

Freedom@75: India Inc flags off Theme *Tiranga*



HUES OF THE SEASON: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport on Thursday

PHOTO: CSMIA

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For the next few days, a visual treat will greet passengers at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) with arts and cultural heritage on display.

India's 75th Independence Day calls for something unique and India Inc is stepping out in unusual ways to celebrate it, with employees, customers and trade partners. The Adani-Group-led CSMIA, for instance, isn't stopping at an arts and cultural show at terminals 1 and 2. Passengers can pick up handcrafted souvenirs and participate in a special musical programme, celebrating India's art forms.

Ahead of the long weekend, corporate houses got into the celebration mood early. New Delhi-based Bharti Enterprises had an office party of sorts for all employees with Tricolour, displayed on plates. Rice to salad to dessert, everything had the colours of *Tiranga* (national flag), a person who attended the celebration said. Turn to Page 6 ▶

the numbers in their budgets and are paying vendors on time, they are within their rights to announce any “freebie”. How do you define “freebie”? It is a matter of the political and policy realms. One can argue that fiscally it is a bad strategy, etc. The argument on freebies should be held in the political realm and decided there. If a state is announcing free electricity, they should have the means to pay the power distribution companies as well,” the official had said. On July 26, the Supreme Court had sought a reply from the Centre on whether a body like the Finance Commission can regulate freebies and if revenue allocation to states could be regulated by taking into account the amount a state has spent on “unnecessary freebies”, especially ahead of elections.

However, the 15th Finance Commission stands dissolved, and although it was mandated with taking a look at populist measures by states, it steered clear of defining “populist schemes” or “freebies”.

India Inc...

In Chennai, the famous HSBC building at Rajaji Salai is already decked up in Tricolour lights.

The country’s largest public sector bank, State Bank of India, will have a bicycle rally to celebrate the milestone. India Cements will organise a special parade by security guards from its 10 manufacturing plants in a nod to their service. The salute will come from the respective plant heads, the company said.

And Air India, now part of



PHOTO: CSMA

the Tata group, will gift the Tricolour to passengers on the first base departure flights on I-Day. It will also serve food in specially designed trays on the occasion. For most corporate houses, the 75th I-Day is about sending out a message of solidarity. As cigarette-to-hotel major, ITC, puts it – Sab Saath Badhein (Let everyone come together), which is also its corporate philosophy. So, a cross spectrum of events including illuminating iconic ITC buildings with Tricolour lightings, community initiatives, employee activities, farmer engagements, cultural programmes, flag-hoisting ceremonies and digital campaigns will be part of the itinerary, a company spokesperson said.

Tata Steel has a huge line-up including green projects targeted at schools, a walkathon for community members at its mining locations in Jharkhand, Bokaro and Odisha and other awareness campaigns.

The Shriram group too has a special mandala painting

session with its employees on the occasion of I-Day. An ancient art form, mandala or 'circle' in Sanskrit revolves around geometric designs or patterns that represent the cosmos.

The number '75', in particular, resonates across platforms, such as e-commerce websites like Flipkart, where a flat 75 per cent discount is available on electronic items right now. Retailers such as Reliance Trends are running their Freedom Celebration Sale currently. A customer can shop for ₹3,499 and get merchandise worth ₹3,499 free plus coupons worth ₹3,000.

On Reliance Jio, a customer recharging for ₹2,999 can get a validity of 365 days and 2.5 GB per day. In addition, he will get a one-year subscription of Disney Hotstar Mobile, among other offers.

NestAway, which provides homes on rent, has decided to offer zero-deposit homes to its clients. In most cases, the need to furnish an upfront security deposit is a deal

breaker, since it involves 2-6 months' rent. That is clearly off the table for now.

Mahindra Holidays & Resorts, meanwhile, has launched a new campaign #BlinkToBeThere. To celebrate this occasion, the company has developed an augmented reality (AR) filter as part of a digital contest. The contest invites audiences to click their picture using the AR filter, post it on Instagram, tagging Club Mahindra. An interesting way to involve digital natives and millennials, the company says. And Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company (Chola), the financial services arm of Murugappa Group, has announced an exclusive finance scheme with JCB India as part of 75 years, wherein JCB customers can benefit from easy and attractive loan offers.

(Inputs from Aneesh Phadnis, Shally Seth Mohile, Sharleen D'Souza, Shine Jacob, Manojit Saha and Ishita Ayan Dutt)