

National Symbols of India

Our country's pride and history are showcased through special symbols. India has 17 national symbols that reflect our rich culture and traditions, which we, as Indians, proudly share worldwide. These symbols are crucial because they hold national significance and should be known by all citizens. If you're preparing for exams like Banking, SSC, IAS, or any other Govt exams, you may encounter questions about these symbols. In this article, we will explore the importance of India's 17 national symbols.

National symbols are like iconic snapshots of a country's identity, culture, history, and values. They play a big role in uniting people, fostering patriotism, and instilling a sense of national pride. These symbols often have strong emotional and cultural connections and can take the form of emblems, flags, anthems, and even animals.

India's National Symbols have been thoughtfully chosen to represent the country in the best possible way. For instance, our national flower, the lotus, signifies spirituality and purity of heart and mind. The tiger, our national animal, symbolizes power, bravery, and courage. The Peacock, India's National Bird, was chosen for its royal grace and stunning natural beauty, while the Banyan tree earned the title of National Tree because of its enduring qualities.

The National Symbols of India are the National identity elements of the country serving as visual and symbolic representations. These National Symbols of India signify the heritage and identity of the Republic of India.

A National Symbol of India is one that is characterized by: **Discovering India's Symbols – Uniting Pride and Identity**

- Collective Symbolisation:** They symbolize the aspirations, principles, and collective pride of the nation.
- Distinct Identity:** Nations around the world have specific symbols and elements that convey their identity.
- National Representation:** National Symbols of India are iconic representations that hold significant cultural, historical, and patriotic value for the country.
- Officially Recognised:** National Symbols of India are officially recognized and widely respected across the country and often hold legal and ceremonial importance.
- List of National Symbols of India:** The 17 National Symbols of India are the Mango, Ganga, Royal Bengal Tiger, Indian Banyan, Tiranga, Jana Gana Mana, Saka Calendar, Vande Mataram, National Emblem of India, Ganges River Dolphin, Indian Peacock, Indian Rupee, King Cobra, Indian Elephant, Lotus, Pumpkin and National Pledge.

Historical background of National Symbols of India

- Significance:** There are 17 National Symbols of India that infuse a deep sense of pride in the hearts of Indian citizens.
- Cultural Roots:** The National Symbols of India represent the culture and nature of India's National Identity.
- Patriotism:** The National Symbols of India evokes a strong sense of pride and love for one's country in the heart of every Indian.
- Diverse Representation:** The National Symbols of India was picked up at various times and has been chosen from India's unique flora and fauna, and its culture and civilization.
- Showcasing Heritage:** These National Symbols of India are intrinsic to the Indian identity and heritage.
- Choice of Symbol:**
 - **Lotus:** For instance, our national flower, the lotus, signifies spirituality and purity of heart and mind.
 - **Tiger:** Similarly, The tiger, our national animal, symbolizes power, bravery, and courage.
 - **Peacock:** The Peacock, India's National Bird, was chosen for its royal grace and stunning natural beauty

National Symbols of India List

The National Symbols serve as powerful emblems, representing the essence of the nation's identity and heritage. The tricolor National Flag embodies courage, purity, and growth, while the State Emblem displays the Lion Capital of Ashoka, symbolizing strength and truth. The national anthem, "Jana Gana Mana," and the national song, "Vande Mataram," evoke patriotism and unity in diversity.

The majestic Peacock is India's national bird, and the regal Bengal Tiger stands as the national animal of India, both highlighting the country's biodiversity. The Ganges, revered as the national river, holds spiritual significance. The lotus, Banyan tree and Mango represent purity, wisdom, and prosperity as the national flower, tree, and fruit, respectively. These symbols inspire a sense of pride and love for the nation among Indians.

17 National Symbols of India List: India has many National Symbols that are special and important to the country. These symbols include the national flag, national emblem, national song, national bird, national animal, national tree, national fruit, national flower, national anthem, national game, national calendar, national vegetable, national aquatic animal, national heritage animal, national river, and national currency. Each of these symbols has its own significance and represents a part of India's identity and culture. So, if you are wondering what are the 17 national symbols of India, check out the complete National Symbols of India list below:

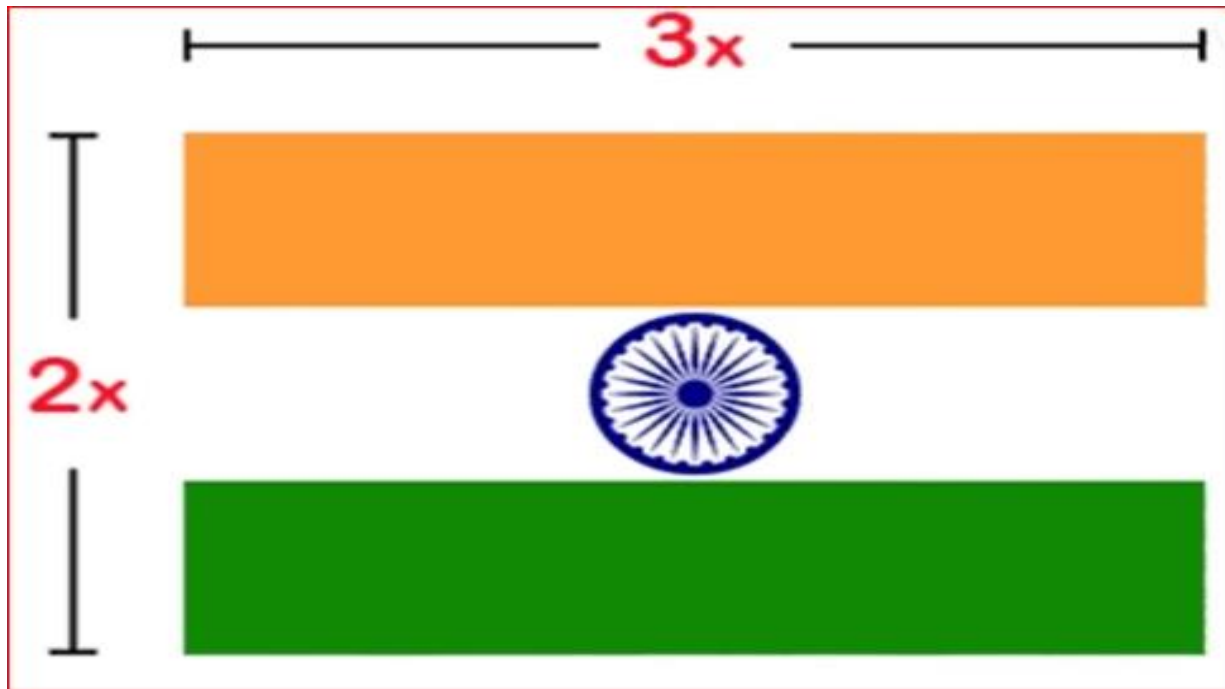
National Symbols of India

S. No.	Title	National Symbols
1	National Flag	Tiranga
2	National Anthem	Jana Gana Mana
3	National Calendar	Saka calendar
4	National Song	Vande Mataram
5	National Emblem	National Emblem of India
6	National Fruit	Mango
7	National River	Ganga
8	National Animal	Royal Bengal Tiger
9	National Tree	Indian Banyan
10	National Aquatic Animal	Ganges River Dolphin
11	National Bird	Indian Peacock
12	National Currency	Indian Rupee
13	National Reptile	King Cobra
14	National Heritage Animal	Indian Elephant
15	National Flower	Lotus
16	National Vegetable	Pumpkin
17	Oath of Allegiance	National Pledge

National Flag of India

The Indian national flag consists of three colors arranged in three horizontal stripes of equal length. Starting from the top, there's a saffron stripe, followed by a white stripe in the middle, and a green stripe at the bottom. In the middle of the white stripe, you can find the Ashok Chakra, which is navy blue and has 24 spokes, symbolizing the 24 hours in a day.

This flag was created by Pingali Venkayya. Each of the three colors on the flag has a special meaning. Saffron stands for sacrifice and courage, the white stripe represents purity, peace, and honesty, and the green stripe signifies faith and chivalry.



The Art and Meaning Behind India's National Flag Design:

- Arrangement: The Indian national flag consists of three colors arranged in three horizontal stripes of equal length.
- Design: Starting from the top, there's a saffron stripe, followed by a white stripe in the middle, and a green stripe at the bottom.
- Ashok Chakra: In the middle of the white stripe, you can find the Ashok Chakra, which is navy blue and has 24 spokes, symbolising the 24 hours in a day.
- Designer: Pingali Venkayya created this flag design.
- Special Meaning: Each of the three colors on the flag has a special meaning.
- Significance: Saffron stands for sacrifice and courage, the white stripe represents purity, peace, and honesty, and the green stripe signifies faith and chivalry.

National Animal of India

Tigers, scientifically known as *Panthera Tigris*, have a specific type called the Royal Bengal Tiger. In April 1973, India declared the Royal Bengal Tiger as its national animal. Nagpur is famous for being the "Tiger Capital" of India. Unfortunately, the population of these tigers has dwindled due to deforestation and illegal hunting, making them an endangered species. They are listed on the "Red List" by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. To safeguard these magnificent

creatures from poaching and hunting, the Government of India initiated “Project Tigers” in 1973.

- Background:: Royal Bengal Tiger is the National Animal of India with effect from April 1973.
- Tiger Capital of India: Nagpur is known as the ‘Tiger Capital of India’.
- Project Tiger: Due to the decrease in forest cover and poaching Tigers are added to the Red List by the IUCN and the Indian Government has launched Project Tiger in 1973 to conserve the Tigers.

National Emblem of India

The national emblem of India is a significant symbol known as the Lion Capital of Ashoka located in Sarnath. It was chosen as India’s national emblem on January 26, 1950. Below the emblem, there is an important motto written in Devnagri script, which is an integral part of India. This motto reads “Satyamev Jayate” in Devnagri script, which translates to “truth alone triumphs” in English.



- Date of Adoption: An adaptation of the Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath was adopted as the National Emblem of India on 26 January 1950, the day India became a republic.
- Source: The national emblem of India is adopted from the Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath.
- Motto: Its motto is Satyameva Jayate; (“Truth Alone Triumphs), a quote taken from Mundaka Upanishad, the concluding part of the sacred Hindu Vedas

- Components: It features four Asiatic 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.
- Significance: The National Emblem symbolizes power, courage, and confidence, and at the bottom is a horse and a bull with a beautiful wheel Dharma chakra at centre.

National Bird of India (Peacock)

- Background: The Indian peacock (*Pavo cristatus*) is the national bird of India.
- Significance: A bird Indigenous to the subcontinent, the peacock represents the unity of vivid colors and finds references in Indian culture.
- Declaration as National Bird: The Government of India declared the Peacock as the national bird of India on February 1, 1963.
- Habitat: It is found in the drier lowland areas and is a resident breeder across the Indian subcontinent.

National Aquatic Animal (Dolphin)

The Ganga River's Dolphin, also called 'Susu,' was declared India's National Aquatic Animal. It is an endangered species found in the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and their tributaries. It plays a crucial role in maintaining the health of the river ecosystems, making its conservation vital for India's biodiversity.



- Regional Significance: It is also the city animal of Guwahati.
- Habitat: The South Asian river dolphin is primarily found in the Ganges, Yamuna, Chambal river, and Brahmaputra Rivers, and their tributaries.

National Heritage Animal – Elephant

The Indian elephant is the national heritage animal of India since 22 October 2010. India has the second-highest number of elephants in Asia that are used for tourism.



- Protection Measure: India's Environment Ministry has declared the elephant a National Heritage Animal in order to increase protective measures for the country's nearly 29,000 elephants. The government of India also started a successful scheme for Elephant conservation in India in 1992, named Project Elephant. India also has around 32 elephant reserves across 14 states.
- Significance: Declaring it a National Heritage Animal will give it a due place as an emblem of ecological sensitivity. It will also mark recognition for its centrality in our plural cultures and traditions," the task force wrote in its report.

National Tree (Banyan Tree)

The Banyan Tree, designated as India's National Tree, symbolizes immortality and eternal life due to its ever-expanding branches and roots. It is deeply rooted in Indian culture, often serving as a place for community gatherings and spiritual rituals. The tree is also known for its medicinal properties and plays a significant role in maintaining ecological balance by providing shelter to various species of birds and animals.



- Background: The banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*) is the national tree of India.

- Significance: It is known for its extensive canopy, which provides shade and shelter.
- Religious Importance: The banyan tree is revered in Hinduism and represents longevity and interconnectedness.

National Song of India

The national song of India is “Vande Mataram,” originally a poem written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. He included this poem in his Bengali novel “Anandamath” back in 1882. It was first sung by Rabindranath Tagore in 1896 during an Indian National Congress session. On January 24, 1950, India’s constituent assembly officially adopted this song as the national song of India.

- Composition: The song of India is Vande Mataram, composed in Sanskrit by Bankimchandra Chatterji.
- Role in Freedom Struggle: On January 24, 1950, the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad said that the song Vande Mataram has played a historic part in the struggle for Indian freedom, shall be honoured equally with Jana Gana Mana and shall have equal status with it.
- 1st Introduction: The first political occasion when Vande Mataram was sung was the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress. The song was a part of Bankimchandra’s most famous novel Anand Math (1882).

National Anthem of India

The national anthem of India is “Jana Gana Mana.” This song was initially written in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore, and it’s a tribute to Bharata Bhagyo Bidhata, a divine entity. On January 24, 1950, India’s constituent assembly officially adopted “Bharoto Bhagyo Bidhata” as the national anthem of India.

- Composition: The National Anthem of India Jana-gana-mana, composed originally in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore.
- Adoption: It was adopted in its Hindi version by the Constituent Assembly as the National Anthem of India on 24 January 1950.
- First Introduction: It was first sung on 27 December 1911 at the then-Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress.
- Structure: The complete song consists of five stanzas. The first stanza contains the full version of the National Anthem.

Indian National Calendar (Saka Calendar)

The Saka Calendar was introduced by the Calendar Committee in 1957. The usage of the Saka Calendar was officially started on 1 Chaitra 1879 Saka Era, or 22 March 1957.

Months: As per National Calendar, the months names are Chaitra, Vaishakh, Jyeshtha, Ashadha, Shrawana, Bhadrapad, Ashwin, Kartik, Agrahayana, Pausha, Magha, and Phalguna.

National Calendar (Saka Calendar)	
Months	Dates
Chaitra	21st March – 20th April
Vaishakha	21st April – 21st May
Jyeshtha	22nd May – 21st June
Ashadha	22nd June – 22nd July
Shrawana	23rd July – 22nd August
Bhadra	22nd August – 22nd September
Became	23rd September – 22nd October
Kartika	23rd October – 21st November
Agrahayana	22nd November – 21st December
Pausha	22nd December – 20th January
Magha	21st January – 19th February
Phalguna	20th February – 20th/21st March

National Fruit of India

The national fruit of India is the mango, scientifically known as *Mangifera Indica*. Mangoes are typically in season during the summer in India. India is the birthplace of mangoes, and it's home to over 100 different mango varieties. This delicious fruit is often called the "king of fruits."



National Flower of India

The national flower of India is the Lotus, scientifically known as *Nelumbo Nucifera Gaertn.* The Lotus holds a special place in India's art and mythology, symbolizing purity and beauty. It's considered an auspicious symbol of Indian culture and heritage.



National Bird of India

The Indian Peacock (*Pavo cristatus*) proudly stands as India's national bird. This stunning bird is native to the Indian subcontinent and symbolizes the harmony of India's diverse colors and cultures. On February 1, 1963, the Government of India officially recognized the peacock as the national bird.



National Currency of India

- Official Currency: The Indian rupee is the official currency of the Republic of India.
- Controller: The issuance of the currency is controlled by the Reserve Bank of India.
- Devanagari Script: The Indian rupee symbol is derived from the Devanagari consonant “₹” (ra) and the Latin letter “R” was adopted in 2010.
- Design: According to Udaya Kumar, its designer, the design is based on the Indian tricolor.

What are the National Symbols of India?

The national symbols of India encompass a diverse array of elements that hold deep cultural, historical, and spiritual significance. These symbols are a reflection of India’s rich heritage and values. They include the national flag, national emblem, national song, national bird, national animal, national tree, national fruit, national flower, national anthem, national game, national calendar, national vegetable, national aquatic animal, national heritage animal, national river, and national currency. Each of these symbols contributes to the tapestry of India’s identity, representing the country’s unity in diversity and its profound connection to its natural and cultural roots.

Natural National Symbols of India

India has several natural national symbols that represent its unique flora and fauna. Here are some of them:

1. National Flower (Lotus): The lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) is the national flower of India. It symbolizes purity, beauty, and the promise of new beginnings. The lotus is culturally significant and often associated with various deities and religious ceremonies.

2. National Tree (Banyan Tree): The banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*) is the national tree of India. It is known for its extensive canopy, which provides shade and shelter. The banyan tree is revered in Hinduism and represents longevity and interconnectedness.

3. National River (Ganga/Ganges): The Ganges River, known as the Ganga, holds immense cultural and religious significance in India. It is considered one of the holiest rivers and is associated with spiritual cleansing. The government declared it as the national river to emphasize its importance for the nation's well-being.

These natural national symbols reflect the rich biodiversity and spiritual heritage of India.

Significance of National Symbols of India: Connecting History, Identity, and Unity

Historical Significance:

- Cherishing the ancient events: Many National Symbols of India have historical significance and are tied to key events in the country's history.
- Lion Capital: For example, the national emblem of India features the Lion Capital of Ashoka, which is a symbol associated with the ancient Mauryan Emperor Ashoka

National Identity:

- Unifying Factor: Symbols such as the national flag, anthem, and emblem help foster a sense of identity and unity among the diverse population of India.
- Emotional Representation: They provide a visual and emotional representation of the nation, creating a shared sense of belonging among its people.

Cultural Heritage:

- Encompasses Regional Diversity: National Symbols of India often reflect this cultural diversity and history, for example, the national anthem, "Jana Gana Mana," reflects India's cultural and linguistic diversity.

International Representation:

- Soft Power Diplomacy: They are used in diplomatic events, sports competitions, and various other international forums, serving as a visual representation of India on the global stage.
- Ease of Identification: The national flag is used to identify Indian ships/aircraft and similarly, the national emblem is used on official government documents and seals.