

National Flag Day 2026, Date, Celebration, Role in Freedom Movement

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National Flag Day 2026, also known as National Flag Adoption Day, is observed in India on **22 July 2026** to commemorate the adoption of the **Tiranga** by the Constituent Assembly on **22 July 1947**, just weeks before India's independence. The day honors the national flag as a symbol of the country's unity, sovereignty, freedom, and democratic values. It also pays tribute to the sacrifices of countless freedom fighters who fought for an independent India under the tricolour.

Why is National Flag Day Celebrated?

National Flag Day is observed to commemorate the adoption of the **Tiranga** on **22 July 1947**, ahead of India's independence. It celebrates the national flag as a symbol of freedom, unity, and national pride. The day also remembers the courage and sacrifices of India's freedom fighters. It encourages every citizen to respect the National Flag and the ideals it represents.

National Flag Day History

The history of **National Flag Day** is closely linked to the adoption of India's present National Flag by the **Constituent Assembly on 22 July 1947**. The day commemorates the evolution of the Tiranga and its role in inspiring India's freedom movement before becoming the official flag of independent India.

- **1904-1906: Sister Nivedita** designed one of the earliest Indian nationalist flags featuring a lotus and Vajra.
- **1906: The Calcutta Flag** was hoisted at Parsee Bagan Square, introducing the tricolour concept.
- **1907: Madam Bhikaji Cama** unfurled the Indian flag at Stuttgart, Germany, making it the **first Indian flag hoisted on foreign soil**.
- **1917: The Home Rule Movement Flag**, led by Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, represented India's demand for self-governance.
- **1921: Pingali Venkayya** designed a new flag, later modified by **Mahatma Gandhi** with the addition of the white stripe and **Charkha**.
- **1931: The Indian National Congress** adopted the **saffron, white, and green tricolour**, which became the basis of today's flag.
- **22 July 1947: The Constituent Assembly** officially adopted the present **National Flag** with the **Ashoka Chakra** replacing the Charkha.
- **15 August 1947: The Tiranga** was first hoisted as the **National Flag of independent India**.

Role of the National Flag in India's Freedom Movement

The **Indian National Flag** became the most powerful symbol of India's struggle against British colonial rule. It united people across regions, religions, and communities, inspiring millions to fight for independence and national unity.

- **Symbol of National Unity:** The National Flag united Indians from diverse backgrounds under one common goal of achieving **Swaraj (self-rule)**.
- **Inspired the Freedom Movement:** The Tricolour became a symbol of hope and determination, encouraging people to participate in protests, marches, and civil disobedience movements.
- **Emblem of Resistance Against British Rule:** Hoisting the National Flag was considered an act of defiance against the British government and often led to arrests, imprisonment, and police action.
- **Played a Key Role in the Swadeshi Movement:** The flag inspired people to boycott foreign goods and support indigenous products as part of the movement for economic self-reliance.
- **Dandi March (1930):** During Mahatma Gandhi's historic **Salt March**, thousands of volunteers carried the Tricolour, making it a powerful symbol of peaceful resistance against unjust colonial laws.
- **Civil Disobedience Movement:** Protesters proudly displayed the National Flag during demonstrations demanding equal rights and complete independence from British rule.
- **Quit India Movement (1942):** The Tiranga became the rallying symbol of the **Quit India Movement**, motivating millions to demand an immediate end to British rule despite widespread repression.
- **Courage of Freedom Fighters:** Revolutionaries, students, women, and ordinary citizens risked imprisonment and even death while protecting or hoisting the National Flag during protests.
- **Expression of National Identity:** The flag gave Indians a common identity beyond regional, linguistic, or religious differences, strengthening the spirit of nationalism.

- **International Recognition:** Leaders such as **Madam Bhikaji Cama** unfurled an early version of the Indian flag abroad, drawing international attention to India's freedom struggle.
- **Representation of Sacrifice:** Every version of the evolving National Flag reflected the sacrifices made by countless freedom fighters who dedicated their lives to the cause of independence.
- **Official Adoption Before Independence:** On **22 July 1947**, the Constituent Assembly adopted the present Tricolour with the **Ashoka Chakra**, making it the official symbol of the soon-to-be independent nation.
- **First Hoisting After Independence:** On **15 August 1947**, the National Flag was proudly hoisted across India, marking the end of colonial rule and the birth of an independent nation.

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National Flag Adoption Day 2026 Significance

National Flag Adoption Day 2026 highlights the importance of the Tiranga as the symbol of India's freedom, sovereignty, and national identity.

- **Commemorates the adoption** of the Indian National Flag by the Constituent Assembly on **22 July 1947**.
- **Honours the sacrifices** of freedom fighters who fought under the Tiranga for India's independence.
- **Symbolizes national unity**, bringing together people of diverse cultures, religions, and languages.
- **Strengthens patriotism** by encouraging pride and respect for the nation.
- **Represents India's sovereignty**, independence, and democratic values.
- **Promotes constitutional ideals** of **justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity**.
- **Highlights the meaning** of the flag's colours and the **Ashoka Chakra**.
- **Encourages citizens** to follow the **Flag Code of India** and maintain the dignity of the National Flag.
- **Educates the younger generation** about the history and evolution of the Tiranga.
- **Preserves the legacy** of India's freedom movement for future generations.
- **Promotes civic responsibility** and inspires citizens to contribute to nation-building.
- **Celebrates India's national identity** and the values that unite the country.
- **Reinforces respect** for national symbols and the Constitution.
- **Reminds citizens** of the importance of unity, integrity, and harmony.

Flag Code of India

The **Flag Code of India** lays down the rules for the **display, use, dimensions, and respectful handling of the Indian National Flag**, ensuring that the Tiranga is always treated with dignity and honor.

- **Legal Framework:** The Flag Code of India came into effect on **26 January 2002** and was amended in **2021** and **2022**.
- **Flag Ratio:** The **length-to-width ratio** of the National Flag must always be **3:2**.
- **Colour Order:** The flag consists of **three equal horizontal bands—India Saffron** (top), **White** (middle), and **India Green** (bottom).
- **Ashoka Chakra:** A **navy blue 24-spoke Ashoka Chakra** is placed at the center of the white band.
- **Correct Hoisting:** The **saffron band** must always remain at the **top** when hoisted or displayed horizontally.

- **Vertical Display:** When displayed vertically, the **saffron band must be on the observer's left.**
- **Position of Honour:** The National Flag should always occupy the **highest and most prominent position** among flags.
- **24x7 Display:** As per the **2022 amendment**, the flag may be displayed **day and night**, provided it is properly illuminated during nighttime.
- **Material:** The flag may be made from **hand-spun, handwoven, cotton, wool, silk, khadi, polyester, or machine-made fabric.**
- **Respect for the Flag:** The flag must **not touch the ground, floor, water, or trail from vehicles.**
- **No Commercial Use:** It cannot be used for **advertisements, commercial branding, packaging, or trade purposes.**
- **Restrictions on Use:** The flag must not be used as **drapery, tablecloth, costume, uniform, cushion, or clothing below the waist.**

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