



सत्यमेव जयते

## Embassy of India ASTANA

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# Embassy of India ASTANA NEWSLETTER

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## Vice President Ansari Visits Rwanda

Vice President Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari paid an official visit to Rwanda from February 19-21, 2017. He met President Mr. Paul Kagame in Kigali on 20th February. He expressed admiration for the remarkable growth and transformation of Rwanda under the leadership of President Kagame. The leaders discussed bilateral cooperation between the two countries and committed to further promote bilateral trade and investment, and increase people to people interactions.



Vice President Ansari reiterated India's decision to open a resident Indian Mission in Rwanda highlighting that it would further cement the strategic partnership between the two countries. Emphasizing India's commitment to partner in Rwanda's development, Vice President Ansari reiterated India's support for priority development projects including Roads, Hydro power and technical and vocational training centres through lines of credit.

President Kagame expressed his desire to replicate some of India's schemes for Digital Inclusion. Vice President Ansari expressed interest in exploring untapped methane reserves in Lake Kivu for energy production. The leaders agreed to enhance cooperation in these areas and in health sector.

The leaders unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and agreed that resolute and credible steps must be taken to eliminate safe havens and sanctuaries that provide shelter to terrorists and their activities.

Vice President Ansari met President of the Senate Hon. Bernard Makuza. They discussed possible areas of collaboration including enhanced parliamentary exchanges, training and capacity building, cultural exchange programmes, institutional support and development including collaboration in regional and international matters of mutual interest.

Vice President Ansari and Prime Minister of Rwanda Mr. Anastase Murekezi presided over the India - Rwanda Business Forum jointly organized by the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Rwanda Development Board on 21st February. They launched the India-Rwanda Innovation Growth Programme, which is expected to expand ties in Science, Technology and Innovation, and create an ecosystem wherein Indian innovations and technology enterprises would thrive and encourage business ventures from both sides. He said that Rwanda has put behind it the unfortunate genocide of 1994 and now, it offers a range of prospects to investors in various sectors including renewable energy, infrastructure, agriculture, mining, tourism, and Information and Communication Technology.

Vice President Ansari delivered a lecture at the University of Rwanda on "Rwanda, India and Africa: Imperatives for Cooperation" on 21st February. He said that the imperatives of shared history and cultural links, complementary strengths, common approach in meeting development challenges towards building a sustainable future, shared perspectives on addressing peace and security related issues and convergence of views on global matters drive Indian-African engagement. He said that India seeks to develop innovative mechanisms such as concessional Lines of Credit tailored to the requirements and capacities of its partners in Africa, so that they do not become another channel leading them into a debt trap.

He highlighted the current global issues facing the world and the role of India as a growing global economic actor and its commitment to greater engagement on global matters. He discussed the growing relationship between India and the African continent in general and cooperation with Rwanda in particular. He interacted with the members of Indian community on 20th February.

Three Agreements/MOUs were signed on Air Services, exemption of visa for holders of Diplomatic and Official passports and establishment of an Entrepreneurship Development Centre in Rwanda.

## Vice President Ansari Visits Uganda

Vice President Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari paid an official visit to Uganda from February 21-23, 2017. He met President of Uganda Mr. Yoweri Museveni on 22nd February. They acknowledged the long-standing excellent historical relations and re-affirmed the mutual desire to strengthen economic, diplomatic, military, technical, educational, scientific and cultural cooperation between the two countries.



President Museveni highlighted the progress achieved by the Indian community in a wide range of sectors such as agro processing, pharmaceuticals and manufacturing in Uganda and invited further private sector investments from India. He expressed his desire to replicate some of India's schemes for Digital Inclusion while implementing Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) project in Uganda. The leaders agreed to enhance cooperation in the fields of ICT and renewable energy. They acknowledged the growing cooperation in the field of defence, in particular, the training of Uganda People's Defence Force in Indian Army Training Institutions and deployment of Indian Military Training Team in Uganda's Senior Command and Staff College in Kimaka. They underlined their shared concerns on the menace of terrorism and stressed the importance of international efforts to prevent and fight against terrorism.

Vice President Ansari announced a grant of medicines worth US\$ 2 million and medical equipment worth US\$ 1 million to Uganda. Vice President Ansari and Vice President of Uganda Mr. Edward Ssekandi attended the India-Uganda Business Meeting jointly organised by the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda and Federation of India Chambers of Commerce and Industry. In his address, Vice President Ansari said that Uganda is blessed with natural resources and the recent economic reforms have ushered in rapid growth. He encouraged Indian companies to remain engaged and invested in the opportunities presented by the Ugandan economy. He spoke about the increasing number of students from Africa receiving quality education at Indian educational institutions and India being the source of specialized healthcare for people of Africa.

Vice President Ansari addressed the Indian community on 23rd February. He said that India wants to build a new vibrant relationship with Africa relevant to the 21st century in which the approach is not to prescribe but to cooperate. He informed that the Government of India recently decided to offer 50,000 scholarships to the students from Africa. He agreed with President Museveni's suggestion that Indian industries may manufacture their products in Uganda instead of importing them from India saying that such initiatives would receive the support of both the governments. He paid floral tribute at the bust of Mahatma Gandhi at the source of the Nile in Jinja in which part of his mortal remains were immersed in 1948.

## National Regulatory Authority of India Meets WHO Standards for Vaccine Regulations

A World Health Organization (WHO)-led team of international experts affirmed that the National Regulatory Authority of India (NRA) and its affiliated institutions meet the WHO published indicators for a functional vaccine regulatory system.

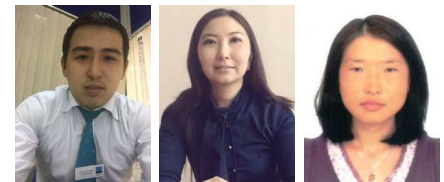


The team carried out the assessment from February 13-17, 2017. The assessment declared the NRA to be functional at maturity level 4 (the highest level) for five functions viz., clinical trial oversight, marketing authorization, vigilance, lab access and lot release and at maturity level 3 for the remaining four functions viz., licensing of premises, market surveillance and control, regulatory inspections and national regulatory system.

A functional NRA is a criterion for WHO prequalification of vaccines. It is also a prerequisite for manufacturers to supply to countries through United Nations procuring agencies. Dr. Henk Bekedam, WHO Representative to India said that as India is one of the main global suppliers of drug and biological medicinal products including vaccines, medical devices and traditional medicines, and it also supplies several vaccines to UN agencies, the successful assessment would go a long way in strengthening global confidence in medical products from India.

## Kazakhstani Professionals Attend ITEC Programme in India

Mr. Yelzhas Kenzhebeyev, Personal Banking Manager, Kazkommerts Bank, Almaty was selected for the course "International Programme in Banking and Finance, Focus: Risk Management" conducted by the National Institute of Bank Management, Pune from 6.3.2017 to 18.3.2017 under ITEC programme fully funded by the Government of India. Ms. Kamshat Mussina, Assistant Professor at L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Astana was selected for the course "High Impact Leadership/Managerial Skill Development" conducted by the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad from 20.3.2017 to 14.4.2017 and Ms. Gulzhan Kuanysheva, HR Specialist at Tarbagatay Munay LLP, Ust-Kamenogorsk was selected for the course "ITP on Human Capabilities" conducted by the National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development, Narela from 27.3.2017 to 24.4.2017.



## President Mukherjee and President Nazarbayev Exchange Greetings on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between India and Kazakhstan

President Shri Pranab Mukherjee extended his warm greetings and felicitations to the people of Kazakhstan on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kazakhstan.

In his letter addressed to President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President Mukherjee expressed immense satisfaction that in this short period, the multifaceted relations between the two countries have steadily expanded into a strategic partnership. He expressed confidence that the friendly ties between the two countries would continue to scale new heights and contribute to the further development and prosperity of the people of the two countries. He extended his best wishes for the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Kazakhstan.

In his letter addressed to President Mukherjee, President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev congratulated the people of India on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kazakhstan.

He noted that since the establishment of diplomatic relations, political, trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian ties are being strengthened from year to year. He expressed confidence that the strategic relations established between the two countries would continue in future in the spirit of mutual understanding for the benefit of the people of the two countries. He extended his good wishes for the peace and well being of the friendly people of India.



## External Affairs Minister of India and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Exchange Congratulatory Messages on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between India and Kazakhstan

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj conveyed her warm greetings and felicitations to the people of Kazakhstan on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kazakhstan.

In her letter addressed to Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov, she expressed satisfaction that in the last 25 years, cooperation between the two countries has intensified in all spheres of bilateral and multilateral relations and has been transformed into an enduring strategic partnership. She expressed confidence that the joint efforts would continue to harness the vast potential of mutually beneficial cooperation existing between the two countries. She extended her good wishes for the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Kazakhstan.



In his letter addressed to Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov congratulated her on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations and expressed gratitude to India for supporting the candidature of Kazakhstan to host International Specialized Exhibition "EXPO 2017" and become a non-permanent member of UN Security Council for 2017-18. He also thanked her for her previous communication congratulating him on his appointment as the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

## Yoga, Dance and Music Teachers Visit Arkalyk

Dr. Brijesh Gupta, Yoga Teacher; Ms. Chnadrani Ojah, Kathak Dance Teacher; and Mr. Bhaskar Ojah, Music Teacher at the Indian Cultural Centre, Astana visited Arkalyk, Kostany Region on February 25-26, 2017 at the invitation of Ms. Aigerim Ossipova, Director, Indian Classical Dance Ensemble "Nataraja". They conducted master classes in Yoga, Kathak dance, Tabla and Flute. Dr. Brijesh Gupta also gave yoga consultations on managing ailments such as back pain, obesity and high blood pressure and Mr. Bhaskar Ojah conducted a drawing class on Indian art. About 30 people attended the classes.



## Ambassador Inaugurates a New Branch of Tengri Bank in Astana

Ambassador Shri Harsh Jain and Mr. Timur Kuanyshev, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Tengri Bank jointly inaugurated a new branch of Tengri Bank, an associate of the Punjab National Bank of India, in Astana on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2017. The new branch is located at Kaz Media Centre. Mr. Dinesh Kumar, Deputy Chairman of Management Board and Mr. Kosanov Rasul, Managing Director—Director of Astana Branch of Tengri Bank were also present on the occasion.

In his address, Ambassador described Tengri Bank as a successful example of joint economic cooperation between India and Kazakhstan. He stated that since its establishment, Tengri Bank has made significant contribution to the growth of bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries. He lauded the bank for providing business support and consultancy to Indian and Kazakh companies and for its regular contribution and support to the cultural activities organized by the Embassy to promote friendly relations between the two countries. He recalled the first institutional meeting of the Joint Business Council between the business chambers of the two countries supported by the bank last year.

He pointed out that the day coincided with the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kazakhstan and used the occasion to congratulate the people of India and Kazakhstan on the anniversary. He wished the bank success in achieving its business objectives and targets and extended his best wishes for the success of the new branch.



## India Participates in the 3rd International Planning Meeting of Astana Expo 2017

The 3rd International Planning Meeting of the Astana EXPO-2017 was held in Astana on February 22-23, 2017. The participants discussed preparations for the EXPO including accreditation, regulations, logistic arrangements and security issues.

Chairman of the Board of Astana EXPO Mr. Akhmetzhan Yessimov outlined the preparations made for conducting the EXPO. He urged the participating countries to speed up the completion of their respective pavilions. The participants toured the EXPO facilities. They visited the Unified Service Centre, which would serve as a single window to provide visa, tax, banking, insurance and other public services.



326 representatives from 108 countries participated in the meeting. A total of 115 countries and 18 international organizations have so far officially confirmed their participation in the EXPO (10<sup>th</sup> June to 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2017).

Shri Arun Kumar Sinha, Joint Secretary, India Trade Promotion Organization and Shri ACM Kumar, Director, India Pavilion attended the meeting. The delegation took possession of the India Pavilion at the EXPO and held technical discussions with the EXPO authorities.

## FDI Inflows into India Jump 18% Despite Global Fall

Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows into India in 2016 jumped by 18% to a record US\$46.4 billion, at a time when global FDI inflows fell. According to the data released by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) on February 17, 2017, the main sectors which attracted the highest foreign inflows include services, telecom, trading, computer hardware and software, and automobile sectors. Bulk of the FDI came in from Singapore, Mauritius, the Netherlands and Japan.



The government has announced several steps to attract foreign investments. The measures include liberalisation of FDI policy and improvement in business climate. The Finance Minister announced further relaxation of foreign investment norms in the budget for 2017-18.

According to the UNCTAD Global Investment Trends Monitor, the overall global flows of FDI fell by 13% in 2016 to an estimated US\$ 1.52 trillion as global economic growth remained weak.

## Incredible India Destination: Amarnath

The cave shrine of Shri Amarnath, situated at an altitude of 3680 metres, is located in one of the world's most incredible landscapes of Lidder Valley in Kashmir. Flanked by breathtaking snow capped peaks, this Shiva shrine provides a wonderful opportunity to soak in the sacred energies of the Himalayas. Located at a distance of 45 km from Pahalgam in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Amarnath is an important centre of Hindu pilgrimage.

Legend has it that Lord Shiva recounted to Goddess Parvathi the secret of creation in this Holy Cave. A pair of pigeons is believed to have eavesdropped on this conversation, and having learnt the secret, they became immortal and made the cave their eternal abode.

Every year in the month of Shravan (July-August) when the moon is full, thousands of yatris (pilgrims) congregate there to worship a naturally formed Ice Lingam, symbol of Lord Shiva. The waxing and waning of the Lingam with the moon has remained a world marvel. According to popular belief, it reaches the maximum height on the purnamashi (full moon) of Shravan, which is the main day for darshan. Fascinatingly, there are two more Ice Lingams by its side, which represent Goddess Parvathi and their son, Shri Ganesh.

The Amarnath Yatra, organized by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir every year during the month of Shravan (July-August), is full of thrill and joy. The date of darshan at the holy cave is allotted to each yatri on first come first serve basis depending upon the daily quota available for each route. Yatris should reach Jammu or Srinagar 3-5 days in advance depending on the route they chose for trek to the cave.

The Amarnath Yatra involves trekking at high altitudes up to 14000 feet under difficult conditions and uncertain weather.

The State Tourism Department has constructed accommodation for pilgrims at various camping stations en route the Holy Cave. Several private parties have also set up tented accommodation with bedding facilities.



*Amarnath Shrine*



*Amarnath Yatra*



*Amarnath Yatra*



*Amarnath Cave Shrine*



*Amarnath Yatra*

## PHOTO FEATURE

### *Ambassador Inaugurates a New Branch of Tengri Bank in Astana*

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### *Yoga, Dance and Music Teachers of ICC Visit Arkalyk*

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