

FLAG CODE OF INDIA

The Indian National Flag represents the hopes and aspirations of the people of India. It is the symbol of our national pride. Over the last five decades, several people including members of armed forces have ungrudgingly laid down their lives to keep the tricolour flying in its full glory.

There is universal affection and respect for, and loyalty to, the National Flag. Yet, a perceptible lack of awareness is often noticed, not only amongst people but also in the organisations / agencies of the government, in regard to laws, practices and conventions that apply to the display of the National Flag. Apart from non-statutory instructions issued by the Government from time to time, display of the National Flag is governed by the provisions of the Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950 (No. 12 of 1950) and the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971 (No. 69 of 1971). 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.

For the sake of convenience, Flag Code of India, 2002, has been divided into three parts. Part I of the Code contains general description of the National Flag. Part II of the Code is devoted to the display of the National Flag by members of public, private organizations, educational institutions, etc. Part III of the Code relates to display of the National Flag by Central and State governments and their organisations and agencies.

Flag Code of India, 2002, takes effect from January 26, 2002 and supersedes the 'Flag Code - India' as it existed.

PART I**GENERAL**

1.1 The National Flag shall be a tri-colour panel made up of three rectangular panels or sub-panels of equal widths. The colour of the top panel shall be India saffron (Kesari) and that of the bottom panel shall be India green. The middle panel shall be white, bearing at its centre the design of Ashoka Chakra in Navy blue colour with 24 equally spaced spokes. The Ashoka Chakra shall preferably be screen printed or otherwise printed or stenciled or suitably embroidered and shall be completely visible on both sides of the Flag in the centre of the white panel.

1.2 The National Flag of India shall be made of hand spun and hand woven wool/cotton/silk khadi bunting.

1.3 The National Flag shall be rectangular in shape. The ratio of the length to the height (width) of the Flag shall be 3:2.

1.4 The standard sizes of the National Flag shall be as follows :-

Flag Size No.	Dimensions in mm
1	6300 x 4200
2	3600 x 2400
3	2700 x 1800
4	1800 x 1200
5	1350 x 900
6	900 x 600
7	450 x 300
8	225 x 150
9	150 x 100

1.5 An appropriate size should be chosen for display. The flags of 450x300 mm size are intended for aircrafts VVIP flights, 225x150 mm size for motor-cars and 150x100 mm size for table flags.

PART II**HOSTING/DISPLAY/USE OF NATIONAL FLAG BY MEMBERS OF PUBLIC, PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, ETC.****SECTION I**

2.1 There shall be no restriction on the display of the National Flag by members of general public, private organizations, educational institutions, etc., except to the extent provided in the Emblems and Names (Preventions of Improper Use) Act, 1950* and

*** The Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950.**

Section 2 : In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires :-

(a) "emblem" means any emblem, seal, flag, insignia, coat-of-arms or pictorial representation specified in the Schedule.

Section 3 : Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time being in force, no person shall, except in such cases and under such conditions as may be prescribed by the Central Government, use, or continue to use, for the purpose of any trade, business, calling or profession, or in the title of any patent, or in any trade mark of design, any name or emblem specified in the Schedule or any colourable imitation thereof without the previous permission of the Central Government or of such officer of Government as may be authorised in this behalf by the Central Government.

NOTE : The Indian National Flag has been specified as an emblem in the Scheduled to the Act.

the prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971** and any other law enacted on the subjects. Keeping in view the provisions of the aforementioned Acts -

- (i) the Flag shall not be used for commercial purpose in violation of the Emblem and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950 ;
- (ii) the Flag shall not be dipped in salute to any person or thing ;

**** The Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971**

Section 2 : Whoever in any public place or in any other place within public view burns, mutilates, defaces, defiles, disfigures, destroys, tramples upon or otherwise brings into contempt (whether by words, either spoken or written, or by acts) the Indian National Flag or any part thereof, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

Explanation 1. - Comments expressing disapprobation or criticism of the Indian National Flag or of any measures of the Government with a view to obtain or an alteration of the Indian National Flag by lawful means do not constitute an offence under this section.

Explanation 2. - The expression "Indian National Flag" includes any picture, painting, drawing or photograph, or other visible representation of the Indian National Flag, or of any part or parts thereof, made of any substance or represented on any substance.

Explanation 3. - The expression "public place" means any palce intended for use by, or accessible to, the public and includes any public conveyance.

- (iii) the Flag shall not be flown at half-mast except on occasions on which the Flag is flown at half-mast on public buildings in accordance with the instructions issued by the Government ;
- (iv) the Flag shall not be used as a drapery in any form whatsoever, including private funerals ;
- (v) the Flag shall not be used as a portion of costume or uniform of any description nor shall it be embroidered or printed upon cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins or any dress material ;
- (vi) lettering of any kind shall not be put upon the Flag ;
- (vii) the Flag shall not be used as a receptacle for receiving, delivering, holding or carrying anything ;

provided that there shall be no objection to keeping flower petals inside the Flag before it is unfurled as part of celebrations on special occasions and on National Days like the Republic Day and the Independence Day ;
- (viii) when used on occasions like unveiling of a statue, the Flag shall be displayed distinctly and separately and it shall not be used as covering for the statue or monument ;
- (ix) the Flag shall not be used to cover a speaker's desk nor shall it be draped over a speaker's platform ;
- (x) the Flag shall not be intentionally allowed to touch the ground or the floor or trail in water.
- (xi) the Flag shall not be draped over the hood, top, sides or back of a vehicle; train, boat or an aircraft ;
- (xii) the Flag shall not be used as a covering for a building ; and

- (xiii) the Flag shall not be intentionally displayed with the "saffron" down.

2.2 A member of public, a private organization or an educational institution may hoist/display the National Flag on all days and occasions, ceremonial or otherwise, Consistent with the dignity and honour of the National Flag -

- (i) whenever the National Flag is displayed, it should occupy the position of honour and should be distinctly placed ;
- (ii) a damaged or dishevelled Flag should not be displayed ;
- (iii) the Flag should not be flown from a single masthead simultaneously with any other flag or flags ;
- (iv) the Flag should not be flown on any vehicle except in accordance with the provisions contained in Section IX of Part III of this Code ;
- (v) when the Flag is displayed on a speaker's platform, it should be flown on the speaker's right as he faces the audience or flat against the wall, above and behind the speaker ;
- (vi) when the Flag is displayed flat and horizontal on a wall, the saffron band should be upper most and when displayed vertically, the saffron band shall be on the right with reference to the Flag (i.e. left to the person facing the Flag) ;
- (vii) to the extent possible, the Flag should conform to the specifications prescribed in Part I of this Code.
- (viii) no other flag or bunting should be placed higher than or above or side by side with the National Flag ; nor should any object including flowers or garlands or emblem be placed on or above the Flag-mast from which the Flag is flown ;

- (ix) the Flag should not be used as a festoon, rosette or bunting or in any other manner for decoration ;
- (x) the Flag made of paper may be waved by public on occasions of important national, cultural and sports events. However, such paper Flags should not be discarded or thrown on the ground after the event. As far as possible, it should be disposed of in private consistent with the dignity of the Flag ;
- (xi) where the Flag is displayed in open, it should, as far as possible, be flown from sunrise to sunset, irrespective of weather conditions ;
- (xii) the Flag should not be displayed or fastened in any manner as may damage it ; and
- (xiii) when the Flag is in a damaged or soiled condition, it shall be destroyed as a whole in private, preferably by burning or by any other method consistent with the dignity of the Flag.

SECTION II

OFFICIAL DISPLAY

3.3 Subject to the provisions contained in Section I above, it shall be mandatory for all Governments and their organisations/agencies to follow the provisions contained in this Part.

3.4 On all occasions for official display, only the Flag conforming to specifications laid down by the Bureau of Indian Standards and bearing their standard mark shall be used. On other occasions also, it is desirable that only such Flags of appropriate size are flown.

SECTION III

CORRECT DISPLAY

3.5 Wherever the Flag is flown, it should occupy the position of honour and be distinctly palced.

3.6 Where the practice is to fly the Flag on any public building, it shall be flown on that building on all days including Sundays and holidays and, except as provided in this Code, it shall be flown from sun-rise to sun-set irrespective of weather conditions. The Flag may be flown on such a building at night also but this should be only on very special occasions.

3.7 The Flag shall always be hoisted briskly and lowered slowly and ceremoniously. When the hoisting and the lowering of the Flag is accompanied by appropriate bugle calls, the hoisting and lowering should be simultaneous with the bugle calls.

3.8 When the Flag is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from a windowsill, balcony, or front of a building, the saffron band shall be at the farther end of the staff.

3.9 When the Flag is displayed flat and horizontal on a wall, the saffron band shall be upper most and when displayed vertically, the saffron band shall be to the right with reference to the Flag, i.e., it may be to the left of a person facing it.

3.10 When the Flag is displayed on a speaker's platform, it shall be flown on a staff on the speaker's right as he faces the audience or flat against the wall above and behind the speaker.

3.11 When used on occasions like the unveiling of a statue, the Flag shall be displayed distinctly and separately.

3.12 When the Flag is displayed alone on a motor car, it shall be flown from a staff, which should be affixed firmly either on the middle front of the bonnet or to the front right side of the car.

3.13 When the Flag is carried in a procession or a parade, it shall be either on the marching right, i.e. the Flag's own right, or if there is a line of other flags, in front of the centre of the line.

SECTION IV

INCORRECT DISPLAY

- 3.14 A damaged or disheveled Flag shall not be displayed.
- 3.15 The Flag shall not be dipped in salute to any person or thing.
- 3.16 No other flag or bunting shall be placed higher than or above or, except as hereinafter provided, side by side with the National Flag ; nor shall any object including flowers or garlands or emblem be placed on or above the Flag - mast from which the Flag is flown.
- 3.17 The Flag shall not be used as a festoon, rosette or bunting or in any other manner for decoration.
- 3.18 The Flag shall not be used to cover a speaker's desk nor shall it be draped over a speaker's platform.
- 3.19 The Flag shall not be displayed with the "saffron" down.
- 3.20 The Flag shall not be allowed to touch the ground or the floor or trail in water.
- 3.21 The Flag shall not be displayed or fastened in any manner as may damage it.

SECTION V**MISUSE**

- 3.22 The Flag shall not be used as a drapery in any form whatsoever except in State/Military/Central Para military Forces funerals hereinafter provided.
- 3.23 The Flag shall not be draped over the hood, top, sides or back of a vehicle, train or boat.
- 3.24 The Flag shall not be used or stored in such a manner as may damage or soil it.
- 3.25 When the Flag is in a damaged or soiled conditions, it shall not be cast aside or disrespectfully disposed of but shall be destroyed as a whole in private, preferably by burning or by any other method consistent with the dignity of the Flag.
- 3.26 The Flag shall not be used as a covering for a building.
- 3.27 The Flag shall not be used as a portion of a costume or uniform of any description. It shall not be embroidered or printed upon cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins or boxes.
- 3.28 Lettering of any kind shall not be put upon the Flag.
- 3.29 The Flag shall not be used in any form of advertisement nor shall an advertising sign be fastened to the pole from which the Flag is flown.
- 3.30 The Flag shall not be used as a receptacle for receiving, delivering, holding or carrying anything.

Provided that there shall be no objection to keeping flower petals inside the Flag before it is unfurled, as part of celebrations on special occasions and on National Days like the Republic Day and the Independence Day.

SECTION VI

SALUTE

3.31 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.

SECTION VIII

DISPLAY OVER PUBLIC BUILDINGS/OFFICIAL RESIDENCES

- 3.39 Normally the National Flag should be flown only on important public buildings such as High Courts, Secretariats, Commissioner's Offices, Collectorates, Jails and offices of the District Boards, Municipalities and Zilla Parishads and Departmental/Public Sector Undertakings.

SECTION XI

HALF-MASTING

3.50 In the event of the death of the following dignitaries, the National Flag shall be half masted at the places indicated against each on the day of the death of the dignitary :-

Dignitary	Place or places
President Vice-President Prime Minister	} Throughout India
Speaker of the Lok Sabha Chief Justice of India	} Delhi
Union Cabinet Minister	} Delhi and State Capitals
Minister of State or Deputy Minister of the Union	} Delhi
Governor Lt. Governor Chief Minister of a State Chief Minister of a Union territory Cabinet Minister in a State	} Throughout the State or Union territory concerned. Capital of the State concerned.

- 3.51 If the intimation of the death of any dignitary is received in the afternoon, the Flag shall be half-masted on the following day also at the place or places indicated above, provided the funeral has not taken place before sun-rise on that day.
- 3.52 On the day of the funeral of a dignitary mentioned above, the Flag shall be half-masted at the place where the funeral takes place.
- 3.53 If State mourning is to be observed on the death of any dignitary, the Flag shall be half-masted throughout the period of the mourning throughout India in the case of the Union dignitaries and throughout the State or Union territory concerned in the case of a State or Union territory dignitary.
- 3.54 Half-masting of the Flag and, where necessary, observance of State mourning on the death of foreign dignitaries will be governed by special instructions which will issue from the Ministry of Home Affairs in individual cases.
- 3.55 Notwithstanding the above provisions, in the event of a half-mast day coinciding with the Republic Day, Independence Day, Mahatama Gandhi's Birthday, National Week (6th to 13th April, in the memory of martyrs of Jalianwala Bagh), any other particular day of national rejoicing as may be specified by the Government of India or, in the case of a State, on the anniversary of formation of that State, the Flags shall not be flown at half-mast except over the building where the body of the deceased is lying until such time it has been removed and that Flag shall be raised to the full-mast position after the body has been removed.
- 3.56 If mourning were to be observed in a parade or procession where a Flag is carried, two streamers of black crepe shall be attached to the spear head, allowing the streamers to fall

naturally. The use of black crepe in such a manner shall be only by an order of the Government.

- 3.57 When flown at half-mast, the Flag shall be hoisted to the peak for an instant, then lowered to the half-mast position, but before lowering the Flag for the day, it shall be raised again to the peak.

Note :- By half-mast is meant hauling down the Flag to one half the distance between the top and the guy-line and in the absence of the guy-line, half of the staff.

- 3.58 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 shall not be lowered into the grave or burnt in the pyre.

- 3.59 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 even if that event falls on Republic Day, Independence Day, Mahatama Gandhi's Birthday, National Week (6th to 13th April, in the memory of martyrs of Jalianwala Bagh) or any other particular day of national rejoicing as may be specified by the Government of India. In the event of death of any other dignitary of that country, the National Flag should not be flown at half-mast by the Missions except when the local practice or protocol (which should be ascertained from the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, where necessary) require that the National Flag of a Foreign Mission in that country should also be flown at half-mast.
