

सत्यमेव जयते

## Embassy of India ASTANA

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# Embassy of India ASTANA NEWSLETTER

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## India Celebrates its 68th Republic Day

India celebrated its 68th Republic Day on 26th January, 2017. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of United Arab Emirates (UAE) graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. India's military prowess and achievements in different fields, state-of-the-art defence platforms, its diverse cultural and social traditions and the government's emphasis on self-reliance and indigenization were showcased in the Republic Day Parade at Rajpath in New Delhi. Tableaux from 17 States and 6 Central Ministries presented varied historical, art and cultural heritage of the country. The parade included a 149-member UAE Presidential Guard, Air Force, Navy and Army contingent led by a UAE band consisting of 35 musicians marching on Rajpath and presenting a ceremonial salute to the President of India.



President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee addressed the nation on the eve of the Republic Day. In his address, he said that Indian democracy has been an oasis of stability for the last six and a half decades in the region troubled by unrest mainly due to the strong institutions of democracy built by the founders of the nation. He gave a brief account of the achievements made by free India in various aspects such as per capita income, reduction in poverty, life expectancy, literacy, economic growth, scientific and technical manpower, military power, nuclear power, space, industrial power and food grain production. He noted that Indian economy has been performing well despite the challenging global economic conditions. He stated that demonetization of high value currencies implemented in November, 2016 immobilized black money, fought corruption and caused more and more transactions to become cashless, which improved the transparency of the economy.

He said that today's youth are brimming with hope and aspirations and are pursuing their life goals, which they perceive will bring them fame, success and happiness, with a single-minded devotion. He emphasized the importance of providing adequate opportunities for them. He stated that happiness is fundamental to the human experience of life and called for making happiness and well-being of the people as the touchstones of public policy. He spoke about the flagship initiatives of the government designed to promote the well-being of the society such as Swachh Bharat Mission aiming at a Clean India; MGNREGA to rejuvenate the rural economy; Digital India programme to create a knowledge economy through universal provision of digital infrastructure and platforms for cashless economic transaction; Start-up India and Atal Innovation Mission fostering innovation and new-age entrepreneurship; Skill India aimed at skilling 300 million youth by 2022; and Aadhaar to facilitate direct transfer of benefits to the people.

He pointed out that India's pluralism and its social, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity are its greatest strength. He stated that a healthy democracy calls for conformity to the values of tolerance, patience and respect for others and emphasized that these values must reside in the hearts and minds of every Indian; inculcating in them a temperament of understanding and responsibility. He called for collective efforts to focus on debate, discussion and decision-making in the legislatures.

He emphasized that imperfections in the systems have to be recognized and rectified, the settled complacencies have to be questioned and the edifice of trust has to be strengthened. He emphasized that in a fiercely competitive world, the Government has to work harder than ever to redeem the promises made to the people to reduce poverty; provide food security; make the agriculture sector resilient to the vagaries of nature; provide better amenities and opportunities to the people in villages to ensure a decent quality of life; provide enhanced employment opportunities to the youth through creation of world-class manufacturing and services sectors; provide safety and security to the women and children; change the consumption pattern which has resulted in environmental and ecological de-gradation; preserve pluralistic culture and tolerance; and keep at bay the dark forces of terrorism.

He urged all citizens to do their duties with integrity, commitment and unflinching loyalty to the values enshrined in the Constitution.

## Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Visits India

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of United Arab Emirates (UAE) paid a State Visit to India from January 24-26, 2017. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi received him on 25<sup>th</sup> January. The leaders expressed satisfaction that the mutually beneficial ties between the two countries have been maturing into a robust relationship across a broad spectrum of political, economic, trade, investment, energy, education, culture, defence and security spheres. They reaffirmed their deep commitment to building a comprehensive strategic partnership in order to elevate the multifaceted ties to an even higher and qualitatively new level.



The leaders described bilateral trade ties as an abiding link between the two countries. They decided to develop a medium and long term strategy for increasing bilateral trade by 60 percent over the next five years. Crown Prince encouraged Indian participation in Dubai Expo 2020. He reaffirmed UAE's interest in investing in infrastructure development in India, especially in priority areas such as energy, power generation and transmission, defence production, industrial corridors and parks, railways, roads, ports, shipping and logistics.

Prime Minister Modi thanked Crown Prince for UAE's interest in the proposal for establishing a semiconductor fabrication facility in India. The leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fields of health care, food security, exchange of white shipping information, hydrography and strengthening the mechanism for exchange of information in tax matters, law enforcement, anti-money laundering, smuggling of fake currency, drug trafficking, human trafficking, illegal migration and other transnational organized crimes. They expressed their grave concern about the threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism and agreed that resolute and credible steps must be taken to eliminate safe havens and sanctuaries that provide shelter to terrorists and their activities.

Crown Prince welcomed Prime Minister Modi's proposal to develop Cruise tourism between the two countries. He conveyed his deep appreciation for the role and contribution played by Indian community in the UAE to the progress and development of their host country, noting that Indian citizens in the UAE are highly respected for their peaceful nature and hard-working ethics. In the joint press conference, Prime Minister Modi said that the two countries can jointly tap abundant opportunities in the initiatives aimed at building digital economy, human capital and smart urbanization in India. He informed that the two countries have agreed to explore ways to transform buyer-seller relationship in the energy sector into one of deeper partnership focusing on investment, joint ventures in petrochemical complexes, joint exploration, R&D and human resources development.

President Shri Pranab Mukherjee received Crown Prince on 25<sup>th</sup> January and hosted a banquet in his honour. 14 Agreements/MOUs were signed during the visit on comprehensive strategic partnership; mutual recognition of certificates of competency of marine officers; exemption of entry visa to the holders of Diplomatic, Special and Official Passports; cooperation in cyber space; defence industry; maritime transport; highways and road transport; prevention of human trafficking; small & medium enterprises; agriculture and allied sectors; broadcasting; trade remedial measures; storage of crude oil by Abu Dhabi National Oil Company in India; and energy efficiency services.

## Prime Minister Modi Inaugurates the 2nd Raisina Dialogue

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the 2<sup>nd</sup> Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi on January 17, 2017. The Dialogue was organized by the Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with Observer Research Foundation from January 17-19, 2017 on the theme "The New Normal: Multilateralism with Multi-Polarity". It is India's flagship International Conference on Geo-politics and Geo-economics and designed to explore prospects and opportunities for Asian integration as well as Asia's integration with the larger world.



In his address, Prime Minister Modi outlined India's foreign policy. He spoke about India's engagement with the countries in the neighbourhood and all other regions. On engagement with Central Asia, he said that India built its ties on the edifice of shared history and culture to unlock new vistas of prosperous partnership. He underscored India's initiative to overcome the barriers to its outreach to Central Asia citing the example of tripartite agreement concluded with Afghanistan and Iran on Chabahar. He emphasized that India's membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization would provide a strong institutional link to its engagement with Central Asian nations.

A number of ministerial and keynote addresses were delivered during the Dialogue. Panel discussions were held on 'The New Normal: Multipolarity with Multilateralism', 'Evolving Politics of the Asia-Pacific', 'Reclaiming the Digital: Countering Violent Extremism Online', 'Will Energy Trump Climate', 'Future of Europe', 'Cyber Security: The Internet of Risks', 'Governing the Political Economy of the Indo-Pacific', 'New Strategic Order - Nuclear Conundrum', 'Women in the New World Order' and 'Terror Inc - Combating State & Non-State Actors'. More than 250 delegates including political leaders, strategic experts and foreign policy thinkers from 65 countries participated in the Dialogue. Among the prominent foreign dignitaries who attended the Dialogue were former President of Afghanistan Mr. Hamid Karzai, former Prime Minister of Australia Mr. Kevin Rudd, former Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Mr. Djoomart Otorbaev and Foreign Minister of Nepal Mr. Prakash Sharan Mahat. Dr. Laura Yerekesheva, Deputy Director, Institute of Oriental Studies, UNESCO Chair Coordinator; and Mr. Batyrbekov Erlan Gadletovich, Director General, National Nuclear Centre, Ministry of Energy attended the Dialogue from Kazakhstan.

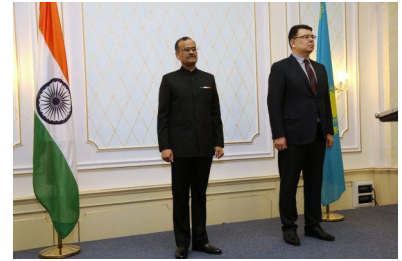
## President Nazarbayev Congratulates India on 68th Republic Day of India

President of Kazakhstan Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev congratulated the President and people of India on the occasion of the 68th Republic Day of India. In his message addressed to President Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President Nazarbayev expressed confidence that mutually advantageous ties created on the basis of friendly bilateral relations and mutual understanding would be developed further for the benefit of the people of the two countries. He wished good health and success to the President and peace and well being to the people of India.



## The Embassy Celebrates Republic Day, ICCR and ITEC Days in Astana

The Embassy hosted a Reception in the evening of 27th January, 2017 to celebrate the Republic Day of India, ICCR and ITEC Days at Hotel Radisson in Astana. Mr. Kanat Bozumbayev, Minister of Energy and Co-Chair of the India-Kazakhstan Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) represented the Government of Kazakhstan as the Chief Guest at the reception. Mr. Erlan Khairov, Vice Minister of Investment and Development and Mr. Nurguzhin Marat Rakhmalievich, Vice Minister of Defence and Aerospace Industry also attended the reception.



Ambassador welcomed and addressed the guests. He said that in the last 67 years, India has made great strides in forging unity among its people notwithstanding the country's vast diversity of race, religion, culture and languages, in dismantling inequalities, promoting economic and social well-being of its people, and contributing to the global peace and security. He stated that measures taken by the government in the last one year such as approval of Parliament to introduce Goods and Services Tax (GST), liberalization of Foreign Direct Investment regime, adoption of green energy, establishment of International Solar Alliance and replacement of 86% of cash in circulation with new currency notes with the objective of bringing shadow economy into the mainstream, eradicating counterfeit currency and black money, and promoting tax compliance and digital payments, would transform the economic landscape in India.

He said that in the last 25 years, India and Kazakhstan have developed enduring strategic partnership based on mutual trust, respect and understanding. Highlighting the developments in bilateral relations in last one year, he mentioned about the brief meetings between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev in April, 2016 in Washington and in June, 2016 in Tashkent; visit of Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Mr. N. Chandrababu Naidu to Kazakhstan in July, 2016 and Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Mr. Akylbek Kamaldinov to Amritsar to attend the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference in December, 2016; signing of the contract for participation of India in Astana Expo during the visit of Commissioner Mr. Rapol Zhoshybayev to New Delhi in February, 2016; completion of Joint Feasibility Study for a free trade agreement between India and Eurasian Economic Union in September, 2016; and holding of the first joint military exercise, "Prabal Dostyk" in Kazakhstan in September, 2016, the fourth India-Central Asia dialogue in India in December, 2016 and Festival of India in four cities in Kazakhstan in October, 2016.

He underscored that Kazakhstan has been India's ITEC partner since 1992 and since then, over 1000 people from Kazakhstan have availed the short term specialized capacity building training programmes offered under ITEC. He informed that India also offers long-term scholarships to Kazakhstani students for higher education in Indian academic institutions through the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) and added that over 200 scholars from Kazakhstan have availed ICCR scholarships in the last two decades. He stated that the ITEC and ICCR days were being held along with the Republic Day this year to give greater publicity to these two programmes. He pointed out that the year 2017 marks the 70th year of India's independence and 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and expressed hope to celebrate these occasions suitably during the year. He mentioned that India joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation as its full member at the SCO Summit in Astana, holding of the next meeting of IGC and India's participation in Astana Expo would be some of the major events in 2017.

In his address, Minister Bozumbayev congratulated the people of India on the Republic Day and 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries. He highly appraised the bilateral relations and appreciated India's support and cooperation in UN and other international organisations as well as in the framework of Astana Expo-2017. He recalled the visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Kazakhstan in July, 2015 stating that it gave new impetus to bilateral relations. He expressed confidence that the meeting of IGC to be held in Astana this year would enhance bilateral relations to a new level.

The speeches were preceded by recital of national anthems of the two countries and followed by screening of a documentary "A day in the life of India" and short cultural performance comprising "Bharatnatyam Dance" by Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, an accomplished ICCR Alumna and Director, Centre for Indian Classical Dances, Almaty. A recorded video of Republic Day parade held in New Delhi on 26th January was screened in muted format during the remainder of the reception. Publicity material on Indian tourism and India perspectives were distributed to the interested guests. Over 300 people, including Heads of Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations accredited to Kazakhstan, senior Government officials, journalists, representatives of academic and cultural institutions, members of the Indian community and around 50 ITEC and 20 ICCR alumni attended the reception.



## President Nazarbayev Unveils Plans of Constitutional Reforms

President Nazarbayev announced plans for redistribution of power and democratization of the political system aimed at building a more efficient, sustainable and modern system of governing the country in a televised address to the nation on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2017. He said that a powerful presidential system, which was necessary in the early years of independence to overcome the difficulties in establishing a new state, needs to be reviewed in the changed circumstances to respond to global and regional challenges in the future. He stated that in the present conditions, the President's priorities would be strategic functions and the role of a supreme arbiter in the relations between branches of the government besides focusing on foreign policy, national security and defence.



The reform will be carried out in two key areas. The first is to transfer some of the president's statutory powers regarding the management of socioeconomic processes to the Government and other executive bodies through changes in the relevant laws. The second area is to ensure a balance in relations between the branches of government at the constitutional level. Some of the changes proposed are to (i) strengthen the role of parliament in the formation of government; (ii) simplify procedure for the parliament to express no confidence in the government; (iii) strengthen the government— President would not suspend the acts of Government and Prime Minister; (iv) strengthen the role of parliament in legislation process — President would not issue a decree to force enactment of law; (v) rationalize the role of Constitutional Council, Judiciary and Prosecutor's Office; (vi) guarantee immutability of constitutional system; and (vii) guarantee inviolability of private property including the right to inheritance.

He said that the proposed reform is to fulfill three tasks: (i) to create a degree of stability in the political system for many years to come; (ii) to raise the roles of the government and parliament to create a more effective response mechanism to modern challenges; and (iii) to create a model of government structure towards democratic development based on Kazakhstan's own experience and needs. The draft constitutional amendments were published for public discussion and feedback till 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2017.

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## President Nazarbayev's Annual Address to the Nation

President Nazarbayev gave his annual address to the nation entitled "Kazakhstan's Third Modernization: Global Competitive Power" on 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2017. He said that his address is devoted to the third stage of modernization because drastic changes in the technology require a transition to a new model of economic growth. He emphasized the need to ensure global competitiveness of the country under the new conditions.



He recalled that first stage of modernization was creation of a new state based on the principle of a market economy and the second one was implementation of the Strategy 2030 and creation of the country's capital, Astana. He noted that one of the key priorities of the third modernization is to accelerate technological modernization of the economy, which means creation of new promising industries based on digital technologies such as 3D-printing, online commerce, mobile banking and other digital services, and adoption of modern technology in traditional industries to boost investments and exports. He said that improvement and expansion of business environment is crucial, for which it is necessary to minimize state involvement in the economy and develop public-private partnerships. He outlined macro-economic stability, improving the quality of the human capital and institutional change, security and fight against corruption as the other key priorities of the third modernization. He asked the government to work out a strategic development plan, "National Technology Initiative in Kazakhstan" for development of Kazakhstan up to 2025 in accordance with his vision of the third Modernization of Kazakhstan.

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## President Nazarbayev Inaugurates Winter Universiade in Almaty

President Nazarbayev inaugurated the 28<sup>th</sup> World Winter Universiade 2017 in Almaty Arena Ice Palace on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2017. In his address, President Nazarbayev said that Kazakhstan would like to communicate to the world its formula of peace and tolerance through sport, science and culture. He pointed out that the Universiade has become a locomotive for the development of sports infrastructure in the city. He said that people of Kazakhstan would benefit from the investments made in building the athletic village. He stated that after the competition, the athletic village would



become a new neighborhood with affordable social housing for more than 1,700 families and the competition halls would become centers of attraction for the mass sports. Sports teams from 57 countries participated in the Winter Universiade held from 29<sup>th</sup> January to 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2017.

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## External Affairs Minister Congratulates Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj conveyed her warm felicitations to H.E. Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov on his appointment as the Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan.

In her letter of 11th January, 2017, she expressed confidence that bilateral relations between India and Kazakhstan would be further strengthened with his wide experience in the area of foreign policy and international relations. She said that she looks forward to working closely with the Minister on enhancing the strategic partnership between the two countries and cooperation in international and regional spheres.

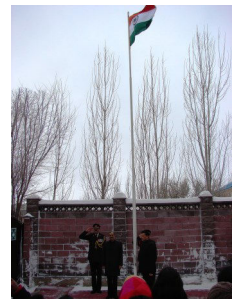


She extended her good wishes for the prosperity, success and well being of the friendly people of Kazakhstan in 2017.

## Flag Hoisting Ceremonies on the 68th Republic Day of India in Kazakhstan

Ambassador Shri Harsh Jain unfurled the National Flag on the occasion of the 68th Republic Day of India at the Indian Cultural Centre in Astana on 26th January at 1000 hrs. It was followed by National Anthem. Ambassador read out the Address by the President of India to the nation on the eve of the Republic Day, following which a video on the valour of Indian army was screened. About 60 Indian nationals, Persons of Indian Origin and the Embassy staff attended the ceremony.

The flag hoisting was also held at the Representative Office of India in Almaty on 26th January. Mr. Martin Cyriac Clemense, Second Secretary unfurled the national flag, which was followed by national anthem and reading out of the Address by the President of India to the Nation on the eve of the Republic Day.



## The Embassy Celebrates Vishwa Hindi Divas

The Embassy celebrated the Vishwa Hindi Divas at the Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), Astana on 16th January, 2017. The celebration began with lighting of lamp by Ambassador Shri Harsh Jain followed by screening of a short film on "10th Vishwa Hindi Sammelan" held in Bhopal on September 10-12, 2015.

Ambassador read out the message of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on the "Vishwa Hindi Divas". In his address, Ambassador mentioned about the significance of celebration of the Vishwa Hindi Divas. He talked about the efforts made for promotion of Hindi in Kazakhstan. He stated that the first Hindi-Kazakh-Hindi Dictionary was published by Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (KazNU) last year, Hindi language is taught at KazNU and Hindi classes are conducted by the Centre for Indian Classical Dances and InCham with the support of the Embassy.

ICCR Alumni Mr. Rajib Dahal, Ms. Assel Turebayeva and Ms. Kassiyet Adilkhan also spoke on the occasion. It was followed by a cultural programme by the ICC and dinner.



## Cadets of Voenni Kafedra of Universities of Kazakhstan Visit India

Two officers and 12 cadets of Voenni Kafedra of four Universities of Kazakhstan, led by Col. Strokov Yevgeniy, Head of Military Chair of Karaganda State Technical University, visited India from January 15-29, 2017 under the Youth Exchange Programme between India and Kazakhstan. During their visit, the cadets participated in the Republic Day Camp in New Delhi and attended training and various other events organised by National Cadet Corps (NCC) of India. They took part in cultural programmes along with NCC cadets. They visited Agra and Jaipur as part of historical and cultural tour.



Col. Radmir Rakyshev, Head of Military Chair of Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Almaty joined the delegation and participated in the Republic Day celebration in New Delhi from January 25-29, 2017.



## Incredible India Destination: Khajuraho

Khajuraho in the State of Madhya Pradesh is famous for its ancient temples, which consist of stunning displays of beautiful sculptures and exceptional architectural skill, making them a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built between 950-1050 AD by the Chandela Dynasty, the temples depict various forms like meditation, spiritual teachings, kinship, wrestling, royalty and erotic art. Of the 85 original temples, 22 have survived till now to constitute one of the world's great artistic wonders. Based on their geographical location, the temples are categorised into three groups: Western, Eastern and Southern.

The Western Group: Kandariya Mahadev, the largest Khajuraho temple, is perfectly symmetrical and soars 31 m high. It consists of 872 spectacular statues. Chaunsat Yogini is the oldest and the only granite temple in the Khajuraho group. Devi Jagadamba Temple has fine sculptures visible over three bands of carvings. North of it facing eastward to the rising sun, is the Chitragupta temple, dedicated to the sun-god, Surya. The temple has beautiful depictions of hunting and elephant fights. Similar in plan to the Kandariya Mahadev is the Vishwanath Temple where there is an impressive three headed image of Brahma. Since the first few Chandela rulers were devotees of Vishnu, there are some Vaishnavite temples, one of which is the Lakshmana Temple. Matangeswara Temple is one of the temples where worship still takes place. South of this temple is the open air Archaeological Museum, which has a beautiful collection of statues and friezes.

Hindu and Jain temples make up the Eastern Group. Parswanath, the largest Jain temple in the group has exquisite sculptures on its northern outer wall. Ghantai temple, another Jain temple, is almost in ruins now, but still bears evidence of its original splendour. North of Parswanath is the Adinatha Temple. Brahma, Vamana and Javari Temples are the three Hindu temples in the Eastern Group.

Chaturbhuj Temple, which has a intricately carved image of Vishnu in the sanctum, and Duladeo Temple are in the Southern Group.

The Lights and Sounds Show, mounted in the complex of the Western Group of temples, evokes the life and times of the great Chandela Kings and traces the story of the unique temples from the 10th Century to the present day.

Raneh Falls (20 km from Khajuraho), Panna National Park (25 km) and Pandav Falls (34 km) are some of the major tourist attractions near Khajuraho.



*Kandariya Mahadev Temple*



*Chitragupta Temple*



*Lakshmana Temple*



*Vamana Temple*



*Parswanath Temple*



*Panna National Park*

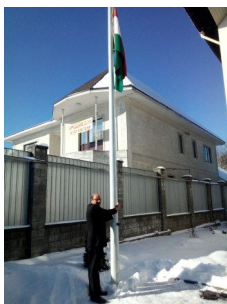


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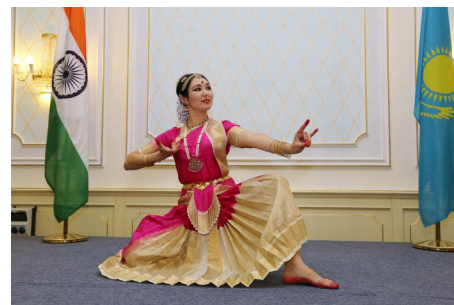
### Flag Hoisting Ceremony in Astana



### Flag Hoisting Ceremony in Almaty



### Celebration of Republic Day, ICCR and ITEC Days in Astana



### Celebration of Vishwa Hindi Divas in Astana



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