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**NATIONAL SYMBOLS**

**NATIONAL FLAG**

THE National flag is a horizontal tricolour of deep saffron (*kesaria*) 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 two to three. In the centre of the white band is a navy-blue wheel which represents the *chakra*. Its design is that of the wheel which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka. Its diameter approximates to the width of the white band and it has 24 spokes. The design of the National Flag was adopted by the Constituent Assembly of India on 22 July 1947.

**How was this topic asked in the CSE?**

Q. What is the number of spokes in the Dharmachakra in the National Flag of India?

- (a) 16 (b) 18 (c) 22 (d) 24

Ans: (d) (CSE 2008)

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). 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.

The Flag Code of India, 2002, has taken effect from 26 January 2002 and supercedes the 'Flag Code—Indias' as it existed. As per the provisions of the Flag Code of India, 2002, there shall be 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.

**STATE EMBLEM**

The state emblem is an adaptation from the Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka. In the original, there are four lions, standing back to back, mounted on an abacus with a frieze carrying sculptures in high relief of an elephant, a galloping horse, a bull and a lion separated by intervening wheels over a bell-shaped lotus. Carved out of a single

block of polished sandstone, the Capital is crowned by the Wheel of the Law (*Dharma Chakra*). 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 wheel appears in relief in the centre of the abacus with a bull on right and a horse on left and the outlines of other wheels on extreme right and left. The bell-shaped lotus has been omitted. The words *Satyameva Jayate* from *Mundaka Upanishad*, meaning 'Truth Alone Triumphs', are inscribed below the abacus in *Devanagari* script.

**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 24 January 1950. It was first sung on 27 December 1911 at the Kolkata Session of the Indian National Congress.

"Nobody has got a right to tinker with the National Anthem" stated the Supreme Court on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2009. The Supreme Court came down heavily on Ram Gopal Varma's distortion of National Anthem in his film 'Rann' saying it gives a 'totally negative sense' with every line of national anthem has been proved wrong.

**How was this topic asked in the CSE?**

Q. Consider the following statements:

No one can be compelled to sing the National Anthem since:

1. it will be violative of the Right to freedom of speech and expression
2. it will be violative of the Right to freedom of conscience and practise and propagation of religion
3. there is no legal provision obliging anyone to sing the National Anthem

(a) 1 and 2 are correct

(b) 2 and 3 are correct

(c) 1, 2 and 3 are correct

(d) None is correct

Ans. (a) (CSE 1996)

**Note:** Silence can be included in ambit of freedom of speech and expression under Art. 19(1) a. Option 3 is also correct because there is no legal provision to oblige anyone to sing the National Anthem. 1 and 3 seems to be correct but no such combination is given in the options.

**NATIONAL SONG**

The National song *Vande Mataram*, **composed in Sanskrit** by Bankimchandra Chatterji, has an equal status with *Jana-gana-mana*. The first political occasion when it was sung was the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress.

**How was this topic asked in the CSE?**

Q. Which one of the following statements is NOT correct?

(a) The National Song Vande Mataram was composed by Bankimchandra Chatterji originally in Bengali

(b) The National Calendar of India based on Saka era has its 1st Chaitra on 22nd March normally and 21st March in a leap year

(c) The design of the National Flag of India was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 22nd July, 1947

(d) The song 'Jana-gana-mana', composed originally in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore was adopted in its Hindi version by the Constituent Assembly on 24th January, 1950 as the National Anthem of India

Ans. (a) (CSE 2003)

**NATIONAL CALENDAR**

The national calendar based on the *Saka Era*, with *Chaitra* as its first month and a normal year of 365 days was adopted from 22 March 1957 along with the Gregorian calendar for the following official purposes: (i) Gazette of India, (ii) news broadcast by All India Radio, (iii) calendars issued by the Government of India and (iv) Government communications addressed to the members of the public. Dates of the national calendar have a permanent correspondence with dates of the Gregorian calendar, 1 *Chaitra* falling on 22 March normally and on 21 March in leap year.

**NATIONAL ANIMAL:**

The magnificent tiger, *Panthera tigris*.

**NATIONAL BIRD:**

The Indian peacock, *Pavo cristatus*.

**NATIONAL FLOWER:**

Lotus (*Nelumbo Nucifera Gaertn*).

**NATIONAL TREE:**

The Banyan Tree (*Ficus benghalensis*)

**NATIONAL FRUIT:**

Mango (*Manifera indica*)