

सत्यमेव जयते

Embassy of India
ASTANA

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Embassy of India ASTANA NEWSLETTER

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India Celebrates 67th Republic Day

India celebrated its 67th Republic Day on 26th January, 2016. French President Mr. Francois Hollande graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. India's military prowess and achievements in different fields, state-of-the-art defence platforms, and the government's emphasis on self-reliance and indigenization were showcased in the Republic Day Parade at Rajpath in New Delhi. A 76-member French Army contingent led by a French military band consisting of 48 musicians marched on the Rajpath and presented a ceremonial salute to the President of India. It was the first time that any foreign troop took part in the Republic Day parade.



President addresses the Nation on the eve of Republic Day

President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee addressed the nation on the eve of the Republic Day. In his address, President said that India today is a rising power and fast emerging as a global leader in science, technology, innovation and start-ups, and whose economic success is the envy of the world. He stated that despite the challenges such as subdued global economy, severe droughts in some parts of India and devastating floods in some other parts, India is poised to become the fastest growing large economy this year (April 2015—March 2016) with an estimated growth rate of 7.3%.



Leaders at the Saluting Dais, Rajpath

President mentioned that 'Aadhaar', with its present reach of 960 million people, is helping in direct transfer of benefits, plugging leakages and improving transparency. He underscored that 190 million bank accounts opened under the 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana' is the single largest exercise in the world at financial inclusion. He spoke on other landmark programmes such as 'Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana' aiming to create model villages, 'Digital India programme' to bridge the digital divide, 'Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana' targeting farmers' welfare and 'MGNREGA programme' intending to enhance employment generation to rejuvenate rural economy. He also spoke about government's flagship investment promotion programmes such as 'Make in India' aimed to boost manufacturing, 'Start-up India' to encourage new-age entrepreneurship and 'National Skill Development Mission' to skill 300 million youth by 2022.



French Army Contingent Marches on the Rajpath

President cautioned that India should guard itself against the forces of violence, intolerance and unreason saying that such forces hit the institutions of democracy. Noting that reforms and progressive legislation are necessary for revitalizing the forces of growth, he urged the lawmakers to avoid delay in decision-making. He termed the scourge of terrorism as a cancer which must be operated out with a firm scalpel.



Tableau of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

President emphasized that disputes between neighbouring nations should be resolved through dialogue, but India cannot discuss peace under a shower of bullets. On climate change, he called for active participation of all stakeholders to address the alarming level of pollution particularly in the cities with innovative solutions of



Smerch Multiple Rocket Launcher System

urban planning, use of clean energy and change in the mindsets of the people. He stressed that the country's academic institutions must become world-class institutions saying that education leads to human progress and prosperity.

French President visits India

President of France Mr. Francois Hollande paid his second state visit to India from January 24-26, 2016 as Chief Guest of India's 67th Republic Day celebrations. He arrived in Chandigarh, a city planned and designed by French Architect Le Corbusier, on 24th January, where Prime Minister Modi received him in the picturesque Rock Garden, underscoring the message of eco-friendly recycling and sustainable development. Both the leaders visited Capital Complex, showcasing the architectural legacy of Le Corbusier. The complex houses the Secretariat, the Legislative Assembly and the High Court. The two leaders visited the Government Museum and Art Gallery and viewed the displays of archaeological findings by an Indo-French archaeological team, which suggest human activity dating back to 2.6 million years ago.

Prime Minister Modi and President Hollande chaired the concluding session of the India-French CEOs Forum and addressed the Indo-French Business Summit where they witnessed the signing of 16 B2B Agreements on development of smart cities in Chandigarh, Nagpur, Puducherry, Development of wind-based power project in India, Urban sector development, Solar photovoltaic projects in Indian rural areas and airports and a roadmap for creating a Joint Venture for manufacture of helicopters in India. In his address, President Hollande lauded Prime Minister Modi for his decisive role at COP21. He said that the main goals of his visit are to consolidate strategic partnership with India and implement decisions taken during Prime Minister Modi's visit to France.

Prime Minister Modi and President Hollande held delegation level talks at New Delhi on 25th January. In the joint press statement, Prime Minister Modi said that the discussions with the French delegation touched upon all domains from locomotives to satellites, archaeological excavations to smart cities and solar energy to nuclear power. India-France Joint Statement issued during the visit provides strong impetus to cooperation in civil nuclear energy. A separate Joint Statement on counter terrorism underscores the determination of the two countries to combat all forces that sponsor, shelter and support terrorism. The two leaders also released the book "Shadows of Gods" published by the French Institute in Pondicherry during the joint media briefing.

Prime Minister Modi and President Hollande jointly laid the foundation stone of International Solar Alliance (ISA) Headquarters and inaugurated the interim secretariat of ISA at the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Gurgaon. Government of India dedicated 5 acre land in NISE campus and contributed Rs. 175 crore (US\$ 26 million). Prime Minister Modi said that the ISA would help make solar energy a valuable source of affordable and reliable green and clean energy in 122 member countries that have more than 300 days of sunlight a year. President Hollande announced that France would contribute €300 million to finance solar energy projects under the ISA.

13 Agreements/MOUs were signed in New Delhi on Purchase of 36 Rafale Aircraft, Hosting of Argos-4 Payload onboard India's Oceansat-3 satellite, Joint thermal infrared earth observation mission, Participation in Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)'s next Mars mission, Joint Venture between Alstom and Indian Railways for production of 800 electric locomotives in Madhepura in the State of Bihar, Joint feasibility study for renovation of Ludhiana and Ambala railway stations, Cooperation between Food Safety and Standards Authority of India and ANSES in food safety, Cooperation in public administration, Conducting next round of Namaste France (Indian festival) in 2016 and Bonjour India (French festival) in 2017, Cultural exchange programme for the period 2016-18, Establishment of an Indo-French Ministerial-level joint committee on science and technology, Industry-sponsored PhD fellowship between Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mumbai and Thales Systemes Aeroportes, Cooperation between Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune and ENS de Lyon for joint research, teaching, exchange of personnel, etc, and Cooperation between IIT, Mumbai and French Universities in the field of higher education and research.



PM welcomes French President at Rock Garden



PM and French President attend CEOs Forum



The leaders attend India-France Business Summit



President meets French President



PM and French President release the Book



Inauguration of Interim Secretariat of ISA

Republic Day Celebration at Astana

Ambassador Shri Harsh K. Jain unfurled the National Flag on the occasion of the 67th Republic Day of India at the Embassy Residence in the morning of 26th January, 2016. It was followed by National Anthem and reading of President of India's address to the nation on the eve of the Republic Day. About 50 Indian nationals, Persons of Indian Origin and Embassy staff attended the ceremony.

The Embassy hosted a Reception at Hotel Radisson in the evening of 26th January. Ambassador welcomed and addressed the guests. In his address, Ambassador said that it was on this historic day in 1950 that Indian Constitution came into force. He stated that Indian Constitution laid the vision of building a new India by declaring India to be a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic, Republic committed to secure justice, liberty, equality and fraternity to its all citizens. He remarked that it has served us well and would continue to guide us in the future.

Ambassador stated that over the last 66 years India has made great strides in ensuring economic and social wellbeing of its people and contributed to the global peace, security and prosperity. He observed that the last one year was particularly remarkable for India's economic growth following Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's landmark initiative "Make in India" to promote India as a global manufacturing hub. He quoted the robust growth forecasts for India for next few years and the new initiatives being launched by the Indian government to further improve business climate. He stated that the last one year was also special for India-Kazakhstan bilateral relations. He noted that Prime Minister Modi's visit to Kazakhstan in July, 2015 served to further strengthen bilateral relations and expand strategic partnership between the two countries. Ambassador wished a happy Republic Day to all Indian nationals and congratulated the people of Kazakhstan on the 25th anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence this year.

In his address, the Chief Guest Mr. Magzum Mirzagaliyev, Deputy Minister of Energy congratulated the people of India on the occasion and wished them prosperity and well being. Recalling Prime Minister Modi's successful visit to Kazakhstan, he said that the agreements concluded during the visit and other high level engagements last year would further strengthen the bilateral relations.

About 200 officials from local government, members of diplomatic corps, academicians, cultural organizations, businessmen and the members of Indian community attended the Reception. A video of the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi was played on large screens during the reception.



Republic Day Celebration in Almaty

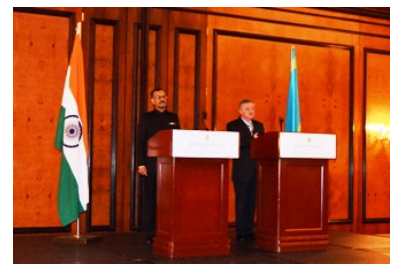
Mr. Naveen Kapur, Second Secretary (Cons), Representative Office of the Embassy of India in Almaty unfurled the national flag at the ROI Office in the morning of 26th January, 2016. It was followed by National Anthem and reading of President of India's address to the nation on the eve of the Republic Day. About 60 Indian nationals, Persons of Indian Origin and friends of India attended the ceremony.

The Embassy hosted a Reception at Hotel Intercontinental in the evening of 28th January, 2016 to celebrate the Republic Day in Almaty. Ambassador Shri Harsh K. Jain welcomed and addressed the guests.

In his address, Ambassador highlighted the important role played by Almaty in trade, economic, tourism, cultural, academic and defence cooperation between the two countries. He congratulated Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, a resident of Almaty and Director of Centre for Indian Classical Dances for receiving the title of the Honoured Worker of Kazakhstan for promotion of friendship among the people of the two countries through promotion of Indian classical dance in Kazakhstan.

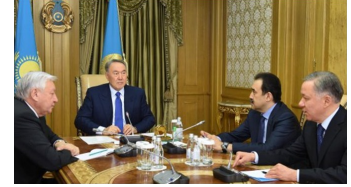
Mr. Rymtai Karibzhanov, Deputy Head of the Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan at Almaty represented the Government of Kazakhstan at the Reception. He congratulated the people of India on the occasion. Speaking about the growing level of engagements between the two countries, he said that Kazakhstan is a major trade and economic partner of India in Central Asia. He recalled the visit of Prime Minister of India to Kazakhstan in July, 2015 and stated that the visit gave a new impetus to bilateral cooperation.

About 150 people from the local government, diplomatic corps, academic and cultural institutions, businessmen and Indian community attended the Reception. A short cultural programme by the Centre for Indian Classical Dances and an exhibition of paintings by Ms. Botagoz Nurpeisova on Indian themes were organized during the Reception. A tea stall was put up by Assam Tea, Almaty. A video showing the Republic Day Parade in New Delhi was played on the large screens during the reception.



Kazakhstan to Hold Early Parliamentary Elections

President of Kazakhstan Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev dissolved the Majlis, the lower House of Kazakh Parliament, by a decree on 20th January, 2016 after holding consultations with the Speakers of both the Houses of Parliament, Prime Minister and the Chairman of the Constitutional Council. There are 107 members in Majlis. The elections to elect 98 members of the Majlis from among the candidates fielded by the parties would be held on 20th March, 2016 and elections for 9 members of the Majlis to be elected by the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan on 21st March, 2016. President Nazarbayev said that the early election of a new legislature is in the interests of the country and people. He urged the political parties to



nominate competent candidates who are devoted to the country's interests and capable of understanding the tasks on the agenda. He called on the citizens to actively take part in the elections and once again demonstrate their solidarity and unity for the sake of the country's future.

Earlier, the members of the Majlis on 13th January, 2016 unanimously appealed to the President for dissolution of the House and holding of early parliamentary elections along with the elections for Maslikhats, the local representative bodies. A Majlis Deputy Mr. Vladislav Kosarev read out a statement saying that current Majlis has fulfilled its mission to create a new legal framework for the Plan of Nation (100 steps to implement the five institutional reforms) and receiving a new mandate from the voters at a time when the world economy is facing major crisis is important for effective implementation of fundamental reforms and modernization of the country. The members of the Majlis are elected for a five-year term and the last elections were held in January 2012.

Chairman of the Central Election Commission Mr. Kuandyk Turgankulov announced simultaneous elections for the Majlis and the Maslikhats to optimize financial and organizational costs. He said that holding of elections for the Majlis and the Maslikhats simultaneously would cost KZT 8 billion (US\$ 21.1 million) as against the cost of KZT 12.8 billion (US\$ 33.8 million) involved in holding separate elections resulting in a saving of KZT 4.8 billion (US\$ 12.7 million) to the government. He announced that the elections for 3,335 seats of Maslikhats of all levels viz., 550 seats of Regional, 625 seats of Town and 2160 seats of District Maslikhats would be held on March 20, 2016.

World Hindi Day Celebrated in Kazakhstan

The Embassy celebrated the World Hindi Day at the Mahatma Gandhi School in Almaty on 29th January, 2016 in collaboration with the Centre for Indian Classical Dances, Almaty. Ambassador Shri Harsh K. Jain welcomed and addressed the guests. He stated that Hindi is the mother tongue of over 400 million people in India and is spoken and understood in many other countries besides India. He observed that Hindi is being regularly taught at the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and the Centre for Indian Classical Dances in Almaty. He expressed happiness that several students from Kazakhstan have visited India to study Hindi at the Central Hindi Institute. He informed that the Embassy is supporting publication of the first Hindi-Kazakh-Hindi dictionary by Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. He stated that presence of several common words in Hindi and Kazakh languages is an evidence of close historical and cultural relations between India and Kazakhstan. He added that two such words "Tej Kadam" became the title of the Joint Statement issued during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Kazakhstan in July, 2015.



Ambassador recalled that a World Hindi Secretariat was established in Mauritius in 2008 to promote Hindi as an international language. He informed about the holding of the 10th World Hindi Conference at Bhopal in September, 2015 with participation of representatives of 39 countries besides India. Mr. Erulan Zhiembayev, Principal of the Mahatma Gandhi School, also addressed the guests. He recalled that Mahatma Gandhi had placed great emphasis on promotion of Hindi language and it was therefore befitting to celebrate the World Hindi Day in Kazakhstan at Mahatma Gandhi School.

The Centre for Indian Classical Dances, Almaty led by its Director Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova presented a cultural programme including Hindi songs & poem recitals and Indian classical and Bollywood dances. A short presentation on the History of Hindi language was also made. A former student of Central Hindi Institute shared her experience in India. Three members of Indian community also recited Hindi poems. About 70 people including staff and students of Mahatma Gandhi School and the Centre for Indian Classical Dances, faculty members and students of Department of Indology, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, scholars of Institute of Oriental Studies, members of Indian community and Indian Chamber of Commerce & Culture attended the celebration.

Defence Attache visits Taraz State University

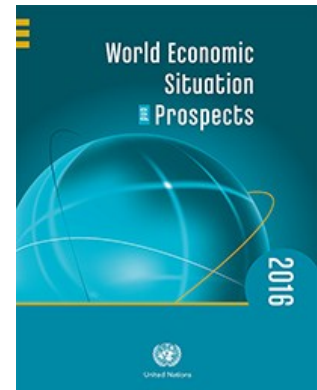
Defence Attache at the Embassy Col. L.S. Lidder visited M.H. Dulati Taraz State University, Taraz in Zhambyl Region at the invitation of Rector of the University Mr. Saryvekov Makhmetgali Nurgaliuly on January 20-21, 2016. He met the Rector Mr. Nurgaliuly and Head of Military Chair of the University Col. Sagat Mukushev. They discussed the strengthening of cooperation between the National Cadet Corps (NCC) of India and the University. Mr. Nurgaliuly extended an invitation for 2 officers and 12 cadets of NCC to visit the University in May, 2016 under the Youth Exchange Programme between the NCC and Voenni Kafedra of Kazakhstan. Col. Lidder visited the facilities of the Voenni Kafedra and interacted with the staff and the cadets.



India to Grow by 7.3% in 2016 : United Nations

"India is expected to be the fastest growing large economy in 2016-17", says United Nations' World Economic Situation and Prospects Report released on 22nd January, 2016. The Report estimates the India's average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth at 7.3% in 2016 and 7.5% in 2017.

The Report is an annual joint product of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the five Regional Commissions of United Nations. It estimates the global growth at 2.9% in 2016 and 3.2% in 2017. "India is an exception in the global scene with improved macroeconomic foundations and economic reforms", said the Head of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific's South and Southwest Asia Office Mr. Nagesh Kumar. Though falling crude oil prices have found mention in the report as an important driver behind the country's falling import figures and a balancing current account deficit, it says that 20% of India's exports are in the category of refined petroleum products, which have also suffered from falling crude rates.



The United Nations' Report says that GDP in South Asia is expected to grow by 6.7% in 2016 and 7% in 2017 driven by rise in domestic consumer demand boosted by low commodity prices, moderate inflation and a slight uptick in exports. India's economy accounts for over 70% of the GDP in South Asia.

India Will See Robust Growth : IMF

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) retained India's growth projections at 7.5% for 2016-17 and 2017-18, as it cut its forecast for the global economy by 0.2% for 2016 and 2017 calendar years on depressed oil and commodity prices. The IMF, in its latest 'World Economic Outlook Update' released on 19th January, 2016, said that India and the rest of emerging Asia are expected to continue to grow at a robust pace although with some countries facing strong headwinds from China's economic rebalancing and global manufacturing weakness. The IMF's outlook closely tracks that of the World Bank announced in first week of January, 2016 projecting a 7.8% growth for India in 2016.



The IMF scaled down the world economic growth to 3.4% in 2016 and 3.6% in 2017 from 3.6% and 3.8% respectively in the October 2015 World Economic Outlook; however, it is marginally better than the 3% growth of 2015. It says that advanced economies are expected to have grown by 1.9% in 2015, slightly higher than 1.8% a year ago and are likely to grow by 2.1% each in 2016 and 2017. The IMF's outlook update expects continuation of a modest and uneven recovery in advanced economies with a gradual further narrowing of output gaps. On the other hand, the outlook says that the picture for emerging market and developing economies is diverse, but in many cases challenging. The IMF cut economic growth projection of emerging markets by 0.2% both for 2016 and 2017 saying that the pick-up in global activity is projected to be more gradual than in the October 2015 Outlook, especially in emerging markets and developing economies. It says that the emerging market economies expanded by about 4% in 2015, much slower than 4.6% a year ago. They are expected to grow by 4.3% and 4.7% in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

India Among Top 3 Nations for Global Automotive Investments : KPMG

"India is among top three most attractive destinations for future investments by automotive companies globally over the next five years", says 17th annual KPMG International Global Automotive Executive Survey (GAES) 2016 released on January 11, 2016.

The survey based on views from around 800 global senior automotive executives ranks India third as the preferred investment destination in the future. The trend is fuelled by India's long term market potential compared to the saturated and stagnant developed markets narrowing industry margins creating pressure to reduce costs, and availability of skilled labour and improvement in the manufacturing environment in India. The survey points out that most major global car manufacturers have already planned additional capacity over the next couple of years in India and component makers are also queuing up to establish R&D centres in the country.



The survey says that factors like geographical proximity and perceived ease of operating were among the key influencers for respondents with almost a third of respondents from India and ASEAN regions rating India as the top destination for future investments.

Prime Minister Modi launches "Start Up India" Movement

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched "Start up India" initiative in New Delhi on 16th January, 2016 unveiling a slew of incentives to boost start-up businesses. A day-long workshop on various aspects of entrepreneurship preceded the launch. In his address, Prime Minister Modi said that successful start-ups are usually created by those who are driven by an idea or an urge to solve a problem facing the people and a sense of compassion for others. He suggested some areas such as crop wastage and cyber security where youth innovators should focus upon.

Unveiling the Start Up Action Plan, Prime Minister Modi announced that (i) a dedicated start-up fund worth Rs.10,000 crore (US\$ 1.5 billion) would be created for funding start-ups; (ii) start-ups would be exempted from income tax on their profits for the first three years and from capital gains tax if the money is reinvested in another start-up; (iii) patent applications of start-ups would be fast-tracked; (iv) 80% of patent fee of start-up businesses would be exempted; (v) a self certification-based compliance system for start-ups would be introduced in respect of nine labour and environment laws; (vi) Atal Innovation Mission would be launched to give a boost to innovation; (vii) start-ups would be encouraged in government purchases with relief in experience and turnover criteria; (viii) a new mobile application would be introduced to enable start-ups to register themselves within a day and apply for clearances online; and (ix) the procedure for exit of unsuccessful ventures would be simplified.



ACTION PLAN	
Here's what start-up businesses can look forward to	When we started, it was only 4-5 venture capitalists, and it was tough to get a meeting with them. Over the next years we want to create a million entrepreneurs.
No tax on profits, inspection for 3 yrs	New intellectual property rights protection, 80% reduction in patent fee
Credit guarantee scheme	Encourage start-ups in port purchases, with relief in experience and turnover criteria
No capital gains if money invested in another start-up	Fund with ₹10,000 crore corpus
Easy exit policy	Special scheme for women entrepreneurs
Self certification-based compliance for labour and environment laws	Encouragement to incubation centres
Single-point Start-up India hub for clearances	Support to biotechnology start-ups
Mobile app, portal for registrations	Programme to encourage innovation among students in 500,000 schools
Handholding, with government acting as a friend and colleague	

KUNAL BHAL
Snapdeal CEO/co-founder

MASAYOSHI SONI
SiftSense founder and CEO

India Launches Fifth Navigation Satellite IRNSS-1E

Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)'s PSLV-C31 (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) successfully launched IRNSS-1E, a 1425 kg spacecraft carrying navigation and ranging payloads, into a sub-geosynchronous transfer orbit from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota in the State of Andhra Pradesh on 20th January, 2016. It is the thirty second consecutively successful mission of PSLV.

IRNSS-1E is the fifth of the seven satellites constituting the space segment of the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS). The ground segment comprises 13 Indian Range and Integrity Monitoring Stations, an IRNSS Network Timing Centre, an ISRO Navigation Centre and a Space Control Facility.

The IRNSS is an independent regional navigation satellite system designed to provide accurate real-time data on the position of objects to aid road, air and maritime traffic apart from providing mapping and tracking services to users in India and the region extending up to 1500 kms from its boundary. The IRNSS would provide two types of services, namely, Standard Positioning Services (SPS), which are provided to all users and Restricted Services (RS), which are provided to authorized users. The earlier four navigation satellites had been put in orbit between July, 2013 and March, 2015. Two more navigation spacecrafts are scheduled to be launched in the coming months, which would complete the seven-satellite constellation, otherwise called the "Indian GPS".



Liberalized Procedure for Faster Issue of Indian Passports

Normal passport applications of first time applicants will be processed on post-police verification basis enabling faster issue of passports without any additional fee. The Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India on January 25, 2016 announced that all first time passport applicants submitting the applications along with Aadhaar Card, Electoral Photo Identity Card, Permanent Account Number (PAN) Card and an Affidavit declaring no-criminal record would be issued passports without prior police verification subject to successful online validation of Aadhaar number. The police verification in such cases will be carried out after issue of passports.



The Ministry of External Affairs also launched "mPassport Police App" on 25th January. Under the Passport Seva Project, the Ministry has streamlined the police verification system by digitally integrating the District Police authorities in the country, which led to overall reduction in the number of days taken to complete the police verification to 34 days in 2015 as against 42 days in 2014 and 49 days in 2013. The 'mPassport Police App' will enable the field level verification officers to directly capture the police verification report in the system digitally. Consequently, the need to download and print the physical Personal Particulars Form would no longer be required resulting in paperless end-to-end digital flow of the police verification process, which would further reduce the time required for completion of police verification process to 21 days.

Incredible India Destination : Jaisalmer

Jaisalmer is situated in the heart of Thar Desert in the State of Rajasthan. The City was founded in 1156 by Rawal Jaisal, a Bhati Rajput King, after whom it is named, and till today exudes an age-old aura of valour and royalty.

The Jaisalmer Fort, also called Sonar Quila (Golden Fort), seems suddenly to rise out of the desert haze, magnificent edifice of massive yellow sandstone ramparts and bastions bathed golden in the sunlight. The setting sun adds its own magic and shrouds the Fort with mystique. The Fort encompasses within it the Raj Mahal (Royal Palace), Jain temples, a Laxminath temple, Havelis, several eateries and shops.

The Jain temples located inside the Jaisalmer Fort were built between 12th and 15th centuries. The temples are dedicated to Rishabdev and Shambhavnath, the first and third Jain "Tirthankars" (wise teachers who taught people how to attain nirvana). India is known as Bharat after the name of the eldest son of Rishabdev, who is also known as Adinath. The temples are carved out of yellow sandstone like all other structures in Jaisalmer.

The Havelis, built by rich merchants of Jaisalmer in 18th and 19th centuries, are a true picture of medieval architecture in India. Patwon ki Haveli, Salim Singh ki Haveli and Nathmal Ji ki Haveli are some of the most beautiful and elegant examples.

Jaisalmer Government Museum has on display traditional household items, rock-cut crockery, jewellery and statues from 7th to 9th century AD.

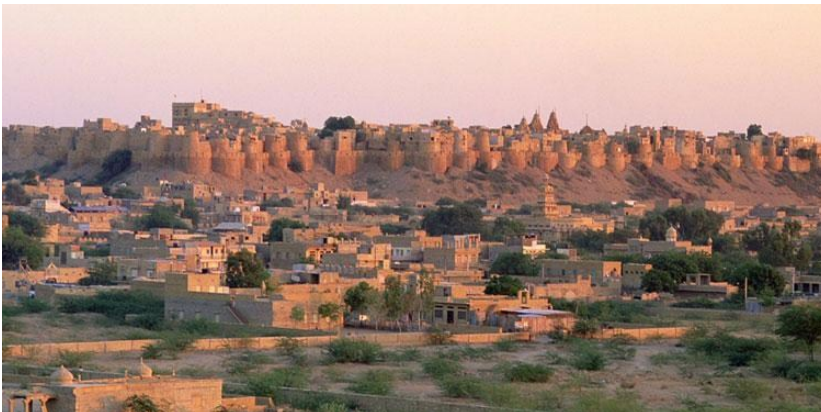
Gadsisar Lake, the rainwater conservation lake built by Maharawal Gadsis in the 14th century, was once the main source of drinking water for the entire town of Jaisalmer. There are many small temples and shrines around it.

Wood Fossil Park is located 17 kms away from the city. The fossils in the Park are 180 million years old and stand witness to the geological cataclysms, which had taken place in the Thar desert.

Sam Sand Dunes are located at a distance of 42 kms from Jaisalmer. Camel safaris are conducted there to give visitors a feel of the desert.

Desert National Park, located 45 kms away from Jaisalmer, is an excellent example of the eco system of the Thar Desert and its diverse fauna. The variety of wildlife there includes the black buck, the great Indian bustard, chinkara, desert fox, etc.

Bada Bagh (6 km), which houses royal cenotaphs; Kuldhara (18 km) and Khabha (30 km), which are two of the 84 medieval villages abandoned by the Paliwals overnight; and Tanot Mata Temple (120 km) are other tourist attractions near Jaisalmer.



Jaisalmer Fort



Jain Temple



Patwon Ki Haveli



Petrified tree trunk at Wood Fossil Park



Sam Sand Dunes



Gadsisar Lake

PHOTO FEATURE

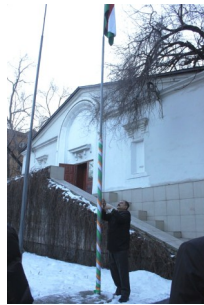
Flag Hoisting on the occasion of 67th Republic Day of India at Astana



Reception on the occasion of 67th Republic Day of India at Astana



Flag Hoisting on the occasion of 67th Republic Day of India at Almaty



Reception on the occasion of 67th Republic Day of India at Almaty



World Hindi Day at Almaty



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