

On the occasion of India's 74th Independence Day, 15 August 2020, Thaye Dorje, His Holiness the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa, shares the following message.

Dear dharma friends

Spare a moment to reflect how swiftly time passes, without any notice.

According to our contemporary way of thinking, a great nation celebrates her 74th birthday, even though her original age is unknown to us, no matter how many linear historical means we may use to try and trace her original birthdate.

This reflection may suggest something about us too: we also cannot truly trace our origin in an historical manner. Nevertheless, we rely on user-friendly, contemporary means to mark a relative birthdate.

Perhaps it's safe to say that the origins of anything are in fact beyond our comprehension.

There are many people like myself who are, in one way or another, children of India. I particularly like to think that I am, because my spirituality originates from India.

Moreover, I have lived in her cradle of kindness for more than two decades. I will celebrate her 74th birthday by the very means that she has taught both me and countless others: the ability of ableness or 'Muni' through aspiration and application.

The changes and challenges, both natural and man-made, that she has faced and overcome, the impact of the overwhelming pandemic that she is currently confronting, her constant nurturing of her children – all reflect her resilience. From my point of view, they are symbols of her strength and love.

Days and nights just slip past. They pass us by without notice. All the while, she nurtures us dispassionately, in various ways, regardless of who we are, whether we are janitors, employers, employees, doctors, nurses, officers or leaders.

With these words, I ask my friends to pray with me for India's longevity. May she continue, with her precious footsteps, to show us how to live both with and without modernity .

With prayers

Thaye Dorje

His Holiness the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa

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