

#FOOD-TALK

Kuch Meetha Ho Jaaye!

Raksha Bandhan, a cherished festival that celebrates the bond of love and protection between siblings, calls for a joyous and sumptuous feast.

Raksha Bandhan, an auspicious occasion that celebrates the unique bond of sibling love, is just around the corner. This year, the festival will be celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm on August 30 and 31st. When it comes to Indian festivals, the grand feast and traditional delicacies are an integral part and no occasion is complete without savouring mouth-watering meals.

Kheer- The sweet love affair

Indian Kheer, known as Rice Pudding internationally, is the best love affair one can have with sweets. Any festival without a bowl of delicious mouth-watering Kheer garnished with dry fruits is incomplete.

Kheer Variety

The dish is traditional and has a long history, but with time Kheer has evolved with the help of multiple modifications, which are as follows:

- Dates Apple Kheer
- Rava Kheer
- Maple Kheer
- Apple Jowar Kheer and more.

But no matter how modern one gets, the simple Indian kheer prepared with rice, milk, and dry fruits is unbeatable. This Raksha Bandhan, you should serve a delicious bowl of love and affection filled with wholesome Kheer and spread love and joy.

Halwa Hai Kya!



After the festive lunch, you rush to your mother and ask her, 'Halwahaikya?'

Yes! That is the kind of relationship we have with Halwa. A festival is incomplete without a bowl of good Halwa. It is in the list and amongst the top 7 Traditional Food Ideas for RakshaBandhan because it is super delicious and made at every Indian Home!

Halwa garnished with Kaju and Badam is like a small piece of heaven served to you. It is the best home-made dessert which is easy and tasty. A good bowl of Halwa can blow your guests' minds during the Rakhi festival.

Malpua Over Rabri

Malpua is one of India's oldest desserts and is massively popular. The dish is as simple as fried pancakes dipped in sugar syrup, and this traditional cuisine has lip-smacking flavours.

The corners' crispness and soft texture in the core of the malpua make it an exciting Raksha Bandhan recipe. It is a go-to sweet dish for family gatherings during festivals, especially Rakhi.

Malpua Varieties

Malpua has many variations other than the traditional ones, which are like these:

- Mango Malpua
- Banana Malpua
- KhoyaMalpua and more.

Malpua is a must at the Rakhi festival, and especially when served with Rabri, it tastes Wow! Malpua and Rabri are one divine combination when it comes to dessert.



So this RakshaBandhan, don't forget to add this duo to your menu.



Salona Bandhan Rakhi Ka

They found his slain body under the wall of the mosque with the Brahmin lady guarding the corpse. The royal retinue brought the dead body back and after ritual bath buried him in Humayun's tomb. The next emperor, Shah Alam II, called Ram Kumari – the Brahmin lady who guarded Alamgir II's body – and declared her to be his sister. He rewarded her generously.



Rana Safvi
writer, blogger and
translator



Anjali Sharma
Senior Journalist &
Wildlife enthusiast

(June 2, 1754 - November 29, 1759) by Imaad-ul-Mulk.

Alamgir II was the reigning Mughal monarch only in name, with all powers vested in the hands of his Wazir, Ghazi-ud-Din Imaad-ul-Mulk.

Attacks and plunder by the Afghan ruler, Ahmad Shah Abdali, had considerably weakened the Mughal Empire. There was chaos everywhere, and Imaad, suspecting the emperor to be in touch with the Afghan ruler and plotting to cast the Wazir aside, decided to get rid of Alamgir II altogether.

Imaad did not have the courage to eliminate the emperor inside the fort, so devised a clever plan of drawing the Badshah out.

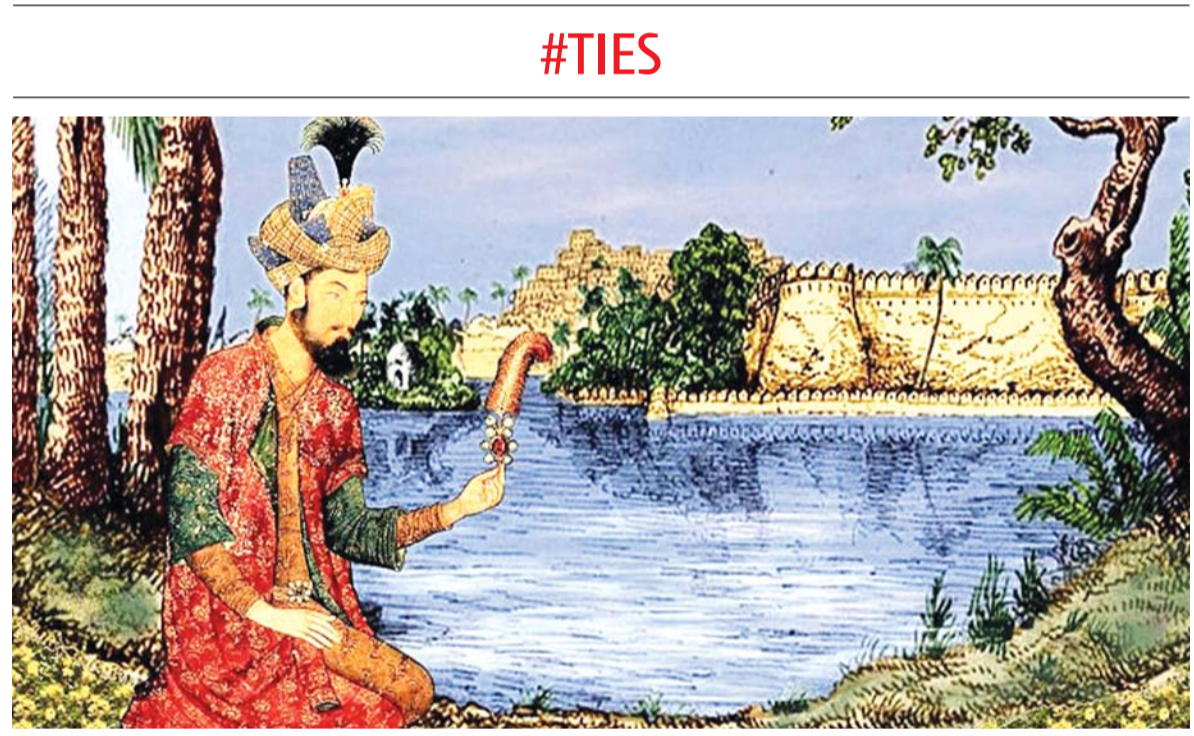
Alamgir II was a very pious man and had great faith in Sufi faqers (mendicants). Whenever he heard a faqer had come to Delhi, he would call him to the fort; and, if the faqer didn't come, the Mughal emperor would himself go and meet the Sufi. Imaad-ul-Mulk spread the rumour that a

very esteemed faqer coming for a visit to Delhi, and staying in Firoz Shah Kotla, and who would not go to meet anyone. As these rumours were cleverly fed to the emperor, his urgency to meet the faqer kept growing.

One night, the Badshah said, "I will go and meet him."

When he reached the Firoz Shah Kotla, the Wazir said, "Jahanpanah, the faqer will be very upset upon seeing your retinue. You should go in alone."

The Badshah ordered everyone, except a eunuch, to wait near the entrance and went in alone. As soon as he set foot inside one of the rooms in the Kotla, he was attacked by the Wazir's men



#TIES

The Mughal emperor enjoyed the good will of his subject – Hindus and Muslims alike. She immediately went over to the emperor's lifeless body, sat down there and kept his head on her lap and crying softly wailed for dawn. At dawn, she was joined by other worshippers of the Yamuna. They all sat with their dead emperor, till help arrived.

Hours passed. When neither the Badshah nor the Wazir came back, the royal retinue got worried and went in to the mosque. There, they found it empty and started running around in search of the emperor.

They found his slain body under the wall of the mosque with the Brahmin lady guarding the corpse. The royal retinue brought the dead body back and after ritual bath buried him in Humayun's tomb.

The next emperor, Shah Alam II, called Ram Kumari – the Brahmin lady who guarded Alamgir II's body – and declared her to be his sister. He rewarded her generously.

Jehangir celebrated various festivals in grand and public way. Guerreiro has recorded festival of Muslims. Jehangir kept fasts for Ramzan and invited Shaikhs and Sayyids to break their fast. On the seventh year of his ascension in 1612 Jehangir celebrated Rakhi festival publicly and allowed citizens to tie him Rakhi or sacred threads.

After that, on every Salona (as Rakshabandhan was called) festival, she would come and tie a rakhi of pure pearls on Shah Alam II's wrist. Accompanying the rakhi would be lots of sweets. In turn, he would gift her clothes and gold coins, as was the norm.

In a chronicle of 18th century Naubat-e-Panchroza describes Rakhi festival celebrations at Red Fort as below

"Sawan is the month loved best by everyone in Delhi. All the people come out in the open and enjoy themselves. There are jhoolas swinging from every tree and the sound of laughter and singing everywhere. The festival of Raksha Bandhan is the most important and popular. In the Red



Frankenstein Day

Frankenstein recounts the story of Victor Frankenstein, a scientist who experiments with the creation of a human-like creature. This tale is considered the predecessor of modern-day science fiction. In the novel, the creature who is rejected by everyone does not actually have a name. However, it is called Frankenstein in modern culture after the creator. Despite everyone believing that Frankenstein is a monster, he is an emotional and intelligent being who simply wants to be accepted by others. There are a lot of people that can relate to this in some way or another.



Fort particularly special preparations are made weeks in advance. Jhoolas are set up with silver supports and ropes of silk with seats of gold and silver. Amidst all this gaiety the Emperor emerges from the Moti Masjid and occupies a small throne while the shehnai plays. Ramjani takes a seat near the Emperor and ties around his wrist a rakhi of gold and silken thread with pearls strung round it. Then she takes a sweet from a silver plate and gives it to the Emperor while everyone chants Mahabali Badshah Salaamat (Long live the king)."

Until the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar hadn't been exiled from the Red Fort, this practice continued, with women of Ram Kumari's family coming to tie rakhis on the wrists of the Mughal emperor and other princes.

Note: The reign and death of Alamgir II, and the role of Imaad-ul-Mulk in the emperor's murder is well documented. I have taken this story from Bazm-e-Akhir,

Akbar, Jahangir also gives prominence to Rakhi. Muhammad Umar argues that Akbar made it a court festival and got Rakhi tied around his wrist. Thus, it became the custom of the courtiers and other muslims. Jehangir celebrated various festivals in grand and public way. Guerreiro has recorded festival of Muslims. Jehangir kept fasts for Ramzan and invited Shaikhs and Sayyids to break their fast on some days. On the seventh year of his ascension in 1612 Jehangir celebrated Rakhi festival publicly and allowed citizens to tie him Rakhi or sacred threads. In Bengal once on Maha Shivratri he met yogis and listened to their stories at night. Dusserha was celebrated every year by the emperor with inspection of mughal troops, horses and elephants. On Diwali Jehangir and his ministers sat and involved in gambling games. Christians could openly celebrate Christmas and Easter at Agra, Delhi and Lahore. Jehangir himself participated in Christmas festivities in palace organized by British and Portuguese ambassadors. He kept Hindu astrologers at court to tell him auspicious dates and also weighed himself and his children on special days.

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



#RESEARCH

Asking for the moon... when you really get it

Now that India has soft landed on the moon, the dust it will raise will travel from moon surface to the earth.



Anjan Roy

The fact is that only four nations have so far been able to soft land on the moon itself bears testimony that this is not an easy achievement. Were it easy, many others would by now have landed there.

By placing its rover on the moon and conducting scientific experiments, India immediately gains recognition as a space super power. In fact, many of the global media is referring to India as such. This is a major recognition. There are larger implications of this achievement.

The landing of a lander kicked up lot of moon dust – called regolith for its typical characteristics – which is minute and sticky and covered the entire lander for a while. Only after the dust subsided, the moon rover was able to roll out from the lander and started its movement across the surface after a while.

But India's successful landing on moon surface, more particularly after the failure of Russian landing bid just couple of days back, puts India on a geo-political plane which would be vastly changed.

India is only the fourth country in the world to put its lander on the moon, that too in an area which is of critical scientific importance. The Vikram lander has arrived at the lunar south pole where sunlight does not reach mostly. So it is surmised if moon has water, it would be in the form of ice particles in the southern polar region.

The technical success in the lunar arrival vests a kind of geopolitical hue on the country. India had earlier signed up to the American Artemis programme, which seeks to create a regime for moon research and lunar governance for the future.

This assumes importance as a host of countries are seeking to land on the moon in the immediate future. These include, Israel, Japan, and the traditional space powers, including China, America and Russia. Until now, the United Nations had resolved that no one country can claim exclusive national sovereign claim on any part of



the moon. China, joined by Russia, have however not joined any of the international efforts for governance of moon research and territorial rights. If anything, China has refused to fall in line with the international position on no national claims on the moon.

India on the other hand is in tune with the international position and as a vindication joined the Artemis programme for joint explorations and non-national ownership of any part of moon.

The space, widely, is fast becoming an extended stage of rivalry among the major earth powers. Russia, in its fallen status, has aligned fully with China as the latter had played its capabilities by making three landings and more particularly on the other side of the moon which is not visible to earth bound observers.

The US, on the other hand, although had placed its astronauts on the moon half a century ago, has not undertaken much activity recently. The only other country which had placed its rovers in the twenty-first century is China.

In the situation, American agreements on moon research and exploration with India is a strategic achievement. India would be a valuable resource for America's renewed moon exploration bid. In this joint effort, several other democracies, like Canada, Japan and South Korea, are also joining in.

That means, you have the newly emerging geo-political alignment – the so-called democracies, on the one hand, with the autocracies on the other.

Because of Chinese behaviour on the Himalayan borders, India firmly remains outside of any joint effort with China. India therefore have to be on the other side with America and the west in space related activities.

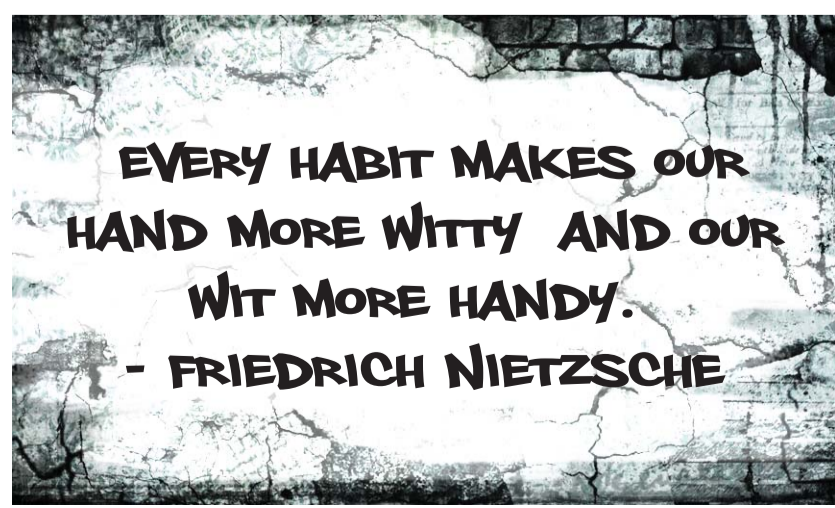
The lunar landing happened at a critically favourable time as well when the BRICS summit was being held in South Africa. Already, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, had pitched the achievement as not just of India but for humanity at large.

India will have a far higher profile at the BRICS summit now that the space capability has been so acutely demonstrated with the picture perfect landing. China's preponderance as the final space power would be challenged and the global south nations will take India so much seriously.

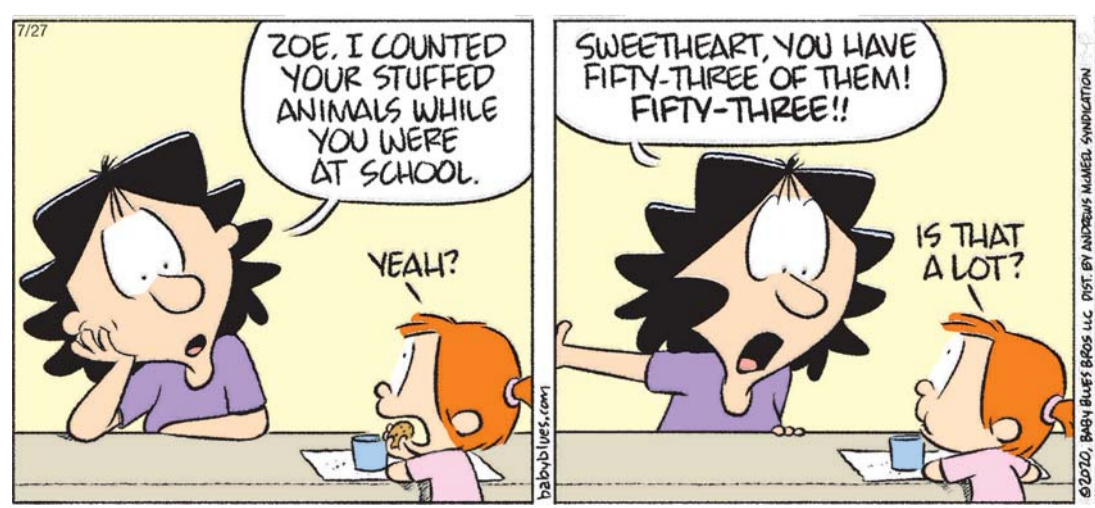
This achievement will give boost to India's hard technological image, as well as, its soft power influence over the global south. These are gains apart from the sheer scientific achievements of the whole endeavour. These are no less important in the life of a nation.

Simply put, India now stands much taller in the city of nations than when the lander was making its still critical descent on moon surface. One wrong move from mission could have changed all that.

THE WALL



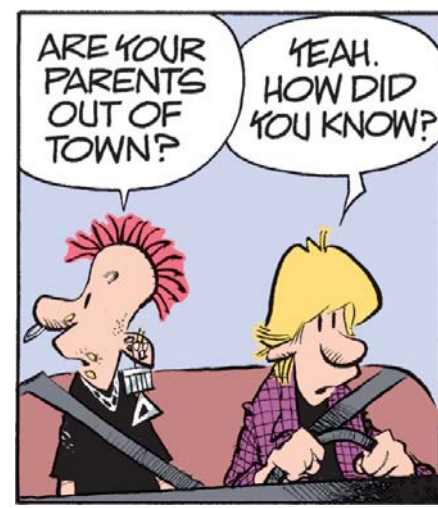
BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

