



Short History of the Indian Flag

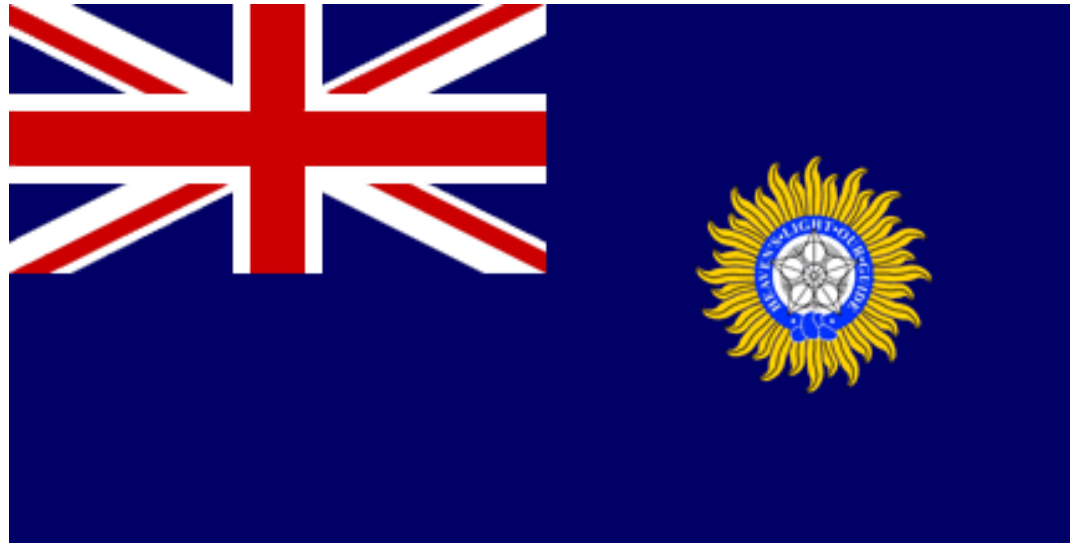
2015 Republic Day Celebration,
Shishu Bharati (Lexington)

Old or New?

- ▶ Indian culture has been around for 1000's of years
- ▶ How about the Indian Flag?
- ▶ How often did the Indian flag change over time?



British India Flag (1857+)



- ▶ Surprisingly, until 1857 there was no flag for India
- ▶ In 1857, the British decided to create a flag for India
 - Has British flag in 1 corner and “Star of India” in middle
- ▶ Indians did not like this flag at all.....

Sister Nivedita Flag (1904+)



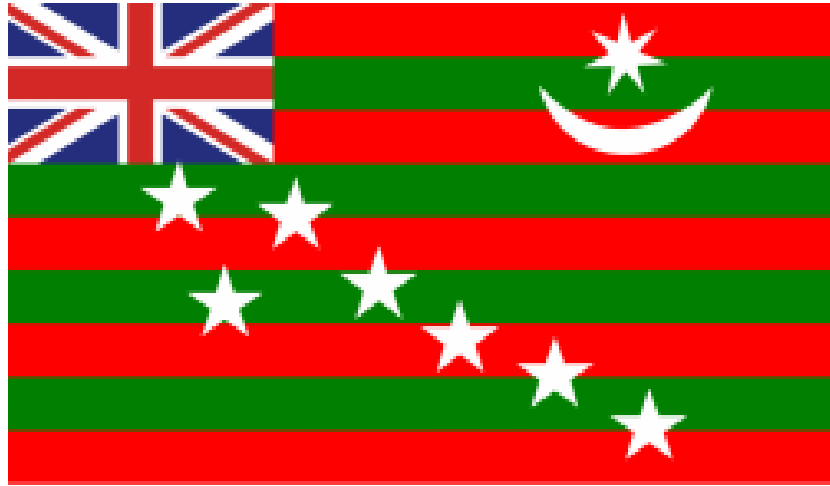
- ▶ In 1904, a (nun) student of philosopher Vivekananda designed a flag with an Indian touch....
 - Red color stood for struggle
 - Yellow color – victory
 - In the middle was “Vajra” – weapon of Lord Indra
- ▶ People liked it – and called it Sister Nivedita flag

Vande Mataram Flag (1906+)



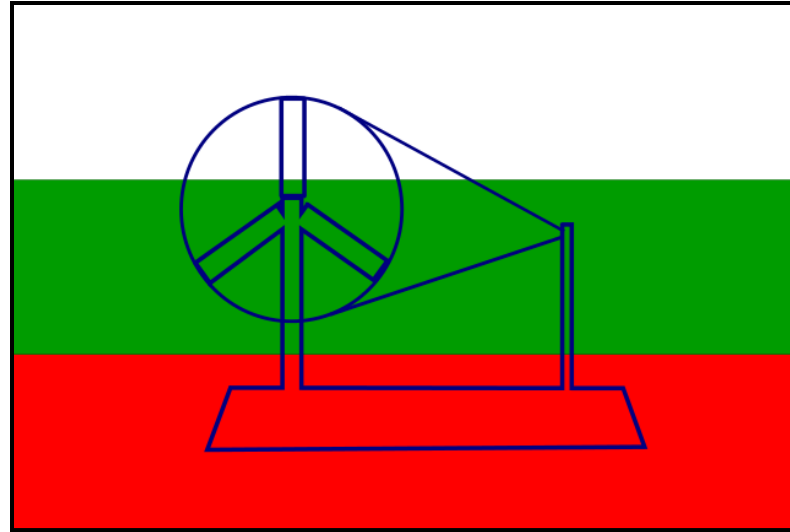
- ▶ In 1906, a new flag was designed in Bengal
 - Three stripes, with 8 lotus on top row (to stand for 8 states/provinces of India at that time)
- ▶ It had “Vande Mataram” written in the middle

Home Rule Flag (1917+)



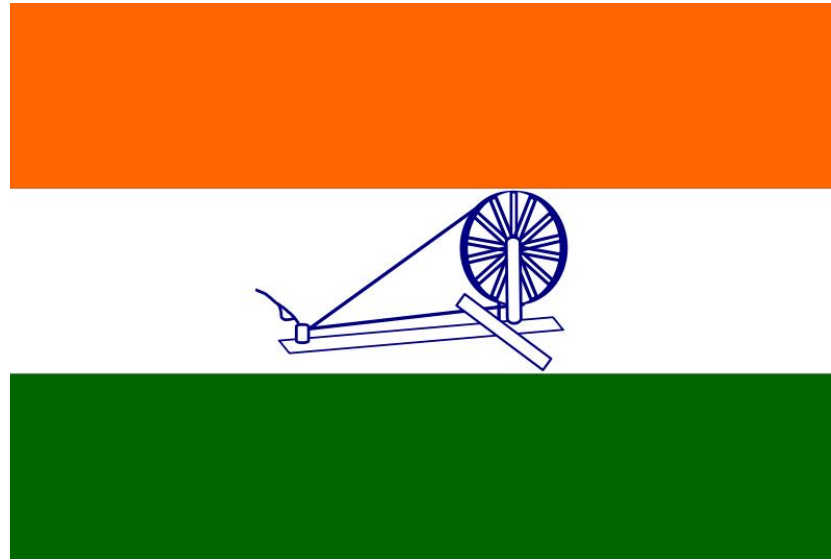
- ▶ In 1917 two famous leaders (Bal Gandhadhar Tilak and Annie Besant) adopted a new flag
 - 7 stars in the shape of constellation of “Saptarishi” (Big Dipper) which stands for the famous 7 rishis of India
- ▶ Unfortunately, it did not become very popular

Tricolor Flag of 1921 +



- ▶ In 1921, an Andhra Pradesh youth designed a flag
 - Red color (for Hindus, Sikhs) and Green Color (Muslims)
- ▶ Gandhiji asked that a 3rd white stripe be added to include all the minorities of India

“Swaraj” (Self-rule) Flag of 1931



- ▶ Many people did not like previous flag because it had colors based on religions
- ▶ In 1931, a tricolor non-religious flag was made
 - Gandhji's charkha was used to signify "progress"
- ▶ This flag became very popular

Free India National Flag (1947)



- ▶ In 1947, 1 month before India got independence
 - a committee was formed to finalize flag
 - They decided to replace the “charka” with a new symbol
 - King Ashoka’s 24 spoked wheel
- ▶ Everybody agreed, and it became the national flag
 - & to this day we use it

Fun Facts about the Indian Flag

- ▶ 4 interesting facts about the Indian Flag
 - The Indian flag can only be made of Khadi (hand woven cloth of cotton, silk or wool) – else you can be fined
 - If you fly the flag outside in the open, it can only be flown from sunrise to sunset (not at night)
 - Until 2002, a common man could not fly the flag on his house except on few special days (rules changed now)
 - If flag is displayed on stage next to a speaker, it should always be put on the right side of the speaker



Thank You!

Remember to always respect the Flag!