



# Embassy of India Astana

## NEWSLETTER

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## President of Seychelles Visits India

President of Seychelles Mr. Danny Antoine Rollen Faure paid a state visit to India from June 22-27, 2018. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi received him in New Delhi on 25th June.

Prime Minister Modi reaffirmed India's commitment to enhance Seychelles' defence capabilities and maritime infrastructure and strengthen the capacity of its defence personnel to enable Seychelles to effectively deal with maritime challenges and protect its maritime resources. He announced a Line of Credit of US\$ 100 million to Seychelles for purchasing defence equipment to build its maritime capacity. He also announced financing of three civilian infrastructure projects in Seychelles viz., Government House, Police Headquarters and Attorney General's Office under a special grant. The leaders agreed to work together on the Assumption Island project keeping in mind each other's interest in this regard. At the joint Press Conference, Prime Minister Modi said that contribution of Indian community to the economy of Seychelles is a matter of pride for India and the shared culture between the two countries provides possibilities to further intensify the bilateral relations.



President Shri Ram Nath Kovind hosted a banquet in honour of President Faure. In his address, President Kovind complimented Seychelles for emerging as the top African country in the Human Development Index and figuring among top five ranking countries in Africa for overall governance. He reaffirmed India's continued commitment to extend development assistance to Seychelles in all the areas which the Government of Seychelles considers critical and of direct benefit to its people. President Faure attended the India-Seychelles Business Forum and interacted with businesspersons. External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj handed over a world class and state-of-the-art second Dornier aircraft to President Faure on 26th June, 2018. The provision of this gift was announced during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Seychelles in March, 2015.

President Faure visited Ahmedabad on June 22-23, 2018. His engagements included a visit to Sabarmati Ashram, where he paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi; Indian Institute of Management; and Gujarat Forensic Science University where he addressed the students including 18 police officers from Seychelles who were attending a training programme there. He visited Goa on June 23-24, 2018 and Uttarakhand on June 26-27, 2018. He visited the World Heritage Site in Goa and the Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy in Dehradun (Uttarakhand).

Six Agreements/MOUs were signed during the visit on Indian grant assistance for implementation of small development projects through local bodies, educational and vocational institutions; cooperation between the cities of Panaji and Victoria; cyber security; cultural exchange programme; sharing of white shipping information; and diplomatic training.

## President Kovind Visits Greece

President Shri Ram Nath Kovind paid a State Visit to Greece from June 16-19, 2018. He met President of Greece Mr. Prokopis Pavlopoulos in Athens on 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. They noted that India and Greece share values of democracy, rule of law and multi-cultural ethos, and these have added depth to the bilateral and multilateral engagements.

Prime Minister Modi said that India is keen to deepen the ongoing co-operation with Greece especially in political and economic fields. He suggested that the two countries should work together to develop Indian and Greek traditional medicinal practices as healthcare options for people. The leaders expressed the view that sectors such as agriculture, shipping and tourism offer scope for cooperation. They committed to work together to achieve the vast untapped potential.



President Pavlopoulos hosted a banquet in honour of President Kovind on 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. In his address, President Kovind said that both India and Greece have a common stake in promoting multilateralism, and global peace and security. He highlighted the possibility of collaborating in the areas of renewable energy and climate change. He laid wreath at the Phaleron Indian Cremation Memorial, where the remains of 74 soldiers of India, who had sacrificed their lives in the campaign in Greece during World War II, were laid to rest.

President Kovind addressed a gathering of Indian community at a reception hosted by the Ambassador of India on 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. He attended the India-Greek Business Forum meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. He urged the Greek shipping, agriculture, food processing, tourism, infrastructure, technology, defence and start-up companies to look at investment and technology tie-up openings in India. He addressed a gathering of diplomats, policymakers and academics on the subject "India and Europe in a Changing World", which was organised by the Hellenic Foundation for Europe and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP). He said that India is committed to world peace and India sees peace not just as the absence of conflict but as a reflection of sustainable development and indeed of any effort that anticipates and prevents strife and suffering.

Three Agreements/MOUs were signed during the visit on cooperation in the fields of Standardization, Diplomatic Training and Culture.

## President Kovind Visits Suriname

President Shri Ram Nath Kovind paid a State Visit to Suriname from June 19-21, 2018. He met President of Suriname Mr. Desire Delano Bouterse in Paramaribo on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. They conveyed their mutual satisfaction at the strong people-to-people relations and cultural cooperation existing between the two countries. They exchanged views on bilateral and global issues of common concern. They agreed to expand the bilateral agenda especially in the areas of economic relations, cultural cooperation, development partnership, ayurveda and other traditional medicinal systems of both countries.



President Kovind announced that India would extend concessional financing of US\$ 20 million for setting up a solar project to provide clean energy to a cluster of 49 villages in Suriname, and Lines of Credit of US\$ 27.5 million to support a power transmission project in Pikin Saron area and US\$ 3.5 million for maintenance of Chetak helicopters. He also announced financial grants for a craft market project and a digital literacy programme. President Bouterse invited Indian investment in areas such as agriculture, mining, energy and timber.

President Kovind addressed the National Assembly of Suriname. He commended Suriname for its enlightened approach on climate change. He conveyed India's desire to share its developmental experience with Suriname, as per Suriname's needs, desires and priorities. President Bouterse hosted a banquet in honour of President Kovind. In his address, President Kovind said that India and Suriname have an engaging relationship and there is high potential to enhance trade and investment relations between the two countries. He suggested that bilateral cooperation in the areas of agriculture, tourism, forestry, mining, energy and health be explored. He attended a community reception. In his address, he said that Indian community has beautifully assimilated in the Surinamese society and yet, has preserved and kept its tradition and culture alive.

President Kovind participated in the celebration of the 4<sup>th</sup> International Day of Yoga in Paramaribo on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2018 along with President Bouterse and Vice President of Suriname Mr. Michael Ashwin Adhin. In his address, President Kovind said that yoga is an ancient Indian tradition, but it does not belong to India alone as it is part of humanity's intangible heritage. He emphasized that yoga is the ultimate expression of Indian soft power, which has won India love and affection among yoga practitioners in all corners of the planet including Suriname. He laid the foundation stone for a new building of Indian Cultural Centre to be called as Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, for which Government of Suriname gifted a plot of land. He paid his tributes at the Gandhi statue, the Mama Sranan and Baba and Mai monuments.

Five Agreements/MOUs were signed during the visit on establishment of a Centre of Excellence in Information Technology, and cooperation in the fields of elections, diplomatic academies partnership, employment for spouse of diplomats of the two countries and archives.

## President Kovind Visits Cuba

President Shri Ram Nath Kovind paid a State Visit to Cuba from June 21-22, 2018. He met President of Cuba Mr. Miguel Díaz-Canel in Havana on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2018. They reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and exchanged views on global issues of mutual concern. They agreed to enhance cooperation in the fields of Biotechnology, Renewable Energy, Traditional Medicine, and Trade and Investment.



President Kovind thanked President Diaz-Canel for Cuba's becoming a founding member of the International Solar Alliance and announced a Line of Credit of US\$ 75 million to support a 100 Mega Watt solar power project in Cuba. He offered an additional 10 slots to Cuba under the ITEC programme, taking the total annual scholarships given to Cuba to 70.

President Kovind arrived in Santiago de Cuba on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2018 and visited the Santa Ifigenia Cemetery to pay his tributes to national heroes of Cuba - Jose Marti, Fidel Castro, Carlos Manuel de Cespedes and Mariana Grajales. He paid tributes at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Havana on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2018.

He delivered a lecture at the University of Havana on the subject "India and the Global South". He said that India and Cuba have close cooperation in multilateral engagement with both the countries playing a stellar role in powering South-South Cooperation and standing up for a stronger voice for the Global South or Developing Countries. He underscored that mutual respect and solidarity among developing countries form the core of South-South Cooperation. He stated that the success of South-South Cooperation must encourage the developed country partners to see how best these modalities can be utilized by them as well. He emphasized that development partnership secures the interests of the Global South only partially and called for greater space for developing countries in global governance structures.

Two MOUs were signed during the visit on cooperation in the areas of Biotechnology, and Traditional Medicine and Homeopathy.

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

The Embassy celebrated the 4th International Day of Yoga (IDY) in Kazakhstan from June 17-24, 2018 in the cities of Astana, Almaty, Atyrau, Temirtau, Karaganda and Shymkent.

The celebration was held in Astana at the forecourt of Astana Opera on 24th June, 2018. Ambassador Shri Prabhat Kumar welcomed the guests and spoke about the benefits of practising yoga. He explained that the IDY is celebrated in Kazakhstan on the theme "Astana@20 - India@70: Yoga for Health and Progress" against the backdrop that India is observing 70 years of independence and Kazakhstan is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its capital "Astana" this year. He read out Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's message on the IDY. He presented certificates and mementos to the premium sponsors and the resource persons for delivering lectures and conducting workshops. Mr. Trilok Tarak, Teacher of Indian Culture at Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre led the Common Yoga Protocol, which was followed by Surya Namaskar led by Mr. R. Sundarpandian, Yoga Instructor at Sundar Yoga. Mr. S. Omarkhanov, Head of Mass and Non-Olympic Sports Department, Ministry of Culture and Sports graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.



The Embassy organized the event "Yoga in the Park" at Yoga Park, Astana on 16th June, 2018. The event began with the address by Mayor of Saryarka District Mr. Turlubek Arman Alashevich. Ambassador delivered the inaugural speech, followed by Yoga Master Class.



The inaugural function of the IDY was organized at the QSI International School, Astana on 17th June, 2018. Mr. Volkov Vladimir Vasilievich, Deputy of the Senate of Kazakhstan was the Chief Guest. The inaugural function was preceded by a yoga march by volunteers from SVCC to the QSI International School.



The Embassy organized the event "Yoga in the Park - Do Yoga Astana" at the Capital Park, Astana on 23rd June, 2018. Ms. Irina Korpusssova, Ms. Diana Akhmadieva and Ms. Diana Nazarova conducted Kundalini Yoga, Hatha Yoga and Vinyasa Yoga respectively.

The Embassy celebrated the 4th IDY in Almaty at the Republic Palace Square on 16th June, 2018. Ambassador addressed the gathering. Mr. Ruslan Bultrikov, Head, Representative Office of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Almaty was the Chief Guest. Mr. Sandeep Yadav and representatives from 19 yoga centres led the Common Yoga Protocol. A cultural performance followed the yoga session.

The Centre of Indian Classical Dances, Almaty hosted an event in collaboration with Turan University and Bollywood Restaurant in Almaty on 12th June, 2018. 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, led the common yoga protocol. The Centre organized a concert in the evening.

The Embassy celebrated the 4th IDY in Atyrau at the Atyrau University Sports Complex on 16th June, 2018. Deputy Rector of the University Ms. Leila Erbulatovna was the Chief Guest. Shri Raju Balakrishnan, Second Secretary at the Embassy attended the celebration.

The celebration was organized in Temirtau at the Convention Centre of Arcelor-Mittal Steel Plant on 23rd June, 2018. Shri K. Ramalingam, Second Secretary at the Embassy, attended the celebration.

The 4th IDY was celebrated in Karaganda at the Central Park on 24th June, 2018. Ms. Irina Lyubarskaya, Deputy Mayor of the City, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Head of Kazakhstan Academy of Yoga Mr. Alexander Bondarenko led the Common Yoga Protocol. The event included yoga performance by pregnant women and mothers with infants. Shri K. Ramalingam, Second Secretary, attended the event.

The Embassy celebrated the 4th IDY in Shymkent on 24th June, 2018. The event was conducted in the format of "Yoga Fest" with entertainment events centered around the Yoga Protocol. Col. M.V. Nalawade, Defence Attache at the Embassy attended the celebration.

The lectures and workshops by yoga instructors were organized at the QSI International School, Astana from June 18-22, 2018. Mr. Seronozhenko Alexander, Ms. Natalia Panchenko Alexandrovna, Ms. Diana Nazarova, Ms. Krokholeva Darya Olegovna and Ms. Diana Tumenbaeva, and Mr. Sungat Iskakov delivered lectures on "Yoga @ 50+", "Yoga for Students", "Yoga for Women", "Yoga for Sportsperson" and "Yoga in Our Daily Life: 8 Parts of Yoga" respectively. Ms. Asem Otepova, Ms. Vidya Volkova, Ms. Gulzhan Torgumbayeva, Ms. Yelena Mikhno and Ms. Diana Akhmadieva conducted workshops on "Yoga Therapy for Spine and Neck Problem", "Yoga Therapy for Digestive Problems", "Yoga Therapy for Stress Management", "Yoga Therapy for Joint Pain" and "Yoga Therapy for Respiratory Problems" respectively.

## Ambassador Meets the Candidates Selected for ITEC Programme for Teachers

Ambassador Shri Prabhat Kumar met the candidates selected for the course "Proficiency cum Professional Development Course for Teachers from Kazakhstan" conducted by the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad from 25th June to 3rd August, 2018 under ITEC programme, at the Embassy on 24th June, 2018 before their departure to India. Mr. Rashid Zhubayev, Second Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Timur Otarshinov, Expert of International Cooperation, Ministry of Education also attended the meeting and interacted with the candidates.



25 English language teachers from various regions of Kazakhstan were selected for the training programme fully funded by the Government of India in coordination with the Ministry of Education of Kazakhstan. Of the 25 teachers selected for the ITEC Programme, 24 are school teachers and one is a University teacher.

## India Participates in the Annual Civil Forum of National Cultural Centres of CICA

The Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) organized the Annual Civil Forum of National Cultural Centres of the CICA Member States dedicated to the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of Astana as the capital of Kazakhstan at the Palace of Independence, Astana on the theme "With Love to Astana" on June 28-29, 2018.



At the inaugural session of the Forum, Secretary of State of Kazakhstan Ms. Gulshara Abydkalikova said that today Astana is the centre of public, political and cultural life of Kazakhstan, and an acknowledged megacity of global level. She spoke about Astana's contribution to international security and CICA's role in strengthening of relations among Asian countries. Dr. Sanjay Garg, Director, Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Astana participated in the Forum.

## SVCC Participates in the Inauguration of the Cultural Centre of Nazarbayev University

The Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC), Astana participated in the Opening Ceremony of the Cultural Center and Glass Pavilion of the Nazarbayev University, Astana on 29th June, 2018. A display corner exhibiting Indian handicrafts, handlooms and musical instruments, as well as books on Indian culture was put up at the venue by the SVCC. Shri Bhaskar Ojha, Music Teacher and Ms. Shruti Ghosh, Dance Teacher at SVCC performed flute recital and Kathak-cum-Bollywood dance respectively.



Mr. Katsu Shigeo, President, and Ms. Dairova Kadisha, Vice President for Student Affairs and International Cooperation of the University, thanked the Embassy of India for its support and the teachers of the SVCC for their excellent performance. Shri Ganesh Haloi, Charge d' Affaires a.i. attended the event.

## External Affairs Minister Launches Citizen-Centric Initiatives for Passport Services

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj launched a new scheme to enable the citizens to apply for passport from anywhere in India and mPassportSeva Mobile App with additional facilities on the occasion of the Sixth Passport Seva Divas in New Delhi on 26th June, 2018.



With the launch of the new scheme, applicants can now choose the Regional Passport Office (RPO) and thus the desired Passport Seva Kendra (PSK)/Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) under the RPO where they wish to submit their application irrespective of whether the present residential address specified in the application form lies within the jurisdiction of the selected RPO or not. The police verification, if required, would be conducted at the address specified in the application form. The passport will be printed and despatched by the RPO selected for application submission by the applicant.

The mPassportSeva App is available in Android and iOS platforms and have facilities to apply, pay and schedule appointments for passport services. With the launch of this App, the applicants would not require access to a computer and printer to apply for passport services.

## Incredible India Destination: Aurangabad

Aurangabad in the state of Maharashtra is named after Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. It was the capital of Aurangzeb from 1653 to 1707. Aurangabad is titled "the City of Gates" and the strong presence of the gates can be felt as one moves through the city. The city is heading towards rapid industrial growth, but retains its past glory and charms, heritage, and tradition. It serves as a major tourist hub that offers a wide array of network services to visit some of the most important attractions around it.

Bibi Ka Maqbara, Panchakki and Aurangabad Caves are some of the major tourist attractions in Aurangabad.

Bibi Ka Maqbara is a beautiful mausoleum of Aurangzeb's wife, Rabia-ud-Durrani. It is an imitation of the TajMahal at Agra and due to its similar design, it is popularly known as the Mini Taj of the Deccan.

Panchakki, a 17th century water mill, is known for its underground water channel, which traverses more than 8 km to its source away in the mountains. The channel culminates in a mesmerizing artificial waterfall.

Aurangabad Caves located at a distance of 5 kms from the city are 3rd century 12 Buddhist Caves nestled amidst the hills. The tantric influence is evident in the iconography and architectural designs of the caves.

Daulatabad Fort (15 km away from Aurangabad) was built by the Yadava Dynasty in 1187. This citadel was never conquered by any military force. Built on a 200 metre high conical hill, the fort was defended by moats and trenches running around the hill at its foot besides the most complex and intricate defence system.

Ellora Caves (29 km from Aurangabad) were chiseled between the 4th and the 9th centuries. There are 12 Buddhist, 17 Hindu and 5 Jain caves. The Cave No.16 popularly known as Kailash Temple was carved from a single monolithic structure and is a World Heritage Site.

Ajanta caves (107 km), a UNESCO World Heritage Site, are a cluster of 32 rock-cut Buddhist Caves, which date from 2nd century BC to 3rd Century AD. On the walls of the caves are paintings, many still glowing with their original colours. The Buddhist theme of the Ajanta paintings recounts the life of Lord Buddha and tales of his previous earthly experiences.

Lonar Crater (135 km) is an oval shaped crater formed by the impact of a meteorite nearly 50,000 years ago. It is said to be among the five largest in the world and has the distinction of being the only natural impact crater in basalt rock. The crater is 2 kilometre wide and 150 meter deep.

Nanded, Paithan, Pithalkora Caves and Shani Shingnapur are some of the other major tourist attractions near Aurangabad.



*Bibi Ka Maqbara*



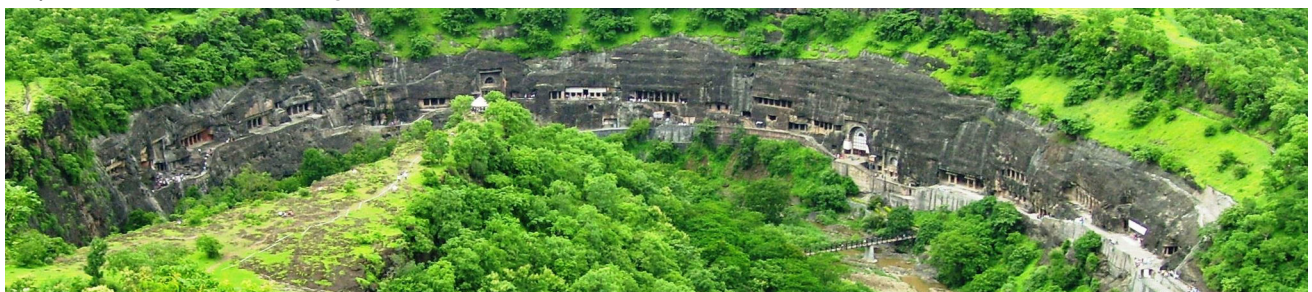
*Daulatabad Fort*



*Kailash Temple, Ellora Caves*



*Lonar Crater*



*Ajanta Caves*

## PHOTO FEATURE

### *Celebration of the 4th International Day of Yoga in Astana*



6/1, Kabanbay Batyr Avenue,  
5th floor,  
Kaskad Business Centre,  
Astana.

Tel. Phone: + 7 7172-925700/925701  
Fax: + 7 7172-925716  
E-mail: info.astana@mea.gov.in

### *Celebration of the 4th International Day of Yoga in Almaty*



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### *Celebration of the 4th International Day of Yoga in Karaganda*



### *Celebration of the 4th International Day of Yoga in Shymkent*



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### *Celebration of the 4th International Day of Yoga in Atyrau and Temirtau*



  
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