

DIASPORA BI-WEEKLY

Federation of Indian Associations NY-NJ-CT. 501(C)3
The Largest Non-Profit Grassroot Umbrella Organization in the Tri-state of NY-NJ-CT

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FIA Makes History; Consul General Randhir Jaiswal Hoists Indian Tricolor to Celebrate India's 74th Independence Day at Times Square



Prime Minister Modi's Independence Day Address to the Nation Focuses on Self Reliance and Fight Against COVID-19 Pandemic



Heartiest Greetings on the Occasion of the 74th Independence Day of India

Happy 74th Independence Day of India



FIA NY-NJ-CT RUNS ON **DUNKIN'**

अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India



The South Asian Times
The INDIAN PANORAMA

The Indian Eye



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FIA Makes History; Consul General Randhir Jaiswal Hoists Indian Tricolor to Celebrate India's 74th Independence Day at Times Square



The flags of the United States and India fly high at New York's iconic Times Square on August 15. The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) of the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut (FIA Tristate), created history on August 15, by unfurling the Indian tricolor for the first time ever at Times Square in New York City, to commemorate India's 74th Independence Day.



Iconic Empire State Building Lit-up in Indian Tricolors



FIA Chairman Ankur Vaidya waves the tricolor during the flag hoisting ceremony at Times Square in New York, August 15.



Crowds at Times Square to witness history at FIA's flag hoisting ceremony on August 15.



FIA leadership at the historic flag hoisting at Times Square on August 15.



Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal addresses the audience at the historic flag hoisting at Times Square on August 15.



FIA Chairman Ankur Vaidya speaks at the historic flag hoisting at Times Square on August 15.



FIA Board of Trustees member Srujal Parikh and Immediate Past President Alok Kumar deliver the vote of thanks.



Consul General of India in New York Mr. Randhir Jaiswal with Abhia Jaiswal and his team.



Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal unfurls India's national flag at Times Square, August 15.

The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) of the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut (FIA Tristate), created history on August 15, 2020 by unfurling the Indian tricolor for the first time ever at the iconic Times Square in New York City, to commemorate India's 74th Independence Day. It was the first time that such an event was held at the crossroads of the world.

Chants of "Vande Mataram" and "Bharat Mata Ki Jai," reverberated through Times Square, as attendees stood witness to a historic moment. Community leaders, representatives from community organizations, patriotic Indian Americans as well as members of the media attended the event.

Consul General of India in New York, Randhir Jaiswal, unfurled the Indian flag. He was accompanied by his wife Abha Jaiswal, Deputy Consul General Shatrughna Sinha and his entire team at the consulate.

In his address, Consul General Jaiswal highlighted Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Independence Day message, delivered from New Delhi's majestic Red Fort. Consul General Jaiswal said Prime Minister Modi "paved the way forward for a new India." Speaking about FIA's Times Square event, Consul General Jaiswal said, the celebration of India's Independence Day in the U.S. is a symbol of the strong relations between the U.S. and India.

Others who spoke at the flag hoisting event were grand sponsor Shri Kenny Desai, Shri Dipak Patel of Dunkin Donuts, and Shri Sethuraman of Incredible India who congratulated FIA on the historic event and wished everyone present on the occasion of India's 74th Independence Day.

FIA Chairman Ankur Vaidya thanked all the sponsors and his team and the members of the Board of Trustees as well FIA's senior advisors, Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh and Padma Shri Dr. H.R. Shah, for making the event a grand success. Vaidya recognized the support of the Consulate General of India in New York, as well as that of Hon. Mayor of New York City, Bill de Blasio and his entire staff, as well as the New York Police Department and the New York Fire Department.

This year's Independence Day marked a new chapter in FIA's history, as two iconic venues in Manhattan came alive to celebrate India's Independence Day. Along with the first ever celebrations on Times Square, the FIA, in continuing with its annual tradition, illuminated the Empire State Building in tricolors - orange, white and green - to mark India's Independence Day.

The Times Square flag hoisting ceremony is a testament to the Indian American community's growing patriotism and is a fitting tribute to the FIA, which is celebrating its golden jubilee year. Established in 1970, FIA is the largest esteemed umbrella organization in the Indian community. Since 1981, the FIA has been organizing its flagship event - the annual India Day parade, which showcases India's rich cultural heritage and history.

"I, along with my FIA family, team members and the patriotic community, share the joy and pride of such an historic celebration here in the New York area and back home in India," FIA President Anil Bansal said in a statement prior to the August 15 event. "Traditionally, for the last 40 years, FIA has celebrated India's Independence Day in the form of the world famous India Day Parade on the streets of the financial capital of the world, New York City. However, this year, due to the unprecedented havoc created by the COVID-19 pandemic globally, the FIA, in the interest of the community and in following the



Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal and Abha Jaiswal with a plaque presented to them by FIA.



FIA leadership presents a plaque to Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal.



Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal presents a plaque on behalf of FIA to grand sponsor Kenny Desai.



Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal presents a plaque on behalf of FIA to Mr. Sethuraman of Incredible India.



Indian American community leaders, representatives from community organizations, members of the diaspora and members of the media attended the August 15 flag hoisting event.

guidelines of the city, had to cancel the India Day Parade," he said "This year, FIA added another milestone in its glorious accomplishments by organizing, for the first time, the hoisting of India's tricolor, at the Iconic Times Square."

FIA thanks all the community organizations which participated in this year's parade: Society of Indo American Engineers and Architects (SIAEA), India Business Association (IBA), National Association of Asian Indian Christians (NAAIC), Shri Guru Ravidas Sabha of New York, Maharaja Darshan Das Charitable Trust, Siddhendra Kuchipudi Art Academy, Telangana American Telugu Association, Telugu Association of North America, Association of Indians in America (AIA), Bihar Jharkhand Association of North America, Telugu Literary and Cultural Association, Telugu Fine Arts Society, Marathi Vishwa New Jersey, Siddhi Vinayak Temple Toms River, N.J., and the Jackson Heights Merchants Association.

FIA thanks all its sponsors, Kenny Desai, Dunkin Donuts and Incredible India for graciously supporting the Time Square flag hoisting as well as the Empire State Building Trust Inc for Empire State tricolor lighting and making it a grand success.

Prime Minister Modi's Independence Day Address to the Nation Focuses on Self Reliance and Fight Against COVID-19 Pandemic

On the occasion of India's 74th Independence Day, Hon. Shri Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation from New Delhi's majestic Red Fort on August 15, 2020.

In his seventh consecutive speech, he focused on the themes of "Aatma Nirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India), "Vocal for local" and "Make in India to Make for World." He also paid tribute to those on the frontlines of the fight against the coronavirus and declared that India had a roadmap ready for the production and distribution of three COVID-19 vaccines that are at various stages of testing.

The general public wasn't invited to the celebration this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, 1,500 corona warriors, including 500 police personnel who have recovered from the infection, were called to attend the function in a symbol of the citizens' determination to fight the pandemic and emerge winners, Indian media said.

"My fellow Indians, my best wishes to you all on Independence Day. Today, we are breathing in a free India because of hundreds of thousands of our freedom fighters and today's security forces, be it the army, the police or other security forces," Prime Minister Modi said. "We are passing through strange times. I don't see children here at the Red Fort because of the pandemic we are facing. We need to take adequate precautions," he continued. "On behalf of the entire nation, I want to thank the efforts of all corona warriors. All those healthcare workers, doctors and nurses, who have worked tirelessly to serve the nation. Many have even lost their lives. The nation salutes them." He said, "the day of freedom and Independence is a day we remember the sacrifice of all our freedom fighters. It is a day which brings joy and hope to us all."

He promised that India's 75th year of Independence shall be celebrated in a "grand manner."

Speaking about a self-reliant India, Prime Minister Modi said: "Today, we focus on taking India to new heights, to build new India - an atma-nirbhar (self-reliant) India," the Prime Minister said. "India will most certainly achieve this. History is evidence to the fact that when India is determined to achieve something, it has always done so."

Hopeful about a COVID-19 vaccine soon, Prime Minister Modi said scientists are working hard on it. "Three Indian vaccines are in different testing



stages," he informed fellow Indians. "As soon as there is a green signal from scientists, the country is prepared to produce it in large numbers." He said his government has a roadmap ready to make sure that the vaccine reaches each and every Indian.

He also thanked "all the sarpanches across Jammu and Kashmir, who are putting in a great effort to ensure development reaches everyone in the union territory and it progresses along with the rest of the country." He also noted that Ladakh "is leading the way and is focusing on becoming carbon-neutral. Just as Sikkim has made its mark as an organic state, efforts are being made to make Ladakh a carbon neutral region. We are working actively with residents of Ladakh in taking new and innovative ways of development."

Speaking about the LAC standoff, the prime minister highlighted how India is standing up for and defeating, both terrorism or expansionism. "From LoC to LAC, whenever India has been challenged, our soldiers have given a fitting response in a language they understand. Today the world stands with India, and to get 184 votes out of 192 nations in the UN for a (non-permanent) seat at the UN Security Council is a testament of it."

Speaking about the Ram temple, he said: "Today, Indians have chosen to be united. Peace and respect for each other is what defines us as a nation. Recently, the Ayodhya dispute was resolved in a peaceful and legal manner. A grand Ram temple is now being built at Lord Ram's janmasthan."

Some of the key points Prime Minister Modi touched upon include infrastructure development, new education policy, Digital India, Women empowerment, National Digital Health Mission, climate change, India's relations with neighbouring countries, defense production, optic fiber cables, among others.

Heartiest Greetings on the Occasion of the 74th Independence Day of India

God Bless America and India | FIA Salutes Martyrs and Victory Jawans of Kargil War



On July 26, India celebrated the second anniversary of victory against Pakistan in the Kargil War, which lasted from May 1999 to July 1999. It was indeed a heroic win, overcoming many obstacles, with Pakistani Army occupying strategic locations. Our gallant jawans and experienced cadre of Army officers made victory possible.



Retd. Gen. V.K Singh

Retired Army General Vijay Kumar Singh (V.K.Singh), now Minister Of State for Road Transport and Highways, was the one of the top architects of this victory. Singh, a former four-star General of the Indian Army was our proud guest of honor at FIA's annual India Day Parade in New York City in 2013. He was accompanied by his wife, Bharti Devi.

After retirement, Gen. Singh was elected MP from Ghaziabad and became MOS for External Affairs (2014-2019) in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

FIA is indeed very proud, honored and privileged to invite more decorated officers as Guest



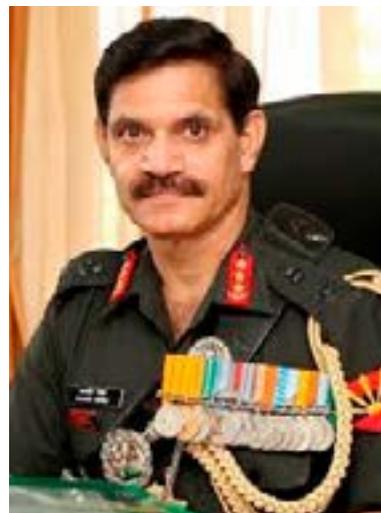
Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Arora

of Honor for the India Day Parade, displaying its patriotism on a global platform.

The first Army officer to grace FIA's India Day Parade in 1985 was Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Arora, the hero of the India-Pakistan war of 1971. Actor Shatrughna Sinha was the grand marshal. Many Indians were delighted to see Jagjit Singh in his uniform, decorated with four awards.

In 2017, Chief of the Army Staff Dalbir Singh Suhag graced the India Day Parade as the Guest of Honor. Currently, General Suhag is the High Commissioner to Seychelles.

FIA salutes the Army stalwarts on the occasion of India's 74th Independence Day.



Chief of the Army Staff Dalbir Singh Suhag

FIA History 1970-2020



The tradition of inviting film stars as Grand Marshal started in 1983. Hema Malini became the first female film star to be invited in 1990.



Dev Anand as Grand Marshal at the 1986 FIA parade.



India's Ambassador to the U.S., Dr. Karan Singh, addressed attendees from the Grand Stand at the 1990 India Day Parade.



FIA parade Grand Marshal Raj Kapoor at the 1984 parade with Ram Gadhvi, FIA President 1994.



Bollywood actress Vidya Balan wowed the crowds at the 2013 parade.



New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg along with Bollywood star Shilpa Shetty at the 2009 parade.



FIA hosts welcome reception for Indian Ambassador to the U.S., Navtej Singh Sarana.



NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio has graced a couple of India Day Parades.



Pete Sessions (in kurta), right, Chairman of the House Rules Committee (2013-2019), with Bollywood actors Raveena Tandon and Sunny Deol at the 2014 parade.



IDP 2018 Grand Marshall Arjun Rampal, other dignitaries, and 2015 FIA President Ankur Vaidya and FIA officials, ringing the NASDAQ closing bell.



Legendary Cricketer Anil Kumble was Guest of Honor at 32nd India Day Parade.



Indian Cricketer Virender Sehwag enthralled New York City at 2015 India Day Parade.



FIA delegation and Rep. Cathy Rogers at Capitol Hill during the S-744 resolution submission.



Late Ramesh Patel - Former Chairman FIA, receiving the Ellis Island Medal of Honor in 2013.



'Baahubali' star Rana Daggubati and his co-star Tamannaah Bhatia at the 2017 India Day Parade.



Empire State Building lamp lighting.



Empire State Building lit-up in Indian tricolors.



Consul General of India in New York, Dnyaneshwar Mulay, Bollywood Actress Parineeti Chopra & Hon. Chief Minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar, supporting the government of Haryana campaign, 'Beti Bachhao - Beti Padhao' (Save the Girl Child & Educate the Girl Child).



FIA hosted then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in NY in 1990.



Anna Hazare leads the biggest India Day Parade in the U.S.



Actress Deepika Padukone at the 28th India Day Parade in New York City in August 2008.



Consul General Reeva Ganguly Das rings NYSE Closing Bell with FIA Board members and community leaders.



Grand Success consular services - Visa Camp Reception From L to R: Sushil Kaul, CKGS; Saurin Parikh FIA; Kiran Namdiar CKGS; Ankur Vaidya, FIA, Consul General Dnyaneshwar Mulay; Amit Yadav, FIA.

NASDAQ Closing ceremonies to commemorate India's Independence Day.



NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, 2nd from left, David Fizzdale, and Julius Randle participate in the 38th India Day Parade.



PM of Trinidad and Tobago Kamla Persad-Bissessar along with Indian Actress Preity Zinta at Indian Day Parade NYC 2010.



Amb. Prabhu Dayal along with Saif Ali Khan in New York India Day Parade on 65th India Independence Day.



NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, Actor Suniel Shetty along with President FIA Alok Kumar at the 39th India Day Parade in Manhattan.



The Indian Consulate General of New York float at the India Day Parade.



Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda at FIA India Day Parade NYC 2013.



Vivek Ranadive & Sim Bhullar of the Sacramento Kings celebrated at India Day Parade 2014 NYC.



Indian Cricketer Virender Sehwag enthralled New York City at 2015 India Day Parade.



Bollywood actor Kamal Haasan & Shruti Haasan along with FIA President Srujal Parikh at 2018 India Day Parade NYC.



Air India - the pride of India in the skies, has supported the parade since its inception in 1981, and participated each year with grandeur.

FIA holds India Day at Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. with more than 400 Indian-Americans in attendance.



Bollywood Singer Kailash Kher performs at the cultural program.



Retd. Gen. V.K Singh addresses 2013 India Day Parade.

A float celebrating Hon. PM Modi's work in India showcased at the India Day Parade in Manhattan.

Sankar Mahadevan performs at the cultural program at FIA India Day Parade.

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Ankur Vaidya

Chairman,
FIA Board of Trustees



On behalf of all of the FIA fraternity, I start with paying my respect to our beloved Chairman Late Shri Ramesh Patel. May Shankar dada rest his soul in divine peace. Along with my FIA colleagues, I extend heartfelt condolences to all those impacted severely, be it a loss of life, livelihood, or loved ones, during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has impacted the society and the global community like never imagined before.

These are learning times and times of toughness and resilience. I take this moment to urge our community to tough it out, to be resilient, maintain the law and the social distancing mandates and come together to keep chipping away at this virus which we are starting to defeat more and more as each day passes by. We, the Indian diaspora and the Indian origin Americans, stand by all of our American brothers and sisters from all walks of life and send a message of togetherness and unity in these unprecedented times.

FIA's theme 'Saluting our Heroes' is a fusion of our salutations to the frontline workers who have bravely faced the risks and fear of the virus and kept up with their service in order to keep us going. Along with the entire FIA family, I take this moment to express our sincere gratitude.

I would also like to salute the heroes of our motherland, who gave their all and then some, for our Independence and freedom that we live and breathe today. They did this to see us, their upcoming generations, thrive and progress. A big thank you to all the freedom heroes, Jai Hind!

On the FIA front, I assure the note-takers of the community that exponential progress awaits FIA and we are already in motion and accelerating towards that goal with the modernized, streamlined, unique, leadership of our President Anil Bansal, his executive team and a very effective Board of Trustees.

Concluding, I thank my entire family including my parents, my wife, my children, and my brother and his family, for their extended support to aid my comprehensive role in the community.

I want to extend a heartfelt thank you and a hug to Anil Bhai and my fellow fraternity brothers, Srujal, Alok, Saurin, Rohit K, Amit R, Parveen B, Amit Y, Andy B, Haresh bhai, Paresh G, along with advisors, Padmashri awardees, Sudhirbhai and Shah sir, along with Rambhai, Bipinbhai, Anandbhai, Jayeshbhai, Mikiben, and Chandrakant Kaka. These are some of my everyday on-call lists that I consistently dialogue with, and oftentimes even argue with, but in return, I get uninterrupted guidance and advise. The fraternity family has stood by me rain or shine, so I take this moment to express my personal thank you and all of you are my real heroes. I am who I am and where I am because of all of you.

Bharat Mata ki Jai!

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Anil Bansal

FIA President

My dear friends:

Namaste!

Heartiest greetings on the occasion of the celebration of India's 74th Independence Day.

I, along with my FIA family, team members and the patriotic community, share the joy and pride of such an historic celebration here in the New York area and back home in India. Traditionally, for the last 40 years, FIA has celebrated India's Independence Day in the form of the world famous India Day Parade on the streets of the financial capital of the world, New York City. However, this year, due to the unprecedented havoc created by the COVID-19 pandemic globally, the FIA, in the interest of the community and in following the guidelines of the city, had to cancel the India Day Parade.

FIA added another milestone in its glorious accomplishments by organizing for the first time, the hoisting of India's tricolor, at the iconic Times Square. This year, the FIA completes its 50 years of service to the Indian diaspora. The Golden Jubilee celebration, with an ambitious plan, has been postponed to next year. This year also brought us sadness. FIA lost its most visionary, dynamic and legendary community leader, our chairman, Mr. Ramesh Patel, to the coronavirus in June. May God rest his soul in eternal peace.

I hope that a young, dedicated, multi-talented and resourceful team continues Rameshbhai's legacy and takes it to new heights. FIA is planning for many beneficial programs with the help of the Consulate General of India in New York. Incidentally, we just honored the new Consul General, Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, at Royal Albert Palace in New Jersey, observing all government guidelines. I take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Ankur Vaidya as the new chairman of our FIA Board of Trustees, along with newly elected members of the Board of Trustees. Andy Bhatia, Alok Kumar and Srujal Parikh add to the experience, vigor and dynamism and help in expanding FIA's horizon and create a beautiful borderless larger world.

I also take this opportunity to share my joy and pride in the start of the long-awaited reconstruction of Shri Ram temple in Ayodhya, on August 5th, 2020. I commend the heroism and valor of Bharat's jawans at the highest location in a standoff with the Chinese army. I also commend the sacrifice of so many doctors, health workers and first responders in controlling the corona pandemic. I bow to so many unsung heroes, donors and organizations in helping the community.

Let me remind you of the famous quote by President John F. Kennedy "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for the country." Also follow the slogan of India's pride, Swami Vivekananda: "Awake, Arise and Stop not till the goal is reached". We sincerely thank Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi for leading Bharat to greater heights. I thank all of you, our proud patriotic sponsors, participants, volunteers, media fraternity and spouses of our Team FIA for their warm support.

Jai Hind, Jai Shriram.

God bless You, America, and India.



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Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh

Senior Advisor to Chairman, Member,
FIA Board of Trustees

Congratulations to the Federation of Indian Associations- NYNJCT, the premier organization serving Indian Americans, on its ongoing 50th anniversary, for the work it has done for Indians and Indian Americans and hosting the largest India Day Parade outside India on India's Independence Day.

Even in the midst of COVID-19, this highly respected organization is celebrating with Times Square flag hoisting and the Empire State tricolor illumination.

As senior advisor to FIA, I will help take the organization to new heights, expand its reach and make it the voice policymakers listen to.



Padma Shri H. R. Shah

Senior Advisor to Chairman, Member,
FIA Board of Trustees

Dear fellow citizens, brothers and sisters, heartiest greetings and congratulations to you all as we celebrate our 74th Independence Day of India worldwide on this 15th August 2020.

India achieved its Independence after fighting for centuries; many martyrs, people at large sacrificed immensely. Let us remember them as well, as our visionary dynamic leaders of the freedom struggle.

FIA, the premier, pioneering grassroots umbrella organization in the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, has the distinction of celebrating this momentous event publicly every August in New York City since 1981 in the form of the world famous India Day Parade.

I have been actively involved in FIA for over 35 years, starting from volunteer, taxi driver, president (2000), distinguished member of FIA Board of Trustees, and advisor. I am the Grand Sponsor of FIA's activities for almost 30 years, and as a chairman and CEO of TV Asia, I covered and broadcast numerous diversified activities. I have contributed to my matrubhoomi's (India) glory in my Karmabhoomi.

I remember my dearest friend Late Ramesh Patel who recently passed away. He led the FIA for over 35 years as the veteran community leader, president and chairman.

This year FIA has completed its 50 years of glorious service to the community. Its Golden Jubilee will be celebrated in a grand way next year.

I commend the energy, enthusiasm, vision and missionary zeal of young dynamic leadership of FIA in expanding its horizons. I am also very proud to witness India's increasing recognition and respect globally under Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

I wish all the best for FIA and will continue to support its flagship world's largest annual India Day Parade.

God Bless America, India, Jai Hind



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Yash Paul Soi

Honorary Vice Chairman

Thanks to the tremendous efforts by the team of the Federation of Indian Associations, the Tiranga, India's national flag, is flying high at the world famous Times Square in the heart of the Capital of the World- New York City on August 15, 2020, This is indeed "Bharat Bhagya Vidhata." Similarly, another iconic New York landmark, the Empire State Building, was lit up in India's tricolors, thanks again to the FIA team.



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Srujal Parikh

Member,
FIA Board of Trustees

On India's Independence Day we look at a new vibrant India. Despite staying away from India, we are always connected to our motherland. We always pray for the betterment of the nation, that brings us all together with its rich culture, history and heritage. On this occasion, I pay my respects to the freedom fighters who fought for Independence from the British, as well as the first responders who lost their life during the current COVID-19 pandemic.



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Prabir Roy

Member,
FIA Board of Trustees

India is getting strong and stronger. So do the NRIs, who are moving ahead in every field in the western world. This reminds me of a song written by Atul Prasad Sen, a composer of more than 1500 songs, in early 1900's: "Be great on righteous rights and work. The sun will shine and make India as a great nation in the world again"

Jai Hind.



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Chandrakant Trivedi

Member,
FIA Board of Trustees

'Ma Tuje Salam'

Heartiest greetings to you all on the historical celebration of 74th Independence Day of India. The FIA is indeed very proud and honored to have this unprecedented opportunity to host this unique celebration hoisting India's tricolor at the iconic Times Square in New York.

India has had phenomenal growth and success in the last 73 years after Independence.

I salute all martyrs, freedom fighters, leaders, all the architects of modern India, and the people at large, on this occasion. India is now respectfully recognized as a formidable nation and is emerging as the world's super power with incredible resources, talents, manpower, and IT specialists. Both the world's largest democracy and the world's greatest democracy have a high degree of mutual respect and strategic partnership.

Let us all rejoice and celebrate the Independence Day of our matrubhoomi in our karmabhoomi which graciously provides us all opportunities to prosper collectively and in harmony.

I like to congratulate the entire FIA team for putting up such a stupendous show in a very short time. I also like to gratefully appreciate the unconditional gracious approval and support by Hon. Mayor of New York City Bill de Blasio and the entire staff.



Jayesh Patel

General Secretary,
FIA Board of Trustees

May the glory of Independence Day be with us forever. Wishing everyone a very happy Independence Day with freedom in our minds, faith in our hearts, memories in our souls. Let's salute the nation on its Independence Day which it secured from British rule, 200 years after being suppressed and oppressed by the British Invaders. This year India will be marking her 74th year of independence. A celebration we all love to observe together, all citizens, NRIs, young and children of our mighty nation.

I would like to congratulate our executive team to organize the flag hoisting festivity at Times Square for the first time and the illumination of the Empire State Building in India's tricolors.

Of course there won't be the annual India Day Parade on Madison Avenue, due to the pandemic. But, looking at the current situation, let us pledge this Independence Day that we will be kind to animals and not be cruel to them. Our beloved Prime Minister, Shri Narendrabhai Modi and his government are working to bring animal cruelty laws in our country to become a leading country in the world to show that we are really civilized in treating animals well. Humans are so insensitive towards animals all over the world. Let's think about them from this year on.

Wishing everyone a very Happy 74th Independence Day.



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Dipak Patel

Honorary Member,
FIA Board of Trustees

Kalidas wrote: “Mother and motherland are dearer than heaven.”

We Indian Americans have excelled and prospered in our karmabhumi America. The FIA has recognized this since the past 50 years. We all have dedicated ourselves in making America a lovely, borderless world. “Jaha gam bhi na ho, ansu bhi na ho, bas pyaar hi pyaar pale”... I, on behalf of all my contributing colleagues and Dunkin’ Brands have conveyed best wishes on “worlds largest democratic country” India’s 74th Independence Day and pledge unconditional support to FIA in the years to come. We also commend the young and versatile leadership of FIA, which is willing to embrace the success saga envisioned by FIA veteran, globally famed leader Chairman Late Rameshbhai Patel. Jai Hind, God Bless us, America and India.



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Dr. Pravin Pandhi

Member,
FIA Board of Trustees

Congratulations to the FIA team for hosting an unprecedented event of flag hoisting at Times Square. I know this is just the beginning and more to come. Proud of your accomplishments.



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Saurin Parikh

FIA Vice President

Celebrating Independence Day is very important to remember the extraordinary sacrifice that our freedom fighters made to win the right for us to live in a free country. A big salute to all our national heroes. Happy India's 74th Independence Day!



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Alok Kumar

FIA Immediate Past President

The celebration of India's 74th Independence Day will be a historic moment for all, especially for those who live in the U.S. For the first time, FIA unfurled India's tricolor at Times Square and salute all the brave warriors, who have been saving lives. On this occasion, we miss our former chairman Ramesh Patel, whose guidance and determination made us strong to deliver, even in these testing times. He nurtured the young generations to hold the torch and make a new path. Chairman Ankur Vaidya is leading the organization from the front and making sure we grow by leaps and bounds. The Times Square event is a testament to that.



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Himanshu Bhatia

FIA Executive Vice President

India is one of the most democratic and diverse countries with many regions and religions. However we all unite as ONE on this Independence Day. Let's unite everyday to make our mother India proud. Happy 74th Independence Day.



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Amit Ringasia

FIA Treasurer

Happy Independence Day to all my fellow Indians. It is a moment of pride for me to be part of the flag hoisting at Times Square - first time in history. I had goosebumps when the national anthem was played, and it was indeed a memorable moment for me.

Jai Hind !!!



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Praveen Bansal

FIA Secretary

Wishing everyone a very happy 74th Independence Day of India. It was an amazing feeling to witness the historic flag hoisting at Times Square. It was a moment of pride that the oldest democracy of the world is celebrating the largest democracy of the world. I would like to take this opportunity to pay my respects to all the men and women in the uniforms for their services and sacrifices.

Congratulations to the entire FIA leadership team who came up with the idea, and led the way to make it happen by executing on the details despite the pandemic environment. It is an honor to get an opportunity to be part of the team and serve the community. I thank everyone for creating these opportunities throughout the year via various community events. Looking forward to contributing to the best of my abilities for the next India Day Parade next year.

Once again thank you and many congratulations to all!
Jai Hind.



Haresh Shah

FIA Committee Member

Happy 74th Independence Day to everybody. Let's salute our soldiers and Mahatma Gandhi who fought for our freedom. Let us remember the golden heritage of our country and feel proud to be a part of India. On this 74th Independence Day, we (FIA) have been celebrating for the last 50 years on Madison Avenue in New York. Due to COVID, we are celebrating at the historic Times Square by hosting our flag ceremony.



Smita Miki Patel

FIA Committee Member

FIA proved again that with strong leadership and teamwork nothing is impossible. I had tears in my eyes as I watched India's tricolor fly next to the American flag at the iconic Times Square to observe India's Independence Day. It was one of the most beautiful sights of my 39 years in the United States of America.



“

Rohi Singh

FIA Committee Member

I was honored to be part of the historic first time flag hoisting ceremony on 74th Indian Independence Day in the heart of NYC, Times Square.

”

Vote of Thanks

FIA Likes to thank all those who have graciously contributed in making the Times Square flag hoisting event the most memorable one.

- Honorable Consul General of New York Randhir Kumar Jaiswal and staff.
- Honorable Governor of New York Andrew Cuomo
- Honorable Mayor New York City Bill De Blasio and his staff
- New York City Police Department (NYPD), New York City Fire Department and Department of Public Works.
- Street Activity Permit Office (SAPO)
- Times Square Alliance
- Grand Sponsors - Incredible India, Dunkin, Kenny Desai
- All proud , patriotic supporters / donors
- All Invited Guests
- Empire State Building Authority
- All print & electronic media
- All participants
- Team FIA, Volunteers.



JAI HIND
WE SALUTE YOUR EFFORTS.

From the Desk of
Rambhai Gadhavi
Member, FIA Board of Trustees



MR. RANDHIR JAISWAL
CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA , NEW YORK

WELCOME CONSUL GENERAL RANDHIR JAISWALJI

It is with great pleasure that we welcome Consul General Randhir Jaiswalji. We are proud to continue the tradition of welcoming the new Consul General of New York. Allow me to introduce the Federation of Indian Associations of the tri- states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut (FIA of NY/NJ/CT) to our new Counsel General.

FIA is one of the largest premier umbrella organization for the diaspora Indian and Indian-American community in the USA. It represents over 500,000 strong and vibrant Indians and Indian-Americans. It provides significant grass root support to them. Founded as the India Students Association at Columbia University, it was established as the Federation of Indian Associations in 1970.

The FIA has blossomed into a respected organization serving as an effective mouthpiece and mobilizer for the community. The FIA shed light on various issues that concern a growing Asian-Indian community at the local, state, and national levels.

Over the years, the FIA has tried to truthfully project the real image of India to the mainstream community and also further the interests of diaspora Indians residing in the United States.

It is in this spirit that, since August 1981, the annual India Day Parade is held in New York City. The parade, the largest of its kind, celebrates India's Independence Day and showcases India's progress and unity to the many diversified ethnic communities in the USA.

The FIA and the Consulate General of India New York have worked very closely under CG Sandeep Chakravorty who created a significant change in atmosphere bringing about service with a smile. The consulate is not only visa and passports, but interactions between the community and delegation of bankers, businessmen, cultural artists and political and social leaders as well. In addition, the FIA has also arranged several events in conjunction with the Consulate such as Yoga Day, Pravasari Bhartiya Divas, the Howdy Modi event in Texas and Visa Passport Camps.

Friends, Consul General Randhir Jaiswalji is a career diplomat. His assignments have included Portugal, Cuba, South Africa and the permanent mission of India at the United Nations in New York. This will be his second assignment to New York, USA.

He joined Indian Foreign Service in 1998. His service has included various positions with the Ministry of External Affairs in many capacities, as the Deputy Secretary overseeing Indian relations with the USA, Joint Secretary concentrating on India's relations with western European countries. And since 2017 he has also worked as the Joint Secretary in conjunction with the President of India's International Relation portfolio.

Jaiswalji is passionate about sports, culture, old cities and cuisine. He is married to Dr. Abha Jaiswal, a Public Health Expert and together they are the proud parents of two daughters.