



सत्यमेव जयते

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Front Cover:

Thousands of yoga enthusiasts performed yoga with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at Rajpath in New Delhi on June 21, 2015

Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi performing yoga at Rajpath along with a record gathering of 40,000 people as part of International Yoga Day celebrations.



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Contents

Visits

Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to France 1



Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's address to UNESCO 8



Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Germany 11



The Prime Minister's address at the opening ceremony of Hannover Messe Fair 13



Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Canada 15



State Visit of President of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to India 20



Visit of the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, to Russia 22



Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Republic of Korea 24



Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Mongolia 29

Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to China 33



Visit of the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, to Sweden 38



Visit of the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, to the Republic of Belarus 40



Official Visit of Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to India 42



Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Bangladesh 44



State Visit of the President of United Republic of Tanzania to India 48



Contents. 2

International Yoga day



International
Yoga Day 49



First International Day
of Yoga, June 21, 2015,
Colombo 52



Bilateral Beats

Indian e-Tourist Visa (eTV)
for Sri Lanka 56



Government of India signs
contract to renovate Rabindra
Memorial Library in Sripalee
College, Horana 57

India develops drone to
monitor IMBL between India
and Sri Lanka 57

Former Indian President
addresses Energy Forum in
Sri Lanka 58



Keynote Address by
Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, former
President of India, at
International Symposium 59

Dr. Abdul Kalam Commends
Progress In Sri Lanka 60

Feature

Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti 61



Saina Nehwal back on top
in world badminton rankings 63

Ganga Ghats 63

Economy

Indian Economy 64

Science & Technology

India Launches First Indigenously
Built Attack Submarine 67



Successful testing of High
Thrust Cryogenic Engine 68

Mars Orbiter Spacecraft under
'solar conjunction' at Mars 68

Culture

A Creative Writing Workshop 69

Authored by : 69

ANDANTE TO ALLEGRO 69



Tagore Jayanti 70

Inauguration of the
photographic exhibition
on Yoga 70

Kriya Yoga Asanas & its
benefits 70

Deepening in to Asanas by
Vyasah Kalyanasunderam 70





Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to France

April 09-11, 2015

At the invitation of the President of the French Republic, Mr. François Hollande, Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi paid an official visit to France on April 10-11, 2015.

The two leaders held wide ranging and fruitful discussions on bilateral, regional and global issues reflecting their convergence in world views. They reaffirmed their commitment to the strategic partnership and agreed to further deepen and strengthen bilateral ties based on shared principles and values relating to democracy, freedom, rule of law and respect for human rights.

As strategic partners, India and France consult and support each other on international matters in a spirit of mutual understanding and commitment to the benefit of the international community at large. Reaffirming their independence and strategic autonomy, France and India commit to continuing their joint efforts to tackle global challenges.

As global partners, India and France reiterated the need for urgent reform of the United Nations, including its Security Council, through an expansion in both categories of membership, to make it more representative of the contemporary world. Both sides underscored the imperative of delivering concrete outcomes on this important subject by the upcoming 70th Anniversary Summit of the United Nations. France reaffirms its support for India's candidature for a permanent membership of the UN Security Council without further delay.

France and India share common concerns and objectives in the field of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In a further effort to strengthen

global non-proliferation and export control regimes, France and India committed to continuing to work jointly towards India's accession to the multilateral export control regimes, namely, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Australia Group, and the Wassenaar Arrangement. France especially reaffirmed its strong and active support to building consensus among regimes' members on this issue.

The leaders expressed satisfaction at the regular and frequent high level visits and meetings; growing cooperation in strategic sectors, especially, defence, space, civil nuclear and security; expanding trade and investment ties; cooperation in science and technology; and increasing exchanges in cultural, educational and tourism sectors.

Climate change

Tackling the issue of climate change is of vital importance for the sake of today's world and future generations. Prime Minister extended his full support to France for a successful outcome of CoP 21 to UNFCCC to be held in Paris later this year. The leaders expressed confidence that the Paris Conference will finalize an historic agreement for the post 2020 period. This will further strengthen the resolve and the efforts of the international community to address the profound challenge of climate change, to facilitate access to a low carbon pathway and resilient sustainable development for all whilst keeping the global temperature rise below 2°C. They underscored the importance of working together and with other countries to conclude an ambitious, comprehensive, universal, balanced and equitable



climate agreement in Paris that will also encourage genuine technology, collaboration for adaptation and mitigation and financial support in meeting this common global challenge. The submission by parties of their intended nationally-determined contributions well before COP21 will be an important step on the road to Paris. They also stressed the importance of immediate action to raise ambition before 2020, and the need to fulfill commitments made for the pre-2020 period. They also acknowledged the role of several voluntary international initiatives in complementing the multilateral climate action under the UNFCCC. In this context, the leaders underlined the importance of enhancing Indo-French cooperation on joint research and development and technology innovation as well as diffusion of clean energy and efficiency solutions that will help in transitioning towards a climate resilient and low carbon economy.

Smart Cities

Smart Cities development is a key area to foster sustainable development solutions. France welcomes India's offer to be a partner of the Smart cities development scheme and is ready to implement its best technological solutions and share its experience in the field of integrated sustainable cities, in particular in urban planning, urban grids, water and sanitation, sustainable mobility and digital technologies. The two

Leaders noted with satisfaction:

- the high level exchanges and progress in bilateral cooperation in the field of sustainable urban infrastructure development and the enhancement in the scope of India-France Agreement for Cooperation in Sustainable Urban Development to include subjects such as 'transport' and 'heritage' for priority bilateral cooperation under the existing mechanism.
- that in view of the interest expressed by the French side in collaboration with India for development of Smart Cities from among the list of cities to be identified by the Government of India, it was agreed to include Smart City cooperation as an area of technical cooperation under the October 2012 MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Sustainable Urban development between France and India. This cooperation would include working together on feasibility studies, building capacities at national, region and local levels, organizing workshops/trainings, forging business-to-business partnerships and implementing any other projects mutually determined.

Security

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi reiterated India's strong condemnation of the heinous terrorists



attack in France in January 2015. Recalling that terrorism is a constant and strategic threat and that both our countries are facing the threat of terror on their soil, France and India are determined to support each other in combatting this scourge. The Leaders reiterated their strong support for ongoing efforts aimed at defeating terrorism. They called for dismantling of the terrorist infrastructure, denying safe havens to terrorists, bringing perpetrators and conspirators of terrorist attacks to justice and to strengthen international frameworks to forge closer cooperation in this area, including through supporting initiatives in the framework of the UN, such as the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

They agreed that India and France must intensify their cooperation within the framework of JWG on Counter-Terrorism, including on information and intelligence sharing on terror networks and work together to share experiences on dealing with the growing phenomenon of radicalisation. They asked officials on both sides to schedule the next meeting of the JWG on Counter-Terrorism at the earliest.

The two countries agreed to commence bilateral dialogue to discuss ways and means of enhancing their cooperation in the maritime domain, in particular in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). India welcomes closer

engagement of France in the affairs of the Indian Ocean Rim Association and will continue to work closely with France in realization of the objectives enshrined in the Charter of the Association.

The two leaders noted with satisfaction the holding of second round of the Cyber Dialogue on 17 March 2015 in New Delhi, which outlined new areas of cooperation between France and India in the field of cyber security.

Defence

The leaders stressed the importance of joint military exercises between their Armies (Shakti), Navies (Varuna), and Air Forces (Garuda) and welcomed the participation of the French Carrier Battle Group in the Varuna exercise in the Indian Ocean in the coming weeks. The two leaders underlined the long history of cooperation between France and India in the defence sector and acknowledged the strong commitment of French companies to manufacturing in India. The two leaders called for further intensification of cooperation in agreed areas, including collaboration in defence technologies, research and development. In response to new emphasis on defence manufacturing by the Government of India, they encouraged their respective business enterprises to enter into arrangements for co-development and co-production of defence equipment in India, including transfer of know-how and technologies. They welcomed the announcements made by French Defence enterprises to set up technological and industrial projects in India following the meeting of French Defence Industry leaders with the Prime Minister of India.

Government of India conveyed to the Government of France that in view of the critical operational necessity for Multirole Combat Aircraft for Indian Air Force, Government of India would like to acquire [36] Rafale jets in fly-away condition as quickly as possible. The two leaders agreed to conclude an Inter-Governmental Agreement for supply of the aircraft on terms that would be better than conveyed by Dassault Aviation as part of a separate process underway; the delivery would be in time-frame that would be compatible with the operational requirement of IAF; and that the aircraft and associated systems and weapons would be delivered on the same configuration as had been





tested and approved by Indian Air Force, and with a longer maintenance responsibility by France.

In the context of ongoing commemoration of the First World War in the two countries, President Hollande recalled the sacrifices made by Indian soldiers who gave up their lives a century ago fighting for France's freedom. Prime Minister conveyed that he would be visiting the Memorial at Neuve Chapelle in France built in the memory of martyrs and heroes from India who fought on the western front.

Space

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of Indo-French space cooperation, and praising its fruitful and successful outcomes from joint research to joint missions, the Leaders welcomed the signing of Programme between their Space Agencies for a reinforced cooperation in space activities addressing joint realization of third earth observation mission, earth observation applications, planetary exploration; MoU on Ka-band propagation experiment; and a document to extend the utilisation of Indo-French Joint Satellite, Megha Tropiques, for two more years. They released a commemorative joint stamp to mark 50 years of cooperation in the space sector.

Nuclear energy

Recalling the Memorandum of Understanding signed on February 4, 2009, between NPCIL and AREVA, the two leaders encouraged their commercial enterprises for an early conclusion of techno-commercial discussions on the proposal for construction of six 1650 Mwe nuclear power plants at Jaitapur, with due consideration to project viability and in the framework of an ambitious partnership for large and critical components. They also welcome the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between AREVA and L&T, which will widen the scope of our industrial cooperation as well as the conclusion of Pre-engineering studies agreement. The two leaders also urged their atomic energy establishments to lay an ambitious foundation for the future of India-France civil nuclear cooperation, including a wide range of

subjects, including in the area of civil nuclear liability.

Economic cooperation

India and France noted that there has been an uneven and subdued improvement in the state of the global economy and agreed that implementing structural reforms and appropriate macroeconomic policies are necessary for attaining long term stability and growth of global economy. They expressed support for G-20 as the key Forum for international economic cooperation. They called for coordinated and concerted international action, including steps to manage spillovers arising from domestic policies, address tax base erosion and profit shifting, to promote tax transparency, facilitate automatic exchange of information and channelize long-term financing for infrastructure. These collective actions are essential to ensure sustainable growth.

Current global trends and rapid socio-economic changes in India are creating a range of new opportunities for the French and the Indian people to work together. Noting that there was considerable potential for expansion of economic ties, the two Leaders underlined the need to encourage Indian and French business and industry to further increase bilateral trade and investments between the two countries. President welcomed Prime Minister's Make in India initiative, aimed at transforming India into a global manufacturing hub, acknowledged that it presented significant opportunities for French business and industry, and expressed France's commitment to contribute to its success. In this context, India and France are committed to finding solutions to current



market access issues hindering trade opportunities. They noted with satisfaction a number of new and ongoing projects of French companies in keeping with the “Make in India” policy. President appreciated Prime Minister’s initiative to receive delegations of French CEOs in infrastructure and defence sectors to encourage them further in this direction.

The two Leaders welcomed the Report presented by co-Chairs of India-France CEO’s Forum, which met in Paris on 9-10 April 2015 and stressed that the Forum has an important role to play in furthering business to business contacts and fostering a positive environment for enhancing bilateral trade and investments.

In the field of transport, the Leaders look forward to cooperating in areas such as modernization of the Railways and in high speed and semi-high speed rail projects, in urban transportation and in roads and welcomed the development of the cooperation between Indian and French railways through the agreement between Indian Railways and the French National Railways (SNCF) to co-finance an execution study by SNCF for a semi-high speed project on upgradation of the Delhi-Chandigarh line to 200 kmph and for redevelopment of Ambala & Ludhiana Railways Stations. The two sides noted with satisfaction the successful completion of a business development study for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high speed corridor.

France welcomes the very ambitious objectives set by the Indian government in terms of energy access to all and the development of renewable energy. France is already supporting India’s efforts to secure its energy supply and develop its sources of renewable energy, including solar power. India welcomed the target set by French companies aimed at developing 8 to 10 GW of solar energy in India by 2020-2022. France is also willing to support other renewable sources in India, such as wind, biomass and hydropower.

President Hollande confirmed the target of AFD credit line of 1 billion euros over the next three years for sustainable infrastructure and urban development in India and conveyed the commitment of France to partner with India in implementation of the following projects launched by India for development of renewable sources of energy:

- Extension of credit facility by Agence Française de Développement for India’s Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) promoting use of LED lighting in select Indian municipalities;
- (Arrangement on renewable energy cooperation between the Indian Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy.

Recognizing the critical role of various States of India and Regions of France in expanding cooperation and exchanges between India and France, the two Leaders decided to accord high priority to promoting exchanges among them in the area of sustainable, rural and urban



development, in particular as regards infrastructure, transport, water and waste management, including through appropriate twinning arrangements and visits of business delegations. Prime Minister noted that he is looking forward to his meeting with local leaders of Midi-Pyrenees Region, including CEOs of French enterprises located in these Regions.

People-to-People Contacts

The two leaders stressed that there is immense potential for increasing tourism between France and India. In this regard, they welcomed the signing of a Letter of Intent on promoting closer cooperation between two countries in this area, including on twinning of historical monuments and sites in the two countries.

France welcomes India’s decision to extend Tourist Visa on Arrival – Electronic Travel Authorisation (TVOA-ETA) scheme to France. India welcomes the French decision to implement a scheme for expedited 48 hours visa issuance for Indian tourists.

The leaders agreed that the two sides take forward their ongoing discussions on an agreement concerning a partnership relating to Migration and Mobility between the governments of France and India.

The two Leaders expressed their satisfaction at the growing exchanges between the two countries in the field of education and agreed to take steps to increase the number of Indian students studying in France and French students studying in India. They welcomed in particular agreement between India and France to facilitate professional experience for their students in both countries after the completion of their courses. Under this arrangement, Indian post graduate students shall be allowed the benefit of a 2 years special residence permit in France and 250 French students would be permitted yearly a maximum stay of 2 years in India under the VIE Scheme of France to join French companies operating in India.

Prime Minister conveyed to President Hollande the importance that Indian Government has accorded to



promoting the welfare of Indian community abroad. President Hollande welcomed the organization of a meeting of the Prime Minister with People of Indian Origin and Non Resident Indians, which highlights their contribution to the socio-cultural and economic development of France.

Heritage/Cultural Cooperation

The two leaders welcomed the range of cooperation initiatives undertaken by Indian and French institutions in a move to promote and preserve the unique heritage of the two countries. They noted with satisfaction a number of steps taken in this direction. This includes:

- Arrangement for training of Indian Heritage Professionals between French and Indian Ministries of Culture, in presence of the Institut National du Patrimoine (INP);
- Letter of Intent between Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and Institut National de Recherches Archéologiques Préventives of France (INRAP), France on training, exchange of best practices, and deployment of experts, especially in the area of Underwater Archaeology;
- Understanding between the two sides to include urban heritage preservation as an area of cooperation within the ambit of JWG on Urban Development;
- Arrangement for twinning of historical monuments and sites;
- Arrangements for cooperation between School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi and School of International Architecture, Paris for training, joint research and exchange of students and faculty.

The President of the French Republic and the Prime Minister of India, recalling the utmost importance of culture for the mutual understanding of their two nations, noted the successful organisation of two editions of the Festival of France in India, 'Bonjour

India'; and the first edition of Festival of India in France, 'Namaste France'; and welcomed that next editions of both will be organized in 2016.

They welcomed the decision of the Government of India to support the organisation of a Regional Hindi Conference, for the first time, in Paris in view of the growing interest in France in Hindi.

The two Leaders welcomed the declaration of 21 June as the 'International Day of Yoga' by the United Nations and agreed to celebrate the 'International Day of Yoga' in a befitting manner.

They welcomed the signing of the Letter of Intent between Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CRAS), Ministry of Ayush, and University of Strasbourg for cooperation in the field of education and research in Ayurveda, through exchange of students, teachers, researchers, scientific and technical publications.

They also welcomed the role of the Alliances Françaises in India, the Institut Français en Inde and the Indian Cultural Center in France in the promotion of cultural relations between our two countries.

Education, Science and Technology, Sports and Health





Expressing a mutual interest in boosting the number and quality of student exchanges, the two Leaders invited educational institutions of both countries to further expand their cooperation especially in the field of engineering and applied sciences. They called for further development of cooperation in the field of technical and vocational education in line with the needs of the industry. The Leaders also welcomed the role of French companies in India in the field of skill development of young Indians.

The two Leaders noted with satisfaction forward movement on the following:

- Cooperation in human resource development and skill building by establishing a knowledge partnership to exchange expertise and best practices, aimed at developing nationwide skill standards and institutional structures to support skill development.
- Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for knowledge partnership and cooperation in the area of qualification registers between National Skill Development Agency (NSDA), under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship of India and Commission National de la Certification Professionnelle (CNCP) of France.

The Leaders, emphasising the importance of health

for the well-being of their populations and the development of their nations, planned to strengthen their partnership in the fields of non-communicable diseases, pharmaceutical industries and healthcare institutions.

The two Leaders expressed their appreciation on the long standing collaboration in science and technology between the two countries and reaffirmed their support to expand it further through establishing a Joint Indo-French Science & Technology Committee. The leaders noted with satisfaction that:

- The Department of Science and Technology (DST), under the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology, and Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) have concluded a new MoU which will accelerate scientific cooperation in frontier areas of mutual interest.
- The Department of Biotechnology (DBT), under the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology, the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) and the Université Pierre et Marie Curie (UPMC) have concluded a MoU to collaborate towards the establishment of a National Institute of Marine Biology and Biotechnology in India.

In the field of sports, the Indian and French cooperation is enhanced by various initiatives developing the ties of friendship and solidarity between both nations. The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to develop their cooperation to reach athletic excellence and youth empowerment. A MoU providing for exchanges on sports medicine, training of executives, exchanges on expertise in high level sports, institutional cooperation, promotion of participation of women in sports and prevention and fight against doping in sports was signed during the visit.

- Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, thanked President Hollande as well as his Government for the warm hospitality extended to him and the delegation accompanying him and the exceptional arrangements made for his visit to France.
- Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, invited President Hollande to visit India at his earliest convenience, conveying that he was looking forward to welcoming him in India and meeting again at the earliest opportunity.



Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's address to UNESCO

April 10, 2015



Director General, Madam Irena Bukova; Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am truly honoured to address UNESCO.

I feel specially privileged to visit this great institution in its 70th anniversary year.

This milestone reminds us of a fundamental achievement of our age: for the first time in human history, we have an organization for the entire world – the United Nations.

And, through the sweeping change of these decades, through many challenges of our times, and the great progress of this era, the organization has endured and grown.

There have been doubts and skepticism. There is need for urgent reforms.

But, for the nations that came together at its birth; and, for three times as many that joined it later, there is one unshakeable belief:

Our world is and will remain a better place because of the United Nations.

It is this faith that has given birth to so many of its institutions that deal with every aspect of human challenge.

Our collective goal is to seek a peaceful and prosperous future for our world, in which every nation has a voice; all peoples have an identity; all cultures are flowers in a garden; every human being has a life of dignity; every child a future of opportunity; and our planet the chance to preserve its glory.

No organization serves our cause more than this one. The seeds of our collective destiny are sown in human

minds. It is nurtured by the light of education and the spirit of enquiry. It makes progress through the marvels of science. And, it draws strength from the basic character of Nature – the harmony and unity in diversity. That is why UNESCO was among the first missions of the United Nations. That is why India values the work of UNESCO so deeply; and, cherishes our partnership so immensely.

I am conscious of the extraordinary legacy of our relationship from the time of UNESCO's birth.

I recall Mahatma Gandhi's message to UNESCO, calling for urgent action to address the needs of education to secure lasting peace; and, the leadership of Dr. Radhakrishnan, later our President, in the early years

of this institution.

We are grateful for UNESCO's support for education and science, in India and for preservation of our cultural heritage.

Equally, we are privileged to have worked with UNESCO in support of its mission around the world.

For, in the challenges India faces and the dreams that Indians seek, our approach mirrors the ideals of UNESCO.

We have built a modern state in an ancient land, with a timeless tradition of openness and co-existence; and, a society of extraordinary diversity.

The foundation of our Constitution rests on a fundamental principle: the peace and prosperity of all is indivisible from the welfare of the individual; the strength of the nation is determined by the joined hands of every citizen; and, real progress is measured through empowerment of the weakest.

This has been our creed since we assumed office nearly a year ago.

And, we shall judge our progress not just by the cold statistics of growth, but by the warm glow of belief and hope on human faces.

For me, it means many things. We will defend and protect the rights and liberty of every citizen. We will ensure that every citizen, of every faith, culture and creed has an equal place in our society; belief in her future; and the confidence to pursue it.

Education always had a special place in our tradition.

As our ancient saying goes, it is *vyaye krate vardhate eva nityam, vidhya dhanam sarva dhan pradhanam*. The wealth that increases by giving, That wealth is



We must intensify exchanges between the youth of the world to sow the seeds of a more peaceful world.

Cultures also hold great wealth of traditional knowledge. Societies across the world have evolved them through wisdom gathered over the ages.

And, they hold the secrets to economic, efficient, and, environment friendly solutions to many of our problems.

But, today they are at risk of extinction in our globalised world.

So, we must here make more efforts to revive, preserve and nurture traditional knowledge.

This will also reaffirm a fundamental truth about human civilization: as our cultures are diverse, knowledge has many sources.

In doing so, we will give ourselves a greater chance to meet our challenges.

We must do more to harness science for human welfare in some of the most vulnerable parts of the world – especially for health and food security.

Climate change is a pressing global challenge. And, it calls for a collective human action; and, a comprehensive response.

We must draw upon our entire wealth of wisdom; the strength of every institution; all possibilities of innovation; and, the power of science.

In India, faith and Nature have had a deep link since ancient times.

For us, the only path to prosperity is the sustainable one.

We make this choice with the natural instincts of our culture and tradition. But, we also do this with a commitment to our future.

We have, for example, set a target of adding 175,000 MW of clean and renewable energy in the next seven years.

Too often, our discussion is reduced to an argument about emission cuts. But, we are more likely to succeed if we offer affordable solutions, not simply impose

choices.

That is why I have called for global public action to develop clean energy, that is affordable and accessible to all.

And, it is for the same reason that I call for a change in lifestyle. Because, the emission reduction that we seek will be the natural outcome of how we live.

And, it will also mean a different path to economic well being.

It is with this vision that I had called the United Nations General Assembly last September to declare June 21 as the International Day of Yoga.

Yoga awakens a sense of oneness and harmony with self, society and Nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help us deal with climate change and create a more balanced world.

Last December, the UNGA adopted it with a record co-sponsorship in a record time.

It was not just an act of friendship for India. It reflected our collective ability to go beyond our familiar boundaries in search for solutions to common challenges.

My campaign to clean our Ganges River is a mission that connects culture, science, traditional knowledge, education, economy, and, environment; but, it is also about attitudes and lifestyles.

Madam Chairperson,

Outside this hall, I paid respect at the statue of a great Indian philosopher and sage, Shri Aurobindo.

There is much that we can learn from his humanism and spiritualism, from his belief in the unity of individual consciousness with the world outside; the enlightened purpose of education; the service of science; and, the unity of world, founded on national freedom, diversity of civilizations and autonomy of culture.

It is a guiding spirit for the purpose of this institution – the defense of peace in the mind of men.

The 70th anniversary is a moment to celebrate our remarkable journey so far. It is also a time to look ahead with wisdom that has come with time and experience.

Whatever we wish to achieve as United Nations, UNESCO will always have a part to play - . whether it is sustainable development, our post-2015 agenda, climate change or peace and security.

UNESCO's responsibilities to our future have become bigger; and, so our resolve must be stronger.

Thank you.



Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Germany

April 12-14, 2015

Commencing his 3-day visit to Germany, the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi arrived in Hannover on April 12, 2015. Hon'ble PM was received at the airport by Shri Vijay Gokhale, Ambassador of India and Shri Vidhu P. Nair, Consul General. PM and his entourage was driven to Hotel Maritim Grand, Hannover where a large number of Indian community members gave a rousing welcome to the PM.

In the afternoon, Prime Minister Shri Modi held a round-table meeting with CEOs of prominent German companies. Thereafter, he visited the New City Hall of Hannover where he was received by Mr. Stefan Schostok, the Mayor of Hannover. PM held brief talks with the Mayor in the latter's Chamber and signed on the Golden Book followed by exchange of gifts. The Mayor also showed Prime Minister Shri Modi the miniature models of the Hannover city displayed at the foyer of the City Hall. Thereafter, PM interacted with a group of around 150 Indian students from various parts of Germany at the Gartensaal in the City Hall.

Subsequently, Prime Minister Shri Modi unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi together with the Mayor at Culemann Strasse near the City Hall. The Mayor thanked the Indian Government for donating the Bust. More than 200 people including members of Indian community as well as students of International School of Hannover had assembled to witness the ceremony which was widely covered by the German press.

In the evening, Prime Minister Shri Modi attended the inaugural ceremony of the Hannover Trade Fair at the Hannover Congress Centre. On arrival, he was received by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The inaugural ceremony witnessed a magnificent display of laser show and performance by cultural troupe from India.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister in his speech highlighted the growing trade relations between Germany and India and exhorted German companies to strengthen investment in India especially in the backdrop of 'Make in India' initiative. Chancellor Merkel hosted PM and his delegation for dinner at the Herrenhausen Garden in the evening in which prominent Indian CEOs also participated.

On April 13, 2015, Hon'ble Prime Minister visited the Fair Grounds where he was received by Chancellor Merkel and the two inaugurated the India Pavilion. Both took a walk-about of the Fair Grounds and visited the stalls of prominent companies. This was followed by the Indo-German Business Summit at the Convention Centre on the Fair Grounds which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Modi and Chancellor.

Prime Minister Shri Modi departed for Berlin from Hannover airport on April 13, 2015 where he was seen off by the Consul General.





The Prime Minister's address at the opening ceremony of Hannover Messe Fair

April 12, 2015

Her Excellency, Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel, Vice Chancellor, Mr. Sigmar Gabriel, Minister Dr. Johanna Wanka, Minister-President Mr. Stephan Weil, Chairman of Deutsche Messe, Dr. Wolfram von Fritsch

It is truly a great privilege for me to be here at the Inauguration of the world's largest industrial fair. It is a special honour to do so in the company of Chancellor Merkel, a great leader and friend of India.

First, I want to thank the city of Hannover and Hannover Messe. They have been most generous in allowing us to unleash our lions in this city. The lions are a symbol of a new India. They roar; but with a message of friendship and promise of partnership, from 1.25 billion people of India. This is also the message of 14 states, 120 CEOs and 350 companies from India participating in this Fair.

Your choice of India as a Partner Country reflects the new confidence in India. Our decision to be here in the first year of my Government reflects our priority:

We want to accelerate economic growth and create jobs for our youth.

We want to build world class industry and infrastructure.

We want to transform our cities and villages; clean up our environment; and improve the quality of life.

Our presence as a partner country says something else also. We will naturally pursue our goals on the strength of our own resources, skills and enterprise. But, we know that we will be more successful when we do this in partnership with the world. For people in India, Germany is a valued partner; and, an enduring symbol of technology and innovation, quality and productivity.

Even more, India and Germany share a close and warm relationship. It goes back centuries, in the intellectual journey of German scholars. It has grown in depth and diversity from our birth as modern Republics at the same time. Through the passage of history, Indians and Germans have formed a relationship of mutual fascination and goodwill.

It also includes a vibrant economic partnership that extends beyond the last century. Today, you can easily think of companies like Siemens as Indian! Nearly a hundred years ago, India's great poet and philosopher, Rabindranath Tagore said, that Germany has done more than any other country to open India to the Western World.



Today, I come to seek German partnership in my own mission to open up India's seamless economic potential. To the industry of the world that has assembled here today, I say that we have no special bias for our host today! India is open and ready to embrace the world. As I have travelled around the world, I have seen a new level of interest in building partnerships of trade, investment and innovation in India. It mirrors the surge of hope in our own people and industry; the new tide of expectation in our 800 million youth – for opportunities and progress. And, if we want to fulfill the dreams of our youth, we must turn our industry into a manufacturing hub for the world and an engine for employment at home. And, we must equip our youth with the skills to meet the needs of our nation, and the demands of the globalised world.

Whatever we choose to do, from reaching the cutting edge of industry to meeting the most critical social need, we require investment and technology, industry and enterprise. That is why for me, Make in India is not a brand. Nor is it simply a slogan on a smart lion!

It is a new national movement. And, it covers the whole spectrum of our government, society and business. To this informed audience, I hardly need to state the obvious: Our scale of transformation is vast; therefore, the opportunities we offer are huge.

You are also familiar with our demography and our demand. The question that you ask is whether we can turn this potential into a reality; and, our vision into action.

What you seek is not just an attractive destination; but, also the assurance that it is open; and, it is easy to reach and work in. You want the confidence that the environment is stable; the rules won't change frequently; and there would be no surprises. So, we

have moved with speed, resolve and boldness to fulfill our pledge.

We are creating a stable economic environment that inspires confidence at home and abroad. We are pursuing strong fiscal discipline to do that. I know how much Chancellor Merkel will appreciate that point!

We have taken sweeping steps to reform our policies and open up more to foreign direct investments in key areas like insurance, construction, defence and railways. Railways is the thread that binds India. It will now be a fast track to India's transformation. And, what was a department of the government is now open to 100% Foreign Direct Investments.

We are removing unnecessary regulations and simplifying our procedures. We are using digital technology to eliminate multiple approvals and endless wait. We will guide you and walk with you in your projects. We have set up Invest India and country desks in it that will be networked to the states. We will nurture innovation and protect your intellectual property. There were institutions in India that seemed beyond scrutiny. Well, they no longer are. We are reforming institutions in ways that has not happened in decades. We are building a tax regime that is predictable, stable and competitive. We will now address the remaining uncertainties. The Goods and Services Tax is a long needed revolution that is becoming a reality.

For us, the highest priority is creating world class infrastructure. We have made a sharp increase in public investments. We have established a National Infrastructure and Investment Fund and a new institution for integrated development of this sector. We are launching attractive new financial instruments for long term funds. We seek to fuel our growth with the cleanest and most efficient use of energy.

We have set a target of 75 Giga Watts of new capacity for renewable and clean energy in the next seven years. It is a challenging goal- yes; but, important to pursue. Good Governance is essential not just for our citizens, but also for business. With transparency and speed, we have resumed long stalled projects and allocation of resources. This is adding new momentum to our economy. We are instituting a rational framework for acquisition of land without causing distress to farmers and other landowners. We are creating a predictable and transparent environment approval process that will protect our natural heritage. Above all, we know, as you do, that the investment journey may begin in Delhi, but its success depends on state capitals and districts.

So, for the first time, we are working as Team India – a new partnership between the Centre and the States. We speak of cooperative federalism, but also of competitive federalism, where states would excel by competing with each other for investments and jobs. We are also giving them more resources, so that they can build the infrastructure that you need. I also see them as partners in our international engagement.

But, I am also aware that it is easier to change policies and write new laws than it is to change attitudes, culture and systems. Every CEO who has tried a turnaround knows that. Our task is huge; it won't be completed overnight. But, I am confident that it will. And, we are moving firmly and clearly in that direction. The wind of change is there. and, it is gathering speed. When IMF, the World Bank, credit rating agencies and expert speak in one voice of optimism about India, we know that the wind is blowing in the right direction. And, it has made us the fastest growing economy in the world.

So, my message to you is this: You will find environment that is not only open, but also welcoming. We will make it easy to do business in India. And, we will always be eager to listen to your feedback. So, our industry is here to showcase their skills. There are many Indian examples of technological leadership in the world. But, we want a future in which excellence defines every sector and every industry in our country. And, they are here to seek your partnership.

It is not just about financial flows, new technology or products. It is also about learning from each other; about seeing possibilities in new ways. India is a nation that is blessed with so much goodwill in the world. Everywhere, I see a strong desire for India to succeed.

The progress of one sixth of humanity will be of great consequence for the world and our beautiful planet. It will be a world of more hope and opportunities; a world more confident of its success. This is a time of political instability and economic challenges; and, threats of violence that are increasingly close to our homes. The humanity needs the solidarity and strength of international partnerships more than ever before.

India will do its part - as an anchor of economic stability; an engine for growth; and, as a force of peace and stability in the world. So, let me invite you to do business and make in India – for India and the world. Let me invite you to be our partner in making a new India. I also welcome you to enjoy our timeless traditions, the ceaseless celebration of diversity; and, the warm embrace of friendship.

I wish the Fair all success. When its shutters come down, I hope that many new doors would have opened.

Thank you once again.



Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Canada

India-Canada Joint Statement: नया उत्साह, नए कदम: "New Vigour, New Steps"

April 15, 2015

Canadian Prime Minister the Right Honourable Stephen Harper hosted the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi who is undertaking an historic bilateral visit to Canada, the first by an Indian Prime Minister in 42 years, including Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver on 14-16 April 2015. The visit comprises extensive engagement with Canada's political, business and academic leadership and robust interactions with the Indian diaspora. It included a call on the Governor General of Canada His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Harper met in Ottawa on 15 April 2015, and held detailed discussions to assess the full spectrum of bilateral relations and exchanged perspectives on a range of regional and international issues of mutual interest. They noted the historic significance of Prime Minister Shri Modi's visit to Canada in advancing bilateral ties to a new level marked with "नया उत्साह, नए कदम" – New Vigour: New Steps. The two Prime Ministers agreed to elevate their bilateral relations to a strategic partnership.

Bilateral Relations

Prime Minister Shri Modi commended Prime Minister Harper for his leadership in renewing the momentum of the bilateral relationship through his visits to India in 2009 and 2012. This momentum was maintained by the Governor General of Canada's state visit to India in 2014. The two leaders welcomed the continuing diversification, growth and deepening of bilateral relations in recent years, rooted in shared values of democracy, pluralism, tolerance, human rights and rule of law, and based on expanding economic engagement and long-standing people-to-people

ties. They also agreed to hold regular discussions including on the margins of international meetings.

The leaders agreed to take concrete measures to expand bilateral cooperation in key areas including the economy, trade and investment, civil nuclear cooperation, energy, education and skills development, agriculture, defence and security, science, technology, innovation and space, culture, people-to-people ties, and regional and global issues.

Economy, Trade and Investment

The Prime Ministers recognised that bilateral business and commercial linkages constitute key drivers of the wide ranging India-Canada partnership. In this regard, Prime Minister Harper commended Prime Minister Shri Modi for his forward-looking vision of energising the Indian economy and welcomed the policy measures and specific initiatives taken to improve the ease of doing business in India. They also appreciated the role played by the bilateral business community in both countries in promoting commercial partnerships between India and Canada.

In this context, the Prime Ministers noted that specific initiatives launched by Prime Minister Shri Modi such as 'Make in India', 'Affordable Housing for all by 2022' and 'Smart Cities' offered significant collaborative commercial opportunities for Indian and Canadian businesses and industry. They also noted that Canada's prioritisation of India in its Global Markets Action Plan aligned well with bilateral objectives.

The Prime Ministers reaffirmed the need to elevate two-way trade and investment linkages to their full potential. They agreed to pursue specific measures to diversify and deepen bilateral trade and investment cooperation to increase the two way flow of goods and services.





They recognised that early finalisation of the Bilateral Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement is an important step in realising the shared objective of enhanced trade and investment cooperation between the two countries. They welcomed the progress made in the recent bilateral discussions between treaty negotiators and agreed to intensify discussions to finalise the outstanding issues.

They also welcomed the agreement on a road map to expeditiously conclude a progressive, balanced, and mutually beneficial Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement as a basis for significantly expanding two-way trade and investment and directed the negotiators to prioritise its finalisation.

Noting the important role of movement of professionals in boosting bilateral trade, investment and people-to-people ties, the Prime Ministers agreed that both sides will hold a dialogue in this field to facilitate greater bilateral cooperation.

Recognising Canadian commercial engagement, the Prime Ministers expressed support for bilateral partnerships for urban transformation and smart city development which would leverage Canadian expertise in a number of relevant fields including, public private partnerships, intelligent transportation systems, civil engineering and urban planning, water and wastewater management, pre-cast and wood construction, energy technology and efficiency and affordable housing.

The Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in RailTransportation between India's Ministry of Railways and Transport Canada, dealing with technical cooperation. The leaders also welcomed the finalisation of an MoU on Civil Aviation between Transport Canada and India's Ministry of Civil Aviation, which will establish a Joint Working Group to bring together key industry and Government stakeholders to advance opportunities for cooperation in civil aviation.

The Prime Ministers took positive note of the useful discussions in the Economic and Financial Sector Policy Dialogue held on 13 February 2015 in New Delhi. The two sides agreed to establish a Finance Ministers Dialogue for the purpose of deepening the India-Canada economic and financial relationship.

Civil-Nuclear Cooperation

The Prime Ministers underscored the considerable potential for mutually-beneficial civil nuclear cooperation. They welcomed the signing of an Agreement between the Department of Atomic Energy of the Government of India and Cameco of Canada for long-term supply of uranium to India to meet its energy needs. They recognised that the agreement would impart a new significance to India-Canada Civil Nuclear Cooperation.

The Prime Ministers agreed to encourage a collaborative programme to leverage their industries' respective strengths in the field of Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor technology for mutual benefit, as well as for the benefit of global nuclear energy needs.

They also encouraged closer cooperation in civil nuclear energy between their companies and welcomed the setting up of the India Nuclear Insurance Pool with potential participation of foreign companies as a positive step towards facilitating such cooperation.

They noted the planned Canadian civil nuclear trade mission to India in October 2015. They also agreed to explore mutually beneficial partnerships in the application of radio-isotopes for societal benefits.

The Prime Ministers, recognising the importance of taking the collaboration in nuclear science and technology to the next level, encouraged their respective atomic energy establishments and research institutions to establish mechanisms for long-term and mutually beneficial R&D collaboration in peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Prime Ministers agreed to exchange experiences and developments on safety and regulatory issues. To take this forward, the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board of India and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission have finalised an arrangement for regulatory cooperation in the field of nuclear and radiation safety regulation

Energy

The Prime Ministers noted the significant opportunities available to expand bilateral trade and investment in energy and resources as well as related technologies

and services. They welcomed efforts underway to deepen cooperation on energy through the Canada-India Ministerial Energy Dialogue and other mechanisms, and agreed to encourage enhanced commercial cooperation between companies in the energy sector. While recognising the significant scope and wide ranging potential for cooperation in this field between governments and the private sector, the Prime Ministers agreed to further collaboration in areas such as energy efficiency and innovation, oil and gas development, exchange of regulatory best practices, renewable energy, and nuclear energy.

The Prime Ministers noted the strong complementarities between Canada, a responsible resource producer with the potential to become an energy exporter to new markets such as India, and India, which is looking to Canada to enhance its energy security by diversifying its sources of supply. To advance cooperation in this important sector, the Prime Ministers welcomed the convening of the next Ministerial meeting of the India-Canada Energy Dialogue by the end of 2015.

The Prime Ministers welcomed the decision by Indian Oil Corporation to invest in a proposed new liquefied natural gas project in British Columbia.

Education and Skills Development

The Prime Ministers identified education as one of the key areas of priority for bilateral engagement and agreed to focus on greater student, faculty and people-to-people exchanges. They affirmed that cooperation in education should focus on building the quality of human resources in both countries. They noted that India is a priority country under Canada's International Education Strategy.

In this context, the Prime Ministers welcomed Canada's partnership in the Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) of India to enable Canadian researchers to cooperate in learning, research and teaching in select Indian educational institutions. They also welcomed the first co-funded student exchange programme through the Ministry of Human Resource Development's Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme and Canada's Mitacs Globalink Program.

The Prime Ministers noted the socio-economic opportunities inherent in India's ambitious goals of skills development. In this regard, they welcomed the 13 MoUs between the National Skill Development Council of India and 13 Canadian colleges, institutes, and Sector Skills Councils in the fields of agriculture, apparel and textiles, automotive, aviation, construction, green economy, healthcare, hydrocarbons, IT, telecom and electronics, sports sector, and water.

The two leaders agreed to renew the Canada-India MoU on Higher Education on a rolling basis.

Agriculture

The Prime Ministers reaffirmed the importance of intensifying and facilitating bilateral collaboration in the area of agriculture and agrifood, including continued collaboration in fertilisers, as well as in the fields of cold chain management, animal development, dryland farming, food processing technologies and agricultural sustainability. They noted interest from both countries to hold discussions to negotiate a bilateral organic equivalency arrangement. They welcomed the setting-up of the Plant Health Technical Working Group, as a sub group of the MoU on agriculture cooperation to promote trade in plants, plant products and other regulated articles by facilitating science-based discussions related to sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues.

Defence and Security

The Prime Ministers agreed that terrorism, extremism and radicalisation present security challenges to the peace, stability and prosperity of the two countries and humanity as a whole. They reaffirmed their strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and called for further efforts to eliminate terrorist safe havens and infrastructure; dismantle terrorist networks, their support systems and financing; and stem the cross-border movement of terrorists.

The Prime Ministers affirmed the need to expand and deepen their continuing cooperation in countering terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism through joint efforts, and greater cooperation between their relevant government departments, including in the areas of extradition and mutual legal assistance, joint research, countering narcotics and Improvised Explosive Devices. In this regard, they welcomed the recent meeting between the Indian and Canadian National Security Advisers and the Plan of Action agreed during the 13th meeting of the India-Canada Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism held in New Delhi on March 19, 2015. The two Prime Ministers took positive note of the productive dialogue on security issues held under the leadership of their respective Deputy National Security Advisors and looked forward to the outcomes of the next round of the Dialogue.

The Prime Ministers agreed to intensify bilateral engagement and exchange perspectives on emerging threats to national security, including in the cyber domain. In this context, they welcomed the signing of the MoU between the Indian Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness of Canada on Cooperation in the Area of Cyber Security. Recognising the importance of a free, open and secure internet they welcomed the commitment to a broader framework for future dialogue on cyber issues.

The Prime Ministers recognised defence cooperation as an important element of the overall bilateral security



cooperation. To this end, they agreed to explore cooperative possibilities in diverse fields including cold climate warfare, peacekeeping, and participation in respective Defence Staff College training. They also agreed to explore further cooperation in enhancing naval linkages, and staff exchanges.

They also welcomed the signing of the Statement of Intent between Defence Research and Development Organisation of India and Defence Research and Development Canada, aimed at exploring potential cooperative initiatives in defence and security science and technology.

Science, Technology, Innovation, and Space

The Prime Ministers appreciated the ongoing bilateral cooperation in science, technology and innovation and its role in improving the lives of their citizens. They noted several successful Indo-Canadian research and development projects and their benefits to the larger society. They took particular note of the partnership between the India-Canada Centre for Innovative Multidisciplinary Partnerships to Accelerate Community Transformation and Sustainability (IC-IMPACTS) and the National Mission for Clean Ganga to find innovative technological solutions to clean the river Ganga; the 'Water for Health' collaboration between Indian's Department of Biotechnology and IC-IMPACTS; and the 'Safe and Sustainable Infrastructure' and 'Integrated Water-Management' initiatives with the Indian Department of Science and Technology. The Leaders agreed to support further joint projects on Safe and Sustainable Infrastructure and Integrated Water Management and public health.

In order to facilitate enhanced cooperation in all these areas, the two leaders welcomed the convening of the biennial meeting of the 5th Canada-India Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee in June 2015 and urged the Committee to explore new mechanisms to further augment bilateral engagement in science, technology and innovation. The Prime Ministers re-affirmed their commitment to joint industrial research and development projects through the International Science and Technology Partnership Program, and endorsed the annual contribution of CAD \$1 million by both countries. They also welcomed the inclusion of Canadian and Indian startups in the Canadian Technology Accelerator initiative. Canada welcomed India's offer to be a Partner Country in the 2017 Technology Summit to be hosted by India.

The Prime Ministers recognised the importance of improving maternal, newborn and child health, which is a development priority for both countries, and welcomed an investment of CAD \$2.5 million in five health innovations in India by Grand Challenges Canada and its Indian partner - the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology. India and Canada have also agreed to accelerate ongoing efforts towards the elimination of Visceral Leishmaniasis in India by jointly supporting an existing Grand Challenges Canada project.

Recognising India's satellite launch capabilities and Canada's expertise in satellites and astronomy, the Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the rapid expansion and intensification of India-Canada space cooperation, including the launch of Canadian satellites. They welcomed the renewal of the MoU on Space Cooperation between the Indian Space Research Organisation and the Canadian Space Agency.

With a shared interest in promoting collaborative research in frontier areas of science, the two Prime Ministers welcomed the proposed collaboration between the the Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine (inStem) of India, and the Stem Cell Network of Canada in stem cell research, including possible research student exchanges.

In the interest of public health and recognising the need to strengthen bilateral engagement and exchange information in the areas of safety, efficacy, and quality of therapeutic products, including cellular therapy products, as well as on traditional medicines, the Prime Ministers agreed to establish a dialogue between relevant federal departments of the two countries in order to facilitate cooperation.

Culture and People-to-People Ties

The two Prime Ministers recognised the central and dynamic role of people to people ties in the Canada-India partnership, noting and appreciating in particular the growing community of more than one million Canadians of Indian origin and their contributions to both societies. Both leaders emphasised the need to

further invigorate bilateral people-to-people contacts. In this regard they welcomed progress towards the renewal of an MoU on Cultural Cooperation between Canada and India, and Canada's proposal to hold the Year of Canada in India in 2017.

The leaders looked forward to the entry into force of the Canada-India Social Security Agreement on August 1, 2015.

Highlighting the important role of increasing connectivity to grow commercial and people-to-people links, the Prime Ministers welcomed the resumption of non-stop air links between Canada and India, commencing November 2015.

Recognising the importance of bilateral parliamentary exchanges, the Prime Ministers agreed to encourage further reciprocal visits by parliamentary delegations.

Regional and Global Issues

The Prime Ministers assessed the emerging regional and global strategic landscape, including in particular, the evolution of terrorist threats globally, the conflicts in Syria and Iraq and the implications for regional stability, and supporting reconciliation and economic recovery in Afghanistan.

Recalling their initial meeting at the G20 Summit in Brisbane in 2014, the Prime Ministers affirmed the ongoing importance of cooperative efforts through the G20 to promote global growth and prosperity.

Recognising Canada's commitment to development

in South Asia, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi took note of Canada's interest in having observer status in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. Prime Minister Harper welcomed India's ongoing interest in and contributions on Arctic issues, particularly through India's observer status in the Arctic Council.

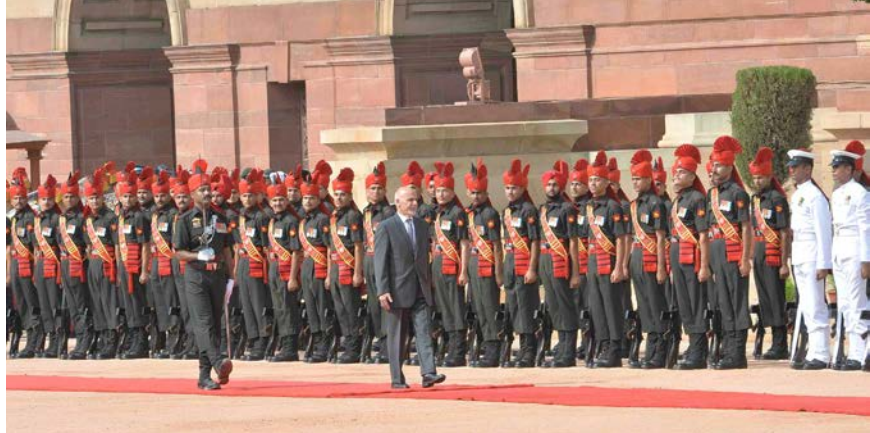
The two leaders underlined their shared commitment to a world without nuclear weapons and reaffirmed their support for global efforts towards non-proliferation and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. Canada recognises India's non-proliferation record and continues to support India's early application and membership of the four multilateral export control regimes.

In this the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, as global partners the Prime Ministers affirmed the desirability of reforming the United Nations to strengthen its ability to address contemporary global challenges more effectively through concrete outcomes.

Canada and India share a commitment to advancing human rights, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

The Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, thanked the Prime Minister of Canada and Mrs. Laureen Harper for the warm hospitality extended to him and his delegation. Prime Minister Shri Modi invited Prime Minister Harper and Mrs. Laureen Harper to visit India again. The invitation was accepted with gratitude.





State Visit of President of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to India

April 27-29, 2015

President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, paid a state visit to India from April 27-29, 2015 at the invitation of Shri Pranab Mukherjee President of the Republic of India. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani was received ceremonially at Rashtrapati Bhawan by President Pranab Mukherjee, Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, and senior members of the Indian Cabinet. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at the Raj Ghat.

Vice President of India Shri M. Hamid Ansari, External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Raksha Mantri Shri. Manohar Parrikar, Minister for Health and Family Welfare Shri. Jagat Prakash Nadda, Minister of State (IC) for Commerce and Industry Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman called on the President of Afghanistan. President Ghani's program in India also included an address to India's strategic community at the historical Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and a meeting with members of India's leading Chambers of Commerce.

This was the first visit of H.E. Mr. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani to India after assuming the Presidency in September 2014, which continues the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries that has been established since 2002.

Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to patiently and systematically work towards strengthening of the India Afghanistan Strategic Partnership, with a clear focus on the long term relationship between the two countries. The two leaders reviewed the progress made so far in the implementation of all areas of cooperation envisaged under the strategic partnership agreement, and reaffirmed their commitment to the full implementation of the strategic partnership objectives through its established implementation mechanism of partnership council and its related technical working groups. The Prime Minister assured the President of Afghanistan of India's abiding support for Afghanistan's ongoing crucial transitions-political, economic and security, for the decade of 2015-24 and beyond. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani reiterated Afghanistan's perspective on the foundational nature of Afghanistan's ties with India, and the fact that India figured in four of the five 'circles' of Afghanistan's foreign policy priorities. The two sides reaffirmed

their commitment to each other's unity, integrity and sovereignty, while agreeing that their territories will not be allowed to be used against any other country.

Noting that there is no justification for acts of terrorism, the leaders expressed determination to work together, along with the international community, to combat and defeat the scourge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They called on the international community to severely deal with the safe havens for terrorists that continue to threaten regional and global security. In this context the two leaders also welcomed the recent decision of the US President to extend the draw-down of US troops till the end of 2016.

Prime Minister Shri Modi and President Ghani discussed the efforts undertaken by President Ghani to launch an Afghan-led and Afghan owned reconciliation process within the framework of the Afghan constitution and the internationally accepted red lines. President Ghani strongly affirmed that the hard won political, social and economic gains over the last 14 years, protection of basic human rights of Afghan citizens, especially women and children, Afghanistan's unity, plurality and sovereignty, can never be diluted in any effort to promote the reconciliation process.

Afghanistan's unique geographical location makes it a natural land bridge to connect people and markets of Central Asia to the rapidly growing regions in South Asia. The two leaders noted that for Afghanistan to fully realize its economic potential as a trading and natural resource hub for the wider region, it was important for all neighboring countries to cooperate with Afghanistan to facilitate transit by implementing existing transit agreements, establishing new transit arrangements and developing all the requisite infrastructure. In this context, President Ghani welcomed the steps taken by India to promote business links and trade between the two countries and India's decision as a fourth party to join the recent PATTTA (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan Trade and Transit Agreement) negotiations that would allow the arrangement to contribute in a meaningful manner to the vision of wider regional economic integration. Afghanistan also welcomed the Indian stewardship of the Trade, Commerce and Investment Confidence Building Measures (TCI-CBM) under the Afghan-led Heart of Asia process whose

activities remain focused on showcasing Afghanistan's potential and its unique location at the 'Heart of Asia'.

To facilitate greater business and commercial ties between the two countries, the two leaders agreed to work towards a more liberalized business visa regime for all businesses, including large, medium and small-



size enterprises. The Afghan side also requested India to further liberalize the registration and immigration procedures for citizens of Afghanistan, including tourists, students, refugees and those who remain out of status in India.

The two leaders also pledged to work closely with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to make Chahbahar port a reality, and a viable gateway to Afghanistan and Central Asia. They agreed that routes additional to existing ones will provide a major impetus to Afghanistan's economic reconstruction efforts.

The leaders expressed satisfaction at the nature and scope of India's assistance to Afghanistan and recognized that, among others, the new Afghan Parliament will stand as a testimony to the friendship between our two democracies and nations.

President Ghani also welcomed India's decisions to provide support to the Habibia School, located in Kabul over the next 10 years, contribution to the Afghan Red Crescent Society's program to treat Child Congenital Heart disease (CHD disease) over the next 5 years, and support a program of the 'Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH) in Kabul over the next 5 years.

Recognizing the special role that India is playing in Afghanistan's reconstruction efforts through its capacity building programs, President Ghani welcomed India's decision to extend the 1000 scholarships per year scheme by another 5 years (till the academic year 2021-22). The two sides agreed to increase the number of scholarships for such technical fields as medicine, nursing, engineering, mining, as well as technical, vocational training and skills development. In response to Afghanistan's numerous state capacity building needs, the Indian side offered to expand its technical assistance programs through provision of short- and long-term training courses, including degree programs, for the Afghan civil servants. Furthermore, given India's expertise and experience

in disaster management, the Afghan side requested India's cooperation in strengthening Afghanistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

The two leaders agreed to work together for their shared goal of bringing reforms to the UN system and PM Shri Modi thanked President Ghani for Afghanistan supporting and co-sponsoring the G-4 resolution on UN reforms, including the expansion of the UN Security Council in the 70th year of the UN.

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani expressed his thanks for the gifting of three multi-role Cheetal helicopters from India in April 2015.

The two sides recalling their common rich cultural and historical legacy, where many faiths have peacefully co-existed over centuries, agreed to undertake joint programs to safeguard and preserve cultural and religious symbols of Afghanistan's rich history, including Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist religious and archaeological sites.

While underlining the strength of their bilateral relations, the leaders acknowledged that peace, prosperity and security in the region was indivisible, and their mutually respectful relations are not at expense of other nations or group of nations.

The two leaders agreed to sign the following documents within three months of the visit:

- Extradition Treaty between India and Afghanistan
- Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons between India and Afghanistan
- Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) in Criminal Matters
- Bilateral Treaty for Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters between India and Afghanistan
- Motor Vehicles Agreement For The Regulation Of Passenger, Personal And Cargo Vehicular Traffic Between India and Afghanistan.
- MOU on Visa free entry for holders of diplomatic passports.

The President of Afghanistan thanked the President of India for the warmth, cordiality and gracious hospitality extended to him and members of his delegation during their stay in India.





Visit of the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, to Russia

May 07-11, 2015

India's President Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited the Russian Federation from May 7-11 at the invitation of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The President was accompanied by various Ministers and a delegation of academics. While in Moscow, he participated in events to commemorate World War II, along with other world leaders during which Shri Mukherjee reiterated India's commitment to peace and re-affirmed its solidarity with the Russian people.

Hon'ble President's visit also reflected the importance that India places on its strategic partnership with Russia, which has stood the test of time. The President had a bilateral meeting with his Russian counterpart Mr Putin on May 9, 2015, during which they reviewed progress on bilateral issues and discussed the rapidly evolving global scenario. In return, Russian President Putin reiterated his commitment to further enhancing ties with India. President Mukherjee expressed his satisfaction at the progress made in several areas, including defence and economic cooperation, and his pleasure at receiving an honorary doctorate from the prestigious Diplomatic Academy in Moscow.

Education was another major focus area of Shri Mukherjee's visit, with India seeking to further develop its scientific and technical fields, in which Russia excels. During his visit President Mukherjee inaugurated 'Namaste Russia', the biennial cultural Festival of India in Russia, and India's Festival of Russian Culture. These festivals have emerged as a leading platform for people of both countries to experience cultural representations of their two ancient civilisations.

Other highlights of the President's memorable visit included paying tribute at the statue of Rabindranath Tagore in Moscow's Friendship Park, interacting with Russia's leading Indologists and engaging with other world leaders. Concluding his visit, President Mukherjee expressed his appreciation to President

Putin and his government for their hospitality, and conveyed good wishes from the people of India to him and the Russian people.



President inaugurates 'Namaste Russia'

On May 10, 2015, in Moscow, Indian President Shri Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the Festival of Indian Culture in Russia, entitled 'Namaste Russia'.

Indian culture and its heritage, said the President, have long been appreciated across Russia, while in India there is enormous regard for Russian culture.

With the support of the Russian Ministry of Culture, he said, 'Namaste Russia' will reach various regions of Russia over the next six months.





Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Republic of Korea

May 18-19, 2015

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi paid a State Visit to the Republic of Korea (ROK) at the invitation of H.E. Mme. Park Geun-hye, President of the Republic of Korea (ROK) on May 18-19, 2015. During the visit, Shri Modi held a summit meeting with President Park.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Park held substantive discussions in areas of mutual interest. They welcomed the rapid expansion and diversification of bilateral ties in recent years. Both sides shared the view that President Park's State Visit to India in January 2014 provided impetus to development of bilateral relations in a comprehensive manner. The two leaders agreed to upgrade the bilateral relationship to a 'Special Strategic Partnership'.

Recalling the historical and cultural bonds that connect the two peoples, the two sides noted that their shared commitment to values of democracy, open society and liberal international economic order has further strengthened the foundation of the ROK-India Special Strategic Partnership. The two leaders resolved to add new substance, speed and content in the partnership in a wide range of areas including foreign affairs, defense, trade and investment, science and technology, culture and people-to-people exchanges and regional cooperation to take the bilateral relations to a qualitatively higher level. Political and Security Relations

India sees the ROK as an indispensable partner in its "Act East" strategy, and the ROK and India recognize the value of the bilateral partnership and its contribution to bringing peace, stability and security in the Asia Pacific Region. President Park informed Prime Minister Shri Modi about ROK's Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI). Prime Minister welcomed ROK's desire to enhance cooperation and security among countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The two leaders agreed that the two sides should work together to find complementarities between NAPCI and Act East Policy to achieve shared goals.

The two sides agreed to further intensify bilateral high-level exchanges. They shared the view that bilateral defence and security cooperation has large potential to grow.

Welcoming the visit of the Speaker of the Korean National Assembly to India in May 2015, the two sides hoped for increased exchange of India-Korea parliamentary delegations. They shared the view that the exchange of India-Korea parliamentary delegations will contribute towards greater interaction and understanding between the two Parliaments.

To substantiate the Special Strategic Partnership the two sides agreed to the following:

- Establish annual Summit meetings, in either country, or on the margins of plurilateral events;
- Hold Joint Commissions led by the two Foreign Ministers annually;
- Facilitate greater parliamentary exchanges to strengthen democratic institutions in their respective regions;
- Strengthen the partnerships between Indian and Korean institutions of defense education, including the National Defence College of India and the National Defense University of Korea, by activating the dispatch of military officers for education;
- Further strengthen regular consultations between the National Security Council structures of the two countries on security, defence and cyber related issues;



- Establish a joint Vice Ministerial level defence and foreign affairs dialogue in the “2+2” Format;
- Encourage greater cooperation between their shipyards for defence needs;
- Pursue further deepening of defence cooperation through commencement of staff level talks between the two navies and regular exchanges of visits between the two armed forces;
- Seek the means of the cyber security cooperation to prepare against transnational cyber threats;
- Cooperate appropriately in the area of UN Peacekeeping; and
- Hold a track 1.5 dialogue annually between Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security of ROK (IFANS) - Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA).

Trade and Investment

President Park welcomed India's 'Make in India' initiative as it provides new avenues to enrich and add substance to the bilateral relations. Prime Minister Shri Modi invited the ROK to become a privileged partner in 'Make in India' to which President Park conveyed

her appreciation. Both leaders acknowledged that trade and investment between both countries have enormous potential for further development. They directed their respective officials to undertake in-depth consultations to leverage fully the potential of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the Republic of Korea and the Republic of India and to make full use of the current discussion mechanisms under the CEPA, such as the Joint Committee, for that purpose.

Recognizing the salience of trade and investment to the bilateral partnership, the leaders called upon the business community from India and Korea to leverage the enormous synergies between their economies for mutual prosperity.

The leaders welcomed:

- i. Signing of the revised Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement;
- ii. The Ministry of Strategy and Finance and the Export-Import Bank of Korea expressed their intention to provide US \$10 billion for mutual cooperation in infrastructure, comprising Economic Development Cooperation Fund (US \$ 1 billion) and export credits (US \$ 9 billion) for priority sectors, including smart cities, railways, power generation and transmission, and other sectors to be agreed. The two governments and the EXIM Banks of the two countries will hold consultations to chalk out a roadmap in order to materialize the envisioned financial support for priority sectors;
- iii. Commencement of negotiations to amend the India-Korea CEPA by June 2016 with a view to achieving qualitative and quantitative increase of trade through an agreed roadmap;
- iv. Mutual cooperation to be explored for enabling cities with updated technologies including smart grids for building of smart cities, in view of their crucial influence on improving the quality of residential environments and achieving





sustainable economic development;

- v. Cooperation in the steel sector by encouraging the steel industry of both countries to develop mutually beneficial projects;
- vi. interest of companies of the two countries in cooperation in the area of shipbuilding, including the construction of Indian vessels such as LNG carriers. The Indian government expressed its hope to discuss partnership with Korea with an aim to modernize the Indian shipbuilding industry. The governments of both countries decided to provide support for facilitating private sector discussion on ways to cooperate in this area. A Joint Working Group that includes the government and private sectors of the two countries will be established to facilitate cooperation in the shipbuilding sector;
- vii. Cooperation for stable maritime transport, possible joint business projects in the area of shipping and logistics, and promotion of employment of both countries' seafarers;
- viii. Cooperation to expedite the necessary procedures for mutual export of fresh fruits and horticultural products;
- ix. Progress made in establishment of the Korean Industrial Park in the State of Rajasthan. They agreed that the Industrial Park will help Korean small and medium enterprises to benefit from 'Make in India' initiative. They shared the same view that it is desirable to establish more offices of both countries' respective trade agencies, including KOTRA, to facilitate trade, investment and industrial cooperation between the two countries;
- x. The first meeting of the Korea-India CEO Forum which will be held in Seoul on 19 May 2015. The CEO Forum will play a significant role to boost exchanges and dialogues between enterprises of the two countries, enhance mutual investment and further pragmatic bilateral business cooperation; and

- xi. The decision to set up an India-Korea Joint Working Group in the field of Electronics Hardware manufacturing to enhance co-operation and facilitate business collaboration through joint ventures and technology transfer on a commercial basis between Indian and Korean electronics manufacturing companies, and the creation of a business friendly environment in this field.

Reaffirming the important role that friendly contact between the Indian and Korean people has played in building this partnership, the two leaders welcomed and encouraged the ongoing efforts, including through an aviation cooperation conference, by their respective civil aviation authorities to amend the bilateral Air Services Agreement with a view to enhancing flight connectivity and to covering more cities. Technology, Energy and Environment

President Park lauded Prime Minister's Swachh Bharat Abhiyan as an effort to transform India. Recognizing that Saemaul Undong (SMU), Korea's successful rural development initiative in the 1970s, can make a substantial contribution to accomplishing the vision of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, the two leaders agreed that both sides would promote cooperation to create synergies by combining development experiences of both sides.

Recognizing the integral link between economic growth, preservation of environment and clean energy, India and Korea agreed to enhance exchanges between their respective Ministries and agencies.

Lauding the Korean Green Economy initiative, India expressed willingness to work with Korea for mutually-beneficial partnerships in deploying innovative policies and technologies to improve urban water and air quality and to protect natural resources.

The two leaders expressed their appreciation on ongoing cooperation in science & technology and noted that joint R&D projects are being implemented in focused areas of Renewable Energy, Materials Science, Robotics & Engineering Sciences and Health Sciences. The leaders further emphasized that both sides should develop strong academia-industry



connect programmes in areas such as Cleantech, Robotics & Automation and Electronics System Design & Manufacturing (ESDM), which can address economic and societal challenges of the two countries.

Two sides agreed that cooperation in space sector has many possibilities. They welcomed the agreement between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI) to pursue cooperation in the areas of lunar exploration, satellite navigation and space science and application as below:

- Deep space cross tracking and communication support for Korean and Indian deep space missions;
- Sharing of data of lunar surface and radiation data collected by Chandrayan-1;
- Collaboration in GAGAN-KASS interoperability and sharing experience in GAGAN (GPS Aided Geo Augmented Navigation system) and KASS (Korea Augmentation Satellite System);
- Technological cooperation in the field of space science and its application, satellite launch, and other areas they agree; and
- Holding working-level talks regularly between ISRO and KARI to strengthen the substantive way of cooperation in the areas mentioned above.

Culture, Education and People-to-People Exchanges

In view of the long history of cultural contact between the Indian and Korean people, President Park welcomed Prime Minister Shri Modi's decision to send a full Festival of India in Korea in autumn of 2015. India also welcomed an opportunity to host a Festival of Korea in India in 2016. In this context, the two leaders also welcomed efforts to strengthen their historic connection by enhancing linkages of Korean people with Ayodhya, and agreed to upgrade the monument for Queen Suriratna /Hur Hwang-ok in Ayodhya as a joint project between the two sides. President Park expressed deep appreciation of Korean people for the gift of holy Bodhi tree sapling.

The President and the Prime Minister called for an intensification of youth delegations to encourage greater understanding and interaction between the future leaders of the two countries. Indian side expressed interest in enhancing cooperation among educational institutes of the two sides, including among relevant technological institutes and in language teaching.

Both leaders agreed to encourage establishment of twin city and twin province/state relationships to deepen and broaden people-to-people exchanges.

Korea invited India to participate in the exhibition titled "Masterpieces of Early Buddhist Sculpture, 100 BCE-700CE" which will commemorate National Museum of Korea's 10th anniversary of reconstruction and opening to the public. India welcomed the invitation and agreed to actively cooperate for the exhibition. The two leaders hoped to promote mutual understanding and appreciation between the two countries, and to broaden cultural relations of the two countries. In addition, they agreed to further explore cooperation on preservation, restoration, and joint research in the field of cultural heritage of both countries.

India invited Korea to participate in the two day seminar on "Shared Heritage as New Variable in the Indo-Korean Relations: Historicizing the Legend of Princess from Ayodhya and its Legacy" being organized by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in collaboration with India International Center in New Delhi. Korea welcomed the invitation. Regional and Multilateral Cooperation

The two leaders underlined the paramount importance of peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. In this regard, they expressed concern over the development of DPRK's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs, which is in violation of its international obligations and commitments. They urged the DPRK to fully comply with all of its international obligations, including under the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, and to fulfil its commitments under the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. Prime Minister Shri Modi expressed support for President Park's efforts to build trust in the Korean peninsula and to lay the groundwork for peaceful reunification of

the Korean peninsula.

Recognizing the increasing and evolving threat posed to world peace and stability from international terrorism, the two leaders reiterated their commitment to the eradication of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and called on international community to work closely to address this challenge. They called for an early conclusion of negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. They recognized the need to eliminate terrorist safe havens and infrastructure, disrupt terrorist networks and their financing, and stop cross-border movement of terrorists, including by implementing the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, as well as enhancing countering violent extremism efforts. They called on all States to work sincerely to achieve these objectives.

President Park highlighted her Eurasia Initiative and the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI), and agreed to explore ways to work with India's Act East and Connect Central Asia policies for the common prosperity of the region. Prime Minister Shri Modi also expressed his willingness to explore ways to work with the NAPCI and the Eurasia Initiative for the peace and stability of the region and beyond.

India and the ROK underlined their shared interest in strengthening global non-proliferation objectives. The ROK took note of India's wish to join the international export control regimes and agreed that India's entry will have a positive influence on strengthening the global non-proliferation regimes. The ROK expressed its support for India's early membership of the four multilateral export control regimes, namely, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, Missile Technology Control Regime, Australia Group and Wassenaar Arrangement, based upon consensus within each regime.

Recognizing the need for comprehensive UN reforms including Security Council expansion to make the body more representative, accountable and effective, both sides agreed to work towards UNSC reforms to reflect contemporary realities and include major developing countries.

Prime Minister Shri Modi thanked President Park and the Government and People of the ROK for the warmth of their hospitality. The two leaders agreed that this Summit meeting had qualitatively raised the partnership to the next level. Prime Minister Shri Modi invited President Park to visit India again soon to ensure that the high momentum of this partnership is sustained. President Park accepted the invitation with pleasure.

During the visit following Agreements and MOUs were signed in the presence of the two leaders:

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Korea for the Avoidance of Double

Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income;

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Korea on Cooperation in Audio-Visual Co-production;
- MOU for Cooperation between the National Security Council Secretariat of the Republic of India and the Office of National Security of the Republic of Korea ;
- MOU between the Ministry of Power of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of the Republic of Korea concerning Cooperation in the field of Electric Power Development and New Energy Industries;
- MOU between the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the Republic of Korea on Cooperation in Youth Matters;
- Framework of Cooperation in the Field of Road Transport and Highways between the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of the Republic of Korea; and
- MOU between the Ministry of Shipping of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea on Cooperation in the Fields of Maritime Transport and Logistics.





Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Mongolia

May 17-18, 2015

At the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Chimedijn Saikhanbileg, Prime Minister of Mongolia, His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, paid a state visit to Mongolia from 16 to 18 May, 2015.

Prime Minister Shri Modi held bilateral discussions with Prime Minister Ch. Saikhanbileg. President Ts. Elbegdorj, hosted a luncheon for Prime Minister Shri Modi. During his meeting with Speaker Z. Enkhbold, Prime Minister Shri Modi expressed his deep appreciation for according him the privilege to address the State Great Hural of Mongolia.

A New Chapter

The two Prime Ministers underscored the significance of the visit in the backdrop of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and India. It is the first ever visit by an Indian Prime Minister marking the dawn of a new era in Mongolia-India relations.

They further noted with satisfaction the continued development of bilateral relations in the framework of a comprehensive partnership based on deep civilizational, historical, spiritual and cultural linkages, common democratic traditions and shared desire for regional as well as international peace and stability.

Given the shared desire to remain trusted partners, the two Prime Ministers pledged to further consolidate India-Mongolia comprehensive partnership, and agreed to elevate the level of the comprehensive partnership to a Strategic Partnership that is conducive to the common cause of the international community for peace and prosperity, and aligned with the collective interests of our two countries and our peoples.

Future directions and objectives

The two Prime Ministers confirmed that developing a Strategic Partnership, which is guided by the universally

recognized principles of sovereign equality of states, the principles of the United Nations Charter, collective interests of our peoples and the fundamental ideals of the Treaty of Friendly Relations and Cooperation between Republic of India and Mongolia, signed on February 22, 1994, and other bilateral documents, would be their common yet a new objective of their respective foreign policies. In line with this policy the two sides reached the following understanding:

Political and Security Partnership

The two Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the increased high-level exchanges between the two countries in recent years and how these exchanges have significantly reinforced the momentum for cooperation between the two countries.

The two Prime Ministers acknowledged the importance to maintain the frequency of reciprocal visits, and agreed to further promote the exchanges of visits at all levels, namely between the government leaders, ministers, parliamentarians and senior officials and regular political dialogue on the sidelines of multilateral events.

The two Prime Ministers agreed to further encourage institutional linkages, including parliamentary as well as governmental interactions, to hold regular dialogue on bilateral relations, other regional and global issues of mutual interest and concern through existing mechanisms such as the Joint Committee on Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia, policy consultations between the two Foreign Ministries and all other channels of communication.

The next meeting of the Joint Committee on Cooperation will be held in Ulaanbaatar in 2015 at a mutually convenient time.

India and Mongolia support the evolution of open,



balanced and inclusive security architecture in the Asia Pacific region based on collective efforts, considering legitimate interests of all states of the region guided by respect for norms and principles of international law. The two Prime Ministers reiterated their readiness to strengthen regional as well as multilateral cooperation, including through enhanced interaction in the UN and other regional and international organizations.

The two Prime Ministers stressed the urgent need for reform of United Nations Security Council by expanding in both permanent and non-permanent categories to reflect contemporary realities and make it more representative and effective in dealing with emerging challenges. They underscored that the year 2015, being 70th Anniversary Year of the United Nations, provided a historic opportunity to push for concrete outcomes on the unanimous call for “early reforms” of UNSC made collectively by all Heads of States and Governments in 2005.

The Government of Mongolia reiterated its support to India's candidature for permanent membership of the UNSC when the expansion takes place. The Government of India expressed its appreciation to the Government of Mongolia for its expression of support. India and Mongolia have also agreed to offer reciprocal support for their bids for a non-permanent seat in the UNSC for the terms 2021-2022 and 2023-2024 respectively.

The Government of India also confirmed its support to Mongolia's candidacy to the UN Human Rights Council for the terms 2016-2018.

Both Prime Ministers noted that the nature and spread of international terrorism in recent years poses a threat to all humanity and requires global resolve and cooperative measures of the international community without double standards or selectivity. They agreed to direct concerned officials to work together for the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention



on International Terrorism. The Prime Ministers expressed hope that all safe havens and sanctuaries for terrorists will be wiped out without delay.

The two Prime Ministers recognized their shared interests in security of cyber domain, and decided to work with each other to preserve the integrity and inviolability of this global common.

Defence & Security Cooperation

The two Prime Ministers agreed to continue to work towards further intensifying bilateral defense and security cooperation through exchanges of high and mid-level visits, regular consultations and dialogue between the Ministries of Defense and other relevant organizations, including the National Security Councils, military personnel exchanges, capacity building, technical cooperation, specialized vocational training, joint exercises in Special Forces and information security, collaboration in UN as well as to other international peacekeeping operations.

The two Prime Ministers welcomed the cooperation between the border security guards of both the countries. Mutual sharing of the experiences between Mongolian and Indian border forces will further strengthen the bilateral defence and security cooperation.

Mongolia and India have been cooperating with each other in the area of cyber security domain. Mongolian Prime Minister expressed his appreciation to India's support to set up a cyber security centre in Mongolia.

Economic Cooperation

The two Prime Ministers agreed to encourage development of equal and mutually beneficial trade, investment and economic cooperation, which is balanced, sustainable, and leads to prosperity in both countries.

India will continue to support Mongolia's endeavor to create a business friendly foreign investment regime.



The two Prime Ministers agreed to encourage Indian companies to further explore cooperation opportunities in Mongolia's mining sector through joint ventures and investment.

Recalling the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2009 between the Department of Atomic Energy of India and the Nuclear Energy Agency of Mongolia for cooperation in the field of Peaceful Use of Radioactive Minerals and Nuclear Energy, the two Prime Ministers noted the intensified cooperation in civil nuclear domain, such as societal and industrial applications of radioisotopes, exploration and mining of radioactive minerals in Mongolia, and human resource development.

Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, welcomed Mongolia to partner in India's economic transformation and noted that Mongolia's rich mineral deposits, including radioactive minerals, could help power India's low-carbon growth, while helping Mongolia in developing indigenous capabilities and economic opportunities in the mining sector. The two Prime Ministers asked the Joint Working Group established between their atomic energy establishments to explore opportunities for future collaborative actions in the spirit of mutual benefit.

Given the immense potential to collaborate in the agriculture sector, the two Prime Ministers encouraged fostering deeper and closer cooperation in animal husbandry, production of dairy products, sharing of expertise and know-how, technology transfer and other forms of cooperation.

Health Sector Cooperation

The two Prime Ministers noted the potential and their common desire to strengthen cooperation in the health sector and that future cooperation would serve their collective interest and contribute to the social development of the people of both countries.

The Mongolian Prime Minister thanked India for its support for the development of peaceful use of nuclear energy in Mongolia, and appreciated the

gesture of providing Bhabhatron-II tele-therapy unit and a Radiotherapy Simulator, designed, developed and manufactured in India to the National Cancer Center of Mongolia.

Scientific, Cultural and People to People contacts

The two Prime Ministers agreed to promote continued cooperation in the scientific, educational and IT sectors by developing mechanisms for capacity building, collaborative research, technical cooperation, exchange of information and experience sharing.

The two Prime Ministers acknowledged that the richness of the relationship between Mongolia and India is a result of the long-standing people to people contacts, and shared the view to further promote greater awareness and mutual understanding between

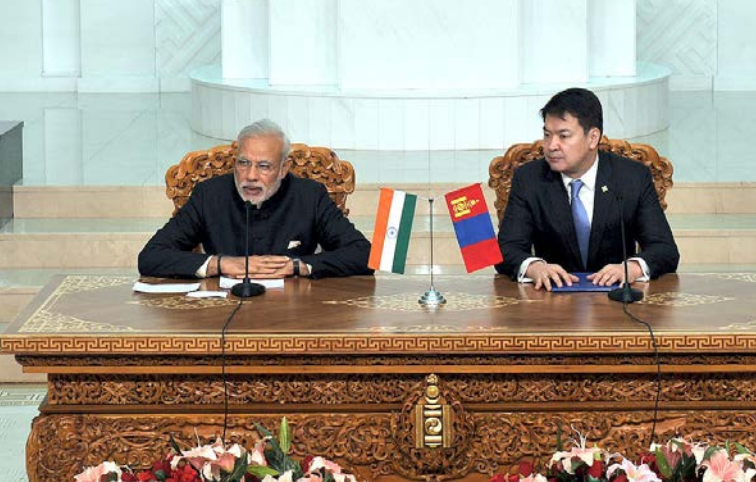


the peoples of the two countries, through enhancing education and cultural cooperation, better utilization of current scholarships under the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarship program with a viewpoint of increasing the number of student scholarships in the future.

The two Prime Ministers agreed to offer up to 5 scholarships each year to the students upon the request of the other Party for learning Mongolian and Hindi languages, Mongolian and Indian culture in their academic institutions.

The two Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the decision to set up Mongolia-India Joint School in Ulaanbaatar. They also welcomed the selection of a Project Management Consultant for the utilization of US\$20 million line of credit to expand the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Centre for Excellence in Information Technology and Communication in Ulaanbaatar to include an Outsourcing Centre. The expanded Centre will be renamed as the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Centre for Excellence in Information Technology & Communication and Outsourcing.

The two Prime Ministers agreed to look into a possibility to ease travel between the two countries by exploring direct air links between Mongolia and India to facilitate greater people to people interactions as well as ways



to simplify the existing visa conditions. Mongolian side conveyed its appreciation for India's decision to extend e-Tourist Visa (eTV) facility to its nationals.

In order to highlight each other's cultural and spiritual heritage, both Prime Ministers agreed to encourage exchanges of films, electronic and print media, performing and fine arts, museums and other related areas of cultural expression and to support mutual establishing of cultural centers.

The two Prime Ministers noted the shared ancient cultural, spiritual and civilizational ties and enduring goodwill between their people. The Mongolian side appreciated the gesture of India, to present a sapling of the sacred Bodhi tree. India agreed to positively consider the request of Mongolia for providing Buddha statue to the Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, as a symbol of an enduring tradition of spiritual bonding between the peoples of the two countries.

To rediscover the shared cultural heritage, both Prime Ministers agreed to initiate a joint translation project of "Holy Tripitaka" into Mongolian language.

Laying Down Frameworks for Future Cooperation

The two Prime Ministers witnessed the signing of the following bilateral documents:

1. Air Services Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia
2. Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons
3. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India Government of Mongolia on Cooperation in the Field of Animal Health and Dairy
4. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia on Cooperation in the Field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy
5. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia and on Establishment of Cyber Security Training Centre in the Ministry of Defence of Mongolia

6. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia on Establishment of India-Mongolia Joint Friendship School in Mongolia
7. Programme on Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia in the field of Culture for the Years 2015-2018
8. Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation between the National Security Council of the Republic of India and the National Security Council of Mongolia
9. Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia
10. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Energy of Mongolia
11. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Justice of Mongolia for enhancing co-operation in Border Guarding, Policing and Surveillance
12. Memorandum of Understanding between the Tata Memorial Centre of India and the National Cancer Center of Mongolia for Gifting of Bhabhatron-II Tele-therapy Unit along with a Radiotherapy Simulator
13. Memorandum of Understanding between the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia

Looking forward

The two Prime Ministers agreed to take the opportunity of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2015 to organize joint cultural activities in their respective countries.

The two Prime Ministers agreed to work closely on issues discussed and agreed on during the official talks between Prime Minister Shri Modi and Mongolian leadership through existing bilateral mechanisms and all other means of interaction to ensure concrete outcomes of bilateral cooperation in the years to come.

The State Visit of the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi has consolidated the longstanding, cordial and cooperative ties between Mongolia and India, and contributed greatly to further developing the newly established bilateral partnership.



Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to China

May 14-16, 2015

Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister paid an official visit to China at the invitation of H.E. Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. Prime Minister Shri Modi called on H.E. Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China and held talks with H.E. Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council. He also met with H.E. Mr. Zhang Dejiang, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China. Prime Minister Shri Modi expressed his deep appreciation for the special gestures extended by President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang during the visit and thanked the Chinese people for the warm welcome accorded to him.

Leaders of the two countries reviewed the progress of bilateral relations. The two sides shared the view that President Xi's visit to India in September 2014 was a significant milestone in the development of bilateral relations. The leaders noted that there is a historic imperative for India and China to enrich their bilateral relations, with the agreement on building closer developmental partnership reached during President Xi's visit to India as a core component.

The leaders agreed that simultaneous re-emergence of India and China as two major powers in the region and the world offers a momentous opportunity for realisation of the Asian Century. They noted that India-China bilateral relations are poised to play a defining role in the 21st Century in Asia and indeed, globally. The leaders agreed that the process of the two countries pursuing their respective national developmental goals and security interests must unfold in a mutually supportive manner with both sides showing mutual respect and sensitivity to each other's concerns, interests and aspirations. This constructive model of relationship between the two largest developing countries, the biggest emerging economies and two major poles in the global architecture provides a new basis for pursuing state-to-state relations to strengthen the international system.

Strengthening Political Dialogue and Strategic

Communication

Recognizing the expanding bilateral relationship, the growing international role of India and China and the imperative of forging strategic trust, the leaders agreed to enhance communication through frequent exchanges at the leadership level and by fully utilising the existing dialogue mechanisms.

The two sides agreed to regular visits at the level of Heads of State/ Government. Full use will be made of the opportunities provided by the presence of their leaders at various multilateral fora to hold consultations on bilateral relations and issues of regional and global importance.

Noting the increasingly important role played by Indian States and Chinese Provinces in advancing the bilateral relationship, the two sides agreed to establish a State/ Provincial Leaders' Forum. The first meeting of the Forum was held in Beijing on May 15, 2015, with the participation of Prime Minister Shri Modi and Premier Li.

Acknowledging the contribution of high-level exchanges organised under the aegis of the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in fostering cooperation and understanding, the two sides agreed to institutionalise and expand the exchange mechanism.

In order to facilitate and promote greater cultural, tourism, economic and people-to-people engagement between the two countries, an additional Consulate General shall be established in each other's country. India shall open a new Consulate General in Chengdu, while China shall open a new Consulate General in Chennai.

The two sides believed that enhanced military ties are conducive to building mutual trust and confidence. The Indian side welcomed visit of a Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission of China to India this year,



and the Chinese side invited Indian Defence Minister and other military leaders to visit China this year. The fifth joint counter-terrorism training between the two armies will be held in China in 2015. The two sides will exchange visits of naval ships and hold PASSEX and SAR exercises.

The two sides acknowledged the positive role of the Agreements and Protocols that have been signed so far in maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas. Committed to enhance border defence cooperation, the two sides will carry out annual visits and exchanges between the two Military Headquarters and neighbouring military commands, endeavour to operationalize the hotline between the two Military Headquarters, expand the exchanges between the border commanders, and establish border personnel meeting points at all sectors of the India-China border areas.

The two sides affirmed that an early settlement of the boundary question serves the basic interests of the two countries and should be pursued as a strategic objective by the two governments. Bearing in mind the overall bilateral relations and the long-term interests of the two peoples, the two sides are determined to actively seek a political settlement of the boundary question. They made a positive assessment of the

important progress made through the mechanism of the Special Representatives, and reaffirmed the commitment to abide by the three-stage process for the settlement of the boundary question, and continuously push forward negotiation on the framework for a boundary settlement based on the outcomes and common understanding achieved so far, in an effort to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution as early as possible.

The two sides will resolve outstanding differences, including the boundary question, in a proactive manner. Those differences should not be allowed to come in the way of continued development of bilateral relations. Peace and tranquillity on the India-China border was recognized as an important guarantor for the development and continued growth of bilateral relations. Pending a final resolution of the boundary question, the two sides commit to implementing the existing agreements and continue to make efforts to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

Next Steps in Closer Developmental Partnership

The two sides resolved to work together to further strengthen their closer developmental partnership as it would provide impetus to economic growth and prosperity of the two countries as well as of their

respective regions and the world at large.

Taking note of the increase in two-way trade and investment flows in the past few years, the two sides acknowledged its positive contribution to strengthening their overall bilateral relationship and to supporting each other's growth and development processes. In this regard, it was agreed that both sides will take necessary measures to remove impediments to bilateral trade and investment, facilitate greater market access to each other's economies, and support local governments of the two countries to strengthen trade and investment exchanges, with a view to optimally exploiting the present and potential complementarities in identified sectors in the Five Year Trade and Economic Development Plan signed in September 2014, including Indian pharmaceuticals, Indian IT services, tourism, textiles and agro-products.

The two sides resolved to take joint measures to alleviate the skewed bilateral trade so as to realize its sustainability. Such measures will include cooperation on pharmaceutical supervision including registration, speedier phytosanitary negotiations on agro-products for two-way trade, stronger links between Indian IT companies and Chinese enterprises, and increasing services trade in tourism, films, healthcare, IT and logistics. Both sides will make full use of the India-China Joint Economic Group to work on this. The leaders welcomed the decision to expedite discussion and endeavour to favourably address, in the spirit of mutual cooperation and reciprocity, the issues pertaining to tariff reduction in respect of relevant Indian products under the framework of Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement.

The two leaders agreed that the Strategic Economic Dialogue is an important mechanism to explore new areas of bilateral economic cooperation. The next meeting of the Strategic Economic Dialogue, co-chaired by Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog of India and Chairman of NDRC of China, will be held in India during the second half of 2015.

The leaders noted with appreciation the positive momentum in investment projects as Chinese companies respond to the invitation to 'Make in India' and Indian companies expand their presence in China.

The two leaders noted with satisfaction the steps taken and the progress achieved in the Railway sector cooperation including the projects on speed raising on the existing Chennai-Bengaluru-Mysore line, the proposed feasibility studies for the Delhi-Nagpur section of high speed rail link, the station redevelopment planning for Bhubaneswar & Baiyappanahalli, heavy haul transportation training and setting up of a railway university. They welcomed the Action Plan outlining the next steps in the partnership in this key infrastructure sector.

The leaders welcomed the signing of the MoU to institute a dialogue mechanism between the NITI



Aayog of India and the Development Research Centre of the State Council of China.

The two sides expressed their readiness to enhance cooperation between the financial regulators and enterprises of the two countries in support of the building of the Closer Developmental Partnership.

Culture and People-to-people Exchanges

Prime Minister Shri Modi and Premier Li attended the Yoga-Taichi demonstration event in Beijing on 15 May 2015. The two sides also agreed to work together to successfully organize events related to the International Yoga Day on 21 June 2015. The leaders welcomed collaboration between the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Yunnan National University.

The leaders noted that enhanced exchanges among education institutions of the two sides will play a positive role in socio-economic development of the two sides. They welcomed the signing of the expanded Educational Exchange Programme.

The two sides expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved in the India-China Cultural Exchange Initiative. The two sides will have the annual exchange of 200 youths from each side in the second half of this year.

The agreements on establishing a provincial partnership between Karnataka and Sichuan and sister-city relationships between Aurangabad - Dunhuang, Chennai - Chongqing and Hyderabad - Qingdao were welcomed.

With a view to foster closer dialogue and mutual understanding, the two sides decided to establish a 'India-China Think Tanks Forum', which will meet annually, alternately in India and China. They also agreed to institutionalize the 'High Level Media Forum' and tasked the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the State Council Information Office of China to convene it on an annual basis, alternately in India and China. The leaders welcomed the establishment of



the Center for Gandhian and Indian Studies at Fudan University, Shanghai.

New Avenues for Cooperation

The leaders welcomed continuous enrichment of India-China Closer Developmental Partnership with its expansion into newer areas of cooperation. The leaders welcomed initiation and expansion of cooperation in the following fields and mandated the relevant agencies to implement the projects in a purposeful manner:

- i. Enhanced cooperation in vocational training and skill development, including through the signing of the Action Plan on the establishment of Mahatma Gandhi National Institute for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship at Gandhinagar/Ahmedabad in Gujarat;
- ii. Initiating cooperation in development of smart cities with identification of GIFT City in India and Shenzhen in China as pilot smart cities for joint demonstration projects;
- iii. In peaceful uses of outer space and the peaceful use of nuclear energy;
- iv. In the sphere of public health, medical education and traditional medicine;
- v. Welcomed the establishment of the Space Cooperation Mechanism between space authorities of India and China and the signing of the 2015-2020 Space Cooperation Outline between the Indian Space Research Organization of the Republic of India and China National Space Administration of the People's Republic of China. The two sides agreed to reinforce the cooperation in the field of Satellite Remote Sensing, Space-Based meteorology, Space Science, Lunar and Deep Space Exploration, Satellite Navigation, Space Components, Piggy-back Launching Services, and Education and Training.

- vi. Noting the recent visit of the Minister of Justice of

China to India, the two sides agreed to strengthen cooperation between the law enforcing agencies of the two sides including on measures to enhance welfare of nationals of either side in the prisons of the other side. The two sides welcomed start of discussions on an agreement for transfer of sentenced persons.

Trans-border Cooperation

The Indian side expressed appreciation to China for providing flood-season hydrological data and the assistance in emergency management. The two sides will further strengthen cooperation through the Expert-Level Mechanism on the provision of flood-season hydrological data and emergency management, and exchange views on other issues of mutual interest.

The two sides recognized that enhancing border areas cooperation through border trade, pilgrimage by people of the two countries and other exchanges can effectively promote mutual trust, and agreed to further broaden this cooperation so as to transform the border into a bridge of cooperation and exchanges. The two sides agreed to hold negotiation on augmenting the list of traded commodities, and expand border trade at Nathu La, Qiangla/Lipu-Lekh Pass and Shipki La.

The Indian side appreciated the support and cooperation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the local government of Tibet Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China to Indian pilgrims for the Kailash Manasarover Yatra (Gang Renpoche and Mapam Yun Tso Pilgrimage). To further promote religious exchange between the two countries and provide facilitation for Indian pilgrims, the Chinese side would launch the route for the Yatra through Nathu La Pass in 2015.

Shaping the Regional and Global Agenda

As two major powers in the emerging world order, engagement between India and China transcends the bilateral dimension and has a significant bearing on regional, multilateral and global issues. Both

Sides agreed to not only step up their consultations on developments affecting international peace, security and development but also coordinate their positions and work together to shape the regional and global agenda and outcomes. They agreed to further strengthen coordination and cooperation in multilateral forums including RIC, BRICS and G20, promote the interests of developing countries and the building of a better world. India will support China in hosting the G20 summit in 2016.

The leaders welcomed the decision to launch a bilateral consultative mechanism on WTO-related issues as a positive step for enhancing coordination in the context of global trade talks.

Both sides reiterated their strong condemnation of and resolute opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and committed themselves to cooperate on counter-terrorism. They agreed that there is no justification for terrorism and urged all countries and entities to work sincerely to disrupt terrorist networks and their financing, and stop cross-border movement of terrorists, in accordance with the relevant principles and purposes of the UN Charter and international laws. They called for early conclusion of negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

The two sides support a comprehensive reform of the United Nations, including recognizing the imperative of increased participation of developing countries in UN's affairs and governance structures, so as to bring more effectiveness to the UN. China attaches great importance to India's status in international affairs as a large developing country, and understands and supports India's aspiration to play a greater role in the United Nations including in the Security Council.

The two sides are ready to continue cooperation under the framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organization. China welcomed India's application for full membership of Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The two sides agreed to work together with relevant parties to accelerate the preparation for establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to promote regional infrastructure and economic development.

The two sides welcomed the progress made in

promoting cooperation under the framework of the BCIM (Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar) Economic Corridor. Both sides recalled the second meeting of the Joint Study Group of BCIM Economic Corridor, and agreed to continue their respective efforts to implement understandings reached at the meeting.

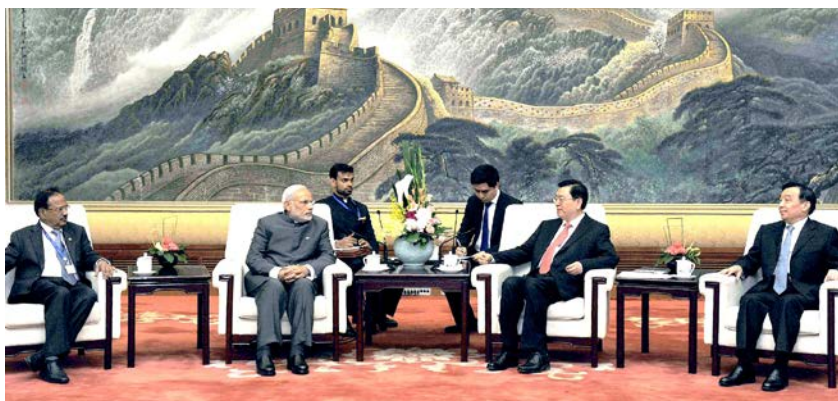
The two sides agreed to broaden cooperation in SAARC.

Both sides recognized that APEC has a significant role in advancing regional economic integration and in promoting regional economic growth and prosperity, and welcomes the success of the Beijing APEC meeting. China acknowledged India's important role in driving the global economic growth, supported the openness of APEC, and welcomed India's desire to strengthen its link with APEC.

The two sides welcomed the India-China Dialogue on Arms Control and Non-Proliferation held in Beijing on April 17, 2015. Noting the commonalities in their approach to global arms control and non-proliferation, they agreed to continue their engagement bilaterally and in multilateral fora on arms control and non-proliferation. The Chinese side took note of India's aspirations to become a member of the NSG, in a bid to strengthen international non-proliferation efforts.

The two sides shared the view that the issue of climate change is of vital importance for the sake of today's world and future generations. They underscored the importance of working together and with other countries to conclude an ambitious, comprehensive, universal, balanced and equitable climate agreement at the forthcoming CoP 21 to UNFCCC to be held in Paris later this year that will also encourage genuine technology transfer, collaboration for adaptation and mitigation and financial support in meeting this common global challenge. The two sides issued Joint Statement on Climate Change between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China during the visit.

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, invited Premier Li Keqiang to visit India at a mutually convenient time. Premier Li accepted the invitation with pleasure.





Visit of the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, to Sweden

May 31 - June 2, 2015

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, paid a historic first-ever visit to Sweden from May 31 to June 1, 2015 at the invitation of His Majesty the King of Sweden. The President was accompanied by the Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers, Shri Hansraj Gangaram Ahir, Members of Parliament, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad and Shri Ashwani Kumar, Member of the Upper House (Rajya Sabha) and Lower House (Lok Sabha) respectively. He was also accompanied by senior officials and an educational delegation comprising several Vice Chancellors and Directors of leading Indian universities. A high level business delegation also accompanied the President to participate in a series of business conferences organized by the Indian Embassy in Sweden and Business Sweden.

The President Shri Pranab Mukherjee was received at the airport by the Crown Princess Victoria and Prince.

In Stockholm, President was given a ceremonial welcome and rode in a traditional horse-drawn carriage accompanied by His Majesty the King of Sweden to the Royal Palace where the entire Swedish government led by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven greeted him.

President then spent some time and interacted with the Royal family which also included the soon-to-be-married Prince Carl Philip and his fiancée.

Thereafter, Shri Pranab Mukherjee attended the reception to meet the Indian community hosted in his honour by the Indian Ambassador. He interacted with the Indian community, who had travelled far from other cities in Sweden and all the way from Latvia to greet the President.

On June 1, 2015 the President's first engagement was

a visit to the Parliament where he was received by Mr. Urban Ahlin, the Speaker and other Members of Parliament drawn from different parties. After meeting with the Swedish Parliamentarians, the President had a bilateral discussion with the Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Stefan Löfven. During the meeting, Mr. Löfven was assisted by a number of senior Ministers including the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Environment Ms. Asa Romson, the Foreign Minister Ms. Margot Wallström, the Defence Minister Mr. Peter Hultqvist, the Enterprise and Innovation Minister Mr. Mikael Damberg and Minister for Housing, Urban development & Information Technology Mr Mehmet Kaplan.

Six agreements/MoUs were signed in the presence of Hon'ble President and His Excellency the Swedish Prime Minister on June 1, 2015, including in the area of sustainable urban development and cooperation in the field of Micro, small & medium enterprises. The list of the agreements and the signatories and their purpose is given in the appendix to this press release.

Simultaneously, around 15 agreements were signed between Indian and Swedish Universities in a separate function hosted by the Swedish Minister for Education and Research, which would give a fillip to cooperation in the important field of education and human resource development.

Thereafter, the Mayor of Stockholm and the President of the City Council hosted a lunch in honour of the President of India in the iconic City Hall where the Nobel Dinner is held. The President was also given a presentation on Smart Cities.

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, accompanied by H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf travelled by

boat to Stockholm's "Smart City" Hammarby Sjöstad and interacted with Swedish companies which have technologies and products relevant for building smart cities, including Ericsson, ABB and Scania.

In the evening, the Leader of Opposition, Mrs. Anna Kinberg Batra, called on the President to exchange views on bilateral cooperation. She assured him that her (Moderate) party was also most keen to have closer ties with India.

On the evening of June 1, 2015, a State Banquet was hosted by Their Majesties the King and Queen of Sweden in honour of the President of India.

The President visited Karolinska Institute which is a foremost leading institute of medicine and related

had the broad theme of "Innovate, Make & Grow in India". His Majesty the King as well as other members of Royal family including the Queen, Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel were amongst the audience. A special cultural programme which mixed Swedish and Indian music and dance followed his speech. Thereafter, the President hosted a sumptuous return luncheon in honour of their Majesties and selected guests.

In the afternoon, before leaving for Uppsala University, the President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, paid a farewell call on Their Majesties and was given a guard of honour at the Royal Palace. After the farewell the President proceeded to Uppsala accompanied by the Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel.



studies. Their Majesties the King and Queen of Sweden also joined him at the Karolinska Institute and participated in the round table meeting held in the Nobel Forum, where the Nobel Prize for medicine and physiology is decided annually.

The President and His Majesty participated in a Roundtable with CEOs of leading global Swedish companies including Ericsson, Volvo, Sandvik, Saab and Scania. The upcoming Swedish mid-size company 'Rusta' represented the retail sector.

After the CEO Round Table, the President spoke on the theme of "India-Sweden Partnership- Co-creating a Brighter Future" in the business conference which

The President's last engagement was a Public Lecture on 'Tagore & Gandhi: Contemporary Relevance for Global Peace' at the ancient and prestigious Uppsala University which is renowned for its cutting edge research in many fields has an India Chair. A bust of Rabindra Nath Tagore was installed in this University last year to commemorate the centenary of the award of Nobel Prize to the poet Laureate. Their Royal Highnesses the Crown Princess Victoria and Prince Daniel graced the occasion. Foreign Minister Margot Wallström introduced the President and made opening remarks. The 1200 plus audience listened with rapt attention to the President's erudite speech.





Visit of the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, to the Republic of Belarus

June 2-4, 2015

The Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, successfully concluded first-ever State Visit to Republic of Belarus from June 02 to 04, 2015. During the visit, President held bilateral discussions with his Belarusian counterpart, Mr. Alexander Lukashenko, Prime Minister of Belarus, Mr. Andrei Kobyakov. The list of agreements /MOUs in the field of economic, culture and political signed are as under :

- Roadmap for India-Belarus Cooperation
- Protocol amending the agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and on Property (Capital) of the 27th of September, 1997.
- MoU between Bureau of Indian Standards and the State Committee for Standardization of the Republic of Belarus on Cooperation in the field of Standardization and Information Support.
- MoU between Prasar Bharati (PB) and the National State Television and Radio Company of the Republic of Belarus (Belteleradio company) for cooperation on Broadcasting.
- MoU on Bilateral Cooperation between the Securities and Exchange Board of India and the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Belarus.
- MoU between the Ministry of Textiles of the Republic of India and the Belarusian State concern for Manufacturing and Marketing of Light Industry Goods (concern "Bellegprom").
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India and the Belarusian National Technical University, Belarus in the field of Research Collaborations, Student and Faculty Exchange.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati and the Belarusian State University of Informatics And Radio-electronics in the Field of Research Collaborations, Student and Faculty Exchange.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak, India and the Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts of Belarus for Development of Academic Cooperation in the Field of Research & Education, Twinning and Dual Degree Programs as per UGC.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak, India and the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics, Minsk, Belarus

The List of Educational MoUs signed during President's State visit of Belarus are as under:-





decision of the Government of India to grant Market Economy Status to Belarus.

During the visit, a degree of Professor Honoris Causa was conferred upon the President by the Belarusian State University. President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee also inaugurated a bust of Mahatma Gandhi in the campus of the Belarus State University. The Grodno Power project completed by BHEL was jointly inaugurated by the two Presidents at the Business Forum. Nine business agreements were signed during the Business Forum.

for Academic and Scientific Cooperation.

- Memorandum of Understanding between Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Republic of India and the Belarusian State University Of Physical Culture, Republic of Belarus.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT), Nagpur, India and the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radio-electronics, Belarus in the field of Engineering and Technology.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT), Nagpur, India and the Belarusian National Technical University, Belarus in the field of Engineering and Technology.

The President has also made an announcement that the Government of India had decided to extend line of credit for 100 million USD for jointly agreed projects. He also announced the





Official Visit of Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to India

June 05-07, 2015

The Prime Minister of the Netherlands, His Excellency Mr. Mark Rutte, paid an official visit to India on 5-6 June 2015 at the invitation of the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi. He was accompanied by the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Ms. Lilianne Ploumen, the Minister for Agriculture, Ms. Sharon Dijksma, senior officials and a large business delegation representing over 100 Dutch companies.

On June 5 2015, Prime Minister Rutte and Prime Minister Modi held wide-ranging discussions on bilateral and global issues of mutual interest, followed by a luncheon discussion hosted by Prime Minister Modi with 35 CEOs of leading industries of both countries. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the longstanding and historical bonds of friendship between the two countries spanning over four centuries and shared values of democracy, pluralism, multiculturalism, human rights and rule of law. Expressing satisfaction at the growing political, economic, institutional and people-to-people exchanges and cooperation, they welcomed the new momentum in bilateral relations. .

Recognizing the increasingly globalized nature of threats and challenges and the shared stakes in each other's security, the Prime Ministers agreed to expand security and defense cooperation between India and the Netherlands. Both Prime Ministers welcomed the possibility of Dutch participation in India's 'Make in India' initiative in the defence sector.

Expressing concern about the serious threat posed by the spread of violent extremism and terrorism to both countries, the Prime Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterated the need for a unified and collective effort by the international community to eliminate terrorism through a holistic approach, including the implementation of the U.N. Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and early conclusion

of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. To enhance bilateral cooperation in this area, they welcomed the setting up of a Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and convening of the first meeting of the Group on 19 June 2015.

The two Prime Ministers recognized the significance of international trade in enhancing development and prosperity. Recalling that the India-EU Strategic Partnership was launched in 2004 during the Dutch Presidency of EU, they acknowledged the importance of early conclusion of negotiations to finalize a balanced and ambitious India-EU Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement.

In the above context, the two Prime Ministers exchanged views on India's flagship initiatives such as "Make in India", "Digital India", "Skill India" and "Clean India" and agreed that these and other specific programmes like "Affordable Housing for All", "Ganga Rejuvenation Plan" and "Smart Cities" offered significant collaborative commercial opportunities for Indian and Dutch industries and had substantial potential to qualitatively upgrade bilateral economic engagement. Noting the tremendous complementarities between world class Dutch competencies and India's current needs in priority sectors, they agreed that the Netherlands was uniquely placed to become a preferred partner in key sectors such as water management and clean water technologies; shipping and inland waterways; infrastructure development, port and airport upgrading; smart cities and smart transportation; high-tech materials and systems; renewable energy and power; sanitation and solid waste management; skill development; maritime heritage and archaeology; telecommunications, agro-processing and dairy farming; horticulture and floriculture; health; biotechnology; sports; banking and insurance.

Recognizing the importance of skill development initiatives, the two Prime Ministers agreed to foster cooperation in this area by instituting a Joint Working Group to facilitate exchange of best practices and collaboration in specific sectors as well as finalize a framework Memorandum of Understanding.

As a step towards forging deeper cooperation, the two Prime Ministers committed to enhancing cooperation under the Joint Economic Committee and Memoranda of Understanding already existing in the fields of Shipping, Urban Development, Science & Technology, Health, Renewable Energy, Agriculture and Sports.

In this context, the two leaders welcomed:



- The initiative of setting up an EU Ganga platform to coordinate efforts among European partners, in which the Netherlands committed itself to play a leading role.
- Visit by a team of Dutch experts to India for finalizing and advancing the identified areas of collaboration with the National Mission on Clean Ganga.
- Program of cooperation between Ministry of Heavy Industries, India and Ministry of Economic Affairs, Netherlands to share best practices and to develop joint pilot projects for the development of an electric vehicle ecosystem in India.
- Agreement between Cochin Shipyards Limited (CSL) of India and Dutch Shipbuilder Royal IHC to jointly build dredgers in India, including transfer of technology from IHC to CSL as a significant collaborative initiative towards "Make in India" in a priority sector.
- Agreement between BIBCOL and Intravacc on vaccine development and manufacturing vaccines against Measles-Rubella in India, with transfer of technology.
- The agreement to expand existing cooperation in the area of large scale cohort studies with a Joint

Cohort study on HIV patients between Erasmus University Medical Centre, International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) India, ICMR and DBT.

- Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation between India and the Netherlands.
- Extension of Memorandum of Understanding in Agriculture for a further period of three years.
- The "Health Hacketon" initiative to find innovative digital solutions for e-healthcare access and affordability in collaboration with the private sector.
- Collaboration between the Netherlands and the State of Maharashtra in infrastructure development and delivery in and around the City of Mumbai, including integrated approach to challenges related to Coastal Road and Metro.

▪ Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Telangana and Wageningen University of the Netherlands for a knowledge partnership and collaborative research in the development of food and agribusiness sector in priority areas like cold chain infrastructure, livestock and horticulture production system in the state of Telangana.

▪ Establishment of a Centre of Excellence for vegetables and flowers at Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala under the Indo-Dutch Action Plan, using Dutch technical expertise for training field officers and transfer of technology.

- Agreement between Baramati Agricultural College in Maharashtra, India, and Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands to facilitate capacity building and demand driven curricula for students with the objective of entrepreneurship development.

Noting that the Netherlands was home to the second largest Indian Diaspora in Europe, the two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the close people-to-people ties and agreed to actively promote further exchanges in the areas of economy; art and culture; academia and education; science and technology; and tourism; and explore ways to enhance mutual understanding and friendship between their peoples. In this context, the two leaders welcomed India's decision to include the Netherlands in the Electronic Tourist Visa Scheme which will come into effect in a few weeks.

Prime Minister Rutte thanked Prime Minister Modi for the warm hospitality extended to him and his delegation.



Visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Bangladesh

June 6-7, 2015

At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ms. Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of India, Shri Narendra Modi, paid a State visit to Bangladesh from June 6-7, 2015.

During the visit, Prime Minister of India called on H.E. Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid, Hon'ble President of Bangladesh.

Prime Minister, Shri Modi, laid a wreath at the National Martyrs' Memorial at Savar as a mark of respect to the memory and contribution of the great freedom fighters of Bangladesh. He paid rich tribute and respect to the memory of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhaka.

Sushri Mamata Banerjee, Chief Minister of West Bengal, also joined Prime Minister Shri Modi and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka on June 6, 2015 for the historic ceremony wherein they witnessed the exchange of instruments of ratification of the India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement, 1974 and its 2011 Protocol. The three leaders jointly flagged off the 2 bus services connecting Bangladeshi and Indian cities.

Prime Minister Shri Modi received, on behalf of the former Prime Minister of India Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the 'Bangladesh Liberation War Honour' from President Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Prime Minister, Shri Modi, had a meeting with Prime Minister Hasina on June 6, 2015 which was followed by the delegation level talks. Both the meeting and the talks were marked by great warmth and cordiality reflecting the excellent bilateral relations and friendship that exist between the two countries.

During the talks, the two Prime Ministers recalled the shared bonds of history, tradition, aspirations and multitude of other commonalities between the two countries and reiterated their firm conviction to further strengthen the bilateral relations. They recognized that the destinies of the peoples of the two countries were interlinked in their quest for peace, development and

stability. The two Prime Ministers also noted that India and Bangladesh have entered a new phase in bilateral relations with a pragmatic, mature and practical approach based on sovereignty, equality, friendship, trust and understanding for the mutual benefit of their peoples and collective prosperity of the region.

The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the unparalleled level of cooperation between the two countries on security related issues and reaffirmed their unequivocal and uncompromising position against extremism and terrorism in all forms and manifestations, as well as their commitment to cooperate with each other by sharing information about groups and persons indulging in terrorism.

The two Prime Ministers stressed the need for effective implementation of the Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP) for better border management so as to prevent cross border criminal activities, irregular movement, incidents of violence and tragic loss of lives.

The two Prime Ministers stressed the need for holding the 38th Ministerial meeting of the JRC at an early date to discuss all issues pertinent to water resources for mutual benefit.

Both the Prime Ministers expressed deep satisfaction at the level of cooperation and achievements in the power sector between the two countries and agreed to widen the cooperation further. The two Prime Ministers agreed to further enhance cooperation in energy sector particularly in renewable energy and nuclear energy. Both Prime Ministers agreed to cooperate in the field of civil nuclear energy, especially training for technical personnel.

The two Prime Ministers welcomed the MOU and the Sale-Purchase Agreement signed between Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) and Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) for construction of a pipeline from Siliguri to Parbatipur for supply of High Speed Diesel to Bangladesh. They directed the officials to quickly finalize the terms for establishment of the joint



Venture Company which will construct and operate the pipeline.

The two Prime Ministers welcomed the renewal of the bilateral Trade Agreement with the new trade facilitation provisions which would not only further widen bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation in a balanced and sustainable manner to mutual benefit but also open up opportunities for regional trade. Recalling Article 1 of the Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development, the two Prime Ministers directed concerned officials to remove all barriers to ensure unfettered bilateral trade. Both sides underscored the need to narrow the trade imbalance.

Both the Prime Ministers stressed the urgent need for up-gradation of infrastructure of the Land Customs Stations (LCSs)/Land Ports/Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) in a coordinated manner. They noted with satisfaction that the work of opening immigration facilities at Phulbari (opposite Banglabandha) has been completed and that the immigration post would be operationalized soon.

The two Prime Ministers noted with appreciation the positive experience gained from the functioning of the Border Haats and stressed the need to open more border haats at mutually agreed locations.

Prime Minister, Shri Modi, emphasized the importance and need to increase Indian investment in Bangladesh and underscored the role of the private sector in this regard. He welcomed the decision of Bangladesh to allocate land for Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for India. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the conclusion of MoU for Establishment of Indian SEZs in Bangladesh and directed the concerned officials to work to realize this goal at the earliest. Mongla and Bheramara were identified as possible locations.

The two Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of the Coastal Shipping Agreement which would open up newer avenues of cooperation in the areas of bilateral & regional trade and connectivity. They also noted with satisfaction the renewal of the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT) with new trade facilitation measures. Both the Prime Ministers agreed on the need for dredging of the Bangladesh-

India inland water protocol routes to utilize their full potential. Both the Prime Ministers directed the officials to explore the possibilities of development of entire protocol route with assured Least Available Depth (LAD) with international funding. Prime Minister Shri Modi agreed to provide necessary assistance for enhancing navigability of the routes as envisaged in the Framework Agreement.

Prime Minister, Shri Modi, agreed to consider Bangladesh's proposal to introduce the 2nd Maitree Express between Khulna and Kolkata. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction about the ongoing cooperation in the railways sector including the



Akhaura-Agartala railway link and revival of the old railway links. They directed the concerned officials of both sides to take measures for ensuring more passenger-friendly customs and immigration facilities for the passengers of Maitree Express. Prime Minister Shri Modi announced that India will construct a modern International Passenger Terminal (IPT) at a suitable location in India so as to facilitate customs and immigration requirements of passengers travelling on the Kolkata-Dhaka Maitri Express and other trains that are to connect India and Bangladesh.

Both the Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the utilization of the first line of credit of US\$ 800 million, which was enhanced by an additional US\$ 62 million and US\$ 200 million grant extended by India to Bangladesh.

Prime Minister, Shri Modi, announced a second Line of Credit worth US\$ 2 billion for Bangladesh for undertaking various development projects. The Line of Credit is to be utilized, inter alia, for developmental projects particularly in the area of public transport, roads, railways, inland waterways, ports, ICT, education, health etc.

Prime Minister Hasina informed that the 'Bangabandhu Satellite-I', the first Bangladesh satellite, is scheduled



to be launched in 2017 which would take the country to the next level of scientific advancement. She appreciated the SAARC Satellite project being undertaken by India.

The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the amicable settlement of the maritime boundary between the two countries. To harness the vast economic opportunities this has opened up, they agreed to work closely on the development of ocean-based Blue Economy and Maritime Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal and chart out the ways for future cooperation.

The two Prime Ministers also welcomed the signing of the MOU to implement the grant assistance of INR 5 crores from the India Endowment for Climate Change for installation of 70,000 improved cook stoves in Bangladesh.

As a technology demonstration pilot project, Prime Minister Shri Modi announced provisioning and installation by India of solar power-based home systems including light bulbs, mobile charging facilities, fans and cook stoves to an off-grid village in Bangladesh.

Recognizing the ongoing cooperation between the two countries in the sector of education, the two Prime Minister reaffirmed their commitment to widen this cooperation for mutual benefit. In this connection, they appreciated the various collaborative arrangements between the universities and educational institutes of the two countries.

Prime Minister Hasina expressed appreciation for the assistance provided by India, under the bilateral MOU on Small Development Projects, for city improvement projects being undertaken in Rajshahi, Sylhet, Khulna & Narsingdi.

Both Prime Ministers welcomed growing exchanges between the two peoples which is helping foster greater understanding and goodwill between the two countries. They agreed to further increase people-to-people contacts. In this context, it was agreed that Doordarshan and Bangladesh Television (BTV) will enter into an agreement to allow BTV to join Prasar Bharati's DTH platform.

Prime Minister, Shri Modi, deeply appreciated the Government of Bangladesh for allowing transshipment of 25,000 Metric Tonnes of food grains to Tripura



across Bangladesh territory on humanitarian cause. Prime Minister Hasina deeply appreciated the cooperation extended by Government of India for facilitating movement of humanitarian assistance from Bangladesh for the victims of the recent earthquake in Nepal.

Prime Minister Hasina deeply appreciated India's assistance in bringing back Bangladesh nationals from Yemen.

Both Prime Ministers reaffirmed their shared commitment to deepen regional cooperation to maximize the mutuality of interests and to ensure equitable share of mutual benefits in all areas, including trade, transport and energy. They recognized the importance of various regional/sub-regional cooperative/collaborative initiatives to improve the lives and livelihoods of all the people across the two countries. Prime Minister Hasina thanked India for the 24 Automatic Weather Stations set up by India under the SAARC STORM programme built by Antrix Corporation of India for the Bangladesh Meteorological Department.

They welcomed the potential role the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank may play in responding to needs of the developing countries. In this connection, Prime Minister Shri Modi took note of Bangladesh's request to become a member of the New Development Bank in due course.

The following bilateral documents were signed, exchanged, adopted and handed over during the visit:

- Exchange of Instruments of Ratification of 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and its 2011 Protocol
- Exchange of letters on Modalities for implementation of 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and its 2011 Protocol
- Bilateral Trade Agreement (renewal)
- Agreement on Coastal Shipping between Bangladesh and India
- Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (renewal)
- Bilateral Cooperation Agreement between Bangladesh Standards & Testing Institution (BSTI) and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) on Cooperation in the field of Standardization.



- Agreement on Dhaka-Shillong-Guwahati Bus Service and its Protocol
- Agreement on Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala Bus Service and its Protocol
- Memorandum of Understanding between Coast Guards
- Memorandum of Understanding on Prevention of Human Trafficking
- Memorandum of Understanding on Prevention of Smuggling and Circulation of Fake Currency Notes
- Memorandum of Understanding between Bangladesh and India for Extending a New Line of Credit (LoC) of US\$ 2 billion by Government of India to Government of Bangladesh
- Memorandum of Understanding on Blue Economy and Maritime Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean
- Memorandum of Understanding on Use of Chittagong and Mongla Ports
- Memorandum of Understanding for a Project under IECC (India Endowment for Climate Change) of SAARC
- Memorandum of Understanding on Indian Economic Zone
- Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2015-17
- Statement of Intent on Bangladesh-India Education Cooperation (adoption)
- Agreement between Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company Limited (BSCCL) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) for leasing of international bandwidth for internet at Akhaura
- Memorandum of Understanding between University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, India for Joint Research on Oceanography of the Bay of Bengal
- Memorandum of Understanding between University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh and University of Jamia Milia Islamia, India
- Handing over of Consent Letter by Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA), Bangladesh to Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), India to start operations in Bangladesh

In a ceremonial event at the Prime Minister's Office, the two Prime Ministers unveiled/inaugurated/flagged off the following:

- Flagging off Dhaka-Shillong-Guwahati Bus Service
- Flagging off Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala Bus Service
- Unveiling of Foundation Stone for Construction of Khulna-Mongla Railway line
- Unveiling of Foundation Stone for Rehabilitation of Kalaura-Shahbajpur section of Bangladesh Railways.
- Inauguration of Tarapur-Kamalasagar Border Haat
- Unveiling of Foundation Stone for Bangladesh – India Friendship Building at National Police Academy, Sardah
- Inauguration of Upgraded Laboratories at BSTI
- Unveiling of Foundation Stone of Rabindra Bhaban Kuthibari, Shilaidaha
- Unveiling of Foundation Stone for Construction of Bangladesh–India Friendship Bridge-1 over Feni River

Prime Minister Shri Modi handed over the following to Prime Minister Hasina:

- Audio recording of Bangabandhu's Speech at Brigade Maidan, Kolkata (06 February 1972)
- DVD of Parliamentary Debate on Land Boundary Agreement
- Mementos of INS Vikrant
- iReplica of a dredger supplied to Mongla Port
- Photo and replica of one of the 24 Automatic Weather Stations installed in Bangladesh under the STORM programme

Prime Minister, Shri Modi, thanked Prime Minister Hasina for the warmth and cordiality shown and gracious hospitality extended to him and members of his delegation during their stay in Bangladesh.

Prime Minister, Shri Modi, extended an invitation to Prime Minister Hasina to pay a visit to India. The invitation was accepted and it was agreed that the visit would take place at a mutually convenient date.



State Visit of the President of United Republic of Tanzania to India

June 16, 2015

H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania paid a State Visit to India from 17-21 June 2015. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation, including ministers and senior officials. A senior business delegation also accompanied the President.

President of Tanzania has earlier visited India in 2008 in his capacity as the Chairperson of the African Union on the occasion of the first India-Africa Forum Summit.

During his visit, President Kikwete called on Hon'ble President and met Hon'ble Vice-President of India. He held bilateral talks with Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi. President Kikwete also had a day long visit to Jaipur. The President hosted a banquet in honour of the visiting guest.

India and Tanzania have historically enjoyed close and friendly relations anchored on mutually beneficial commercial exchanges and extensive people to people contacts. India is the largest trading partner of Tanzania with bilateral trade in 2013-14 being more than US\$ 4 billion. Apart from trade relations, India is also the important destination for Tanzanians seeking high quality health care and education.

Indians form the largest expatriate community in Tanzania and their positive contribution in the progress and development of their host country is well recognized and appreciated. There are over approximately 50,000 to 60000 PIOs living and working in Tanzania. In addition there are approximately 10000 Indian expatriates.



Shri Narendra Modi called for International Yoga Day



Yoga for Harmony & Peace



We need to change our lifestyles. Energy not consumed is the cleanest energy. We can achieve the same level of development, prosperity and well being without necessarily going down the path of reckless consumption. It doesn't mean that economies will suffer; it will mean that our economies will take on a different character. For us in India, respect for nature is an integral part of spiritualism. We treat nature's bounties as sacred. Yoga is an invaluable gift of our ancient tradition. Yoga embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and the nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help us deal with climate change. Let us work towards adopting an International Yoga Day.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addresses the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly at UN headquarters in New York on Saturday - September 27, 2014





International Yoga Day

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, leads mass yoga demonstration in New Delhi

June 21, 2015

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, on June 21, 2015, announced the arrival of a new Yoga era, with the first International Day of Yoga being observed across the world. Leading a mass yoga demonstration at Rajpath in New Delhi, the Prime Minister declared that as International Yoga Day is observed in various parts of the world, the sun would not set on the community of Yoga practitioners.

The Prime Minister said that today is not just the first-ever International Yoga Day, but the beginning of a new era that would inspire humanity in its quest for peace and harmony. The Prime Minister recalled the contribution of ancient sages, yoga gurus, and practitioners across the world through the ages, for making Yoga what it is, today. He said that as mankind

advances in various spheres of development and technology, individual human beings must progress too, and Yoga offered an avenue for this. He said Yoga was not merely an exercise, but offered an opportunity for balancing the mind and body, and could help harness an individual's inner strength.

The Prime Minister acknowledged all countries across the world who are observing International Yoga Day today, and the 177 countries which co-sponsored the resolution in the United Nations, for adopting June 21st as International Yoga Day.

The Prime Minister later participated in a mass yoga demonstration at Rajpath.



First International Day of Yoga, June 21, 2015, Colombo

June 21, 2015

Special events have been planned in Sri Lanka on the occasion of the first "International Day of Yoga" (IDY), which was celebrated across the world on June 21, 2015.

Addressing a Press Conference on June 15, 2015, the High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, Shri Y.K. Sinha, stated that the highlight of the activities in Sri Lanka would be a large public event at Galle Face Green from 6.30 a.m. to 8.30 a.m. Apart from the print and electronic media, the Press Conference was attended by a number of well known Sri Lankan celebrities, who endorsed the International Day of Yoga celebrations in Sri Lanka. These included Ms. Sangeetha Weeraratne, Film Artist and Mr. Muttiah Muralitharan, Cricketer.

The High Commissioner said that Yoga is an invaluable gift of ancient Indian tradition, and it embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action, restraint and fulfillment, harmony between man and nature. Yoga, like Ayurveda, forms a part of shared heritage of

India and Sri Lanka. High Commissioner also noted that global health is a long term objective, which requires closer international cooperation, and wider dissemination of knowledge about the benefits of Yoga would be beneficial for the health of the people of the world. It was in this spirit that the United Nations General Assembly had adopted a Resolution piloted by India, on December 11, 2014 declaring June 21 each year as the "International Day of Yoga". The resolution was supported by more than 170 countries, with Sri Lanka being one of the first co-sponsors of the Resolution.

The High Commissioner recalled that the UN Resolution followed the call for the adoption of June 21 as International Day of Yoga by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, during his address to UN General Assembly on September 27, 2014 wherein he stated "Yoga embodies unity of mind and body; a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of



oneness with yourself'. In suggesting June 21, which is the Summer Solstice, as the International Day of Yoga, Prime Minister also said that it is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and has special significance in many parts of the world.

The High Commissioner stated that the Ministry of External Affairs of India has developed a special webpage <http://www.mea.gov.in/idy.htm> to disseminate information about celebrations of the International Day of Yoga across the world.

The High Commissioner mentioned that events to celebrate the first International Day of Yoga in Sri Lanka were being organized by the High Commission of India in collaboration with local community organizations, and established yoga and spiritual centres. The public event at Galle Face Green on the morning of June 21 would include the release of a special e-book on Yoga, telecast of a message of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on the significance of Yoga, and Yoga demonstrations. The Yoga demonstrations would be conducted by Indian Cultural Centre; Sky Consciousness; Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Centre; OM Space; Art of Living Foundation; and Sethsada Yoga Institute. In this regard, the High Commissioner appreciated the efforts of the participating organizations, all of whom are actively involved in the promotion and propagation of Yoga in

Colombo. The High Commissioner also thanked the Government of Sri Lanka, IRCON International, Brandix Limited and Mayurapathi Temple Trust for their assistance in organizing the public event. Participation in the event is free for all members of the public, with prior registration at <https://www.facebook.com/IndiaInSriLanka>.

In addition to the event on June 21, other Yoga related activities have also been planned in Colombo to celebrate the first International Day of Yoga, including interaction with senior Yoga instructors of Sri Lanka and Yoga demonstrations from June 22-25 at the Indian Cultural Centre. The High Commissioner released a poster that provides details of the various activities planned. (These details are also available on the website of the High Commission of India, its Facebook page and on its Twitter account.)

The Consulates General of India in Jaffna and Hambantota, and the Assistant High Commission of India in Kandy, have also planned events to celebrate the first International Day of Yoga across Sri Lanka.

The High Commissioner invited members of the public to participate in the events being organized so that the First International Day of Yoga is celebrated in Sri Lanka in a befitting manner.





Worldwide Celebrations of International Day of Yoga





Indian e-Tourist Visa (eTV) for Sri Lanka

April 16, 2015

In pursuance of the announcement made on March 14, 2015 by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, the High Commission of India has the pleasure to inform that the e-Tourist Visa (eTV) scheme [earlier known as the Tourist Visa on Arrival enabled by Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) scheme] has been extended to Sri Lankan nationals with effect from Tuesday, April 14, 2015.

The new scheme will be in addition to the existing visa services. Sri Lankan nationals holding Diplomatic / Official passports cannot avail of the eTV scheme. Sri Lankan nationals of Pakistani origin cannot avail of the eTV scheme either.

The eTV can be utilized by all Sri Lankan Nationals holding ordinary passports whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sightseeing, casual visit to meet friends or relatives, short duration medical treatment or casual business visit. The applicant should not have a residence or occupation in India. The applicant should hold a passport with at least six months validity from the date of arrival in India.

It may be noted that visa will not be issued on arrival without ETA. Applicants have to apply and obtain ETA online prior to undertaking travel to India. This process will take a minimum of 4 working days.

The eTV will be for single-entry, and valid for only 30 days stay from the date of arrival in India. The eTV will be non-extendable, non-convertible and not valid for visiting Protected /Restricted and Cantonment Areas. Entry into India must be through any of the following 9 designated airports only - Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Goa, Hyderabad, Kochi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Thiruvananthapuram. However, exit can be through any authorized Immigration Check Post (ICP) in India. Entry into India must be undertaken within 30 days from the date of approval of ETA. The eTV facility cannot be availed of more than twice in a calendar year.

The applicant should carry a printed copy of ETA along with him / her at the time of travel. He / she should have a return / onward journey ticket, with sufficient money to spend during his/her stay in India.

Biometric details of the applicant will be captured at Immigration on arrival in India.

There is a special fee of US\$ 60 per person (plus an interchange charge of US\$ 2 for credit / debit cards) for the new scheme. This fee must be paid before the application can be processed, and once paid, the fee is non-refundable.

How to apply for ETA

Applicants should apply online at

<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/tvoa.html>

Each applicant must have a separate passport (international travel documents shall not be accepted). Applications by individuals endorsed on parent's/ spouse's passport shall not be accepted.

The application process requires uploading the scanned page of the passport containing the photo and personal details like name, date of birth, nationality, expiry date, etc., in PDF format (10 KB to 300 KB).

The application process also requires the uploading of a recent front-facing digital photograph with plain white background, in JPEG format (10 KB to 1 MB). The head should be centred within the frame and present the full head, from top of hair to bottom of chin. The photograph should not have any shadow on the face or on the background, and should not have any border. The height and width of the photograph must be equal.

The application is liable to be rejected if the uploaded document and photograph are not clear and as per specification.

The fee can be paid through Credit or Debit card. If there are more than three unsuccessful payment attempts, the application ID would be blocked and the application has to be made afresh, with a new application ID.

A decision on the application will be conveyed by email. Applicants are advised to ensure that correct e-mail address is provided. Applicants can track the status of their application online by clicking visa status.

For any assistance call 24 x 7 visa support center at +91-11-24300666 or send email to indiatvoa@gov.in

The process of ETA issuance is completely online, and the High Commission / Consulates General / Assistant High Commission in Sri Lanka will be unable to assist in expediting the issuance of ETAs. However, in case the eTV application is rejected, the applicant may apply afresh for issue of a regular visa.

Government of India signs contract to renovate Rabindra Memorial Library in Sripalee College, Horana

May 14, 2015

As part of its development partnership with Sri Lanka in the field of education, the Government of India is undertaking a project to renovate the Rabindra Memorial Library and Hall in Sripalee College, Horana, at a total cost of SLR 38 million. In this regard, following a process of competitive bidding, a Contract Agreement was signed with M/s. Farzan Building Construction on 13 May 2015 in the presence of Mr. Arindam Bagchi, Acting High Commissioner of India, Mr. K.A.K. Ranjith Dharmapala, Additional Secretary (Procurement & Construction), Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka, and other officials of the Government of Sri Lanka. The project is being implemented in close consultation with the Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka.

The objective of the project is to provide a conducive learning environment for the students of Sripalee College, and to provide a reading space for the general public in



the region. The project involves renovation of the existing library building and hall to upgrade it into a reference library. The project is expected to be completed within a period of 240 days, and its implementation will be jointly monitored by the High Commission and the Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka.

India develops drone to monitor IMBL between India and Sri Lanka

Jun 26, 2015

India's Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO) has developed a drone to monitor the international maritime boundary line (IMLB) between India and Sri Lanka that is being frequently violated by the fishermen and smugglers from both countries, a report in Business Standard says.

The DRDO has developed the Rustom-1 unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) and is working with the Indian navy to fit the drone with an Automatic Identification System (AIS) that will identify Indian fishing vessels along the maritime boundary. The AIS on the Rustom-1 will transmit an "interrogator" signal that reflects back from a transponder that will be fitted on every Indian fishing boat.

If an Indian vessel strays into Sri Lankan waters, or an unidentified boat enters Indian waters, a digital data link between the UAV and a ground control station (GCS) on the Indian coast will alert the Indian navy and coast guard in real time.

Currently, the Indian Navy monitors this maritime boundary - in the Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar - with Dornier-228 manned aircraft, and a squadron of Israeli-built Heron and Searcher UAVs that operate from INS Parundu, a naval air base near Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu. Since these aircraft do not have AIS systems, they cannot differentiate Indian vessels from Sri Lankan, Business Standard reported.



Indian fishermen deliberately invading Sri Lanka's waters has become a vexing issue for both countries and the Sri Lankan Navy constantly arrest the intruding fishermen to the irritation of Tamil Nadu government.

Earlier this year, Sri Lankan PM Ranil Wickramasinghe warned that the country's navy has a right to shoot invaders if they poached on the livelihood of northern fishermen.

Tamil Nadu's fishing community meanwhile reportedly demands the Indian navy and coast guard must protect them from the Sri Lankan Navy.

For that reason, the navy has welcomed the DRDO's plan to modify the Rustom-1 for this task by fitting it with AIS, the report says.

However, one problem the Indian Navy is having is to fit AIS transponders in the tens of thousands of fishing boats that operate from Tamil Nadu.

According to a DRDO scientist it will take 6 -8 months to fit the Rustom with an AIS and make it lighter and another 6 months for testing the final platform leaving the government about a year to fit AIS transponders in all fishing vessels. The initiative would otherwise serve no purpose, the scientist has said.

Former Indian President addresses Energy Forum in Sri Lanka

June 26, 2015



Former President of India, Dr. Abdul Kalam, who arrived in Sri Lanka on June 25, 2015 on a three-day visit, is scheduled to deliver the keynote address at the International Summit on Knowledge Based Economy organized by the Ministry of Power and Energy.

The inauguration of the symposium entitled 'Energy

Challenges in the Knowledge Based Economy' held at the Colombo Hilton on June 26, 2015.

The objective of the Energy Symposium facilitated an exchange of knowledge among energy policy makers, researchers, academia, and industry; who seek solutions to problems of energy economy, sustainability of resources, and effectiveness of energy use in the economy.

The Ministry of Power and Energy said, having adopted a policy framework for planning the development of the energy sector of Sri Lanka recently, it now envisages organizing the scientific knowledge base for plan implementation.

An international Symposium provided the forum for local and invited foreign experts in the field to discuss debate and share futuristic knowledge relevant to the challenges that the nation is facing in the evolving economy.

The forum enabled the Ministry to formulate programs and projects on the basis of evidence collected systematically for implementation of policies.

The strategic plan expects energy for all in affordable manner with minimum dependence on external sources by 2025.

Former Indian President was a renowned physicist and a space scientist before he became President of India in 2002. After serving a term of 5 years, he returned to civilian life of education, writing, and public service.

Courtesy: www.colombopage.com





Keynote Address by Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, former President of India, at International Symposium on Energy Challenges In the Knowledge Economy

Colombo, Sri Lanka, Jun 26, 2015

SAARC Energy Independence Platform: Livable Planet Earth Technology is a nonlinear tool Leading to accelerated development

I am delighted to participate and address at the International Symposium on Energy Challenges in the Knowledge Economy, here in the beautiful city of Colombo. I am happy to know that this Symposium is organized by the Ministry of Power and Energy Sri Lanka which envisages organizing the scientific knowledge base for plan implementation and will provide the forum for Sri Lankan and invited foreign experts in the field to discuss, debate and share futuristic knowledge relevant to the challenges that the nation is facing in the evolving economy.

This is in line with the mega trend of our times, where steady supply of energy is being replaced by a new paradigm which recognizes two fundamentally new energy transformations: replacing oil with electricity in transportation, and replacing high carbon, finite-supply coal and natural gas with renewable wind, solar, marine, nuclear and biomass energies for electricity production. The objective of this symposium "is to facilitate a rich exchange of knowledge among energy policy makers, researchers, academia, and industry, who seek solutions to problems of energy economy, sustainability of sources, and effectiveness in energy use in the new economy." Such exchange platforms for knowledge is indeed the need of today, when the earth faces many challenges due to man-made and natural causes, and humanity strives to keep their home planet safe from pollution.

My greetings to all of you. When we are all here together, discussing on sustainable future, I would like to share my views on the topic SAARC Energy Independence Platform : Livable Planet Earth.

Dear friends, I would like to share with you one important aspect of Energy Independence. 86 % of the total energy produced comes from fossil fuel; around 14% comes from

renewable energy and nuclear sector. In this situation, it is essential to find innovative methods to reduce the consumption of the electric power from fossil fuel and increase the deployment of renewable energy systems.

In India, we are already working on adopting certain innovative methods to convert certain important segments for improving the efficiency of the electric power usage from fossil fuel and increase the use of renewable energy systems.

For example, India has 600 million mobile users, and 250,000 lakh cell phone towers, which consumes nearly 2 billion litres of diesel for power. If we convert these installations into solar powered systems, we save about 1.7 billion dollars and offset 5 million tonnes of CO₂ emission and gain carbon credit. Next, if we transform all our 600,000 villages where 700 million people live, into solar powered homes and street lights, we may offset around 60% of fossil fuel usage in that sector.

With this background of energy saving, in India I have been advocating to convert the cities into Carbon neutral cities, which has taken a momentum now. I may also suggest Energy Symposium Sri Lanka to adopt such experiences including transforming Colombo and other Sri Lankan cities into Carbon Neutral Cities, which will create a new momentum in this mission globally.

These are some of the innovative methods to reduce the consumption of fossil fuel usage and increase the deployment of renewable energy sources. I hope these steps will lead us towards achieving energy independence in a much faster way.

Dr. Abdul Kalam Commends Progress In Sri Lanka

June 27, 2015

Former President of India Dr. Abdul Kalam praised President Maithripala Sirisena and the present government for the strategies for increasing domestic food production, elimination of drug menace and environment protection.

Dr. Kalam made these observations when he met with President Maithripala Sirisena at the Presidential Secretariat yesterday (26).

Former Indian President was warmly welcomed by the President Sirisena at the Presidential Secretariat. He expressed his happiness over meeting of such a great leader and recalled the long-standing relations between Sri Lanka and India.

During this meeting, matters of mutual interests of the two countries were discussed. The Former President of India commends the progress made by Sri Lanka in the fields of Literacy and Tourism.

President Sirisena said he would take action to locally produce food, fruits and medicine which are being imported by Sri Lanka and attempt to be self sufficient in those items within next three years. He stated the

country hopes to be self-sufficient in oil and gas, taking the best use of the oil and gas resources in the country.

The President further stated that more attention will be paid on preservation of environment including resources of water and forests. 'A national programme will be implemented to save the society from drug menace' he said.

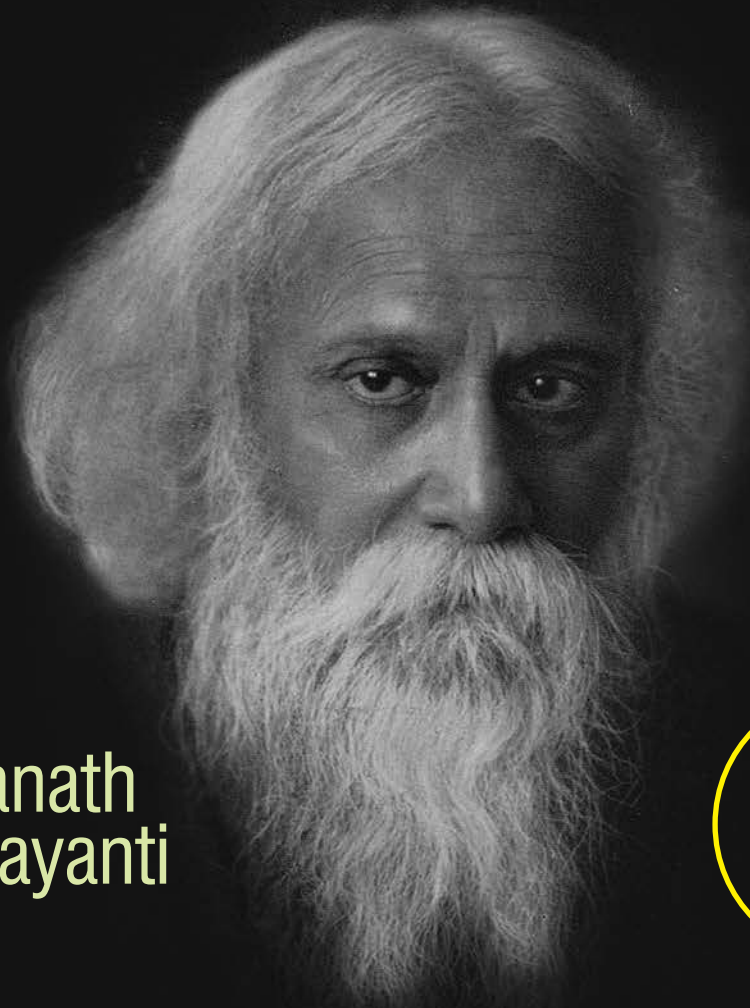
The former Indian President expressed his high appreciation about those matters and said it will be important not only for Sri Lanka, but also for the entire region.

The two leaders exchanged ideas on the friendly cooperation in the fields of science and technology between Sri Lanka and India.

Dr. Abdul Kalam presented two books written by him to President Sirisena. The President also presented a souvenir to the former Indian President.

Minister Patali Champika Ranawaka and Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka Shri Y. K. Sinha were also present on this occasion.





Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti

May 7, 2015

May 7

Rabindra Jayanti is the day which marks the birth anniversary of the great scholar and novelist Rabindranath Tagore. Birthday of the noble laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore is celebrated on 25th day of Baisakh. In Kolkata, it is popularly called Poncheeshe Boishakh and is celebrated ceremoniously and jauntiness all across West Bengal. According to the Gregorian calendar Rabindra Jayanti is celebrated on 8th or 9th of May. Rabindranath is remembered on this day.

The celebration of Rabindra Jayanti is among the most important festivals for people in Bengal. Cultural shows and poetry recitations are organized throughout the city in the memory of the great poet-Rabindranath. All cultural activities during the this day are held at Jora

sanko Thakurbari. Music, skits, dramas, traditional songs and dances are performed in institutes and theaters that are followed by the distribution of awards.

Jorasanko Thakurbari and Rabindra Sadan is the main venue of all cultural activities during Rabindra Jayanti. The celebration continues from dawn to dusk.

It is celebrated with equal fervour at Shantiniketan, the university started by Rabindranath Tagore.

Rabindranath Tagore was born in Calcutta in an affluent Brahmin family. Rabindranath was the youngest sibling of the family. An eminent poet, visual artist, playwright, novelist, and composer Rabindranath Tagore gave a new dimension to Indian literature and music in late 19th and early 20th centuries. He became Asia's first laureate winner of the most prestigious award Nobel Prize in 1913.

Tagore wrote novels, short stories, songs, dance-dramas, and essays on political and personal topics. His best works Gitanjali, Gora and Ghare-Baire owed him worldwide acclaim. Tagore brought a cultural reform who modernized art by strictly adhering to classical Indian forms. His composition 'Jana Gana Mana' has been adopted as national anthem of India and yet another great composition by him 'Amar Shonar Bangla' is acclaimed the national anthem of Bangladesh. The lyrics of his songs have a charm of their own and cast a spell on everyone.

His works are an exclusive blend of Indian poetry and pious theology. Tagore took his ideas of great scholarly works from the Vedas and Upanishads. A soothing mixture of Indian classic music and popular folklore of Bengal has been attributed to him and is called as Rabindra-Sangeet.

www.festivalsofindia.in

Known Facts about Rabindranath Tagore

On his 154th birth anniversary, let's take a look at lesser-known facts about the legend.

1. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who is popularly remembered as Mahatma Gandhi has a direct

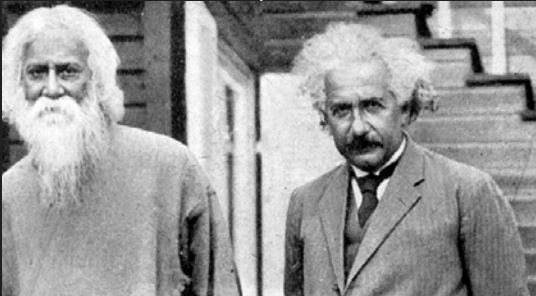


connection with Tagore. Tagore a strong admirer of Gandhi for his ideas on nationalism conferred the title of 'Mahatma' on Gandhi to honour him.

2. Rabindranath attended a number of Indian National Congress sessions in Calcutta (Kolkata) where he composed songs and sang during India's freedom struggle. 'Jana Gana Mana' was the opening song for the second day of the Congress Session in 1911, and only later it was adopted as our National Anthem. In 2011, India celebrated 100 years of our National Anthem.

Tagore also is the only person who is the creative mind behind the National Anthems of as many as three countries – India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. While he both penned and composed the National Anthem for both India and Bangladesh, Sri Lanka's anthem was also written by him in Bengali in 1938. After the country got independence, the song was translated in Tamil and few lines were changed and adopted as its National Anthem.

3. Everyone must have seen the historic picture where the two legends shared a frame, but rarely one has read the excerpts of their conversation.



Rabindranath Tagore and his interaction with Albert Einstein was widely published after the two had met at latter's home in Caputh in Germany in 1930. The two Nobel-laureates were mutual admirers.

4. In 1932, Tagore visited the middle-eastern countries of Iran and Iraq. Tagore's visit to Iran was seen as an opportunity for Iran to

present him to the Iranian public as a living personification of this newly conceived idea of national authenticity. He had been invited to Iran as the official guest of King Reza Shah Pahlavi.



In his address he said, "There was a time when, along with other Aryan peoples, the Persians also worshipped the elemental gods of nature, whose favour was not to be won by any moral duty performed, or service of love. That, in fact, was the crude beginning of the scientific spirit trying to unlock the hidden sources of power in nature. But through it all there must have been some current of deeper desire, which constantly contradicted the cult of power and indicated a world of inner good, infinitely more precious than material gain. Its voice was not strong at first, nor was it heeded by the majority of the people, but its influence, like the life within the seed, was silently working."

His address had built a strong bond among the Indian and Iranians at that time. Tagore's Iran visit, till date is a topic of discussion among experts.

5. We all remember the great speech by Swami Vivekananda at the World Parliament of Religion, but this great Nobel-laureate too addressed the same parliament twice, years later, in 1929 and 1937 in Kolkata. Address at the Parliament of Religions, originally the presidential address at the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Parliament of Religions, in March 1937 was published in May 1937 in Visva-Bharati quarterly.

In his special address of 1937, the philosopher said, "We, in our human nature, have hunger for Bhuma, for immensity, for something a great deal more than what we need immediately for the purposes of life. Men all through their history have been struggling to realise this truth according to the unfolding of their idea of the boundless and have been gradually changing their methods and plans of existence, constantly meeting failures, but never owning final defeat."

Saina Nehwal back on top in world badminton rankings

Press Trust of India - April 16, 2015



Ace Indian shuttler Saina Nehwal on April 16, 2015 regained the number one position in international rankings after China's Li Xuerui dropped a couple of rungs to third in the latest list issued on Thursday.

Saina, the first Indian woman shuttler to be world number one after her India Open Grand Prix Gold triumph earlier this month, had dropped to the second place following her semifinal finish in the Malaysia Open Super Series.

She skipped last week's Singapore Open Super Series but gained in the rankings after Xuerui also pulled out from the tournament, leading to loss of two positions in the women's singles chart.

Elsewhere, P V Sindhu dropped out of the top 10 and was placed 12th this week after slipping three spots.

In the men's rankings, K Srikanth retained the fourth spot, while P Kashyap rose a rung to 14th owing to his semifinal finish in the Singapore Open.

H S Prannoy, who ended a quarter-finalist in Singapore, slid one spot to be 15th in the rankings.

Ganga Ghats

April 30, 2015



The National Mission for Clean Ganga has sanctioned a project 'Development of Area around Assi Ghat, Varanasi' under the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA), at an estimated cost of Rs. 27.28 crores. The project is to be implemented by the Government of Uttar Pradesh. However, work on the project has currently been stopped under directions from the Hon'ble High Court.

Under the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) assisted Ganga Action Plan-II (GAP-II) project at Varanasi, Ghat Improvement, at an estimated cost of Rs. 496.90 crore is being undertaken at 26 bathing ghats and 9 dhobighats at Varanasi. Improvement

work on 11 bathing ghats has been completed; repair & renovation on 7 bathing ghats is in progress, while work for a remaining 8 ghats is yet to be awarded. Of the 9 dhobighats, 6 new ghats are to be developed, while 3 existing ghats are to be improved. Contracts for the construction of 2 new dhobighats and the improvement of 3 existing ghats have been awarded and work is in progress. Work for 4 new dhobighats is yet to be awarded.

Uttar Pradesh State Programme Management Group (UPSPMG) has submitted a concept note on "Ghat & Kund development in the city of Varanasi (Development of area around panch pandav kund, Pushkar Kund and Trilochan-Gola-Nandeshwar Ghats, Varanasi heritage tour and IEC & capacity development activities)". The concept note has been approved by NMCG and the State has been requested to submit the DPR for the same.

During 2014-15, a budgetary provision of Rs. 100 crore was kept for ghat works for the beautification of river fronts, including the ghats of Varanasi. The State Governments have

been requested to expedite proposals for river front development by selecting suitable locations on the banks of the Ganga and taking action for preparation of DPRs.

Indian Economy

June 28, 2015

Introduction

India is set to emerge as the world's fastest-growing major economy by 2015 ahead of China, as per the recent report by The World Bank. India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to grow at 7.5 per cent in 2015, as per the report.

The improvement in India's economic fundamentals has accelerated in the year 2015 with the combined impact of strong government reforms, RBI's inflation focus supported by benign global commodity prices.

Market size

According IMF World Economic Outlook April, 2015, India ranks seventh globally in terms of GDP at current prices and is expected to grow at 7.5 per cent in 2016.

India's economy has witnessed a significant economic growth in the recent past, growing by 7.3 per cent in 2015 as against 6.9 per cent in 2014. The size of the Indian economy is estimated to be at Rs 129.57 trillion (US\$ 2.01 trillion) for the year 2014 compared to Rs 118.23 trillion (US\$ 1.84 trillion) in 2013.

The steps taken by the government in recent times have shown positive results as India's gross domestic product (GDP) at factor cost at constant (2011-12) prices 2014-15 is Rs 106.4 trillion (US\$ 1.596 trillion), as against Rs 99.21 trillion (US\$ 1.488 trillion) in 2013-14, registering a growth rate of 7.3 per cent. The economic activities which witnessed significant growth were 'financing, insurance, real estate and business services' at 11.5 per cent and 'trade, hotels, transport, communication services' at 10.7 per cent.

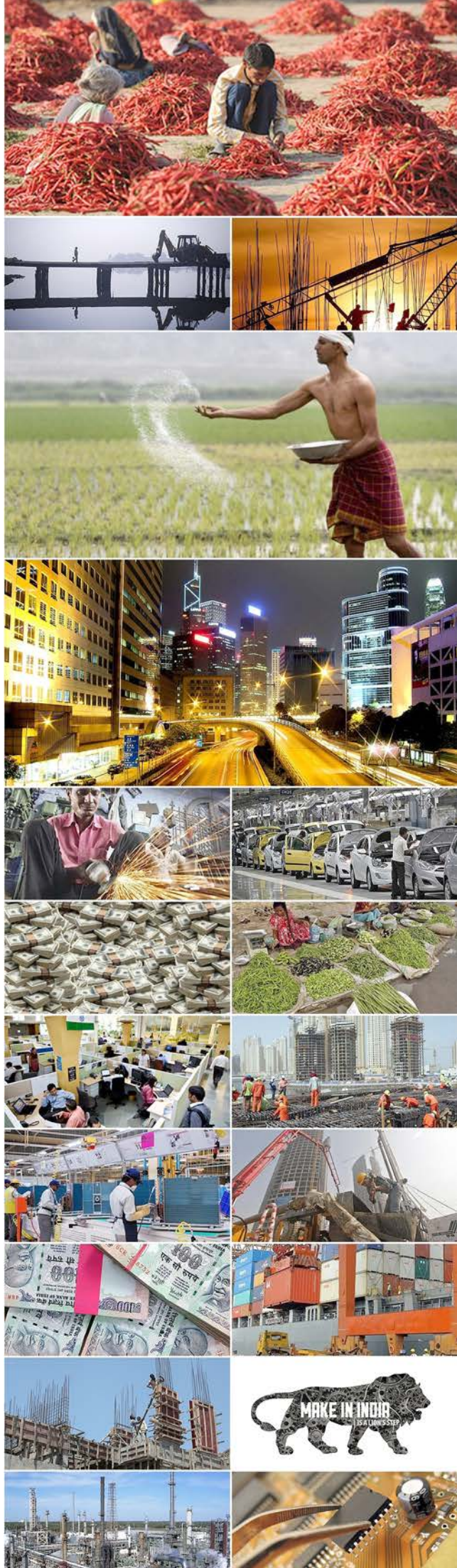
Stating that its great time to invest in India, Minister of State for Finance Mr Jayant Sinha said the Indian economy has potential to become a US\$ 4-5 trillion economy in the next 10-12 years.

Investments/developments

With the improvement in the economic scenario, there have been various investments leading to increased M&A activity. Some of them are as follows:

India has emerged as one of the strongest performers with respect to deals across the world in terms of mergers and acquisitions (M&A). M&A activity increased in 2014 with deals worth US\$ 38.1 billion being concluded, compared to US\$ 28.2 billion in 2013 and US\$ 35.4 billion in 2012. The total transaction value for the month of May 2015 was US\$ 3.3 billion involving a total of 115 transactions. In the M&A space, pharma continues to be the dominant sector amounting to 23 per cent of the total transaction value.

India's Index of Industrial Production (IIP) grew by 4.1 per cent in April 2015 compared to 2.5 per cent in March 2015. The growth was largely due to the boost in manufacturing growth, which was 5.1 per cent in April compared to 2.8 per cent in the previous month.



India's Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rate increased to 5.01 per cent in May 2015 compared to 4.87 per cent in the previous month. On the other hand, the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation rate remained negative at 2.36 per cent for the seventh consecutive month in May 2015 as against negative 2.65 per cent in the previous month, led by low crude oil prices.

India's consumer confidence continues to remain highest globally for the fourth quarter in a row, riding on positive economic environment and lower inflation. According to Nielsen's findings, India's consumer confidence score in the first quarter of 2015 increased by one point from the previous quarter (Q4 of 2014). With a score of 130 in the first quarter (2015), India's consumer confidence score is up by nine points from the corresponding period of the previous year (Q1 of 2014) when it stood at 121.

India's current account deficit reduced sharply to US\$ 1.3 billion (0.2 per cent of GDP) in the fourth quarter of 2015 compared to US\$ 8.3 billion (1.6 per cent of GDP) in the previous quarter, indicating a shrink in the current account deficit by 84.3 per cent quarter-on-quarter basis.

India's foreign exchange reserve stood at a record high of US\$ 354.28 billion in the week up to June 12, 2015 – indicating an increase of US\$ 1.57 billion compared to previous week.

Owing to increased investor confidence, net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows touched a record high of US\$ 34.9 billion in 2015 compared to US\$ 21.6 billion in the previous fiscal year, according to a Nomura report. The report indicated that the net FDI inflows reached to 1.7 per cent of the GDP in 2015 from 1.1 per cent in the previous fiscal year.

Government Initiatives

Numerous foreign companies are setting up their facilities in India on account of various government initiatives like Make in India and Digital India. Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, has launched the Make in India initiative with an aim to boost the manufacturing sector of Indian economy. This initiative is expected to increase the purchasing power of an average Indian consumer, which would further boost demand, and hence spur development, in addition to benefiting investors. Besides, the Government has also come up with Digital India initiative, which focuses on three core components: creation of digital infrastructure, delivering services digitally and to increase the digital literacy.

Currently, the manufacturing sector in India contributes over 15 per cent of the GDP. The Government of India, under the Make in India initiative, is trying to give boost to the contribution made by the manufacturing sector and aims to take it up to 25 per cent of the GDP. Following the government's initiatives several plans

for investment have been undertaken which are as follows:

Foxconn Technology group, Taiwan's electronics manufacturer, is planning to manufacture Apple iPhones in India. Besides, Foxconn aims to establish 10-12 facilities in India including data centers and factories by 2020.

India Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA) and Nasscom have signed a MoU to push electronics manufacturing share to 25 per cent of GDP by 2025. Under the MoU approval has been given to 21 electronic clusters.

Hyderabad is set to become the mobile phone manufacturing hub in India and is expected to create 150,000 – 200,000 jobs. Besides, the Telangana Government aims to double IT exports to Rs 1.2 trillion (US\$ 18.7 billion) by 2019.

Ford Motor Company has started working on plans to manufacture EcoSport in India for exporting it to US. The company has provided the quotation for 90,000 units every year, which is greater than the vehicles it sells in India.

Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) and Hindustan Shipyard Ltd have joined hands to build warships in India. Besides, Samsung Heavy Industries and Kochi Shipyard will be making Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) tankers.

Mercedes-Benz plans to increase the number of cars it manufactures in India by doubling the capacity to 20,000 vehicles a year and has come up with a new plant in Pune.

Under the Digital India initiative numerous steps have been taken by the Government of India. Some of them are as follows:

The Government of India has launched a digital employment exchange which will allow the industrial enterprises to find suitable workers and the job-seekers to find employment. The core purpose of the initiative is to strengthen the communication between the stakeholders and to improve the efficiencies in service delivery in the MSME ministry. According to officials at the MSME ministry over 200,000 people have so far registered on the website.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development recently launched Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan's (KVS) e-initiative 'KV ShaalaDarpan' aimed at providing information about students electronically on a single platform. The program is a step towards realising Digital India and will depict good governance.

The Government of India announced that all the major tourist spots like Sarnath, Bodhgaya and Taj Mahal will have a Wi-Fi facility as part of digital India initiative. Besides, the Government has started providing free Wi-Fi service at Varanasi ghats.



Based on the recommendations of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB), the Government of India has approved 10 proposals of FDI amounting to Rs 2,857.83 crore (US\$ 445.21 million) approximately. Out of the 10 approved proposals, six belonged to the pharmaceutical sector with a total value of Rs 1,415 crore (US\$ 221.05 million) excluding the outflows.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for strengthening cooperation in the field of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), between India and Sweden. The purpose of the MoU is to achieve and promote cooperation between MSMEs of the two countries by providing a structured framework and creating an environment to identify each other's technologies, strengths, markets, policies, etc.

The Government of India has launched an initiative to create 100 smart cities as well as Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) for 500 cities with an outlay of Rs 48,000 crore (US\$ 7.47 billion) and Rs 50,000 crore (US\$ 7.78 billion) crore respectively. Smart cities are satellite towns of larger cities which will consist of modern infrastructure and will be digitally connected. The program was formally launched on June 25, 2015. The Phase I for Smart City Kochi (SCK) is set to launch in July 2015 which will be built on a total area of 650,000 sq. ft., having a floor space greater than 100,000 sq. ft. Besides, it will also generate a total of 6,000 direct jobs in the IT sector.

Road Ahead

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Moody's Investors Service have forecasted that India will witness a GDP growth rate of 7.5 per cent in 2016, due to improved investor confidence, lower food prices and better policy reforms. Besides, according to mid-year update of United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects, India is expected to grow at 7.6 per cent in 2015 and at 7.7 per cent in 2016.

As per the latest Global Economic Prospects (GEP) report by World Bank, India is leading The World Bank's growth chart for major economies. The Bank believes India to become the fastest growing major economy by 2015, growing at 7.5 per cent.

According to Mr Jayant Sinha, Minister of State for Finance, Indian economy would continue to grow at 7 to 9 per cent and would double in size to US\$ 4-5 trillion in a decade, becoming the third largest economy in absolute terms.

Furthermore, initiatives like Make in India and Digital India will play a vital role in the driving the Indian economy.

References: Press Information Bureau (PIB), Media Reports, World Bank, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP), Grant Thornton, Database of Indian Economy (DBIE)



India Launches First Indigenously Built Attack Submarine

By: Megan Eckstein - April 6, 2015

India launched its first indigenously built attack submarine on Monday at Mazagaon Dock Limited in Mumbai, according to international media reports.

The French-designed, Indian-built Scorpene-class is the first of six diesel-electric boats (SSK) set to join the fleet over the next few years as part of the Indian Navy's Project 75 in collaboration with France, according to India Today.

The effort would modernize the Indian submarine fleet, which comprises nine Russian Kilo-class submarines, some as old as 30 years old; four German Type 209 SSKs; an Akula-1 submarine, Chakra, on lease from Russia; and one Indian-built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), INS Arihant.

Arihant became the first Indian-built submarine of any kind when it joined the fleet in 2013, according to the U.S. Naval Institute's Combat Fleets of the World. India's NDTV reported that the sub is loaded with nuclear-tipped missiles and preparing for sea trials this month, ahead of joining the fleet in late 2016. The second sub in the class launched in 2013 and is expected to join the fleet later this year, according to Combat Fleets.

The Scorpene-class attack submarines will be delivered every nine months, BBC quoted Parrikar as saying, with the last of the six subs inducted into the navy by 2018.

Defence Minister, Shri Manohar Parrikar, Chief Of Naval Staff Admiral, Shri R.K. Dhowan, Chief Minister, Shri Devendra Fadnavis and others officials attended an undocking ceremony for the sub, expected to be commissioned by September 2016, India Today reported.

According to Combat Fleets, the boat displaces 1,700 tons submerged, requires a crew of six officers and 25 enlisted sailors and fields up to six SM 39 Exocet anti-ship missiles.



Successful testing of High Thrust Cryogenic Engine

April 28, 2015



A major milestone in the development of ISRO's next generation launch vehicle, GSLV MkIII, was achieved on successful long duration hot test (635 seconds) of high thrust cryogenic engine (CE20) on 28-04-2015 at ISRO Propulsion Complex, Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu. The CE20 cryogenic engine is being indigenously developed by ISRO to power the cryogenic stage of GSLV MkIII launch vehicle.

The completion of successful long duration hot test has once again proved ISRO's capability in mastering the complex cryogenic technology. All subsystems of this engine such as Thrust Chamber, Injector, Gas Generator, LOX & LH2 Turbopumps, Control Components, Pyro systems etc., and the ground Test Facility systems performed very well and the parameters are well within the prediction.

A series of development tests on this engine are being carried out to validate the performance and to prove the design of the engine. Two cold start tests and four short duration hot tests were already carried out on this engine at IPRC, Mahendragiri.

Mars Orbiter Spacecraft under 'solar conjunction' at Mars

Jun 08, 2015

Mars Orbiter Spacecraft (MOM) is under 'solar conjunction' at Mars, which means the spacecraft, which is orbiting Mars, is behind the Sun as viewed from the Earth. As a result of this event which happens once in 2.2 years for Mars, communication signals from the spacecraft are severely disrupted by the Sun's corona (outer atmosphere). The reason for this is the charged particles from the sun and they are responsible for the reception of noisy signals at the ground antenna from the spacecraft.

The conjunction for Mars Orbiter Spacecraft began on May 27, 2015 and will extend up to July 01, 2015. No commands are transmitted to the spacecraft during this period for safety reasons and only telemetry (spacecraft's health related information) is monitored.. All payload (spacecraft's scientific instruments) operations are also suspended. Health of the spacecraft is normal.

A Creative Writing Workshop - AUTHORED BY

April 3 & 4, 2015

A workshop with Aparna Raman, held at the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo on 3 & 4 April 2015



Authored by :

April 4, 2015

Timbuktoo Young Authors Publishing and the Good Book Corner present Authored by : An Anthology of writing by kids between 7-14 . Book Launch held at the Bare Foot Gallery on 4 April 2015



ANDANTE TO ALLEGRO

May 15, 2015

Classical & Flamenco Guitar Concert by Amarath Ranatunga and the rest of the Fingertips organized by the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo . Its very first Guitar Concert on May 15, 2015 at its auditorium.



Tagore Jayanti

May 7, 2015

The Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo celebrated Tagore Jayanti on 7th May 2015 at the Centre. The programme included Rabindra Sangeet by Mrs. Saumi Bhattacharya, a Talk by Prof. Chandragupta Thenuwara on "Tagore's contribution to visual art in connection to Sri Lanka" and a short documentary on Gurudev .



Inauguration of the photographic exhibition on Yoga

June 22, 2015

Inauguration of the photographic exhibition on Yoga and felicitation of Yoga Institutes participated in First International Yoga Day at Galle Face Green at Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo by His Excellency Shri Y.K.Sinha



Kriya Yoga Asanas & its benefits

June 24, 2015

Kriya Yoga Asanas & its benefits by Dr. Subramaniam Thyaparan of Ohm Kriya Babaji Yoga Aranyam held at ICC on June 24, 2015



Deepening in to Asanas by Vyasah Kalyanasunderam

June 24, 2015

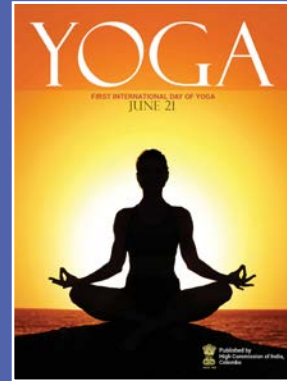
Deepening into Asanas by Mr. Vyasah Kalyanasunderam - Chief Yoga Instructor of Indian Cultural held at ICC on June 24, 2015 Centre & Astanka Yoga Mandir





Worldwide Celebrations of International Day of Yoga





A special eBook on YOGA was launched at the public event took place on the International Day of Yoga - June 21, 2015. Download the eBook from

www.hcicolombo.org/pdf/YOGA_HCI_e_brochure.pdf

