

सत्यमेव जयते

## Embassy of India ASTANA

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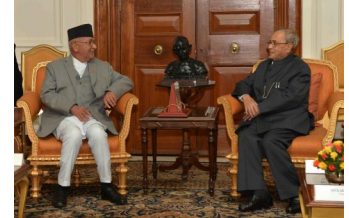
# Embassy of India ASTANA NEWSLETTER

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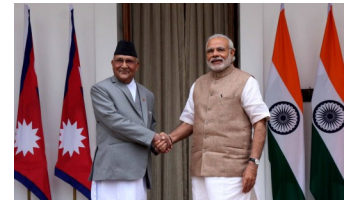
## Nepalese Prime Minister Visits India

Prime Minister of Nepal Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli paid a state visit to India from February 19-24, 2016. It was his first visit abroad after assuming office in October, 2015. He stayed at the Rashtrapati Bhawan (Presidential Residence) in New Delhi as state guest. Prime Minister Mr. Oli called on President of India Mr. Pranab Mukherjee on February 20, 2016. Prime Minister Mukherjee said that the open border between India and Nepal is a unique aspect of relationship. He emphasized that India is committed to further strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation. Prime Minister Oli reciprocated the President's sentiments and said that the two countries have a great deal in common and belong to one culture and one civilization.



Nepalese Prime Minister calls on President

Prime Minister Oli met Prime Minister Modi at Hyderabad House followed by delegation level talks. They discussed political, economic, security and socio-cultural ties between the two countries. Their discussions touched upon issues of mutual concern as well as bilateral cooperation in diverse areas including developmental assistance, trade, energy and connectivity. Both sides agreed to continue to cooperate closely on matters relating to national security. The two Prime Ministers tele-inaugurated a power transmission line between Dhalkebar in Nepal and Muzaffarpur in India.



Nepalese Prime Minister meets PM Modi

In their joint press statement, Prime Minister Modi said that India and Nepal are working on hydroelectricity projects with a combined capacity of 7000 MW and their quick and successful completion can be a gateway to Nepal's economic prosperity. He stated that trade and investment are strong pillars of bilateral relations and early completion of Integrated Check Posts and construction of a road in Terai region would boost trade infrastructure. Prime Minister Oli said that his visit to India underlines the importance that his Government attaches to good relations with India. He conveyed Nepal's gratitude for the prompt and extensive assistance provided by India in the wake of earthquake in Nepal in April, 2015 and appreciated the special assistance package of US\$ 1 billion committed by India for the post earthquake reconstruction.

Prime Minister Oli visited the Tehri hydropower project in the state of Uttarakhand on 21st February. He inspected every section of the Dam and took a keen interest in grasping various aspects from design to rehabilitation strategies related to the project.

Prime Minister Oli addressed a conference organized by Indian Council of World Affairs on 22nd February where he underlined that the new constitution of Nepal promulgated in September, 2015 embodies hopes and aspirations of all segments of the Nepalese society. He attended a business meeting organized by FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry). He invited the Indian businesses to invest in Nepal and stated that his government is committed to economic reforms and would extend all necessary support to the investors.

On 23rd February, Prime Minister Oli visited the rehabilitation sites in Kutch district in the state of Gujarat, which was devastated by an earthquake in January, 2001, to have a first-hand experience of the post-earthquake reconstruction and development work. He said that the post-earthquake reconstruction in Gujarat is inspiring and vowed to build a strong and resilient Nepal. Prime Minister Oli visited Hindustan Unilever Limited located at the Industrial Park in Mumbai on 24th February and took stock about its products and global marketing network. At an event organized by All India Association of Industries, he invited the Indian business and industry leaders to invest in Nepal in areas such as Tourism, Hydropower, IT, etc. He also urged the film industry to explore the possibilities of film shooting in Nepal.

Seven Agreements/MOUs were signed on utilization of US\$ 250 million grant component of India's assistance package for post earthquake reconstruction assistance, strengthening of road infrastructure in Terai area of Nepal, cooperation between Nepal Academy of Music and Drama and Sangeet Natak Academy, transit routes, rail transport, inauguration of Muzaffarpur-Dhalkebar transmission line and establishment of an Eminent Persons Group.

## Make in India Week Concludes on a High Note

The 'Make in India Week' inaugurated by Prime Minister Modi in Mumbai on 13th February, 2016 concluded on 18th February on a high note showcasing India's manufacturing prowess. The week-long event created avenues for showcasing, connecting and collaborating for manufacturing in India, promoted an investment enabling environment, and provided encouragement to design, innovation and startups and a platform where global CEOs, think tanks, policy makers, diplomats and political leaders converged.



Some of the policies unveiled during the Make in India Week were the establishment of a Rs. 2,200 crore (US\$ 323 million) Electronics Development Fund to finance innovations, research and development in electronics manufacturing sector and National Capital Goods Policy aimed at creating an ecosystem for a globally competitive capital goods sector and doubling the share of capital goods in exports to 40%. Some state governments announced state-specific policies.

The Make in India Week witnessed a business commitment of Rs.15.20 lakh crore (US\$ 223 billion) in investment. 30% of the total investments committed are from foreign investors. 102 countries participated in the Make in India Expo. More than 25,000 people participated in Seminars and Symposia, where over 1,245 national and international experts spoke on wide ranging issues concerning business and society. A total of 150 events were organized under the Make in India Week banner. More than 890,000 people visited the Expo and other events, of which 49,743 were registered delegates. The Make in India Week played host to 20 foreign dignitaries including two Prime Ministers. 215 exhibitors showcased their strengths and opportunities in 11 sectors covering aerospace & defence, automobiles, chemicals & petrochemicals, construction machinery, food processing, infrastructure, IT & electronics, industrial equipment & machinery, MSME, pharmaceuticals and textiles. 17 Indian states and 3 countries - Germany, Sweden and Poland - had their pavilions in the Make in India Centre. The Make in India Week also provided a platform for nearly 8,245 Business-to-Business, Business-to-Government and Government-to-Government meetings.

## Scheme for Voluntary Certification of Yoga Professionals

The Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy), Government of India launched a Scheme for Voluntary Certification for Yoga Professionals providing yoga lessons/classes. The scheme aims to certify the competence of yoga professionals using third party assessment. It will evaluate four levels of competence, namely, Yoga Instructor, Yoga Teacher, Yoga Master and Yoga Acharya (advanced level). The scheme has been developed by adopting the principles and requirements laid down in the international standard, "ISO/IEC 17024:2012(E) General Requirements for Bodies Operating Certification of Persons".



The certification will be carried out by the Quality Council of India (QCI). The yoga professionals desirous of getting certified have to apply for the certification to QCI. It can be done online as well as offline. The applicants will be informed of the center at which they will be examined. The examination will consist of Written Examination, Practical Demonstration and Oral Interview. There is no particular pre-requisite to apply for the certification. There is no requirement of age, qualification, training or experience. The certificate will be valid for three years and one needs to apply for re-certification after three years. Foreign applicants would be provided gratis visa to travel to India to appear in the examination. Further details of the scheme are available at : [www.yogacertification.qci.org.in](http://www.yogacertification.qci.org.in)

## New Delhi and Mumbai Airports Ranked World's Best

New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) and Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport (CSIA) were ranked world's best in 2015 under the category of 25-40 million passengers per annum. The IGIA has been adjudged as the best airport in the 25-40 million passenger category for the second consecutive year by the Airports Council International (ACI). The CSIA has featured in the same category among the top five airports of the world for the fifth time in a row. According to the Airport Service Quality Survey conducted by the ACI in 2015, the two airports are not only highly elegant, but also provide top-notch facilities for passengers and have received some of the best passenger satisfaction reviews.



## Embassy Celebrates ITEC and ICCR Days in Kazakhstan

The Embassy of India in Astana celebrated the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) and Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Days on February 17 in Astana and February 28 in Almaty. A distinguished ITEC Alumnus Mr. Roman Vassilenko, Chairman of the Committee for International Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Kazakhstan joined the celebration as the Chief Guest at the function in Astana. Over 80 ITEC and ICCR Alumni attended the programme in Astana and over 65 alumni attended the programme in Almaty.

Ambassador Shri Harsh K. Jain welcomed the guests. He spoke about the ITEC programme organized by the government of India to share India's developmental experience with other friendly developing countries. He stated that the ITEC programme now provides 10,000 scholarships annually at leading training institutions in India to over 140 countries and 10 multilateral organizations. Ambassador informed that as part of the programme, India provides technical know-how and capacity building covering a wide range of subjects in both civilian and defence spheres, consultancy services, deputation of Indian experts abroad, humanitarian aid and disaster relief. He noted that over 1000 scholars from Kazakhstan comprising about 880 civilian participants and over 132 defence personnel have benefited from the programme.

Ambassador stated that ICCR offers more than 3300 scholarships annually to foreign students in various streams of humanities, commerce and science & technology at undergraduate, post-graduate and doctoral levels and performing arts in premium Indian universities and institutions. He noted that over 200 scholars from Kazakhstan have availed ICCR scholarships. He expressed confidence that more and more scholars from Kazakhstan would benefit from the two programmes in the coming years and would, in turn, contribute to the socio-economic progress of Kazakhstan and friendly ties between India and Kazakhstan.

He informed that ICCR has a Cultural Centre in Astana and supports the activities of the Centre of Indian Classical Dances in Almaty directed by Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova. He underscored that both the centres are engaged in multifaceted cultural activities and exchanges between the two countries. He spoke about the opening of the Centre for Indian Music and Dance at the Nazarbayev University and the launch of Yoga classes at the Al-Farabi University in 2015. He recalled the celebration of golden jubilee of ITEC programme and ICCR Day in Astana last year, where having noticed that several ITEC and ICCR alumna had come from Almaty, he promised to hold the celebration of ITEC and ICCR Days in Almaty too from next year. He expressed satisfaction for being able to fulfill the promise.

He congratulated one of the ICCR alumna Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, Director, Centre of Indian Classical Dances in Almaty for being awarded the title of "Honored Worker of the Republic of Kazakhstan" [Kazakhstannyn Enbek Sinirgen Kairatkeri] in recognition of her work for the past 18 years in uniting the people through her dance, strengthening friendship, spirituality and cultural ties, enriching the knowledge about Kazakhstan abroad, spreading the main principles of humanity and healthy life style through spiritual Indian classical dance and undertaking educational work including Asian philosophy among young people.

In his address, Chief Guest Mr. Roman Vassilenko fondly recalled his own experience in his ITEC training in 1995. He appreciated the highly useful training, visits to various institutions and historical sites organized during his training programme in India. He noted the strong and strategic partnership built by India and Kazakhstan in the past two decades as is evident from the constant strengthening of cooperation between the two countries in trade, investment, education, science, culture and sports. He expressed gratitude for India's support to advancing CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia) process and recalled the then Prime Minister Shri A.B. Vajpayee's visit to Kazakhstan to participate in its first summit in June, 2002. He described the honour accorded to President of Kazakhstan Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev to be the chief guest in India's Republic Day celebrations in January, 2009 as the sincere respect and friendly attitude enjoyed by Kazakhstan in India. He stated that important discussions held between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Nazarbayev during the former's visit to Kazakhstan in July, 2015 provided an impetus to further development of cooperation between the two countries in all key directions.

Ms. Gulnar Sarseke, an ITEC alumna; Mr. Timur Zhussupov, an ITEC alumnus; and Ms. Aigul Kazhuratova, an ICCR alumna shared their experiences at the event in Astana. Ms. Laura Yerekeshova, an ITEC as well as ICCR alumna; Dr. Seningul Dossova, an ITEC alumna; Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, an ICCR alumna; Mr. Berik Umarov, an ITEC alumnus; and Ms. Ainagul, an ITEC alumna shared their experiences at the event in Almaty.

A cultural programme including classical & Bollywood dances and flute recital was organized by Indian Cultural Centre and Yoga Art Studio in Astana. The Centre of Indian Classical Dances in Almaty presented a short cultural programme at the event in Almaty. The events ended with Cocktail receptions serving assortment of Indian cuisine.



## Executive Director, ITPO Attends 2nd International Participants Meeting of EXPO

Ms. Shubhra Singh, Executive Director and Mr. R.P. Dhusia, Deputy General Manager of Indian Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO) attended the Second Meeting of EXPO 2017 International Participants in Astana on February 24-25, 2016. They also visited the EXPO site. 278 representatives from 102 countries attended the meeting where the National Company Astana EXPO 2017 JSC presented updates relating to the preparation of various aspects of EXPO 2017. 12 countries and 1 multilateral agency signed participation contracts in the two-day event. Shri R. Gururaj, First Secretary (Com) at the Embassy of India also attended the meeting.



So far, 75 countries and 14 international organizations have confirmed their participation in the EXPO 2017 to be held in Astana from June 10 to September 10, 2017.

## Kazakh Armed Forces Officers Participate in ITEC Courses

Major Nurzhas Kalabayev, Captain Niyaz Ayupov, Senior Lieutenants Rinat Zhumagaliyev, Nurlan Serikkaliuly and Tanat Orynbasarov, and Lieutenant Askhat Alzhanov from Kazakh Armed Forces were selected for the "English Language Course" conducted by Army Education Corps Training Centre and College, Pachmarhi from 7th March to 3rd September, 2016 under government of India's ITEC programme.



Colonel L.S. Lidder, Defence Attache at the Embassy interacted with the six candidates and handed over air tickets to them for their travel to India. He also briefed them about the course and the city of Pachmarhi.

## Kazakh Professionals Participate in ITEC Courses

Mr. ZhanibekZhapbasbayev, Programming Specialist of JSC "NC "Kazakhstan Temir Zholy", was selected for the course "Certificate Course in English Fluency and IT skills" conducted by "CMC Ltd, New Delhi" from 14.3.2016 to 3.6.2016. Mrs. Gulzhas Mailybayeva, Senior Lecturer of L.N. Gumilev Eurasian National University, was selected for the course "Broadband Technologies and Future Trends" conducted by "Excellence in Telecom Technology and Management, Mumbai" from 14.3.2016 to 6.5.2016. Shri Ram Kumar, SS(PPS/ITEC) handed over air tickets to the two candidates and briefed them about the courses.



## Ambassador Meets Office Bearers of InCham

Ambassador Shri Harsh K. Jain met the office bearers of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Culture in Kazakhstan (InCham), in Almaty on 29th February, 2016. He congratulated them on their election and wished them success in their endeavour to promote trade, economic and cultural cooperation between India and Kazakhstan.



InCham, an Indian Community Association in Kazakhstan, was formed in September, 2015. It held elections of its office bearers on February 6, 2016.

## Indian Cultural Centre Moves to New Premises

The Indian Cultural Centre in Astana moved to new premises at Villa No.2, Zhyly Oi Street, Karaotkel Microdistrict-2, Yesil District in Astana on 19th February, 2016. The new location is more spacious and easily accessible. It contains a mini auditorium and multipurpose hall. A map showing its location is attached at page No.8.

The Indian Cultural Centre in Astana conducts regular Yoga and Kathak dance classes besides other activities.



## Finance Minister Presents Budget for 2016-17

Finance Minister Mr. Arun Jaitley presented the Union Budget for the year 2016-17 (April, 2016 to March, 2017) on 29th February, 2016. The government proposed to spend Rs. 19,78,060 crore (US\$ 290 billion) in the fiscal year 2016-17, which is 10.8% higher than the Revised Estimates for the previous year. The budget provided for enhanced expenditure in priority areas of farm and rural sector, social sector, infrastructure, employment generation and recapitalization of banks. The government focused on ensuring macro economic stability and prudent fiscal management, boosting domestic demand and continuing with the pace of economic reforms and policy initiatives. While the budget retained the fiscal deficit at 3.5% of GDP adhering to the fiscal targets, it ensured that the development agenda is not compromised.

Finance Minister proposed to take measures to double the farmers' income by 2022. He allocated Rs. 47,912 crore (US\$ 7.03 billion) for agriculture, farmers' welfare and irrigation, which is nearly twice the allocation for the previous year. He proposed that Rs.9 lakh crore (US\$ 132 billion) would be given as agricultural credit in 2016-17. He increased allocation under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana to Rs.19,000 crore (US\$ 2.79 billion) to connect 65,000 eligible habitations by 2019. He announced that Krishi Kalyan Cess @ 0.5% would be imposed on all taxable services with effect from 1st June, 2016 and the proceeds would be exclusively used for financing initiatives relating to improvement of agriculture and welfare of farmers. He announced 100% electrification of villages by 1st May, 2018.

He announced the following three major schemes to help the weaker section of the society : (i) the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) whereby the farmers will get due compensation in the event of any loss suffered against payment of a nominal amount of insurance premium; (ii) health insurance scheme to take care of hospitalization expenditure, which is likely to cover about one-third of India's population; and (iii) an initiative to provide cooking gas connection to 15 million BPL (below poverty line) households in the name of women members of the families during the year 2016-17 at the cost of Rs.2000 crore (US\$ 293 million).

He announced setting up of a Higher Education Financing Authority with an initial capital base of Rs.1000 crore (US\$ 143 million) to promote higher education and 1500 Multi Skill Training Institutes across the country, for which Rs.1,700 crore (US\$ 250 million) was allocated in the budget. In order to boost growth and employment generation, he announced 100% deduction of profits for 3 out of 5 years for start-ups set up during April, 2016 to March, 2019 and allocation of Rs. 1000 crore (US\$ 143 million) to pay the Employee Pension Scheme contribution of 8.33% for all new employees enrolling in EPFO for the first three years of their employment.

He proposed a massive hike in public spending on infrastructure to Rs.2.21 lakh crore (US\$ 32.42 billion), an increase of 22.5% over the previous year. He announced reforms in FDI policy in the areas of insurance and pensions, asset reconstruction companies and stock exchanges. His announcement to allow 100% FDI through FIPB route for marketing food products produced and manufactured in India is expected to give a big encouragement to food processing industry and create new jobs. To promote Make in India campaign, Finance Minister proposed changes in customs and excise duty rates on certain inputs to reduce costs and improve competitiveness of domestic industry in sectors like IT hardware, capital goods, defence production, textiles, mineral fuels & oils, chemicals & petrochemicals, paper, paperboard & newsprint, maintenance, repair and overhauling of aircrafts and ship repair.

In order to strengthen financial sector, he announced allocation of Rs.25,000 crore (US\$ 3.67 Billion) for recapitalization of public sector banks and listing of government-owned general insurance companies. He increased the target under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana to Rs.180,000 crore (US\$ 26.41 Billion) to provide funding to non-corporate small business sector.

He provided in the budget a corpus of Rs. 900 crore (US\$ 132 million) for the Price Stabilization Fund to deal with the situation arising out of abrupt increase in prices of essential commodities. He proposed three specific initiatives to ensure targeted disbursement of government subsidies and financial assistance to actual beneficiaries.

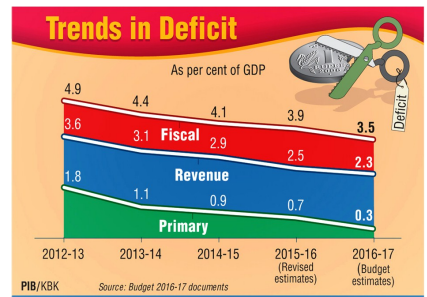
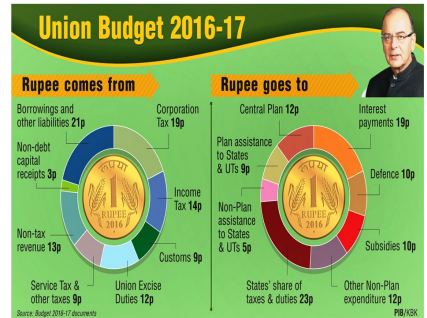
Finance Minister provided 100% tax exemption on profits from small projects to facilitate affordable housing and allowed deduction of additional interest of Rs.50,000 to encourage small first-time home buyers. He reiterated the government's commitment to provide a stable and predictable taxation regime.

### Budget at a Glance

Figures in Rs cr

	2014-15 (Actuals)	2015-16 (Budget est)	2015-16 (Revised est)	2016-17 (Budget Est)
REVENUE RECEIPTS	11,01,412	11,41,515	12,06,094	13,71,022
CAPITAL RECEIPTS	5,62,201	6,35,902	5,79,302	6,01,036
TOTAL RECEIPTS	16,63,613	17,77,417	17,85,396	19,78,060
NON-PLAN EXPENDITURE	12,01,029	13,12,200	13,08,194	14,28,050
PLAN EXPENDITURE	4,62,684	4,65,217	4,77,197	5,50,010
REVENUE DEFICIT	3,65,589	3,94,422	3,41,588	3,54,016
EFFECTIVE REV DEFICIT	2,34,759	2,68,000	2,09,585	5,33,904
FISCAL DEFICIT	5,10,725	5,55,649	5,35,090	5,33,904
PRIMARY DEFICIT	1,08,281	99,504	92,469	41,235
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	16,63,613	17,77,417	17,85,391	19,78,060

Source: PIB



## Incredible India Destination : Guwahati

Guwahati, considered to be the gateway to the enchanting North East in India, is the largest city in the region. It is situated between the southern bank of Brahmaputra river and the foothills of the Shillong plateau. The city and its surrounding areas are rich in wildlife. As the second largest commercial tea production region in the world, Guwahati is an important tea trading centre. Dispur, a part of Guwahati, serves as the capital of the state of Assam. Assam is a state of breath-taking scenic beauty, flora and fauna, vast rolling plain, mighty waterways and a land of fairs and festivals.

Umananda temple is located in peacock island in Brahmaputra river, which is believed to be the world's smallest human inhabited river island.

Bhubaneswari temple, a white shrine perched atop a hill adjacent to the city, is a major draw among religious pilgrims. The temple has a beautiful surrounding of lush green plantation and provides a magnificent view of Guwahati. The enchanting view of the sunset on the Brahmaputra river as viewed from the hill attracts many visitors.

The state museum is extremely popular due to its amazing anthology of antiques right back to prehistoric times. The collection boasts of some of the most authentic pre-historic sculptures, metal, ivory paintings, woodwork, costumes, etc.

State Zoo-cum-Botanical Garden boasts of an astonishing collection of some rare and extinct species of wild animals settled comfortably in their natural habitat. It also plays host to rare species of birds.

Vasishtha, the learned sage credited with writing of Vasishtha Ramayana, is believed to have created the Vasishtha Ashram and later died there. The belief of longevity after a holy dip in the three streams flowing near the ashram enhances the popularity of this pilgrimage centre.

The suburban town of Pandu is named after King Pandu, father of the famous five Pandavas. The Tila Hills in the town has a temple dedicated to Pandu. It is believed that the Pandavas lived there for some time during their exile.

Saulkuchi, located at a distance of 30 km from Guwahati, is a rural tourism hotspot renowned for production of Assamese silk.

Hajo, 32 km away from Guwahati, is an interesting place where one can find the shrines of Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists.

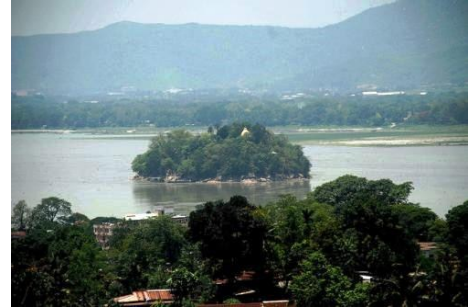
Madan Kamdev, located at a distance of 40 km from Guwahati, is an archaeological site where sculptures dating back to 9th and 10th century AD are situated.

The Manas National Park situated 180 km away from Guwahati rests at the foothills of the Himalayas and is spread over an area of 390 sq.km.

Kaziranga National Park located at a distance of 200 km from Guwahati is the star attraction for visitors for its unique animal and bird mix and authentic habitat. This world heritage site is renowned for breeding and habituating the one-horned rhino.

Majuli, about 200 km from Guwahati, is the biggest river island in the world and is famous for its satras or vaishnava monasteries.

Sivasagar, a beautiful town, is 360 kms north east of Guwahati. It was the capital of Ahom kingdom from 1699 to 1788. It is well known for Ahom palaces and monuments.



*Umananda Temple*



*State Museum*



*State Zoo Cum Botanical Garden*



*Madan Kamdev*



*Kaziranga National Park*

## PHOTO FEATURE

### *Celebration of ITEC and ICCR Days at Astana*

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### *Celebration of ITEC and ICCR Days at Almaty*



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### Map of Location of Indian Cultural Center

