

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.