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# Revealed: UAE's first astronaut carried Indian tricolour to ISS

MBRSC GIFTS INDIAN EMBASSY WITH THE FLAG ALMANSOORI TOOK TO SPACE

DUBAI

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Senior Reporter

**T**he first Emirati astronaut carried an Indian flag to space during his maiden flight to the International Space Station (ISS) in September 2019, it was revealed this week.

The Indian Embassy in Abu Dhabi posted images of the Indian Ambassador to the UAE Sunjay Sudhir receiving the special flag from Salem Humaid Al Marri, director general of Mohammad Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC).

Noting that space can be a new frontier for India-UAE strategic partnership, the mission said in a post that the ambassador met the director general, discussed space cooperation and received the Indian tricolour carried to ISS research centre by the first Emirati astronaut in September 2019.

The framed image of the small tricolour held by the ambassador and director general was captioned: "This flag was carried to the International Space Station with the first Emirati Astronaut Hazzaa AlMansoori on September 25, 2019."

The embassy added the hashtags #AzadiKaAmritMahotsav the slogan for the 75 years of Indian Independence and #HarGharGharTiranga, a campaign launched by the Indian government to encourage people to hoist the tricolour at



Indian Ambassador to the UAE Sunjay Sudhir receives the flag from Salem Humaid Al Marri, director general of MBRSC as Dr Aman Puri, Consul General of India, third from right, looks on.

home to mark the 76th Independence Day on August 15.

An embassy spokesperson told *Gulf News* that the special flag will be showcased at the mission and will be open to the public soon.

### 10kg cargo

As per reports back in 2019, AlMansoori, the first Arab and Emirati astronaut to travel to ISS on an eight-day space mission, had carried 10kg of cargo to the ISS, including a UAE flag and some Emirati food.

It included important elements of Emirati heritage, cul-

**The special flag will be showcased at the Indian Embassy in Abu Dhabi and will be open to the public soon.**

ture and history, which were said to be placed in museums upon his return.

In the bag AlMansoori, carried a 100 per cent silk UAE Flag, 30 seeds of the symbolic Al Ghaf tree, a copy of the Quran, a picture of the founding father, the late Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and a copy of *Qissati* (My Story), a book written by His Highness Shai-

kh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

The bag also included three traditional dishes from the UAE, which were developed for this space trip, madrooba, saloona, and balaleet. Also in Hazzaa's bag were some personal items, including pictures of his family.