



Embassy of India Astana

NEWSLETTER

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Prime Minister Modi Visits Singapore

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid an Official Visit to Singapore from 31st May to 2nd June, 2018. He met Prime Minister of Singapore Mr. Lee Hsien Loong on 1st June, 2018. He expressed deep appreciation for Singapore's harmonious multicultural society that has supported and provided opportunities for all communities, including Indian community, to be part of the Singaporean society. The leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation in the sectors of defence, economy, skill development, smart cities and urban solutions, digital connectivity and platforms, FinTech and innovation, basic infrastructure, planning, cyber security, extremism and terrorism.



In the joint press conference, Prime Minister Modi said that Singapore is an important source of foreign direct investment for India and it is also the top destination for India to make investments abroad.

Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Lee visited the India-Singapore Enterprise and Innovation Exhibitions on 31st May, 2018. The entrepreneurs of the two countries demonstrated frontier technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, data analytics and cyber security. A New India Innovation Hub of over 50,000 sq. ft. was launched for Indian Start-ups. Prime Minister Modi addressed a business, innovation and community event "India and Singapore: Stepping into the Future - Partnership for Enterprise and Innovation". 14 Agreements were signed at the event in areas such as investment promotion, start-ups, FinTech, innovation and skills. Prime Minister Modi launched the RuPay, Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM App) and India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) based cross-border remittance App, aimed at internationalization of the country's digital payment platforms. He interacted with prominent CEOs from Singapore at a round table hosted by High Commissioner of India.

He called on President of Singapore Ms. Halimah Yacob on 1st June, 2018. He visited Nanyang Technological University and interacted with the students. He delivered a keynote address at Shangri-La Dialogue where he expressed India's perspective on peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, and articulated his vision of SAGAR i.e., Security and Growth for All in the Region.

Prime Minister Modi unveiled a plaque on 2nd June, 2018 at Clifford Pier, where Gandhiji's ashes were immersed in sea on 27th March, 1948. He visited the National Orchid Garden, where a robust tropical orchid was named after him. He visited Sri Mariamman Temple; Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and Museum; Chulia Mosque; Indian Heritage Centre, where Kala Sangam, a permanent platform for Indian artisans and craftsmen to demonstrate and sell their products, was launched; and Indian and Singapore Naval Ships at Changi Naval Base.

8 Agreements/MOUs were signed during the visit on conclusion of second review of CECA; mutual recognition on nursing; constitution of a Joint Working Group on Fintech; cooperation on naval visits; cyber security; combating illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors; personnel management and public administration; and planning.

Prime Minister Modi Visits China to Participate in SCO Summit

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited China to participate in the 18th meeting of the Council of Heads of State of Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Qingdao on June 9-10, 2018. This was the first SCO Summit after India became a full member at the Summit held in Astana in June, 2017.



In his intervention at the extended plenary of the Summit on 10th June, 2018, Prime Minister Modi said that India welcomes new connectivity projects that are inclusive, sustainable and transparent, and respect countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity. He noted that only 6% of foreign travelers to India come from SCO countries and asserted that it can be doubled by creating awareness about the shared and rich cultural heritage. He proposed that India would organize an SCO Food Festival and an exhibition of shared Buddhist Heritage. He reaffirmed that India would be happy to cooperate in the areas of skill development, capacity-building and human resource development in the bilateral and the SCO framework with SCO countries, especially with the countries from Central Asia. In this regard, he made a number of specific suggestions.

The Summit adopted the Qingdao Declaration and other documents on trade facilitation, countering the threat of epidemics, tourism, environmental protection, promotion of micro, small and medium-sized businesses, etc.

Prime Minister Modi met President of Kazakhstan Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of China Mr. Xi Jinping, President of Uzbekistan Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of Tajikistan Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of Mongolia Mr. Khaltmaagiin Battulga and President of Kyrgyzstan Mr. Sooronbay Jeenbekov on the sidelines of the SCO Summit. Two Agreements/MOUs were signed between India and China on provision of hydrological information of the Brahmaputra River in flood season by China to India and phytosanitary requirements for exporting rice from India to China during the bilateral meeting with the President of China.

Prime Minister Modi Meets President Nazarbayev on the Sidelines of SCO Summit

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi met President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Qingdao in China on 10th June, 2018. They discussed several aspects of bilateral relations including strengthening of cooperation in the fields of people-to-people exchange and hydro carbon, and improvement of connectivity between India and Central Asia, particularly between India and Kazakhstan.



Prime Minister Modi thanked Kazakhstan for its support in the re-election of Judge Dalveer Bhandari as Member of the International Court of Justice. He invited Kazakhstan to join the International Solar Alliance and President Nazarbayev responded enthusiastically saying that it is an important initiative. President Nazarbayev noted that the trade between India and Kazakhstan grew by over 50% last year. The leaders discussed further enhancement of bilateral trade and investment.

5th Meeting of JWG on Military Technical Cooperation Held in Astana

The 5th Meeting of India-Kazakhstan Joint Working Group (JWG) on Military Technical Cooperation was held in Astana on 1st June, 2018.

Shri Shambhu S. Kumaran, Joint Secretary at the Ministry of Defence led the Indian side and Mr. Timur Shaimerzhenov, Vice Minister of Defence and Aerospace Industry led the Kazakhstani side. Ambassador Shri Prabhat Kumar also attended the meeting. The two sides discussed further development of bilateral cooperation between India and Kazakhstan in the fields of military-industry, cyber security and peacekeeping. A protocol was signed at the conclusion of the meeting.



Promotional Campaign for Indian Mangoes Held in Kazakhstan

The Embassy of India in association with Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, organized a promotional campaign at six locations in Almaty and five locations in Astana to promote Indian Mangoes in Kazakhstan. A 9-member mango exporter delegation led by Dr. Sudhanshu, Deputy General Manager of APEDA participated in the campaign.



The campaign was held at the branches of Ramstore at Samal Microdistrict and Mega Center, Rozybakiev Street; Magnum Store at Ryskulov-Zhangeldina Intersection, Abai-Momyshtuly Intersection and Gagarin-Yeskaraev Intersection; and Galmart Store at Dostyk Plaza Mall in Almaty on June 1-2, 2018. A buyer-seller meet was organized in Almaty on 2nd June, 2018, in which the Centre of Indian Classical Dances, Almaty led by its Director Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova presented a short cultural performance of bharatanatyam, folk and bollywood dances. The delegation also visited the warehousing facilities of one of the leading importers of fruits and vegetables in Almaty. The Embassy appreciates the support extended by Incham, Almaty for successfully conducting the event in Almaty.

The campaign was held in Astana on 4th June, 2018 at the branches of Ramstore at Samal Microdistrict, Astana Mall and Mega Silk Way Mall; and Galmart Store at Keruen Mall and Keruen City Mall. Alphonso, Badami, Tothapuri, Kesar and Banganapalli varieties of mangoes were made available to the public for free sampling.

India Participates in VI International Boxing Tournament for President's Cup in Astana

A 21-member Indian Boxing Team participated in the VI International Boxing Tournament for the President's Cup in Astana from June 5-10, 2018.

Mr. Lalbiakkim Nutlai and Mr. Sivah Sahin won Bronze Medals in Men's 49 kg and 52 kg weight categories respectively and Ms. Priyanka Chodari won Bronze Medal in Women's 60 kg category. Mr. Lalbiakkim Nutlai beat reigning olympic gold medalist and world number one Mr. Hasanboy Dusmatov in a sensational quarter-final match. 162 boxers from 15 countries participated in the tournament held at the Daulet Sports Complex in Astana.



Celebration of the 4th International Day of Yoga in Kazakhstan Commences

The celebration of 4th International Day of Yoga commenced with a programme hosted by the Centre of Indian Classical Dances in Almaty on 12th June, 2018 in collaboration with Turan University and Bollywood Restaurant, Almaty. Shri Ganesh Haloi, Counsellor at the Embassy and Mr. Rahman Alshanov, Rector of the University inaugurated the yoga session. Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, Director of the Centre of Indian Classical Dances and 10 students of the Centre conducted the common yoga protocol. About 85 people participated in the yoga session that concluded with serving of Indian snacks.



The Centre organized a concert at the Turan University in the evening of 12th June. Ms. Leyla Tusupova, Vice Rector for International Relations of the University inaugurated the concert. Mr. Adil Vadoliwala, Director of Kazakhstan Facilitators Company also spoke on the occasion. The concert comprised Indian classical dances of Bharatanatyam and Kathak, Indian folk dances, Bollywood dances and fusion of Indian and Kazakh dance forms. About 120 people attended the concert.

Celebration of World Environment Day

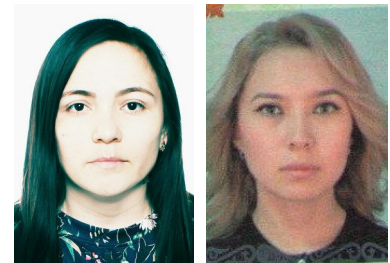
Shri Ganesh Haloi, Chrgd' Affaires a.i. and the staff of the Embassy planted saplings at the Embassy Residence on the occasion of World Environment Day on 5th June, 2018. Earlier, a round table discussion on the World Environment Day was organized at the Embassy.



India was the global host of the World Environment Day, 2018, which was observed with the theme "Beat plastic pollution". Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed the plenary session of the global celebrations of the World Environment Day in New Delhi on 5th June, 2018. The Government of India launched a pan-India plastic clean-up drive in public areas such as national reserves, beaches, etc and is making efforts to have all government offices single-use plastic free.

Kazakhstani Professionals Participate in ITEC Programmes in India

Ms. Bigzat Narinbetova, Manager at KAZGUU University (Department of Psychology and Tourism and Management of Higher School of Economics), Astana was selected for the course "Progress to Proficiency-Advanced" conducted by the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad from 12th June to 31st August, 2018 under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme funded by the Government of India.



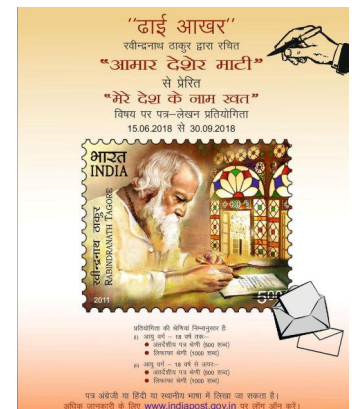
Ms. Dinara Idiyatova, Yoga Instructor at Sport Line IE, Astana was selected for the course "Special Training Programme for Yoga Trainers" conducted by the Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana, Bengaluru from 16th July to 12th August, 2018 under ITEC programme.

Department of Posts Invites Entries for Dhai Akhar Letter Writing Campaign

The Department of Posts, Government of India is organising a letter writing campaign titled "Dhai Akhar Letter Writing Campaign" at international level in two categories viz., up to 18 years and above 18 years.

The theme of the Campaign is "Letter to my motherland" inspired by Rabindranath Tagore's "Amar Desher Mati". The letter is to be handwritten on plain A-4 size paper in not exceeding 1000 words. The entries may be sent to Assistant Director General (Philately), Department of Posts, Room No.108, Dak Bhawan, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001 by post during the period from 1st July to 30th September, 2018. A scanned copy of the entry may be submitted on MyGov portal.

Top three letters in each category will be awarded prizes as follows: First Prize - Rs.50,000; Second Prize - Rs.25,000; and Third Prize - Rs.10,000. All Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) in Kazakhstan are encouraged to participate in the Dhai Akhar Letter Writing Campaign.



UGC Approves Online Courses by Higher Educational Institutions

In a landmark reform in the field of higher education, University Grants Commission has approved online courses to be offered by higher educational institutions from the academic session 2018-19 on 24th May, 2018. The institutions can offer Certificate, Diploma and Degree

programmes in full-fledged online mode in the disciplines in which they have already been offering the same or similar programmes /courses at graduation level in regular mode (of classroom teaching) or in open and distance learning mode and from which at least one batch has been graduated and approved by the statutory councils, as applicable. The online learning shall have minimum four quadrants: video lectures, e- content, self-assessment and discussion forum to clarify doubts. The examinations shall be conducted in proctored mode.



विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग
University Grants Commission
quality higher education for all

Aadhaar and Passport shall be used to authenticate the Indian and foreign students respectively for all online interactions including teaching-learning and examinations. The programmes requiring practical/laboratory courses as a curricular requirement shall not be permitted in online mode.

Guidelines on Adventure Tourism Launched

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India launched the Guidelines on Safety and Quality Norms for Adventure Tourism in India on 31st May, 2018. Adventure tourism has grown rapidly over the past few years attracting a large number of travellers from across the globe to the country.

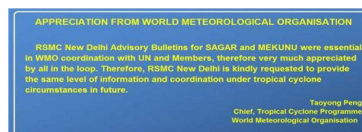
In an effort to make adventure sports safer, the set of guidelines list out the basic minimum standards required for adventure tourism activities in India. The information given educates tour operators and other concerned agencies about important safety requirements and lesser-known dangers. It covers some major areas such as the role of a guide, important equipment required, inspections and maintenance process, operating instructions, risk mitigation, medical safety, etc.

These guidelines cover land, air and water based activities which include mountaineering, trekking, bungee jumping, paragliding, kayaking, scuba diving, snorkeling, river rafting and many other sports.



World Meteorological Organization Appreciates the India Meteorological Organization

The World Meteorological Organisation(WMO) as well as Oman, Yemen and Somalia appreciated the Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre (RSMC), New Delhi on 5th June, 2018 for giving timely and accurate cyclone advisories over Cyclonic Storm (CS) Sagar during May 16-20, 2018 and Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm (ESCS) Mekunu during May 21-27, 2018. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) acts as WMO-designated RSMC-Tropical Cyclones to provide tropical cyclone advisories to WMO/ESCAP panel member countries.



The IMD maintained round the clock watch over the north Indian Ocean and monitored both the cyclones since formation of low pressure area over the Arabian Sea. It utilized various national and international numerical weather prediction models and dynamical-statistical models to predict the genesis, track and intensity of the cyclones. It provided six hourly advisories during depression stage and three hourly advisories from cyclonic storm stage to the WMO, Oman, Yemen and Somalia. The timely and accurate cyclone advisories and other preparedness measures significantly minimised the loss of life and property.

World's Second Oldest Rock Discovered in Odisha

A rock sample recovered from Champua in the State of Odisha (India) has been found to have a grain of magmatic zircon (a mineral that contains traces of radioactive isotopes) that is an estimated 4,240 million years old. The discovery is of great promise to study the earth's early years.

The only instance of zircon being older than this discovery was the one found in Jack Hill, Western Australia, which is 4,400 million years old and is the oldest known rock sample.

The discovery published in the journal "Scientific Reports" was made by geologists from the University of Calcutta and the Curtin University, Malaysia, along with researchers from the Chinese Academy of Geological Sciences, Beijing.



Incredible India Destination: Tirupati

Tirupati in the State of Andhra Pradesh is famous for Lord Venkateswara Temple. The temple, believed to be the busiest pilgrimage centre in the world, draws millions of pilgrims every year. The Vimana over the sanctum sanctorum and the Dhvajasthambam (flag-post) are gold-plated. The temple is located on the top of Tirumala Hill at an elevation of 860 m, while the town of Tirupati is situated at the foot of the hill. Tirupati is also known for its red wooden toys, and copper and brass idols. It is surrounded by seven panoramic hills, which are home to perennial waterfalls, lush valleys and verdant forests.

Akasa Ganga, Sila Thoranam, Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park and Pre-historic Life Park are some of the major tourist attractions in Tirupati.

Akasa Ganga is a perennial stream, which is said to flow from the feet of the deity. The water is considered holy and is used for daily rituals in the temple. Sila Thoranam is a rare geographical arch, which measures 8 metres in width and 3 metres in height. The geologists have computed the age of the arch as 1500 million years. Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park is home to wide range of wildlife and is themed on Hindu mythology and Indian epics. Pre-historic Life Park is located in Regional Science Centre. It takes visitors back in time and gives them a glimpse of the evolution of life on Earth.

Chandragiri Fort (13 kms away from Tirupati) built on a 183-metre high rock in 1000 AD is a testimony of the outstanding architectural expertise. The exquisite stucco work, natural light and ventilation are the hallmarks of the fort in Chandragiri, which was capital of the mighty Vijayanagar Empire. The collection of the royal family displayed in Raja Mahal in the Fort leaves the visitors spellbound. Srikalahasti Temple (36 kms from Tirupati), built in the 11th century, is located on the banks of Swarnamukhi River. The three majestic towers of the temple testify the ornate and beautiful architecture.

Talakona Waterfalls (49 km) is located in Sri Venkateswara National Park. The 60-metre waterfall is perennial and standing under the cascade is said to cleanse the mind and body. Horsley hills (144 km) is a scenic and beautiful hill station situated at an altitude of 1,265 metres. The town is popular among adventure sports lovers, as they can experience the thrills of zorbing, rappelling, rock climbing and trekking.

Swami Pushkarini Lake, Sri Govindaraja Swami Temple, Kapila Theertham Waterfalls, Padmavati Temple, Alamelumanga Temple, Narayanavanam and Kailasanathakona Waterfalls are some of other major tourist attractions in and around Tirupati.



Lord Venkateswara Temple



Sila Thoranam



Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park



Raja Mahal in Chandragiri Fort



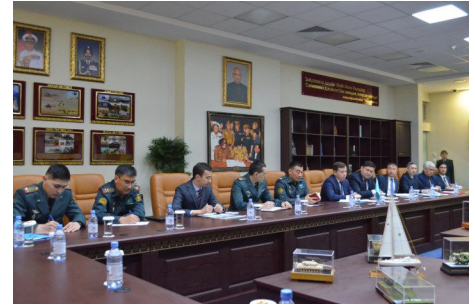
Srikalahasti Temple



Kapila Theertham Waterfalls

PHOTO FEATURE

5th Meeting of JWG on Military Technical Cooperation Held in Astana



Promotional Campaign for Indian Mangoes Held in Kazakhstan



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