

## 1. Prime Minister and President of France jointly inaugurate the Consulate General of India in Marseille

### Introduction

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the President of the French Republic, H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, today jointly inaugurated the newly opened Consulate General of India in Marseille.

The decision to open a Consulate General in Marseille was announced during Prime Minister's visit to France in July 2023.



### PM Modi recalls Story of Savarkar's attempted escape

While in Marseille, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote about the port city's "special" connection to India's struggle for Independence.

"It was here that the great Veer Savarkar attempted a courageous escape. I also want to thank the people of Marseille and the French activists of that time who demanded that he not be handed over to British custody," he posted on X.

### Savarkar's attempted escape at Marseille

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was arrested in

London in March 1910, on charges of anti-state acts and abetment of Nashik magistrate A M T Jackson's murder. While being brought to India for trial onboard the commercial ship SS Morea, Savarkar tried to escape from custody in Marseille.

SS Morea had sailed from London on July 1, 1910. It docked at Marseille a week later. On July 8, 1910, Savarkar, who was being closely guarded, sought permission to use the washroom. He then bolted the toilet from inside, jumped out of the ship's porthole, and swam ashore.

However, Savarkar was soon apprehended by a brigadier of the French maritime gendarmerie, who handed him over to guards from the ship after mistaking him for a crew member.

### Sentence Given to Savarkar

Savarkar was brought to India and tried. He was sentenced to two life terms by the Bombay High Court for 25 years each in December 1910 and January 1911. He would be sentenced to rigorous imprisonment in the Cellular Jail in Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, on July 4, 1911.

### **Savarkar's account**

Savarkar references his attempted sea escape in his Marathi biographical work Mazi Janmathep, first published in 1927. The book has been translated into English as The Story of My Transportation for Life by Prof V N Naik.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Bilateral Relations

Source: PIB and Indian Express

## **2. Prime Minister visited the Mazargues War Cemetery**

### **Mazargues War Cemetery**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Emmanuel Macron visited the Mazargues War Cemetery in Marseille and paid tribute to the Indian soldiers who lost their lives during World Wars I and II. The Mazargues War Cemetery preserves the history of valor and sacrifice of Indian soldiers who fought for peace in Europe.



Relevance: GS Prelims; Bilateral Relations

Source: PIB

## **3. Former Cong MP Sajjan Kumar was convicted of double murder during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots**

### **Introduction**

A Delhi court convicted former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar of murder in a case during the anti-Sikh riots that followed the assassination of Indira Gandhi.

The case is related to the killing of Jaswant Singh and Tarundeep Singh, two Sikh men in Saraswati Vihar on November 1, 1984.

### **Role of Ranganath Mishra Commission**

The FIR for this case was registered in 1991 based on an affidavit given by the complainants – the wife and mother of the victims – before the Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission.

The commission was appointed in 1985 by then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi "to inquire into the organised violence that took place in Delhi...and to recommend measures that may be adopted for prevention of recurrence of such incidents."



**1984 Anti-Sikh Riots: Sajjan Kumar Convicted For Killing Father, Son In Delhi**

#### **Question before Court**

The main question before the court concerned the reliability of the witness testimonies. The case had three main witnesses: the complainant, her daughter, aged 14 during the incident, and her niece, then aged 21.

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing this case, had argued that the statements of the witnesses were reliable. On the other hand, the defence lawyers had long maintained that the complainant came forward as an eye witness after a 32-year delay, making her testimony unreliable.

#### **The cases against Sajjan Kumar**

Sajjan Kumar is already in Tihar Jail, serving a life sentence handed in 2018 in a case related to the

killing of five persons at Raj Nagar Part I in Palam Colony on November 1-2, 1984, and the burning down of a gurdwara in Raj Nagar Part II.

In September 2023, a Delhi court acquitted Kumar in a case related to the murder of seven people from the Sikh community in Sultanpuri during the 1984 riots.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Governance

Source: Indian Express

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