



Embassy of India Astana

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 14

November 21, 2018

CONTENTS

Sl. No.	Title	Page No.
I.	India News	
1.	Visit of the President of Russian Federation to India	2
2.	Prime Minister's visit to Japan	2
3.	Prime Minister conferred the Champions of the Earth Award 2018	3
4.	India improves to rank at 77 in World Bank's "Doing Business Report" (DBR)	3
5.	Prime Minister dedicated the "Statue of Unity" to the nation	3
6.	ISRO launches latest communication satellite GSAT- 29	4
II.	India-Kazakhstan News	
7.	Embassy celebrates 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi	4
8.	Visit of Hon'ble Minister of Defence of India to Kazakhstan	4
9.	Visit of Minister of State of Human Resource Development to Kazakhstan	4
10.	Embassy organizes Exhibition of Indian Dresses "VASTRAM"	5
11.	Visit of Hon'ble Minister of Health & family Welfare to attend Global Conference on Primary Health Care in Astana	5
12.	Diwali Concert of Indian Dance & Music	5
13.	Cultural Festival in Almaty	5
III.	Incredible India: Destination-Nalanda	6
IV.	Photo Feature	7

President of Russian Federation Visits India

President of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. Vladimir V. Putin visited India on October 04-05, 2018. Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi and President of the Russian Federation H.E. Mr. Vladimir V. Putin met for the 19th edition of the Annual Bilateral Summit in New Delhi. Eight MoUs were exchanged during his visit. India Russia Joint Statement was issued on the occasion. In his speech Hon'ble Prime Minister said: India gives top priority to its relations with Russia. In this rapidly changing world our relations have become more relevant. Our Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership has consistently received new energy and direction from the continuous series of nineteen summits. And our cooperation on global issues has acquired new meaning and goals. Our cooperation has got a strategic direction from the visit of the Hon'ble President. The important decisions taken during this visit, in the long run, will make our relations more strong.



From human resource development to natural and energy resources, from trade to investment, from the peaceful cooperation of nuclear energy to solar energy, from technology to tiger conservation, from arctic to far East, and from sea to space, there will be an even greater expansion of India-Russia relations. This expansion will take our cooperation ahead of the few selected areas of the past. India and Russia are unanimous in strengthening multi-polarity and multilateralism in this rapidly changing world. Both our countries have common interests in cooperating on terrorism, developments in Afghanistan and Indo-pacific, climate change, regional organizations like SCO, BRICS and multilateral organizations like the G20 and ASEAN. We have agreed to continue our beneficial cooperation and coordination in international institutions.

Prime Minister's Visit to Japan

Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi visited Japan on October 28-29, 2018 for the India-Japan Annual Summit with Prime Minister of Japan H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe. Japan announced joining the International Solar Alliance (ISA) submitting the instrument of ratification on 29th October 2018. A number of MoUs/ Agreements were signed during the visit. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed "Make in India: India-Japan Partnership in Africa and Digital Partnership" seminar in Tokyo. He attended Indian Community Event and interacted with the Indian Community. MoUs/ Agreements were exchanged in the field of Defence, Digital and New Technologies, Healthcare and Wellness, Postal, Sports. In his address to "Make in India" Seminar he explained how the Union Government is focused on improving ease of doing business, and ease of living for the citizens. He expressed happiness at the large presence of Japanese companies in India.



Noting that Japan has been a partner in many important industrial projects in India, the Prime Minister explained the strength of India's economic performance over the last four years. He said India is today the fastest growing major economy. He mentioned other major transitions in the Indian economy, including the move from informal to formal economy, digital transactions and GST etc.

The Prime Minister said that India's rising economy, fast growing middle class and young demography offer many new opportunities to Japanese investors. In this context, he mentioned low cost manufacturing, IT industry, and electric mobility, among other sectors.

The Prime Minister emphasized on the shared values between India and Japan. He said that both countries would look to develop stronger development partnerships in other parts of the world, including the Indo Pacific, South Asia and Africa. During the visit, recognizing the unparalleled potential for development of relations between the two countries, Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Abe reviewed the significant milestones achieved over the last four years. The two leaders shared their view that in order to achieve this shared vision, India and Japan must endeavour to work together for a rules-based and inclusive world order that fosters trust and confidence by enhancing communication and connectivity to ensure rule of law, unimpeded trade and flow of people, technology and ideas for shared prosperity. Prime Minister Modi recognised that the India-Japan relationship has been transformed into a partnership with great substance and purpose and is a corner stone of India's Act East Policy. Prime Minister Abe underscored the basic importance of India-Japan relationship for the regional order and is determined to advancing the "new era in India-Japan relations" so as to further cooperate for peace, stability and prosperity of Indo-Pacific. The two leaders also affirmed that ASEAN unity and centrality are at the heart of the Indo-Pacific concept, which is inclusive and open to all. The two Prime Ministers viewed with great satisfaction the enormous progress made in the last decade in fostering joint efforts towards shared security since the signing of the India-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in 2008. They reaffirmed their desire to further deepen bilateral security and defence cooperation and institute Foreign and Defence Ministerial Dialogue (2+2), in addition to existing mechanisms, including the Annual Defence Ministerial Dialogue, Defence Policy Dialogue, the National Security Advisers' Dialogue, Staff-level Dialogue of each service.



Prime Minister Conferred the Champions of the Earth Award 2018

The Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi, was conferred the Champions of the Earth Award 2018 on 03.10.2018 for Policy Leadership by UN Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres at a ceremony at Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra, here today. Executive Director, UN Environment, Mr Erik Solheim, Union Minister for External Affairs, Ms. Sushma Swaraj and Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Mahesh Sharma, were present on the occasion.



During his speech, Prime Minister Modi recognized that climate change poses a direct existential threat to everyone. He added that India has always been a fundamental pillar of civilization, philosophy, culture in the world. He dedicated the award to the countless Indians and their efforts

towards achieving climate justice. He also stated that it is a proud moment for India to host such an event. Climate and calamity are directly related to culture; if climate is not the focus of culture, calamity cannot be prevented. He said the When he says 'Sabka Saath,' he also includes nature in it. While giving credit to farmers and the indigenous communities, he said that they are the true recipient of this Award. He also said that from sewer to surveillance, India is shifting towards smart technology. He added that his Government is working to bring down "emission intensity" by 20 -25 percent in the next two years. He said that we have pledged to get rid of single-use plastics by 2022.

India improves to rank at 77 in the World Bank's Doing Business Report

The World Bank released its latest Doing Business Report (DBR, 2019) on 31st October 2018. India has recorded a jump of 23 positions against its rank of 100 in 2017 to be placed at 77th rank among 190 countries assessed by the World Bank. India's leap of 23 ranks in the Ease of Doing Business ranking is significant considering that last year India had improved its rank by 30 places, a rare feat for any large country of the size of India. As a result of continued efforts by the Government, India has improved its rank by 53 positions in last two years and 65 positions in last four years. India has improved its rank in 6 out of 10 indicators and has moved closer to international best practices (Distance to Frontier score) on 7 out of the 10 indicators. But , the

S.No.	Indicator	Position		Change
		2017	2018	
1	Construction Permits	181	52	+129
2.	Trading Across Borders	146	80	+66
3.	Starting a Business	156	137	+19
4.	Getting Credit	29	22	+7
5.	Getting Electricity	29	24	+5
6.	Enforcing Contracts	164	163	+1
Overall rank		100	77	+23

most dramatic improvements have been registered in the indicators related to 'Construction Permits' and 'Trading across Borders'. In grant of construction permits, India's rank improved from 181 in 2017 to 52 in 2018, an improvement of 129 ranks in a single year. In 'Trading Across Borders', India's rank improved by 66 positions moving from 146 in 2017 to 80 in 2018. The important features of India's performance this year are:

- The World Bank has recognized India as one of the top improvers for the year.
- This is the second consecutive year in which India has recognized as one of the top improvers
- India is the first BRICS and South Asian country to be recognized as top improvers in consecutive years.
- India has recorded the highest improvement in two years by any large country since 2011 in the Doing Business assessment by improving its rank by 53 positions.
- As a result of continued performance , India is now placed at first position among South Asian countries as against 6th in 2014
- Further, India has improved its rank among BRICS countries from 5th in 2014 to 3rd in 2018

Prime Minister dedicated the "Statue of Unity" to the nation

Statue of Unity, world's tallest statue, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Gujarat on October 31, 2018 on the occasion of the 143rd birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The Statue is 182 meter s tall almost twice as tall as the world famous Statue of Liberty. It rises out of a star-shaped, geometric base that covers the entire Sadhu Hill. It has a unique, slender width to height ratio, far more exacting than existing technical norms, that calls for special engineering considerations. The structure has two vertical cores, each housing a high-speed passenger elevator. It has a viewing gallery at the 135 m level, at the chest, can accommodate up to 200 visitors at one go and affords a breath-taking view of the dam and its environs. There is an exhibition centre at its base showcasing the life and achievements of Sardar Patel. A 320 m long designer bridge connects Sadhu Hill to the mainland. It harbours an administrative complex, 3-star hotel and



conference centre. It took around 210,000 cu.m. of cement concrete, 18,500 tonnes of reinforced steel, 6,500 tonnes of structural steel and 1,700 tonnes of bronze to build the statue. The statue has been engineered to withstand wind speeds of up to 50 m per second (almost 180 km/hr.). The Statue can also survive earthquakes measuring up to 6.5 on the Richter Scale, at a depth of 10 km and within a radius of 12 km.

ISRO launches latest communication satellite GSAT-29

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Wednesday launched India's newest communication satellite, GSAT-29, into orbit on the GSLV-MKIII D2's second developmental flight from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SHAR), Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. The 43.4-metre tall GSLV-MKIII rocket weighs roughly 640 tonnes and has the capacity to carry a satellite as heavy as four tonnes into space. It is also the rocket ISRO intends to use to carry the first Indian astronauts to space in the 2022 Gaganyaan mission. The successful launch of GSAT-29 adds to a series of test flights ISRO is carrying out to develop the agency's heaviest rocket for the manned space mission. The satellite, called GSAT-29, is a communications satellite with two separate payloads designed to improve telecommunication and internet services under the 'Digital India' program in Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast. India's first manned mission Gaganyaan is expected to carry a three-person team of Indian astronauts to space for a seven days trip in low-Earth orbit, slated for late 2022.



Embassy celebrated 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi

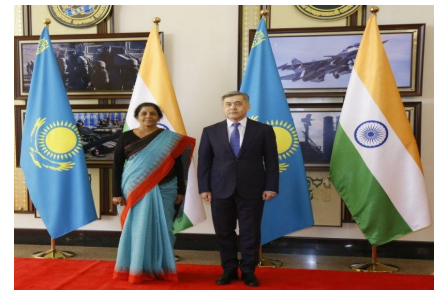
Embassy of India celebrated 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 02.10.2018 in Almaty and Astana. Ambassador Mr. Prabhat Kumar paid tributes to the Mahatma. A special function was organized at the Swami Vivekanand on the occasion. Ambassador launched a fortnightly quiz on the Life of Mahatma Gandhi which will continue till 02.10.2019. An Essay writing competition was also announced on the occasion. Ambassador also symbolically re-released a set of special postage stamps brought out by the Government of India to mark the occasion. Ambassador also released a music video of Mahatma Gandhi's favourite bhajan or devotional song "Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye", sung by two young Kazakh artists Mr. Azamat Aitekenov and Ms. Tomiris Yermolina. The highlight of the



day-long celebration was the launch of a LED projection on the life and message of Mahatma Gandhi at the Kazakhstan Railway Building, Astana. The projection was on view till 16 October 2018. To mark the occasion Embassy will be announcing a series of events/ activities regularly which will run for two years culminate on 02.10.2020.

Visit of Hon'ble Minister of Defence to Kazakhstan

Minister of Defence of the Republic of India (Raksha Mantri), Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman visited Astana from 02 to 04 October 2018. During the visit, she met Minister of Defence, Mr. Nurlan Yermekbayev and Minister of Defence and Aerospace Industry, Mr. Beibut Atankulov. They discussed full range of issues relating to defence and military technical cooperation and took stock of the progress that this bilateral relationship has made. She inspected a tri-service Guard of Honour at the Ministry of Defence. She had a meeting with Foreign Minister, Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov and also visited the Indian Military Art Room (IMAR) at the National Defence University. India and Kazakhstan are bound by historical and cultural and this has laid a strong foundation for the multifaceted cooperation. They are strategic partners since 2009. India and Kazakhstan Defence Cooperation includes military-technical cooperation, military education and training, joint military exercises, bilateral exchange of visits and cadet youth exchange programs. Over 200 Kazakh Defence Forces Personnel have undergone military training in India till date. Both countries successfully conducted a company level joint military exercise 'KAZIND-2018' in South Kazakhstan in September this year. Jointly with the Minister of Defence, Mr. Nurlan Yermekbayev, Mrs. Sitharaman presided over the flag off ceremony of the Kazakhstan contingent that will join the Indian contingent at United Nations International Peacekeeping Force in Lebanon.



Visit of Hon'ble MoS of Human Resource Development to Kazakhstan

Dr. Satya Pal Singh, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Government of India visited Kazakhstan on 15-18 October 2018 to participate in the 7th Meeting of Education Ministers of SCO Member States held in Astana. In his statement at the meeting, MoS said that education continued to be a strategic priority in India's national development initiatives which helped in achieving substantial progress in improving access to and quality of school and higher education. He informed that India had 1.5 million schools with a total enrolment of 260 million students and 8.69 million teachers. The higher education sector comprised 864 Universities; over 40,000 colleges; 11,700 standalone institutions; 35.7 million students; and over 1.3 million faculty. India had also launched a 'Skill India' mission in 2015 with a view to skilling 400 million youth by 2022. He also briefed the participants about India's major interventions to strengthen technology use and integration in education such as SWAYAM - an integrated platform for online courses offering more than 1500



1500 courses free of cost; National Academic Depository; National Knowledge Network; DIKSHA portal connecting teachers in sharing their best practices; e-Pathshala- a digital repository of school textbooks; Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) to tap the talent pool of scientists and entrepreneurs internationally to encourage their engagement with institutes of Higher Education in India; Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) to improve research collaboration between reputed Indian Institutes and highly ranked global Institutes of repute through Joint Research Projects.

Embassy Organizes Exhibition of Indian dresses- VASTRAM

An exhibition of traditional Indian textiles, VASTRAM: THE SPLENDID WORLD OF INDIAN TEXTILES organized by the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre of the Embassy of India in Kazakhstan, was inaugurated by the Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan HE, Prabhat Kumar and Mrs Gulzeinep Pazylova, Head of Division of Museums and Libraries of the Ministry of Culture and Sport, Republic of Kazakhstan at the National Museum of Kazakhstan, Astana, on 16 October 2018. The exhibition was a part of the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi. A large number of Ambassadors, members of the diplomatic corps, government officials, media personnel and invitees from different walks of life attended the inaugural ceremony. A selfie point with Indian dresses, and a free Henna stall were also set up on this occasion which became a big hit with the visitors. This travelling exhibition had been curated by eminent visual artist and fashion designer, Ms. Shelly Jyoti and sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. The Exhibition was initially upto 25.10.2018 but was extended to 28.10.2018 on popular demand



Visit of Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare to Astana

Hon'ble Minister of Health and Family Welfare Mr. J P Nadda visited Astana to attend the Global Conference on Primary Health Care on 25-26 October 2018. He was a panelist in Ministerial Parallel Sessions. On the sidelines of the Conference, he had bilateral meetings with the Hon'ble Minister of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mr. E.A. Birtanov and Hon'ble Minister of Health and Medical Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mr. Seyyed Hassan Ghazizadeh Hashemi. He had bilateral meeting with Hon'ble Minister for Public Health of the Kingdom of Sweden Ms. Annika Strandhäll. During his visit, he also met Ms. Henrieta H Fore, Executive Director, UNICEF and Ms. Helga Fodstad, Executive Director, PMNCH. He briefed about India's health schemes such as "Ayushman Bharat" under which will cover over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries)



providing coverage upto 5 lakh rupees per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization. To ensure that the funds reach SHA on time, the transfer of funds from Central Government through Ayushman Bharat - National Health Protection Mission to State Health Agencies may be done through an escrow account directly. He further added that In partnership with NITI Aayog, a robust, modular, scalable and interoperable IT platform will be made operational which will entail a paperless, cashless transaction.

Diwali Concert of Indian Music and Dance

On the occasion Diwali, a Concert of Indian Music and Dance was organized in Kazakh National University of Arts, Astana on 3 November 2018 with support of Embassy of the Republic of India in the Republic of Kazakhstan and Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre of the Embassy of India. The dance group consisting students of different age-groups was led by Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, the Honored Art Worker of the Republic of Kazakhstan, whose 20th anniversary of creative work is also celebrated this year. Ambassador Mr. Prabhat Kumar, Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan was Chief Guest at the event. More than 500 Invitees representing the diplomatic corps in Astana, government officials,



Cultural Festival in Almaty

As a part of celebrating 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre of the Embassy of India, Astana along with the Kazakhstan-Indian Foundation organized a 2 Day Cultural Festival in Almaty on 1-2 November 2018. The programme included an International Conference on "The Art of Weaving- The Way of Living", and Exhibitions of photographs and paintings of Mahatma Gandhi, and textile specimens from India and Kazakhstan. Mr. Prabhat Kumar, Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, delivered the Inaugural Speech at the International Conference on 1 Nov 2018, where is stressed upon the commonalities between the 15th-century Indian mystic poet and saint Kabir, Mahatma Gandhi and Kazakh sufi saint, Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi (1093-1166).



Incredible India Destination: Nalanda

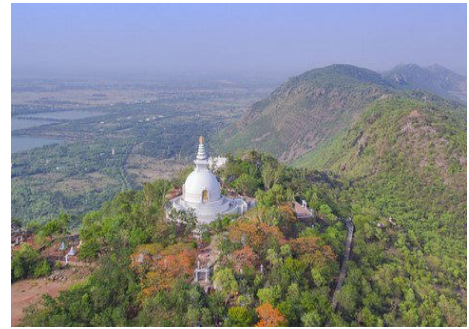
Lying in an empty landscape, Nalanda historically formed one of the main sources for learning extensive Buddhist literature. As Asia's most famous university from 5th to 12th century AD, it attracted students and travellers from far and wide. Often graced by the presence of Buddha himself, Nalanda in its lifetime was a hub for scholars from around the world. As apparent in the writings of Chinese Buddhist monk, Hieun Tsang, who first visited the city in the 7th century, he described how the city's name was inspired by a serpent. This is also the birthplace of Sariputra, a follower of Lord Buddha. The traces of the past, the relics of Nalanda's ancient glory are kept preserved at Nalanda's Archaeological Museum, open from Saturday till Thursday, 9 am to 5 pm.

Tradition has it that stupas or tumuli were built over the ashes of the Buddha. Some of the earlier stupas in India were built by Ashoka, the greatest Mauryan emperor, in honour of the Buddha in many parts of India and Nepal. The great stupa flanked by flights of steps and terraces, votive stupas and beautiful sculpture give the present day tourists a glimpse of the past glory that once was Nalanda. Many of the stupas were two or even three times built one over the other on the same spot. In the course of excavation it has been found that the very small original structure was enlarged by later temples built over and around the ruins of the earlier ones. The main stupa is the result of seven successive accumulations of the shrine-chamber on the top, facing both, can be approached by the staircase of the sixth period. It presumably contained a colossal image of the Lord Buddha, as the pedestal therein would indicate.

Established in 5th century AD, Nalanda was a famous university of ancient India. During the rule of Harsha, the fame of university reached far and wide. Under the Pala ruler Dharampal, the glory of the university reached its zenith. The renowned Chinese traveller Hieun-Tsang, who came to India during the rule of Harshvardhan in the 7th century and studied at Nalanda, has referred to Nalanda University in glowing terms. From his accounts it can be said that the university was a great centre of education and was famous even in far-off countries. According to Hieun-Tsang, the number of students at the university was 10,000 and the faculty consisted of great minds drawn from different parts of India. Separate buildings were used for the study of the students. Some buildings had the seating capacity of 10,000 students. The library of the university was very large and consisted of three buildings, one of them nine storied. Admission to Nalanda University was difficult. The rules of the university were tough and had to be obeyed. Students were not required to pay any fee. The expenses of the university were met by the donations given by the rulers and the rich. The enormous pyramidal mass of the Temple No.3 is impressive and from its top commands a splendid view of the entire area. It is surrounded by smaller stupas, many of which are studded with small and big statues of the Lord Buddha in various poses or 'Mudras'. This site has become UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The place of birth of Lord Mahavira, Kundalpur is located just outside Nalanda. A grand temple with beautiful spires has been built here to mark the place with a four and half feet tall idol of Lord Mahavira. Within the complex is a serene Trikal Chaubeesi Jain-mandir where 72 idols of Tirthankaras, representing 24 each of the past, present and future age, preside

Erected in the memory of famous Chinese traveller Hieun Tsang, this memorial is one of the major tourist attractions in Nalanda. Hieun Tsang had come to India in 633 AD and stayed at the Nalanda University for many years, studying Buddhism. The documents gathered by him during his stay serve as a relevant source of history in Buddhist writing.



Nalanda Stupa



Nalanda Ruins



Kundalpur



Hieun Tsang Memorial Hall

PHOTO FEATURE

Diwali Celebration at Radisson Hotel



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

Visit us: indembastana.in

www.facebook.com/IndiaInKazakhstan

Twitter @indembastana

Ambassador meets Mayor of Astana



Disclaimer: Embassy of India Astana Newsletter gathers its contents from diverse sources and the views expressed in interviews and articles published do not necessarily represent views of the Embassy of India or the Government of India.

Embassy celebrating 150 Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi



India participates in World Food in Almaty




Embassy of India

To subscribe to Embassy Newsletter by e-mail, please send your name and e-mail address to info.astana@mea.gov.in