

= Flag of India =

The National Flag of India is a horizontal rectangular tricolour of deep saffron , white and India green ; with the Ashoka Chakra , a 24 @-@ spoke wheel , in navy blue at its centre . It was adopted in its present form during a meeting of the Constituent Assembly held on 22 July 1947 , when it became the official flag of the Dominion of India . The flag was subsequently retained as that of the Republic of India . In India , the term " tricolour " ( Hindi : ?????? , Tira?g? ) almost always refers to the Indian national flag . The flag is based on the Swaraj flag , a flag of the Indian National Congress designed by Pingali Venkayya .

The flag , by law , is to be made of khadi , a special type of hand @-@ spun cloth , or silk , made popular by Mahatma Gandhi . The manufacturing process and specifications for the flag are laid out by the Bureau of Indian Standards . The right to manufacture the flag is held by the Khadi Development and Village Industries Commission , who allocate it to the regional groups . As of 2009 , the Karnataka Khadi Gramodyoga Samyukta Sangha has been the sole manufacturer of the flag .

Usage of the flag is governed by the Flag Code of India and other laws relating to the national emblems . The original code prohibited use of the flag by private citizens except on national days such as the Independence day and the Republic Day . In 2002 , on hearing an appeal from a private citizen , Naveen Jindal , the Supreme Court of India directed the Government of India to amend the code to allow flag usage by private citizens . Subsequently , the Union Cabinet of India amended the code to allow limited usage . The code was amended once more in 2005 to allow some additional use including adaptations on certain forms of clothing . The flag code also governs the protocol of flying the flag and its use in conjunction with other national and non @-@ national flags .

= = Design and construction details = =

According to the Flag code of India , the Indian flag has a ratio of two by three ( where the length of the flag is 1 @.@ 5 times that of the width ) . All three stripes of the flag ( saffron , white and green ) are to be equal in width and length . The size of the Ashoka Chakra is not specified in the Flag code , but it has twenty @-@ four spokes that are evenly spaced . In section 4 @.@ 3 @.@ 1 of " IS1 : Manufacturing standards for the Indian Flag " , there is a chart that details the size of the Ashoka Chakra on the nine specific sizes of the national flag . In both the Flag code and IS1 , they call for the Ashoka Chakra to be printed or painted on both sides of the flag in navy blue . Below is the list of specified shades for all colours used on the national flag , with the exception of Navy Blue , from " IS1 : Manufacturing standards for the Indian Flag " as defined in the 1931 CIE Colour Specifications . The navy blue colour can be found in the standard IS : 1803 @-@ 1973 .

Note that the values given in the table correspond to CIE 1931 color space

= = Symbolism = =

Gandhi first proposed a flag to the Indian National Congress in 1921 . The flag was designed by Pingali Venkayya . In the centre was a traditional spinning wheel , symbolising Gandhi 's goal of making Indians self @-@ reliant by fabricating their own clothing . The design was then modified to include a white stripe in the centre for other religious communities , and provide a background for the spinning wheel . Subsequently , to avoid sectarian associations with the colour scheme , saffron , white and green were chosen for the three bands , representing courage and sacrifice , peace and truth , and faith and chivalry respectively .

A few days before India became independent on 15 August 1947 , the specially constituted Constituent Assembly decided that the flag of India must be acceptable to all parties and communities . A modified version of the Swaraj flag was chosen ; the tricolour remained the same saffron , white and green . However , the charkha was replaced by the Ashoka Chakra representing the eternal wheel of law . The philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan , who later became India 's first Vice President and second President , clarified the adopted flag and described its significance as follows :

= = History = =

A number of flags with varying designs were used in the period preceding the Indian Independence Movement by the rulers of different princely states ; the idea of a single Indian flag was first raised by the British rulers of India after the rebellion of 1857 , which resulted in the establishment of direct imperial rule . The first flag , whose design was based on western heraldic standards , were similar to the flags of other British colonies , including Canada and Australia ; its blue field included the Union Flag in the upper @-@ left quadrant and a Star of India capped by the royal crown in the middle of the right half . To address the question of how the star conveyed " Indianness " , Queen Victoria created the Knight Commander of the Order of the Star of India to honour services to the empire by her Indian subjects . Subsequently , all the Indian princely states received flags with symbols based on the heraldic criteria of Europe including the right to fly defaced British red ensigns .

In the early twentieth century , around the coronation of Edward VII , a discussion started on the need for a heraldic symbol that was representative of the Indian empire . William Coldstream , a British member of the Indian Civil Service , campaigned the government to change the heraldic symbol from a star , which he considered to be a common choice , to something more appropriate . His proposal was not well received by the government ; Lord Curzon rejected it for practical reasons including the multiplication of flags . Around this time , nationalist opinion within the dominion was leading to a representation through religious tradition . The symbols that were in vogue included the Ganesha , advocated by Bal Gangadhar Tilak , and Kali , advocated by Aurobindo Ghosh and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay . Another symbol was the cow , or Gau Mata ( cow mother ) . However , all these symbols were Hindu @-@ centric and did not suggest unity with India 's Muslim population .

The partition of Bengal ( 1905 ) resulted in the introduction of a new flag representing the Indian independence movement that sought to unite the multitude of castes and races within the country . The Vande Mataram flag , part of the Swadeshi movement against the British , comprised Indian religious symbols represented in western heraldic fashion . The tricolour flag included eight white lotuses on the upper green band representing the eight provinces , a sun and a crescent on the bottom red band , and the Vande Mataram slogan in Hindi on the central yellow band . The flag was launched in Calcutta bereft of any ceremony and the launch was only briefly covered by newspapers . The flag was not covered in contemporary governmental or political reports either , but was used at the annual session of the Indian National Congress . A slightly modified version was subsequently used by Madam Bhikaji Cama at the Second Socialist International Meeting in Stuttgart . Despite the multiple uses of the flag , it failed to generate enthusiasm amongst Indian nationalists .

Around the same time , another proposal for the flag was initiated by Sister Nivedita , a Hindu reformist and disciple of Swami Vivekananda . The flag consisted of a thunderbolt in the centre and a hundred and eight oil lamps for the border , with the Vande Mataram caption split around the thunderbolt . It was also presented at the Indian National Congress meeting in 1906 . Soon , many other proposals were initiated , but none of them gained attention from the nationalist movement .

In 1909 , Lord Amphill , former Governor of the Madras Presidency , wrote to The Times of London in the run up to Empire Day pointing out that there existed " no flag representative of India as a whole or any Indian province ... Surely this is strange , seeing that but for India there would be no Empire . "

In 1916 , Pingali Venkayya submitted thirty new designs , in the form of a booklet funded by members of the High Court of Madras . These many proposals and recommendations did little more than keep the flag movement alive . The same year , Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak adopted a new flag as part of the Home Rule Movement . The flag included the Union Jack in the upper left corner , a star and crescent in the upper right , and seven stars displayed diagonally from the lower right , on a background of five red and four green alternating bands . The flag resulted in the first governmental initiative against any nationalistic flag , as a magistrate in Coimbatore banned its use . The ban was followed by a public debate on the function and importance of a national flag .

In the early 1920s , national flag discussions gained prominence across most British dominions following the peace treaty between Britain and Ireland . In November 1920 , the Indian delegation to the League of Nations wanted to use an Indian flag , and this prompted the British Indian government to place renewed emphasis on the flag as a national symbol .

In April 1921 , Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi wrote in his journal Young India about the need for an Indian flag , proposing a flag with the charkha or spinning wheel at the centre . The idea of the spinning wheel was put forth by Lala Hansraj , and Gandhi commissioned Pingali Venkayya to design a flag with the spinning wheel on a red and green banner , the red colour signifying Hindus and the green standing for Muslims . Gandhi wanted the flag to be presented at the Congress session of 1921 , but it was not delivered on time , and another flag was proposed at the session . Gandhi later wrote that the delay was fortuitous since it allowed him to realise that other religions were not represented ; he then added white to the banner colours , to represent all the other religions . Finally , owing to the religious @-@ political sensibilities , in 1929 , Gandhi moved towards a more secular interpretation of the flag colours , stating that red stood for the sacrifices of the people , white for purity , and green for hope .

On 13 April 1923 , during a procession by local Congress volunteers in Nagpur commemorating the Jallianwala Bagh massacre , the Swaraj flag with the spinning wheel , designed by Pingali Venkayya , was hoisted . This event resulted in a confrontation between the Congressmen and the police , after which five people were imprisoned . Over a hundred other protesters continued the flag procession after a meeting . Subsequently , on the first of May , Jamnalal Bajaj , the secretary of the Nagpur Congress Committee , started the Flag Satyagraha , gaining national attention and marking a significant point in the flag movement . The satyagraha , promoted nationally by the Congress , started creating cracks within the organisation in which the Gandhians were highly enthused while the other group , the Swarajists , called it inconsequential .

Finally , at the All India Congress Committee meeting in July , 1923 , at the insistence of Jawaharlal Nehru and Sarojini Naidu , Congress closed ranks and the flag movement was endorsed . The flag movement was managed by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with the idea of public processions and flag displays by common people . By the end of the movement , over 1500 people had been arrested across all of British India . The Bombay Chronicle reported that the movement drew from diverse groups of society including farmers , students , merchants , labourers and " national servants " . While Muslim participation was moderate , the movement enthused women , who had hitherto rarely participated in the independence movement .

While the flag agitation got its impetus from Gandhi 's writings and discourses , the movement received political acceptance following the Nagpur incident . News reports , editorials and letters to editors published in various journals and newspapers of the time attest to the subsequent development of a bond between the flag and the nation . Soon , the concept of preserving the honour of the national flag became an integral component of the independence struggle . While Muslims were still wary of the Swaraj flag , it gained acceptance among Muslim leaders of the Congress and the Khilafat Movement as the national flag .

Detractors of the flag movement , including Motilal Nehru , soon hailed the Swaraj flag as a symbol of national unity . Thus , the flag became a significant structural component of the institution of India . In contrast to the subdued responses of the past , the British Indian government took greater cognisance of the new flag , and began to define a policy of response . The British parliament discussed public use of the flag , and based on directives from England , the British Indian government threatened to withdraw funds from municipalities and local governments that did not prevent the display of the Swaraj flag . The Swaraj flag became the official flag of Congress at the 1931 meeting . However , by then , the flag had already become the symbol of the independence movement .

A few days before India gained its independence in August 1947 , the Constituent Assembly was formed . To select a flag for independent India , on 23 June 1947 , the assembly set up an ad hoc committee headed by Rajendra Prasad and including Maulana Abul Kalam Azad , Sarojini Naidu , C. Rajagopalachari , K. M. Munshi and B. R. Ambedkar as its members .

On 14 July 1947 , the committee recommended that the flag of the Indian National Congress be

adopted as the National Flag of India with suitable modifications , so as to make it acceptable to all parties and communities . It was also resolved that the flag should not have any communal undertones . The spinning wheel of the Congress flag was replaced by the Chakra ( wheel ) from the Lion Capital of Ashoka . According to Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan , the chakra was chosen as it was representative of dharma and law . However , Nehru explained that the change was more practical in nature , as unlike the flag with the spinning wheel , this design would appear symmetrical . Gandhi was not very pleased by the change , but eventually came around to accepting it .

The flag was proposed by Nehru at the Constituent Assembly on 22 July 1947 as a horizontal tricolour of deep saffron , white and dark green in equal proportions , with the Ashoka wheel in blue in the centre of the white band . Nehru also presented two flags , one in Khadi @-@ silk and the other in Khadi @-@ cotton , to the assembly . The resolution was approved unanimously . It served as the national flag of the Dominion of India between 15 August 1947 and 26 January 1950 , and has served as the flag of the Republic of India since then .

= = Manufacturing process = =

The design and manufacturing process for the national flag is regulated by three documents issued by the Bureau of Indian Standards ( BIS ) . All of the flags are made out of khadi cloth of silk or cotton . The standards were created in 1968 and were updated in 2008 . Nine standard sizes of the flag are specified by law .

In 1951 , after India became a republic , the Indian Standards Institute ( now the BIS ) brought out the first official specifications for the flag . These were revised in 1964 to conform to the metric system which was adopted in India . The specifications were further amended on 17 August 1968 . The specifications cover all the essential requirements of the manufacture of the Indian flag including sizes , dye colour , chromatic values , brightness , thread count and hemp cordage . The guidelines are covered under civil and criminal laws and defects in the manufacturing process can result in punishments that include fines or jail terms .

Khadi or hand @-@ spun cloth is the only material allowed to be used for the flag , and flying a flag made of any other material is punishable by law with imprisonment up to three years , besides a fine . Raw materials for khadi are restricted to cotton , silk and wool . There are two kinds of khadi used : The first is the khadi @-@ bunting which makes up the body of the flag , and the second is the khadi @-@ duck , which is a beige @-@ coloured cloth that holds the flag to the pole . The khadi @-@ duck is an unconventional type of weave that meshes three threads into a weave , compared to the two threads used in conventional weaving . This type of weaving is extremely rare , and there are fewer than twenty weavers in India professing this skill . The guidelines also state that there should be exactly 150 threads per square centimetre , four threads per stitch , and one square foot should weigh exactly 205 grams ( 7 @. 2 oz ) .

The woven khadi is obtained from two handloom units in the Dharwad and Bagalkot districts of northern Karnataka . Currently , Karnataka Khadi Gramodyoga Samyukta Sangha based in Hubli is the only licensed flag production and supply unit in India . Permission for setting up flag manufacturing units in India is allotted by the Khadi Development and Village Industries Commission , though the BIS has the power to cancel the licences of units that flout guidelines . The hand @-@ woven khadi for the National Flag was initially manufactured at Garag , a small village in the Dharwad district . A Centre was established at Garag in 1954 by a few freedom fighters under the banner of Dharwad Taluk Kshetriya Seva Sangh and obtained the Centre 's licence to make flags .

Once woven , the material is sent to the BIS laboratories for testing . After quality testing , the material , if approved , is returned to the factory . It is then separated into three lots which are dyed saffron , white and green . The Ashoka Chakra is screen printed , stencilled or suitably embroidered onto each side of the white cloth . Care also has to be taken that the chakra is completely visible and synchronised on both sides . Three pieces of the required dimension , one of each colour , are then stitched together according to specifications and the final product is ironed and packed . The BIS then checks the colours and only then can the flag be sold .

= = Protocol = =

Display and usage of the flag is governed by the Flag Code of India , 2002 ( successor to the Flag Code ? India , the original flag code ) ; the Emblems and Names ( Prevention of Improper Use ) Act , 1950 ; and the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act , 1971 . Insults to the national flag , including gross affronts or indignities to it , as well as using it in a manner so as to violate the provisions of the Flag Code , are punishable by law with imprisonment up to three years , or a fine , or both .

Official regulation states that the flag must never touch the ground or water , or be used as a drapery in any form . The flag may not be intentionally placed upside down , dipped in anything , or hold any objects other than flower petals before unfurling . No sort of lettering may be inscribed on the flag . When out in the open , the flag should always be flown between sunrise and sunset , irrespective of the weather conditions . Prior to 2009 , the flag could be flown on a public building at night under special circumstances ; currently , Indian citizens can fly the flag even at night , subject to the restriction that the flag should be hoisted on a tall flagpole and be well @-@ illuminated .

The flag should never be depicted , displayed or flown upside down . Tradition also states that when draped vertically , the flag should not merely be rotated 90 degrees , but also reversed . One " reads " a flag like the pages of a book , from top to bottom and from left to right , and after rotation the results should be the same . It is considered insulting to display the flag in a frayed or dirty state , and the same rule applies to the flagpoles and halyards used to hoist the flag , which should always be in a proper state of maintenance .

The original flag code of India did not allow private citizens to fly the national flag except on national days such as Independence Day or Republic Day . In 2001 , Naveen Jindal , an industrialist used to the more egalitarian use of the flag in the United States where he studied , flew the Indian flag on his office building . The flag was confiscated and he was warned of prosecution . Jindal filed a public interest litigation petition in the High Court of Delhi ; he sought to strike down the restriction on the use of the flag by private citizens , arguing that hoisting the national flag with due decorum and honour was his right as a citizen , and a way of expressing his love for the country .

At the end of the appeals process , the case was heard by the Supreme Court of India ; the court ruled in Jindal 's favour , asking the Government of India to consider the matter . The Union Cabinet of India then amended the Indian Flag Code with effect from 26 January 2002 , allowing private citizens to hoist the flag on any day of the year , subject to their safeguarding the dignity , honour and respect of the flag . It is also held that the code was not a statute and restrictions under the code ought to be followed ; also , the right to fly the flag is a qualified right , unlike the absolute rights guaranteed to citizens , and should be interpreted in the context of Article 19 of the Constitution of India .

The original flag code also forbade use of the flag on uniforms , costumes and other clothing . In July 2005 , the Government of India amended the code to allow some forms of usage . The amended code forbids usage in clothing below the waist and on undergarments , and forbids embroidering onto pillowcases , handkerchiefs or other dress material .

Disposal of damaged flags is also covered by the flag code . Damaged or soiled flags may not be cast aside or disrespectfully destroyed ; they have to be destroyed as a whole in private , preferably by burning or by any other method consistent with the dignity of the flag .

= = = Display = = =

The rules regarding the correct methods to display the flag state that when two flags are fully spread out horizontally on a wall behind a podium , their hoists should be towards each other with the saffron stripes uppermost . If the flag is displayed on a short flagpole , this should be mounted at an angle to the wall with the flag draped tastefully from it . If two national flags are displayed on crossed staffs , the hoists must be towards each other and the flags must be fully spread out . The flag should never be used as a cloth to cover tables , lecterns , podiums or buildings , or be draped from railings .

Whenever the flag is displayed indoors in halls at public meetings or gatherings of any kind , it should always be on the right ( observers ' left ) , as this is the position of authority . So when the flag is displayed next to a speaker in the hall or other meeting place , it must be placed on the speaker 's right hand . When it is displayed elsewhere in the hall , it should be to the right of the audience . The flag should be displayed completely spread out with the saffron stripe on top . If hung vertically on the wall behind the podium , the saffron stripe should be to the left of the onlookers facing the flag with the hoist cord at the top .

The flag , when carried in a procession or parade or with another flag or flags , should be on the marching right or alone in the centre at the front . The flag may form a distinctive feature of the unveiling of a statue , monument , or plaque , but should never be used as the covering for the object . As a mark of respect to the flag , it should never be dipped to a person or thing , as opposed to regimental colours , organisational or institutional flags , which may be dipped as a mark of honour . During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag , or when the flag is passing in a parade or in a review , all persons present should face the flag and stand at attention . Those present in uniform should render the appropriate salute . When the flag is in a moving column , persons present will stand at attention or salute as the flag passes them . A dignitary may take the salute without a head dress . The flag salutation should be followed by the playing of the national anthem .

The privilege of flying the national flag on vehicles is restricted to the President , the Vice @-@ President or the Prime Minister , Governors and Lieutenant Governors of states , Chief Ministers , Union Ministers , members of the Parliament of India and state legislatures of the Indian states ( Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parishad ) , judges of the Supreme Court of India and High Courts , and flag officers of the Army , Navy and Air Force . The flag has to be flown from a staff affixed firmly either on the middle front or to the front right side of the car . When a foreign dignitary travels in a car provided by government , the flag should be flown on the right side of the car while the flag of the foreign country should be flown on the left side .

The flag should be flown on the aircraft carrying the President , the Vice @-@ President or the Prime Minister on a visit to a foreign country . Alongside the National Flag , the flag of the country visited should also be flown ; however , when the aircraft lands in countries en route , the national flags of the respective countries would be flown instead . When carrying the president within India , aircraft display the flag on the side the president embarks or disembarks ; the flag is similarly flown on trains , but only when the train is stationary or approaching a railway station .

When the Indian flag is flown on Indian territory along with other national flags , the general rule is that the Indian flag should be the starting point of all flags . When flags are placed in a straight line , the rightmost flag ( leftmost to the observer facing the flag ) is the Indian flag , followed by other national flags in alphabetical order . When placed in a circle , the Indian flag is the first point and is followed by other flags alphabetically . In such placement , all other flags should be of approximately the same size with no other flag being larger than the Indian flag . Each national flag should also be flown from its own pole and no flag should be placed higher than another . In addition to being the first flag , the Indian flag may also be placed within the row or circle alphabetically . When placed on crossed poles , the Indian flag should be in front of the other flag , and to the right ( observer 's left ) of the other flag . The only exception to the preceding rule is when it is flown along with the flag of the United Nations , which may be placed to the right of the Indian flag .

When the Indian flag is displayed with non @-@ national flags , including corporate flags and advertising banners , the rules state that if the flags are on separate staffs , the flag of India should be in the middle , or the furthest left from the viewpoint of the onlookers , or at least one flag 's breadth higher than the other flags in the group . Its flagpole must be in front of the other poles in the group , but if they are on the same staff , it must be the uppermost flag . If the flag is carried in procession with other flags , it must be at the head of the marching procession , or if carried with a row of flags in line abreast , it must be carried to the marching right of the procession .

= = = Half @-@ mast = = =

The flag should be flown at half @-@ mast as a sign of mourning . The decision to do so lies with the President of India , who also decides the period of such mourning . When the flag is to be flown at half mast , it must first be raised to the top of the mast and then slowly lowered . Only the Indian flag is flown half mast ; all other flags remain at normal height .

The flag is flown half @-@ mast nationwide on the death of the president , Vice @-@ president or prime minister . It is flown half @-@ mast in New Delhi and the state of origin for the Speaker of the Lok Sabha , Chief Justice of the Supreme Court , and Union Ministers . On deaths of Governors , Lt. Governors and Chief Ministers , the flag is flown at half @-@ mast in the respective states and union territories .

The Indian flag cannot be flown at half @-@ mast on Republic Day ( 26 January ) , Independence day ( 15 August ) , Gandhi Jayanti ( 2 October ) , National Week ( 6 ? 13 April ) or state formation anniversaries , except over buildings housing the body of the deceased dignitary . However , even in such cases , the flag must be raised to full @-@ mast when the body is moved from the building .

Observances of State mourning on the death of foreign dignitaries are governed by special instructions issued from the Ministry of Home Affairs in individual cases . However , in the event of death of either the Head of the State or Head of the Government of a foreign country , the Indian Mission accredited to that country may fly the national flag at half @-@ mast .

On occasions of state , military , central para @-@ military forces funerals , the flag shall be draped over the bier or coffin with the saffron towards the head of the bier or coffin . The flag should not be lowered into the grave or burnt in the pyre .