

**Embassy of India
Warsaw

Press Release

Paying homage to the Good Maharajas on the eve of India's Independence Day

The Association of Poles in India, 1942-48, with the Warsaw Garrison of the Polish Armed Forces, held a beautiful ceremony at Skwer Zolnierzy Tulaczy in Warsaw today to pay homage to Jamsaheb Digvijaysinhji, the Jamsaheb of Nawanagar, and to the Royal Family of Kolhapur.

Adam Siwek, Director, Institute of National Remembrance, and Michal Syska, Deputy Director, Office of Combatants and Veterans, Ministry of Defence, expressed their deep appreciation for the extraordinary gesture of the Jamsaheb and the Royal Family of Kolhapur in providing refuge to Polish women and children in their States in the period 1942 to 1948. Director Siwek pointed out that the Polish camps in India were very different from those elsewhere which were run by the British colonial administration, as the Indian Maharajas had funded and run the camps using their own resources. Andrzej Jan Chendynski, President of the Association of Poles in India, recounted touching memories of his childhood spent in Valivade camp in Kolhapur of attending the first hoisting of the Indian tricolour at the camp on 15 August 1947 as a Polish scout. Ambassador Nagma M. Mallick, in her remarks, saluted the affectionate hearts of the Indian Poles who had built the beautiful stone memorials in Warsaw that were evocative reminders of their story, the bedrock today of the people-to-people ties between India and Poland. In particular, she paid homage to Wieslaw Stypula, Roman Gutowski and others who called themselves Jamnagari Dziecy Maharadzy, or the Jamnagari children of the Maharaja, who had kept alive the story of the Good Maharaja through the decades.

The event was graced by many who had spent their childhood in the Indian camps, their family members and representatives of the Maharaja School, Bednarska. At the end of the ceremony, wreaths were laid by the participants at the memorial.

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