

**FIRST INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION AT CANBERRA**  
**ON 15 AUGUST - 1947**

As India celebrates the 64<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its Independence on 15 Aug 2011, it may be of interest to note that the first outdoor unfurling of independent India's national flag – the Tricolour – was at 34, Mugga Way, Canberra Australia.

The tricolour was adopted in its present form as India's national flag at the meeting of the Constituent Assembly on 22 July 1947. The national flag of independent India was first unfurled at a midnight ceremony held in New Delhi's Constitution Hall on the night of 14-15 August 1947.

The national flag was then formally unfurled at 0830 hrs (Indian Standard Time, IST) on 15 Aug 1947 at the Durbar Hall. The Indian tricolour was officially hoisted at India House, the High Commissioner's residence by Sir Raghunath Paranjpye at 0730 hrs IST (1200 hrs local time at Canberra) on 15 Aug 1947, in the presence of the then Australian Minister for External Affairs Dr Herbert V Evatt, and over 300 guests. Thus, it may be claimed that Canberra was the venue for the first outdoor official ceremony with independent India's national flag.

Addressing guests at India House on 15 Aug 1947, Sir Raghunath Paranjpye remarked, "My country has a population of about 300 millions and is the largest self-governing unit on the face of the earth. We are the natural successors of India's great past, ranging over five thousand years, and will do our utmost to see that its future will be as great, if not greater". Offering a benediction at the first official unfurling of independent India's national flag in Australia, he said, "May this Flag ever fly on a peaceful and prosperous India. May it promote peace, order and unity all over the world. Jai Hind".



Flag of the Dominion of India flying for the first Independence Day on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 at Indian High Commission, Canberra after an impressive flag raising ceremony

Source: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/62892174>