

Bruce, Kristina

From: Sanjay Gowda <sanjay.gowda@iagb.org>
Sent: Saturday, June 27, 2020 5:14 PM
To: tmoffice@townofchelmsford.us; Cohen, Paul; Select Board
Cc: McCall, Michael; Bruce, Kristina
Subject: Requesting your permission to hoist the Indian Flag to Commemorate India's Independence Day on August 15

Respected Town Manager/Selectmen,

Hope this letter finds your family, friends, and you in the best of health & spirits. As we all recognize, this COVID-19 pandemic has caught us all in our paths as we find new ways to adapt to this new normal for the foreseeable future.

One of the most challenging 'new norm' is the restriction on the number of people gathering in one place at the same time, thus adding a huge question mark on ways to celebrate various special milestone socio-cultural or historic occasions, which are traditionally and historically celebrated in a grand way welcoming a huge public gathering.

Who are we?

India Association of Greater Boston, known as IAGB is the oldest and one of the leading Indian American community organizations in New England. It is a non-profit, non-political, and non-religious organization, serving the Indian American communities in the New England region. IAGB strives to foster a strong Indian- American social, cultural and community presence in New England.

How have we commemorated Indian Independence Day in the past?

For the past 60+ years, IAGB has been celebrating August 15, as India Day to commemorate India's Independence and celebrate Indian Americans' rich culture and traditions, with utmost vigor and grandeur. For more than 25 years, until 2017, we have celebrated India Day alongside Charles River at the Hatch Memorial Shell with a cheering crowd of over 12,000 people. From 2018 onwards, we have been doing the same in the heart of Boston – the City Hall Plaza, with an even larger crowd.

However, considering the current restriction, we have had to revisit our plan to commemorate this momentous day in a safe way following the 'new norm'. While we have done away with the traditional plan of bringing a huge gathering at one centralized place, we are planning to bring this celebration to as many Towns in New England. This will not only help decentralize the celebration and but also allow people to take pride in the fact that their towns recognized and celebrated this historic event, while still being in the safe radar of their hometown and enjoy the cultural events we will conduct virtually.

We humbly seek your kind permission to hoist India's Flag at XX Town Common to commemorate India's 74th Independence Day on Saturday, August 15, 2020. Should Saturday not work and a weekday is preferred, Friday, Aug. 14 will work as well.

How do we plan to do it?

- What will we do?

- On August 15, 2020: A few of the town residents will gather for the flag hoisting while following all social distancing guidelines. The flag hoisting location as permitted by the town.
 - Sing the U.S National Anthem and hoist the U.S flag
 - Sing the Indian national anthem and hoist the Indian flag
- What time?
 - Anytime between 8 – 10 am or any other time that works for the town office.
- Who provides the flag?
 - IAGB
- Who hoists the flag?
 - IAGB member/representative in presence of one of the Town Selectmen
- What do we need?
 - Your kind permission

While we take pride in originating from our native country, India, deemed the world’s largest democracy, we are equally as proud and grateful for being able to call the United States of America our home, where democracy and personal freedom are held at utmost priority. We look forward to hearing back from you with a positive response to our request.

With sincere regards,
Sanjay Gowda

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IAGB President



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