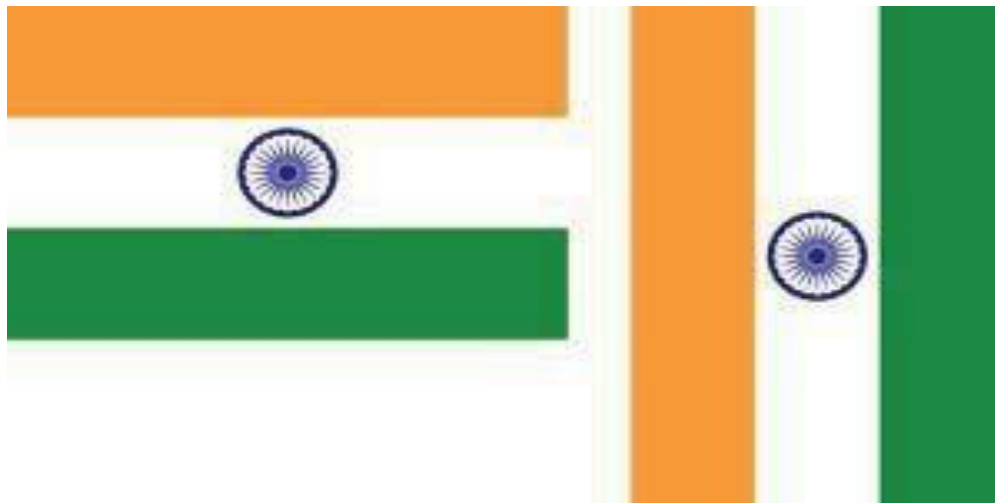


National Insignia and Language

INDIA'S NATIONAL INSIGNIA

INDIA'S NATIONAL FLAG

India's National flag is a horizontal tri-colour of deep saffron (Kesari) at the top, white in the middle and dark green at the bottom in equal proportion. The ratio of width of the flag to its length is 2:3. In the centre of the white band is a navy blue wheel which has 24 spokes. Its diameter approximates the width of the white band. Its design is taken from that of the wheel which appears on the abacus of the Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath.



MEANING OF THREE COLOURS OF NATIONAL FLAG

The saffron stands for courage, sacrifice and the spirit of renunciation; the white stands for purity and truth and the green for faith and fertility.

ADOPTION OF NATIONAL FLAG

Tricolor flag was first accepted by Indian National Congress in 1931. It had charkha in the center of the white band which was later replaced by Wheel taken from Sarnath Asoka pillar. The design of the national flag was adopted by the Constituent Assembly of India on 22 July 1947. In the constituent assembly, Dr. Rajendra Prasad was the head of the Ad hoc committee on National Flag. The flag was designed by Pingali Venkayya.

FLAG CODE OF INDIA

The Flag Code of India, 2002, has taken effect from 26 January 2002 and supersedes the 'Flag Code – as it existed. The Flag Code of India, 2002 is an attempt to bring together all such laws, conventions, practices and instructions for the guidance and benefit of all concerned. As per current norms, there is no restriction on the display of the National Flag by members of general public, private organisations, educational institutions, etc., except to the extent provided in the Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950 and the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 and any other law enacted on the subject.

Bureau of Indian Standards is in charge of enforcement of the standards of the Indian Tricolor as per the provisions of the “Flag Code of India”.

STATE EMBLEM

The state emblem depicts four lions, standing back to back. It is an adaptation from the Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka, near Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. Carved out of a single block of polished sandstone, the capital is crowned by the Wheel of the Law (Dharma Chakra).



The Lion Capital was erected in the third century BC by Asoka to mark the spot where Buddha first delivered his sermon.

In the State emblem, adopted by the Government of India on 26 January 1950, only three lions are visible, the fourth being hidden from view.

The four lions symbolizing power, courage and confidence, rest on a circular abacus. The abacus is girdled by four smaller animals — guardians of the four directions: the lion of the north, the elephant of the east, bull of the west and horse of the south {you can remember this by analogy NEWS→ LEBH}. The abacus rests on a lotus in full bloom, exemplifying the fountainhead of life and creative inspiration. The words Satyameva Jayate (meaning ‘truth alone triumphs’) from Mundaka Upanishad are inscribed below the abacus in Devanagari script. The use of the state emblem of India, as the official seal of the Government of India, is regulated by the state of India (Prohibition of Improper Use) Act, 2005.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

The song Jana-gana-mana, composed originally in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore, was adopted in its Hindi version by the Constituent Assembly as the national anthem of India on Tuesday, 24 January 1950.

Rabindranath Tagore wrote it at the request of his intimate friend Ashutosh Chaudhari, a judge of the Calcutta High Court, for singing at the 26th session of the Indian National Congress on 27 December 1911 at the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress.

Playing time of the full version of the National Anthem is approximately 52 seconds. A short version consisting of the first and last lines of the stanza (playing time approximately 20 seconds) is also played on certain occasions.

Apart from Indian national anthem Rabindranath Tagore has written national anthem of Bangladesh ‘Amar Sonar Bangla’ and also the lyrics of Sri Lanka’s National Anthem (Sri Lanka Matha). Tagore had written the music and lyrics for Nama Nama Sri Lanka Mata in the Bengali language for his student Ananda Samarakoon.

NATIONAL SONG

The song Vande Mataram, composed in Sanskrit by Bankimchandra Chatterji, was incorporated in his famous novel Ananda Math (1882). It has an equal status with the National Anthem. Later the song was set to tune by Rabindranath Tagore and sung for the first time before the gathering at the 12th annual session of the Indian National Congress held in 1896 in Calcutta. It was declared as the National Song in 1937 through a resolution. The English translation of the stanza was rendered by Sri Aurobindo.

NATIONAL CALENDAR

The National Calendar is based on the Saka Era with Chaitra being its first month. It consists of 365 days in a normal year. It was adopted from 22nd March 1957 along with the Gregorian calendar for the following official purposes: Gazette of India; news broadcast by All India Radio; calendars issued by Government of India; and, Government communications addressed to the members of the public. Dates of the National Calendar correspond with those of the Gregorian Calendar. Thus, the first day of Chaitra corresponds to 22nd March in a normal year and 21 March in leap year.

NATIONAL ANIMAL

The Tiger – *Panthera tigris* (Linnaeus), is the national animal of India. It is a rich-colored well-striped animal with a short coat. The combination of grace, strength, power has earned the tiger great respect and high esteem. Out of eight races of the species known, the Indian race, the Royal Bengal Tiger, is found throughout the country except in the north-western region and also in the neighbouring countries, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh.

NATIONAL BIRD

The Indian peacock, *Pavo cristatus*, the national bird of India, is a colourful, swan-sized bird, with a fan-shaped crest of feathers, a white patch under the eye and a long, slender neck. The male of the species is more colourful than the female, with a glistening blue breast and neck and a spectacular bronze-green trail of around 200 elongated feathers. The female is brownish, slightly smaller than the male and lacks the trail.

NATIONAL FLOWER

Lotus, an aquatic plant of *Nymphaea* with broad floating leaves and bright fragrant flowers that grow only in shallow waters, is India's national flower. It is a sacred flower and occupies a unique position in the art and mythology of ancient India and has been an auspicious symbol of Indian culture since time immemorial.

National Fruit

Mango (*Manifera indica*) is the National fruit of India. Mango is one of the most widely grown fruits of the tropical countries. In India, mango is cultivated almost in all

parts, with the exception of hilly areas. Mangoes have been cultivated in India from time immemorial. The poet Kalidasa sang of its praises. Alexander savoured its taste, as did the Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang. Akbar planted 100,000 mango trees in Darbhanga, known as Lakhi Bagh.

NATIONAL TREE

Banyan Tree is India's National Tree. It's a member of mulberry family. The mulberry family is known as Moraceae and this plant grows in India, Bangladesh and some other countries.

The banyan Tree begins its life as epiphyte on a host tree, gathers nourishment and water from air (not the host). Despite being an epiphyte, the Ficus is an example of a strangler fig. Its roots grow down and around the stem of the host, their growth accelerating once the ground has been reached. After time, the roots coalesce to form a pseudo trunk, eventually strangling and killing the host.

NATIONAL AQUATIC ANIMAL

The Gangetic Dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*) is the National aquatic animal of India. It is listed by the IUCN as endangered on their Red List of Threatened Species. The decision to declare the Ganges river dolphin India's national aquatic animal was taken Oct 5 2009 during the first meeting of the newly-constituted National Ganga River Basin Authority. Details about Ganges River Dolphin are located [here](#).

NATIONAL CURRENCY SYMBOL

The symbol is an amalgam of Devanagari "Ra" and the Roman Capital "R" with two parallel horizontal stripes running at the top representing the national flag and also the "equal to" sign. The Indian Rupee sign was adopted by the Government of India on 15th July, 2010. The symbol of Indian Rupee signifies India's international identity for money transactions and economic strength. The symbol, conceptualised and designed by Udaya Kumar, a post graduate in Design from Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, has been chosen from thousands of concept entries received by the Ministry of Finance through an open competition among resident Indian nationals.

NATIONAL HERITAGE ANIMAL

The Indian elephant (*Elephas maximus indicus*) has been declared as the national heritage animal by the government in order to conserve its dwindling population. 60% of the Asian elephants live in India. There are over 25,000 elephants in the country, including 3,500 in captivity in zoos and temples – particularly in southern and north-eastern parts of the country. Indian Elephant has been listed as endangered by IUCN as the population has declined by at least 50% over the last three generations

NATIONAL GAME

The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports of India clarified that, officially, the country does not have a national game; no game, including hockey, has been notified as such. However, many sources, including the Indian government's official portal, mention hockey as a "National Game". India has won eight Olympic gold medals for hockey

LANGUAGES

There are 22 scheduled languages, 114 other languages, 216 mother tongues, 96 non specified languages and totally up to 10,000 languages spoken by the people in India.

CLASSIFICATION

Indian languages have evolved from different stocks and are closely associated with the different ethnic groups of India. Broadly the Indian languages can be put into six groups: 1) Indo-Aryan, 2) Dravidian, 3) Sino-Tibetan, 4) Negroid, 5) Austric and 6) Others. These languages have interacted on one another through the centuries and have produced the major linguistic divisions of modern India. The Indo-Aryan and the Dravidian are the dominant groups and together comprises all the major languages of India.

INDO-ARYAN

It is part of the Indo-European family of languages, which came to India with the Aryans.

It is the biggest of the language groups in India and accounts for about 74% of the total Indian population.

It comprises of all the principal languages of northern and western India such as Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Sindhi, Rajasthani, Assamese, Oriya, Pahari, Bihari, Kashmiri, Urdu and Sanskrit.

DRAVIDIAN

This is the second most important group and comprises mainly of languages spoken in the Southern India. It covers about 25% of the Indian population.

Proto-Dravidian gave rise to 21 Dravidian Languages. They can be broadly classified into three groups: Northern group, Central group, and Southern group of Dravidian languages.

The Northern group consists of three languages i.e. Brahui, Malto and Kudukh. Brahui is spoken in Baluchistan, Malto spoken in Bengal and Orissa, while Kurukh is spoken in Bengal, Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

The Central group consists of eleven languages viz., Gondi, Khond, Kui, Manda, Parji, Gadaba, Kolami, Pengo, Naiki, Kuvi and Telugu. Out of these, only Telugu became a civilized language and the rest remained tribal languages.

The southern group consists of seven languages viz., Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam, Tulu, Kodagu, Toda and Kota.

The major languages of the Dravidian group are: (i) Telugu (numerically the biggest of the Dravidian languages), (ii) Tamil (oldest and purest language of the Dravidian family), (iii) Kannada and (iv) Malayalam (smallest and the youngest of the Dravidian family).