



सत्यमेव जयते

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Front Cover:

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi with President of Sri Lanka Mr. Maithripala Sirisena at Hyderabad House, New Delhi. Photo courtesy: Photo Division (February 16, 2015)

State Visit of President of the United States of America to India [January 25-27, 2015]



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Contents

Visits

Official visit of the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to India	1
Official visit of United Nations Secretary General to India	2
Official visit of Prime Minister of Bhutan to India	4
Visit of Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Mr. Mangala Samaraweera to India	5



State Visit of President of the United States of America to India	6
---	---



President Obama at India's Republic Day Parade	16
--	----

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Media Statement during Joint Press Interaction with President of United States of America	17
---	----



Media Statement by President Barack Obama during Joint Media Interaction with Prime Minister	18
--	----

India-U.S. Delhi Declaration of Friendship	20
--	----

President Obama at India's Republic Day Parade	21
--	----

State Visit of the President of the Republic of Singapore to India	22
--	----

State Visit of the President of the Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to India	23
--	----



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Media Statement during the State Visit of President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to India	25
--	----



Sri Lanka and India Signed Four Agreements/MoUs	26
---	----

Visit of External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj to Sri Lanka	27
--	----



Remarks by External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj at the Dinner hosted by Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka in Colombo	28
--	----

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Seychelles	29
---	----



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Visit to Mauritius	30
--	----

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Sri Lanka	31
--	----



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Sri Lanka	32
--	----

On Arrival Visas for Sri Lankans Visiting India – Prime Minister Modi	35
---	----

Text of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's address to the Sri Lankan Parliament	36
--	----

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's statement to the media during visit to Sri Lanka	39
--	----



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's remarks at the Banquet hosted by the President of Sri Lanka	41
---	----

A New Page in Indo-Lanka Cooperation – President Sirisena	42
---	----

Bilateral Beats

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's message to Heads of Indian Missions	43
---	----

Delhi-Colombo Bonding: New Frontiers	44
--------------------------------------	----



Contents. 2

India constructs 27,000 houses in Sri Lanka

46



66th Republic Day of India's celebrations in Sri Lanka

47



REPUBLIC DAY RECEPTION AT INDIA HOUSE

49

Message on the Occasion of India's 66th Republic Day from Shri Y. K. Sinha, High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka

50



Reduction of entree fee to The National Museum in New Delhi for Sri Lankan Nationals

52

Colombo Dockyard : delivers largest passenger ship MV Lagoons to India

53



Visit of Shri Rajeev Kher, Commerce Secretary of India to Sri Lanka

54

Indian Navy's Training Squadron in Trincomalee

55



India and Sri Lanka agree to extend the ongoing project on Women's Trade Facilitation and Community Learning Centres in Batticaloa

56

Visit of High Commissioner to Batticaloa and Ampara

57

Joint Celebration of the 'Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Day (ITEC Day) and the 'International Students Day'

58



Feature

Science And Technology in India

60

PSLV-C27 Successfully Launches India's Fourth Navigation Satellite IRNSS-1D

62

Government has approved India-based Neutrino Observatory Project with estimated cost of Rs 1,583.05 crore

63

ISRO proposes to set up a new launch pad, referred as Third Launch Pad, at Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota

63

Economy

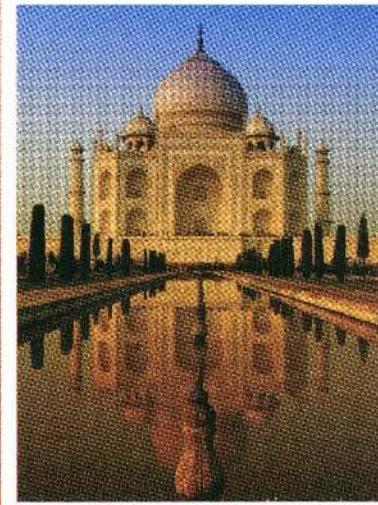
ECONOMIC SURVEY 2014-15

64

Tourism

Taj Mahal Is Top Destination of Asia's 'Virtual Tourists'

65



Culture

"SALUTE: Celebrating India"

66

Shankuleela - A Kathakali and Mohiniyataam Performance

66

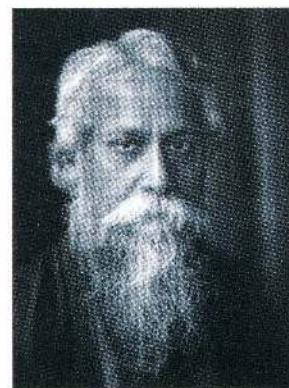
Sri Thyagaraja Aaradhana

67



One Hundred Years of Gitanjali

68



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at India House, Colombo

66



Official visit of the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to India

January 7-12, 2015

The President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana H.E. Donald Rabindranauth Ramotar paid a six-day official visit to India from January 7-12, 2015.

He was the Chief Guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas which was held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat on January 8-9, 2015. The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, the world's largest annual gathering of people of Indian origin.

Relations between India and Guyana are embedded in historical, cultural and traditional links. The presence

of a large Indian diaspora in Guyana adds to the close relationship between the two countries.

The President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, during his visit, met Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj and other senior leaders.

The visit has contributed to further strengthening of the close bilateral relations between India and Guyana, a country on the Caribbean coast of South America.



Official visit of United Nations Secretary General to India

January 10-13, 2015

The Secretary General of the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, paid an official visit to India from January 10-13, 2015. He was accompanied by his wife Madam Yoo (Ban) Soon-taek and a team of Senior Officials.

Upon arrival in New Delhi from New York on Saturday, 10 January, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had a brief meeting at the airport with Shri Rajendra Pachauri, the chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Shri Pachauri briefed him about the on-going work of the Panel and on his planned activities in the months ahead.

On Sunday morning, the Secretary-General and Madam Ban visited the Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram. The Secretary-General was given a tour of the museum and of Mahatma Gandhi's dwelling on the Ashram. He was also shown some of Gandhi's original writings and saris which Gandhi had woven himself.

From the Ashram, the Secretary-General went directly to the inaugural session of the seventh Vibrant Gujarat Summit, where he spoke to the assembled guests and delegates.

The Secretary-General cited Gujarat as a prime example of how sustainable energy and climate action are different aspects of the same issue, and connect to economic growth, increased social equity and a healthier environment. "I am pleased that my Sustainable Energy for All initiative is a partner of Vibrant Gujarat," he told the participants.

Following a lunch hosted by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Secretary-General held a bilateral meeting with the Indian Prime Minister. During the meeting, the Secretary-General expressed his admiration for the Prime Minister's focus on improving the socio-economic well-being of all Indian people and encouraged further progress.

He also thanked India for its significant contribution to United Nations peacekeeping operations, as well as to United Nations conflict prevention and humanitarian efforts. They also discussed the need for action on climate change, the post-2015 development agenda, and regional issues. Noting concerns regarding sexual violence and discrimination, the Secretary-General invited the Prime Minister to join UN-Women's "He for She" campaign.

After his meeting with the Prime Minister, the Secretary-

General, along with Madam Ban, flew a short distance to Vadodara to inaugurate a 10 megawatt solar energy plant. The innovative project places solar panels on top on an existing canal thereby reducing evaporation from the canal and also limiting the impact on land.

In speaking to a group of reporters afterwards, the Secretary-General was asked about the state of climate financing. He agreed that the issue was one of the most important aspects of making climate change a success. The Secretary-General added that he had already secured \$10 billion for the Green Climate Fund but that the target was \$100 billion by 2020.

Upon returning to Ahmedabad, the Secretary-General held a bilateral meeting with United States Secretary of State John Kerry, who was also attending the Vibrant Gujarat Summit. They discussed international peace and security issues, including United Nations efforts to address the crisis in Libya, the urgency of returning to negotiations to achieve a two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the need for progress on nuclear disarmament of the Korean peninsula.

The Secretary-General also met with Prime Minister Lyonchoen Tshering Tobgay of Bhutan before attending an official dinner hosted by Smt. Anandiben Patel, Gujarat

Chief Minister, at the Pandit Deen Dayal Petroleum University at Gandhinagar.

The Secretary-General departed Ahmedabad early on the morning of 12 January for New Delhi, where he held a number of bilateral meetings with senior Indian officials. The first was with Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs of India. They had a broad ranging discussion on climate change, peacekeeping, Security Council reforms and gender issues. Foreign Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj also hosted a working lunch for the Secretary-General and his delegation.

The Secretary-General also spoke that day at the Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA), where he delivered a keynote address in which he discussed India's role as a driver for peace in the region and the world, as a champion of human rights, and as a leader on clean development — clean sustainable development. He told his audience that South Asia faces the grave danger of nuclear weapons. Each addition to the arsenals raises the risks of a nuclear nightmare. He called on India to renew its leadership on nuclear disarmament.

"Nature does not wait for us. Nature does not negotiate with us. Rather, it is up to human beings to make sure that our world will be environmentally sustainable"

- Ban Ki-moon

After holding a town hall meeting with United Nations staff, the Secretary-General also met that day with Shri Manohar Parrikar, India's Minister of Defence, as well as with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shri Kailash Satyarthi, with whom he discussed the importance of ending child slavery worldwide.

Before attending a dinner to launch the UN@70 campaign, the Secretary-General held a separate meeting with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Ambassador and cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, UNICEF National Ambassador Sharmila Tagore, and actress-activist Nandita Das, as well as Shri Satyarthi.

At the dinner, the Secretary-General told the audience, which included a number of students, how much he appreciated the efforts of the Goodwill Ambassadors present in their respective fields. He officially launched the UN@70 campaign to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. He took that opportunity to thank all United Nations staff in India for their hard work and dedication. The Secretary-General also underscored the strong partnership between India and the United Nations in the fight for equality of all individuals, giving priority to children and women welfare. On Tuesday morning, 13

January, the Secretary-General met with Smt. Sumitra Mahajan, Speaker of the Lower House of the Indian Parliament. He also met with Environment Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar, and planted a tree at the Ministry of the Environment. The Secretary-General spoke to reporters afterwards, and said that he counts on the continuing leadership role of India in the ongoing efforts to address climate change issues. He welcomed India's use of innovative technologies, such as the Canal Top Solar Power Plant that he saw during his visit to Gujarat.

He added: "Nature does not wait for us. Nature does not negotiate with us." Rather, he said, it is up to human beings to make sure that our world will be environmentally sustainable.

He then met with Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of the Republic of India. They discussed a broad range of issues, including climate change, sustainable development, peacekeeping and United Nations reform.

In the afternoon, Mr. Ban met with the family of his former landlord before travelling to the airport to fly from India to Honduras to begin an official visit to that country.



Official visit of Prime Minister of Bhutan to India

January 10-18, 2015

At the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, His Excellency Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay, the Prime Minister of Bhutan made an official visit to India from 10-18 January 2015.

The Prime Minister of Bhutan was accompanied by his spouse Aum Tashi Doma, Hon'ble Foreign Minister Rinzin Dorji, Hon'ble Economic Affairs Minister Norbu Wangchuk and other senior officials of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

While in Ahmedabad, the Prime Minister of Bhutan attended the Vibrant Gujarat Summit and also visited a number of very successful projects initiated by Prime Minister Shri Modi in Gujarat such as the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT), Solar Park, Kaushal Vardhan Kendra (Skill Development Institute), Sabarmati river front, Garima Park and Kids City. Further, Prime Minister also visited the Buddhist sites in Vadnagar.

On 11th January 2015, Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay addressed the inaugural session of the Vibrant Gujarat Summit along with several other visiting dignitaries. The Summit was preceded by a breakfast meeting hosted by the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi for the visiting dignitaries. Prime Minister Shri Modi also hosted a lunch for the visiting dignitaries.

On 10th January 2015 afternoon, Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay met Prime Minister Shri Modi and had wide-ranging discussions on bilateral relations as well as on regional and international issues of mutual interest and concern. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction with the existing very close ties of friendship and understanding between India and Bhutan and reiterated their resolve to further strengthen their cooperation.

The two Prime Ministers agreed that cooperation in

the field of hydro-power was mutually beneficial and a win-win situation for both countries. They expressed satisfaction over the progress of the three ongoing HEPs totaling 2940 MW under the inter-governmental model. They reiterated their commitment to the 10,000 MW initiative and in this context to the early implementation of the four JV-model projects, totaling 2120 MW.

The Prime Minister of Bhutan also had a meeting with the Chief Minister of Gujarat Smt. Anandiben Patel. They discussed areas of cooperation between Bhutan and Gujarat including promotion of investments from Gujarat in Bhutan and other business links.

In New Delhi, Prime Minister of Bhutan called on the Hon'ble President of India at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. He had meetings with Shri Rajnath Singh, Minister of Home Affairs, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs, Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Finance, Shri Manohar Parrikar, Minister of Defence, Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Power, Shri Ajit Doval, National Security Advisor and Smt. Sujatha Singh, Foreign Secretary.

From 16-18 January, Prime Minister of Bhutan visited the holy sites in Varanasi and Bodhgaya. In Bodhgaya, the Prime Minister of Bhutan was presented a sapling of the Bodhi tree as a gift by the people of India to the people of Bhutan during a very special year when the Bhutanese people are celebrating the 60th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Fourth King of Bhutan.

The visit of the Prime Minister of Bhutan to India reinforced the tradition of regular visits at the highest levels, and extensive exchange of views between close friends. It further strengthened the excellent bilateral relations between India and Bhutan.



Visit of Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Mr. Mangala Samaraweera to India

January 18, 2015

Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister, Shri Mangala Samaraweera, paid a two day official visit to India from 18-19 March 2015 on the invitation of the Indian External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj. This was the first foreign visit undertaken by Minister Samaraweera after assumption of office on 12th January, and reflects the priority attached by Sri Lanka towards enhanced relations with India.

During this visit, Minister Shri Samaraweera held bilateral talks with the Minister of External Affairs Smt. Sushma Swaraj on January 18, 2015 and called on Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

The meeting between the two Ministers was extremely cordial and fruitful. Discussions covered all aspects of bilateral relations, with the Ministers agreeing to commence a consultative process to re-engage on the issue of repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu.

The two Ministers discussed the proposed visit to India by President Maithripala Sirisena of Sri Lanka. Minister Samaraweera also extended an invitation to Minister

Swaraj to visit Sri Lanka as early as possible, which she accepted. The two sides agreed to hold the 9th Meeting of the India - Sri Lanka Joint Commission in Colombo during this visit.

During Minister Samaraweera's courtesy call on Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at the Prime Minister's official residence, Minister Samaraweera extended an invitation to Prime Minister Shri Modi from the President Maithripala Sirisena to visit Sri Lanka at an early date, which the Prime Minister accepted. This would be the first official visit by an Indian Prime Minister after the official visit by former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi in 1987. The Minister said that Sri Lanka is looking forward to the enhancement of economic cooperation with India, which is heading towards great economic progress under Prime Minister Shri Modi.

Minister Samaraweera also met the National Security Advisor of India, Shri Ajit Doval and paid courtesy calls on the Leader of the Indian National Congress, Smt. Sonia Gandhi and former Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh.





State Visit of President of the United States of America to India

January 25-27, 2015

The President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, accompanied by First Lady Michelle Obama visited India from January 25-27, 2015. The President of India and the Prime Minister of India welcomed the U.S. President as the Chief Guest at India's 66th Republic Day celebrations, the first U.S. President to grace this historic event.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Barack Obama assessed the extensive bilateral strategic and global partnership between their two countries and pledged to continue to enhance cooperation across the spectrum of human endeavor to better their citizens' lives and that of the global community.

Noting that the multifaceted partnership between the United States and India is rooted in shared values of democracy and strong economic and people-to-people ties, President Obama and Prime Minister Shri Modi elevated the bilateral relationship through their endorsement of a new India-U.S. Delhi Declaration of Friendship, which builds on their 30 September Vision Statement by articulating tangible principles to guide ongoing efforts to advance mutual prosperity, a clean and healthy environment, greater economic cooperation, regional peace, security and stability for the larger benefit of humankind.

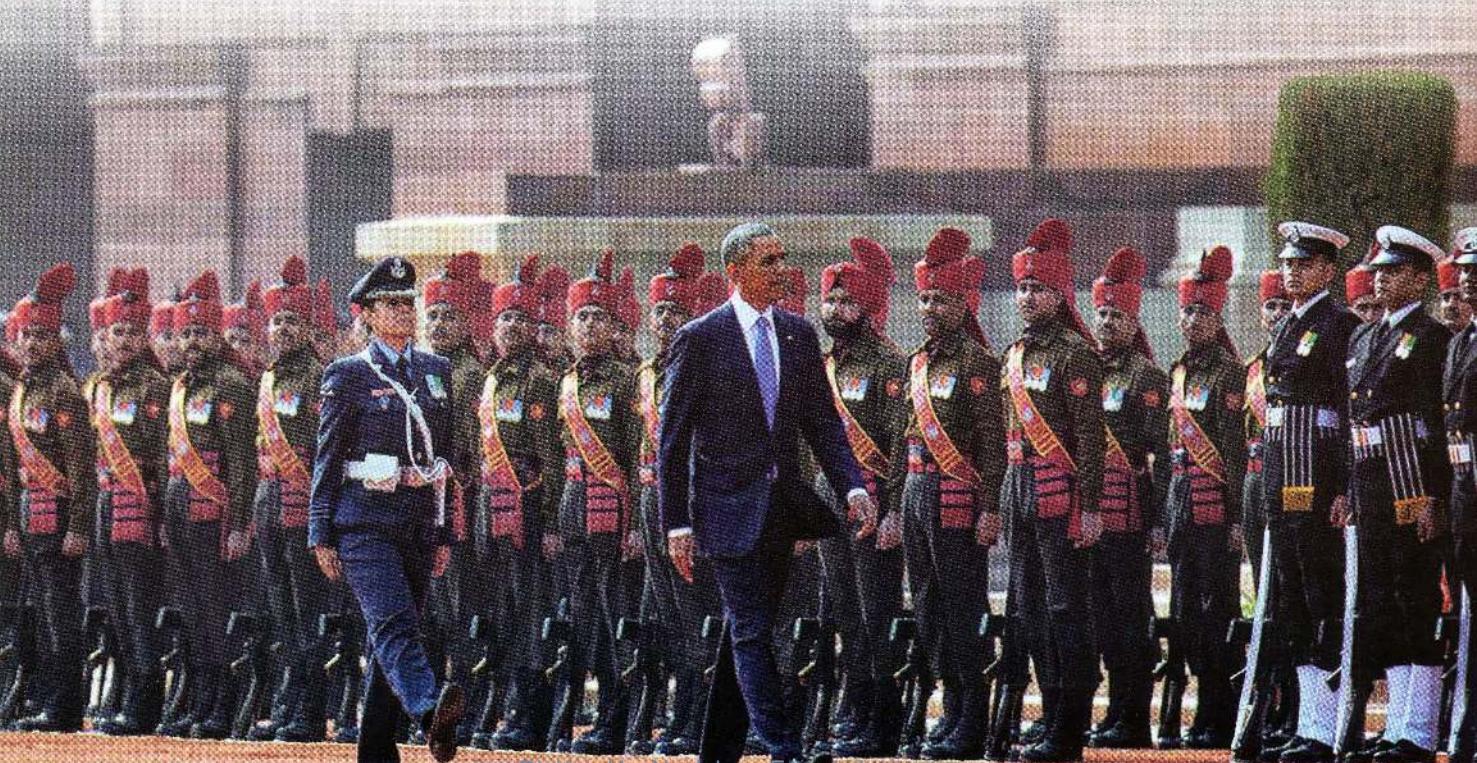
Recognizing the important role that both countries play in promoting peace, prosperity, stability and security in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region, and noting

that India's 'Act East Policy' and the United States' rebalance to Asia provide opportunities for India, the United States, and other Asia-Pacific countries to work closely to strengthen regional ties, the Leaders announced a Joint Strategic Vision to guide their engagement in the region.

The Prime Minister and the President acknowledged and expressed satisfaction at the qualitative reinvigoration of strategic ties and the intensity of substantive interactions since the Prime Minister's visit to Washington in September 2014. They appreciated the focused action and accomplishments by both sides on the decisions taken during the Summit in September and in this regard, they welcomed:

- The 30 September 2014 signing of an implementing agreement between the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to conduct the joint NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission.
- The convening of the Defence Policy Group and its subgroups on 28-29 October 2014 to pursue stronger and expanded bilateral defence cooperation.
- India's ongoing facilitation of U.S. Department of Defense humanitarian missions in India, including a mission in October and November 2014, to recover the remains of fallen U.S. soldiers who served in World War II.

- The signing of the India-U.S. Statement of Guiding Principles on Triangular Cooperation for Global Development on 3 November 2014, in furtherance of bilateral efforts to advance sustainable development in cooperation with partner countries around the world.
- The breakthrough between India and the United States on issues relating to the implementation of the Bali Ministerial Decisions regarding public stockholding for food security purposes, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, and post Bali work.
- Convening of the U.S.-India Joint Commission Meeting on Science and Technology Cooperation in New Delhi on 17 November 2014 to review, exchange views, and advance cooperation in diverse areas of science and technology and foster engagement in techno-entrepreneurship and innovation partnership for mutual benefit.
- Convening of the India-U.S. Higher Education Dialogue in New Delhi on 17 November 2014 to further bilateral cooperation in this field, strengthen partnerships between Indian and U.S. universities and community colleges, improve student and scholar mobility, and promote faculty collaboration.
- The signing of the MoU on 18 November 2014 between Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. and the Export-Import Bank of the United States, which would make available up to \$1 billion in financing to facilitate expanded cooperation and enhance U.S. private sector investment in Indian clean energy projects.
- Successful hosting of the bilateral India-U.S. Technology Summit on 18-19 November 2014 with the U.S. as a partner country for the first time.
- Convening of the High Technology Cooperation Group on 20-21 November 2014 to shape a cooperative agenda on high technology goods, including export control-related trade in homeland security technologies, high technology manufacturing equipment including machine tools, defence trade, and fostering collaboration in biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and health-related information technology.
- Convening of the Smart Cities Conclave on 22 November 2014 organised by the U.S.-India Business Council in cooperation with the Ministry of Urban Development and the Mayors and Commissioners of Ajmer (Rajasthan), Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh) and Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and the decision by the Government of India to constitute a high-level committee for each of the three Smart Cities comprising different departments of the Central Government, the state governments, local governments, and representatives of the U.S. industry.
- Signing of three MoUs between the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency on January 25, 2015 to develop Vishakhapatnam, Allahabad, and Ajmer as Smart Cities with the participation of U.S. industry, in furtherance of the commitment made by the Leaders in September 2014.
- The convening of the Trade Policy Forum at the Ministerial level on 24-25 November 2014, in which India and the United States agreed to work towards resolving commercial impediments in both markets, to help realize the potential of bilateral trade in goods and services, and to promote investment and manufacturing.



- Convening of the India-U.S. Political Military Dialogue on 4 December 2014 to exchange perspectives on bilateral strategic and regional issues.
- Convening the sixth round of the India-U.S.-Japan trilateral discussions on 20 December 2014 to deepen regional engagement and to discuss ways to implement projects on the ground.
- The launch of the Infrastructure Collaboration Platform in New Delhi on 13 January 2015 to promote enhanced market access and financing to increase U.S. industry participation in the growth and development of sectors that support Indian infrastructure.
- The 12-15 January 2015 expert exchange on Counter-Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED) strategies and technologies and completion of a Joint Statement of Intent and a work plan for a programme of bilateral C-IED cooperation.
- The signing of a framework on and inauguration of the India-U.S. Investment Initiative in Washington on 12-15 January 2015 to jointly cooperate on facilitating capital market development conducive to financing investment; creating an environment that encourages investment in various sectors in India; and working to overcome any obstacles to such investment.
- The convening of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Working Group in Washington on 14-15 January 2015 and the 23 January signing of the Joint Declaration of Intent to advance implementation of the Digital India programme and further bilateral commercial ICT cooperation.
- Launching of a Knowledge Partnership in defence studies expressing a shared desire to pursue collaborative activities between the United States and Indian National Defence Universities.
- Signing of the Statement of Cooperation for Supervisory Cooperation and Exchange of Supervisory Information between the Reserve Bank of India and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Federal Reserve System, and Office of the Comptroller of Currency (OCC).
- Convening of Indian and U.S. CEOs who are committed to deepening bilateral economic ties by identifying current impediments to trade and investment and working with the two government to find solutions; and identifying emerging sectors where public-private partnership can unlock new collaborations between our two peoples.
- The 13 January 2015 signing of the MoU between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ministry of Urban



Development to enable USAID to share expertise, best practices, innovation and technologies in support of India's efforts to strengthen water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in urban areas.

- India's recent introduction of visa-on-arrival for U.S. citizens and the convening of the first technical discussions to advance India's membership in the United States' Global Entry Program, initiatives aimed at easing travel between India and the United States to further strengthen people-to-people ties.
- Cooperation on scientific research collaboration on the Indian Monsoon Rainfall currently underway aboard the U.S. research vessel JOIDES Resolution in the Bay of Bengal.
- The conclusion of the first of two project annexes between the Indian Department of Atomic Energy-Department of Science and Technology and the U.S. Department of Energy, which will enable discovery science cooperation in particle accelerator and high energy physics.
- The 22 January signing of the MoU between the U.S. Department of Treasury and India's Ministry of Finance to enhance cooperation to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism. The Completion of an MoU between the Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Biotechnology, Indian Council of Medical Research, All Indian Institute of Medical Sciences, and the U.S. National Institute of Health and National Cancer Institute.
- The 23 January signing of the Joint Declaration of Intent between USAID and the Ministry of Human Resource Development for technical support to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), starting with IIT Gandhinagar, to strengthen research and entrepreneurship capabilities.



- The recent finalization of the 2015 Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship, which will guide and expand the bilateral defence and strategic partnership over the next ten years.
- The 22 January signing of the India-U.S. Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation (RDT&E) Agreement to facilitate cooperation in defence research and development.
- Continuing bilateral engagement on the Defence

Economic Growth

Prime Minister Shri Modi and President Obama expressed confidence that continued bilateral collaboration will increase opportunities for investment, improve bilateral trade and investment ties and lead to the creation of jobs and prosperity in both economies. In this regard, the Leaders agreed to continue to strengthen their broad-based partnership for development through stronger trade, technology, manufacturing, and investment linkages between the two countries and triangular cooperation with partner countries, and that continued efforts to maintain labor standards as per domestic law and agreed international norms will make these linkages more durable. The two sides also committed to continuing to cooperate on the finalization of the Post-Bali Work Programme in the spirit of the Doha mandate.

The President and the Prime Minister affirmed their shared commitment to facilitating increased bilateral investment flows and fostering an open and predictable climate for investment. To this end, the Leaders instructed their officials to assess the prospects for moving forward with high-standard bilateral investment treaty discussions given their respective approaches.

The President and the Prime Minister also welcomed

Technology and Trade Initiative (DTI), including the 22 January 2015 agreement in principle to pursue co-production and co-development of four pathfinder projects, form a working group to explore aircraft carrier technology sharing and design, and explore possible cooperation on development of jet engine technology.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Obama jointly appreciated the significant efforts undertaken by both sides in recent months to re-energize the strategic partnership, and affirmed expanding the substantive underpinnings of our diversified bilateral strategic partnership including through expanded strategic consultations, stronger defence, security, and economic cooperation.

President Obama also reiterated his support for Prime Minister Modi's vision to transform India, and recognized that India's focus on its development priorities presented substantial opportunities for forging stronger India-U.S. economic ties and greater people-to-people contacts. Reaffirming that India's rise is also in the interest of the United States, regional and global stability, and global economic growth, President Obama reiterated the United States' readiness to partner with India in this transformation. The two leaders pledged to translate their commitment of "Chalein Saath Saath": "Forward Together We Go" of September into action through "Sanjha Prayaas; Sab Ka Vikaas": "Shared Effort; Progress For All".

the fifth annual U.S.-India Economic and Financial Partnership Dialogue in February, in which the countries will deepen their dialogue on macroeconomic policy, financial sector regulation and development, infrastructure investment, tax policy, and efforts to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

The two sides agreed to hold a discussion on the elements required in both countries to pursue an India-U.S. Totalisation Agreement.

President Obama commended Prime Minister Modi's "Jan Dhan" scheme to prioritize financial inclusion for India's poor. The Leaders noted India's intent to join the Better Than Cash Alliance.

The Leaders committed to explore areas of collaboration in skill development ranging from establishing quality assurance systems for skilling certification standards, setting up of skill development centres, nurturing and promoting social entrepreneurship and strengthening the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

President Obama and Prime Minister Modi agreed to collaborate in the implementation of India's ambitious Digital India programme and expand commercial cooperation, including by encouraging investment

engagement in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector.

In recognition of the importance of their ongoing commercial discussions, the two sides agreed to hold public-private discussions in early 2015 under the aegis of the India-U.S. Commercial Dialogue for a period of two years, until March 2016, on mutually agreed areas of cooperation.

Recognizing the progress made in constructive engagement on Intellectual Property under the last round of the India-U.S. Trade Policy Forum held in November, 2014, the Leaders also looked forward to enhancing engagement on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in 2015 under the High Level Working Group on Intellectual Property, to the mutual benefit of both the countries.

Acknowledging the potential for technological cooperation in the rail sector in augmenting and optimizing India's rail infrastructure, the Leaders agreed to facilitate U.S. Trade and Development Agency and Indian Railways technical cooperation that will assist Indian Railways' efforts to modify its leasing and public-private partnership frameworks to attract private sector funding.

The Leaders recognized the robust public-private U.S.-India civil aviation partnership and agreed to continue working together to identify emerging technologies and build a larger commercial engagement agenda through key events such as the 2015 U.S.-India Aviation Summit and demonstration of advanced U.S. technologies.

Reaffirming their commitment to safety and security of civil aviation, the United States and India will continue consultations between the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the India Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to ensure international safety standards set by the International Civil Aviation

Organisation (ICAO), with the aim of restoring Category I status at the earliest possible time.

Noting the importance of ongoing cooperation in higher education, the President and Prime Minister welcomed ongoing efforts to extend a knowledge partnership for supporting the Indian Institute of Technology at Gandhinagar through USAID, President Obama and Prime Minister Modi also pledged to collaborate through India's Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN), to facilitate short-term teaching and research programs by up to 1000 visiting U.S. academics in Indian universities.

The Leaders emphasized the importance of strengthening international financial institutions, including the International Monetary Fund. The President also affirmed his commitment to enhancing India's voice and vote in international Financial Institutions and ensuring that resources are made available and used creatively through multilateral development banks for infrastructure financing. Prime Minister Modi appreciated the efforts of the U.S. Treasury for cooperating with the Ministry of Finance on the Task Force on Resolution Corporation set up in pursuance of the recommendations of the Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission.

High Technology, Space and Health Cooperation

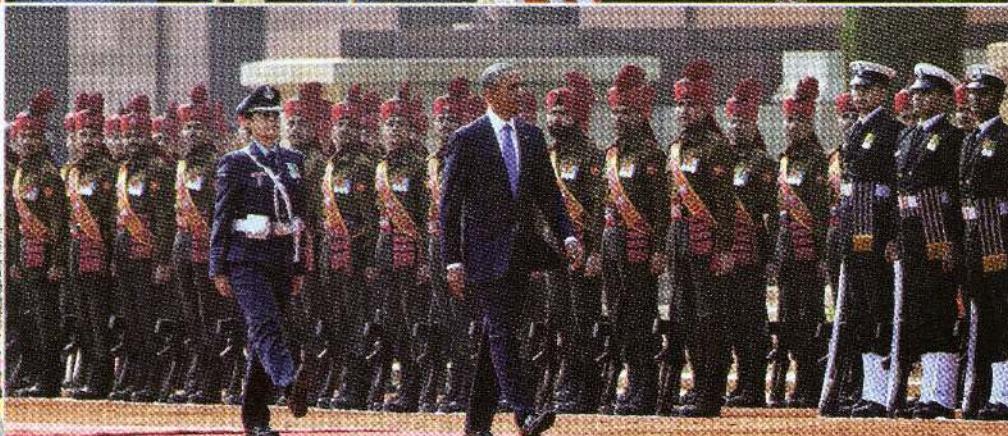
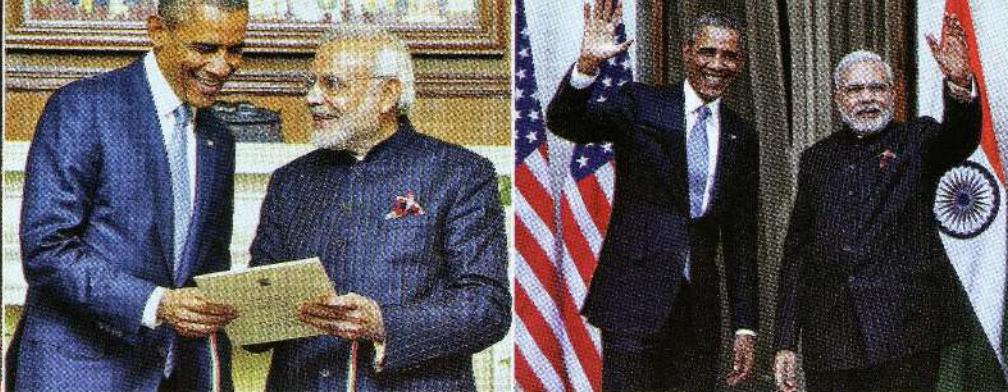
Prime Minister Shri Modi and President Obama reaffirmed their commitment to ensure that partnerships in science, technology and innovation are a crucial component of the overall bilateral engagement in the 21st century. They also reaffirmed their support for the role that science, technology and innovation partnerships can play in addressing pressing challenges in areas such as food, water, energy, climate, and health and developing innovative solutions that are affordable, accessible and adaptable, meet the needs of the people of the two countries and benefit the global community. To this end, the Leaders agreed to continue to develop cooperative efforts in many areas of science, technology, and innovation, including studying the impacts of water, air pollution, sanitation and hygiene on human health and well-being.

The two Leaders also agreed to continue U.S.-India collaboration in hydrology and water studies and monsoon modelling and noted the need to expeditiously work towards launching an Indo-U.S. Climate Fellowship to facilitate human capacity building. The Prime Minister and the President also reaffirmed the importance of ongoing efforts to strengthen women's participation in science, technology, engineering, and math through networking and mentoring programs.

The President and the Prime Minister welcomed efforts, under the bilateral High Technology Cooperation Group, to seek timely resolution of the challenges to trade in High Technology goods, including the U.S. licensing requirements for trade in certain dual use items.

The Leaders reaffirmed the importance of providing





transparent and predictable policy environments for fostering innovation. Both countries reiterated their interest in sharing information and best practices on IPR issues, and reaffirmed their commitment to stakeholders' consultations on policy matters concerning intellectual property protection.

President Obama and Prime Minister Shri Modi agreed to further promote cooperative and commercial relations between India and the United States in the field of space. The leaders noted the on-going interactions between their space agencies, including towards realizing a dual frequency radar imaging satellite for Earth Sciences, and exploring possibilities for cooperation in studying Mars.

The Leaders took note of ongoing U.S.-India space cooperation, including the first face-to-face meeting of the ISRO-NASA Mars Working Group from 29-31 January 2015 in Bangalore, in which the two sides will consider opportunities for enhanced cooperation in Mars exploration, including potential coordinated observations and analysis between ISRO's Mars Orbiter Mission and NASA's Mars Atmosphere and Volatile Evolution mission (MAVEN). The Prime Minister and the President also welcomed continued progress toward enhanced space cooperation via the U.S.-India Civil Space Joint Working Group, which will meet later this year in India.

Under the umbrella of an implementing agreement between the U.S. Department of Energy and the Department of Atomic Energy of India, the Leaders welcomed expanded collaboration in basic physics research, and accelerator research and development.

The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) and announced specific actions at home and abroad to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including a CDC-Ministry of Health Ebola and GHSA preparedness training, expansion of

the India Epidemic Intelligence Service, and development of a roadmap to achieve the objectives of the GHSA within three years.

The Leaders also committed to multi-sectoral actions countering the emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and cooperation in training of health workers in preparedness for infectious disease threats. The Leaders agreed to focus science and technology partnerships on countering antibiotic resistant bacteria and promoting the availability, efficacy and quality of therapeutics.

The Leaders welcomed further progress in promoting bilateral cooperation on cancer research, prevention, control, and management and agreed to continue to strengthen the engagement between the CDC and India's National Centre for Disease Control.

The President and Prime Minister also welcomed the upcoming completion of an Environmental Health, Occupational Health and Injury Prevention and Control MoU between the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Indian Council for Medical Research to further collaborative efforts to improve the health and welfare of both countries' citizens.

The Prime Minister and the President also agreed to expand the India-U.S. Health Initiative into a Healthcare Dialogue with relevant stakeholders to further strengthen bilateral collaboration in health sectors including through capacity building initiatives and by exploring new areas, including affordable healthcare, cost saving mechanisms, distribution barriers, patent quality, health services information technology, and complementary and traditional medicine. The President and the Prime Minister pledged to encourage dialogue between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and its Indian counterparts on traditional medicine. The Leaders also pledged to strengthen collaboration, dialogue, and cooperation between



the regulatory authorities of the two countries to ensure safety, efficacy, and quality of pharmaceuticals, including generic medicines.

The Leaders also agreed to accelerate joint leadership of the global Call to Action to end preventable deaths among mothers and children through a third meeting of the 24 participating countries in India in June 2015. As host, India will showcase the power of new partnerships, innovations and systems to more effectively deliver life-saving interventions. They also lauded the highly successful collaboration on a locally produced vaccine against rotavirus which will save the lives of an estimated 80,000 children each year in India alone, and pledged to strengthen the cooperation in health research and capacity building through a new phase of the India-U.S. Vaccine Action Programme.

Defence and Homeland Security Cooperation

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Obama welcomed the efforts made by both sides to expand bilateral defence cooperation in areas of mutual interest and reaffirmed their commitment to continue to work towards deepening the bilateral defence relationship. The Leaders acknowledged bilateral military ties as the foundation of the defense relationship and encouraged their respective militaries to pursue additional opportunities for engagement through exercises, military personnel exchanges, and defense dialogues.

The Leaders also acknowledged the need for the two-way defence engagement to include technology cooperation and collaboration, co-production and co-development. To this end, the President and the Prime Minister emphasized the ongoing importance of the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) in developing new areas of technology cooperation in the defence sector including through co-development and co-production and the Prime Minister welcomed the U.S. Defense Department's establishment of a dedicated rapid reaction team focused exclusively on advancing DTTI. The Leaders expressed confidence that continued DTTI collaboration will yield additional joint projects in the near future.

The President also welcomed the Prime Minister's initiatives to liberalize the Foreign Direct Investment Policy regime in the defence sector and the Leaders agreed to cooperate on India's efforts to establish a defence industrial base in India, including through initiatives like 'Make in India.'

Prime Minister Shri Modi and President Obama expressed satisfaction over the efforts made by both countries to deepen cooperation in the field of maritime security, as reflected in the 2015 Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship. To this end, they agreed that the navies of both sides would continue discussions to identify specific areas for



expanding maritime cooperation. They also reiterated their commitment to upgrading their bilateral naval exercise MALABAR.

The two sides also noted the growing cooperation between their law enforcement agencies, particularly in the areas of extradition and mutual legal assistance, to counter transnational criminal threats such as terrorism, narcotics, trafficking, financial and economic fraud, cybercrime, and transnational organized crime and pledged to enhance such cooperation further. The President and the Prime Minister also noted the serious risks to national and economic security from malicious cyber activity and agreed to cooperate on enhancing operational sharing of cyber threat information, examining how international law applies in cyberspace, and working together to build agreement on norms of responsible state behavior.

The Leaders committed to undertake efforts to make the U.S.-India partnership a defining counterterrorism relationship for the 21st Century by deepening collaboration to combat the full spectrum of terrorist threats and keep their respective homelands and citizens safe from attacks. The Leaders reiterated their strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations with 'zero tolerance' and reaffirmed their deep concern over the continued threat posed by transnational terrorism including by groups like Al Qaida and the ISIL, and called for eliminating terrorist safe havens and infrastructure, disrupting terrorist networks and their financing, and stopping cross-border movement of terrorists.

The Leaders reaffirmed the need for joint and concerted efforts to disrupt entities such as Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, D Company and the



Noting that the Contact Group set up in September 2014 to advance implementation of bilateral Civil Nuclear Cooperation has met three times in

Haqqani Network, and agreed to continue ongoing efforts through the Homeland Security Dialogue as well as the next round of the U.S.-India Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism in late 2015 to develop actionable elements of bilateral engagement. The two sides noted the recent U.S. sanctions against three D Company affiliates. The President and the Prime Minister further agreed to continue to work toward an agreement to share information on known and suspected terrorists. They also agreed to enter discussions to deepen collaboration on UN terrorist designations, and reiterated their call for Pakistan to bring the perpetrators of the November 2008 terrorist attack in Mumbai to justice.

The President and the Prime Minister also noted the positive cooperative engagement between the Indian and the U.S. authorities with a view to working together to counter the threat of IEDs and to develop counterterrorism best practices.

Energy and Climate Change

December and January, the Leaders welcomed the understandings reached on the issues of civil nuclear liability and administrative arrangements for civil nuclear cooperation, and looked forward to U.S.-built nuclear reactors contributing to India's energy security at the earliest.

Clean Energy Goal and Cooperation

President Obama and Prime Minister Shri Modi emphasized the critical importance of expanding clean energy research, development, manufacturing and deployment, which increases energy access and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. The leaders announced actions to advance India's transition to low carbon economy. India intends to increase the share of use of renewable in electricity generation consistent with its intended goal to increase India's solar target to 100 gigawatts by 2022. The United States intends to support India's goal by enhancing cooperation on clean energy and climate change, to include:

- i. Expanding Partnership to Advance Clean Energy Research (PACE-R): A renewed commitment to PACE-R, including extending funding for three existing research tracks of solar energy, building energy efficiency, and biofuels for an additional five years and launching a new track on smart grid and grid storage.
- ii. Expanding Partnership to Advance Clean Energy Deployment (PACE-D): Both the countries intended to expand our current Partnership to Advance Clean Energy Deployment (PACE-D) through increased bilateral engagements and further joint initiatives to expand cooperation in support of India's ambitious targets in renewable energy.
- iii. Accelerating Clean Energy Finance: Prime Minister Shri Modi emphasized India's ongoing efforts to create a market environment that will promote trade and investment in this sector. President Obama welcomed India's ambitious solar energy goals and encouraged India to continue its efforts to increase trade and private investment in this sector. President Obama conveyed the potential availability of U.S. Government official financing in this area, consistent with its policies, to support private sector involvement for those entities in contributing to India's clean energy requirements.
- iv. Launching Air Quality Cooperation: Implementing EPA's AIR Now-International Program and megacities partnerships, focused on disseminating information to help the urban dwellers to reduce their exposure to harmful levels of air pollution, and enable urban policy planners to implement corrective strategies for improving Ambient Air Quality in the cities keeping in view health and climate change co-benefits of these strategies.
- v. Initiating Climate Resilience Tool Development: Jointly undertaking a partnership on climate resilience that will work to downscale international climate models for the Indian sub-continent to

much higher resolution than currently available, assess climate risks at the sub-national level, work with local technical institutes on capacity building, and engage local decision-makers in the process of addressing climate information needs and informing planning and climate resilient sustainable development, including for India's State Action Plans.

- vi. Demonstrating Clean Energy and Climate Initiatives on the Ground: Additional pilot programs and other collaborative projects in the areas of space cooling, super-efficient appliances, renewable energy storage, and smart grids.
- vii. Concluding MOU on Energy Security, Clean Energy and Climate Change: Both countries concluded negotiations on a five year MOU to carry this work forward, to be signed as early as possible at a mutually agreed upon date.



Climate Change

The United States of America and the Republic of India recognize that global climate change is a profound threat to humanity and to the imperatives of sustainable development, growth and the eradication of poverty. President Obama and Prime Minister Modi share a deep concern regarding the climate challenge and understand that meeting it will require concerted action by their countries and the international community. They stressed the importance of enhancing their bilateral cooperation on adaptation measures, as well as joint research and development and technology innovation, adoption and diffusion

for clean energy and efficiency solutions that will help achieve the goals of transitioning to a climate resilient and low carbon economy. They also stressed the importance of working together and with other countries to conclude an ambitious climate agreement in Paris in 2015. To this end, they plan to cooperate closely over the next year to achieve a successful agreement in Paris. The President and Prime Minister reaffirmed their prior understanding from September 2014 concerning the phase down of HFCs and agreed to cooperate on making concrete progress in the Montreal Protocol this year.

Global Issues and Regional Consultations

The Leaders agreed to expand their efforts to assist other developing countries and address global development challenges for the benefit of the wider region and the world and they lauded ongoing triangular assistance, which may involve U.S.-India collaboration to address development challenges in third countries in areas including health, energy, food security, disaster management, and women's empowerment. The two sides noted that this collaboration, which is active with Afghanistan, East and West Africa, may be expanded to additional third countries.

Further underscoring the importance of implementing infrastructure projects to enhance connectivity and enable freer flow of commerce and energy in the region, the Leaders agreed to develop additional areas in which both sides could work together, including on India's initiatives to enhance its connectivity with the South and South East Asian region. The President and the Prime Minister also stressed the importance of the economic and transport connectivity between Central and South Asia and the need to promote a

secure, stable, and prosperous Afghanistan as part of a secure, stable, and prosperous region. Reaffirming the importance of their strategic partnerships with Afghanistan, the Leaders asserted the importance of a sustainable, inclusive, sovereign, and democratic political order in Afghanistan and they agreed to convene further high-level consultations on Afghanistan in the near future.

The President and the Prime Minister also welcomed the role of the leaders-led East Asia Summit (EAS) process in promoting open, balanced and inclusive security architecture in the region. Noting the discussions in the sixth round of the India-US-Japan Trilateral Dialogue, the President and the Prime Minister underlined the importance of the cooperation between the three countries through identification of projects of common interest and their early implementation, and they decided to explore holding the dialogue among their Foreign Ministers.

The President and Prime Minister pledged to strengthen their efforts to forge a partnership to lead



global efforts for non-proliferation of WMDs, to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs, and to promote universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory global nuclear disarmament. They supported negotiations on a fissile material cut off Treaty on the basis of the Shannon Mandate in the Conference on Disarmament.

As active participants in the Nuclear Security Summit process, the United States and India welcomed progress towards reducing the risk of terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons or related materials, and noted their shared commitment to improving nuclear security nationally and globally. The Prime Minister welcomed the hosting of the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit by the United States. President Obama and Prime Minister Modi also welcomed the recent convening of the first bilateral nuclear security best practices exchange, under the auspices of the Global Center for Nuclear Energy Partnership, as an example of their cooperation on nuclear security.

In a further effort to strengthen global nonproliferation and export control regimes, the President and the Prime Minister committed to continue to work towards India's phased entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Wassenaar Arrangement, and the Australia Group. The President reaffirmed the United States' position that India meets MTCR requirements and is ready for NSG membership and that it supports India's early application and eventual membership in all four regimes.

The Leaders expressed concern over the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, including its uranium enrichment activity. They urged the DPRK to take concrete steps toward denuclearization, as well as to comply fully with its international obligations, including relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, and to fulfill its commitments under the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party talks.

The Leaders welcomed recent progress and noted the criticality of Iran taking steps to verifiably assure the international community of the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme, and agreed that this is an historic opportunity for Iran to resolve outstanding concerns related to its nuclear programme.

Highlighting the United States' and India's shared democratic values and recognizing the important role of women in their societies, the Leaders looked forward to reconvening the Women Empowerment Dialogue as early as possible and reasserted their zero tolerance for violence against women. The Leaders also looked forward to the reconvening of the Global Issues Forum.

The President and the Prime Minister also reaffirmed their commitment to consult closely on global crises, including in Iraq and Syria. The Leaders agreed to exchange information on individuals returning from these conflict zones and to continue to cooperate in protecting and responding to the needs of civilians caught up in these conflicts.

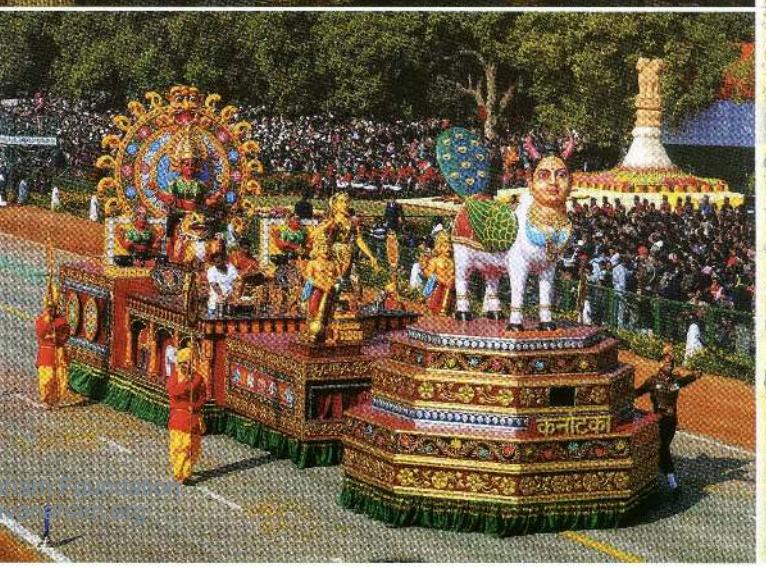
President Obama reaffirmed his support for a reformed UN Security Council with India as a permanent member, and both leaders committed to ensuring that the Security Council continues to play an effective role in maintaining international peace and security as envisioned in the United Nations Charter. They also committed to accelerate their peacekeeping capacity building efforts in third countries.

Both sides also acknowledged that the Internet was a central element of the information society and a powerful enabler of global economic and social progress. Both sides also noted that the growth of the Internet in the coming decade would be from developing countries, of which India would be a significant contributor, especially in the context of its "Digital India" programme.

The Leaders recognized that a digital divide persists between and within countries in terms of the availability, affordability and use of information and communications technologies, and they stressed the need to continue to bridge that divide, to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technologies for development, are available to all people, including the poorest of the poor.

President Obama thanked Prime Minister Shri Modi and the people of India for the extraordinary hospitality extended to him on his second presidential visit to India, and he congratulated the nation on the celebration of its 66th Republic Day. The Leaders reflected proudly on recent achievements and looked forward to continuing to work together to build a U.S.-India partnership that is transformative for their two peoples and for the world.

President Obama at India's Republic Day Parade





Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Media Statement during Joint Press Interaction with President of United States of America

January 25, 2015

Mr. President and members of the media,

It is a great pleasure and privilege to welcome back President Obama and the First Lady in India.

Mr. President, we are honoured that you accepted our invitation to be the Chief Guest for our Republic Day, despite a busy January.

It is special because on this day we celebrate the values shared by the world's two largest democracies.

You are also the first United States President to visit India twice in Office.

It reflects the transformation in our relationship. It shows your deep personal commitment to this partnership.

It tells us that our two nations are prepared to step forward firmly to accept the responsibility of this global partnership – for our two countries and for shaping the character of this century.

The promise and potential of this relationship has never been in doubt. This is a natural global partnership. It has become even more relevant in the digital age. It is needed even more in our world of far-reaching changes and widespread turmoil.

The success of this partnership is important for our progress and for advancing peace, stability and prosperity around the world.

From the turn of this century, we have begun transforming our relationship. But, we have to convert a good start into lasting progress. This requires translating our vision into sustained action and concrete achievements.

Mr. President, in the last few months, I see new excitement and confidence in this relationship. I see

renewed energy in our engagement. I thank you for your leadership and for setting the tone last September. The civil nuclear agreement was the centrepiece of our transformed relationship, which demonstrated new trust. It also created new economic opportunities and expanded our option for clean energy. In the course of the past four months, we have worked with a sense of purpose to move it forward. I am pleased that six years after we signed our bilateral agreement, we are moving towards commercial cooperation, consistent with our law, our international legal obligations, and technical and commercial viability.

President Obama has also assured me of strong U.S. efforts in support of India's full membership of the four international export control regimes at the earliest.

Today, we have also decided to take our growing defence cooperation to a new level. We have agreed, in principle, to pursue co-development and co-production of specific advanced defence projects. These will help upgrade our domestic defence industry; and expand the manufacturing sector in India. We will also explore cooperation in other areas of advanced defence technologies.

We have renewed our Defence Framework Agreement. We will deepen our cooperation on maritime security.

Terrorism remains a principal global threat. It is taking on a new character, even as existing challenges persist. We agreed that we need a comprehensive global strategy and approach to combat with it. There should be no distinction between terrorist groups. Every country must fulfil its commitments to eliminate terrorist safe havens and bring terrorists to justice.

Our two countries will deepen our bilateral security cooperation against terrorist groups. And, we will further enhance our counter-terrorism capabilities, including in the area of technology.

President Obama and I agree that a strong and growing economic relationship is vital for the success of our strategic partnership. Economic growth in our two countries is becoming stronger. Our business climate is improving. This gives me great optimism about our economic ties.

In addition, we have established a number of effective bilateral mechanisms to identify opportunities and also help our businesses trade and invest more. We will also resume our dialogue on Bilateral Investment Treaty. We will also restart discussions on a Social Security Agreement that is so important for the hundreds of thousands of Indian professionals working in the United States.

For President Obama and me, clean and renewable energy is a personal and national priority. We discussed our ambitious national efforts and goals to increase the use of clean and renewable energy. We also agreed to further enhance our excellent and innovative partnership in this area. I asked him to lead international efforts in making renewable energy more accessible and affordable to the world. President and I expressed hope for a successful Paris Conference on climate change this year.

We will continue to deepen our collaboration in science, technology, innovation, agriculture, health, education and skills. These are central to the future of our two countries; and also give us an opportunity to help others around the world. Indeed, our strategic

partnership will only be complete if we assume our responsibility to work together to promote development and connectivity in our vast region. President Obama and I agreed to pursue this goal with a sense of priority.

President and I had an excellent discussion on global and regional issues. In particular, we renewed our commitment to deepen our cooperation to advance peace, stability, prosperity in Asia, Pacific and Indian Ocean Region, which is critical for the future of our two countries and the destiny of this world.

Our relationship stands at a new level today. We have outlined a broad vision for our friendship and cooperation that reflects the opportunities and challenges of this century. As Lord Buddha said, noble friends and companions are the whole of the holy life.

We have decided to give this critical partnership a new thrust and sustained attention. For this, we have agreed that India and the United States must have regular summits at greater frequency. And, we will also establish hotlines between us and our National Security Advisors. At the beginning of this year, we start a new journey.

Let me welcome you once again, Mr. President. It is a great pleasure to have you with us.

Thank you

Media Statement by President Barack Obama during Joint Media Interaction with Prime Minister

January 25, 2015

Namaste, thank you Prime Minister Modi for very generous words. I want to express my profound gratitude to not only you but people of India for incredible hospitality that has been shown to me and Michelle. We are thrilled to be back in India. Mera pyar bhara namaskaar. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for the invitation to join the people of India on Republic Day. I am honoured to be the first American President to attend this celebration as well as the first President to visit India twice. This reflects my commitment since beginning my Presidency to deepen our ties with India. I am pleased to be joined by the members of my administration as well as members of Congress and business leaders from the United States. All who believe that a strong relationship with India is critical



gives us an opportunity to further energize these efforts. (..inaudible..) to the White House last fall, your reputation preceded you as many of you know in New York the Prime Minister appeared in Madison Square Garden and was greeted like a Bollywood star and it was a signal of the deep friendship between our peoples as well as our close ties that we are working to expand even further.

At the White House, we agreed to take this partnership to a new level. We advanced that work today. Prime Minister Modi, thank you for hosting me including Chai pe Charchaa, we need more of those in White House. But even as this visit is rich in symbolism, we made substantial progress. Prime Minister has already indicated that United States and India have created a new declaration of friendship that elevates and formalizes our partnership. Not only (..inaudible..) and values that we share but it commits us to more regular meetings at leaders' level and sets up frequent consultations across our governments.

We agreed our trade and economic partnerships must focus on improving the daily lives of our people. Prime Minister Modi described for me his ambitious efforts to empower rural Indians with bank accounts and to ensure clean water and clean air for the Indian people and we want to be partners in this effort. In the last few years trade between our two countries has increased by some 60% to a US \$ 100 billion, we want to trade even more. So, we welcome the reforms that the Prime Minister is pursuing to make it easier to do business here in India.

Today, we achieved a breakthrough understanding on two issues that were holding up our advances on civil nuclear cooperation and we are committed to moving towards full implementation and this is an important step that shows how we can work together to elevate our relationship.

We have also, as Prime Minister noted, agreed to resume discussions about a possible bilateral investment treaty and we will continue to pursue export reforms so that we can advance more hi-tech collaborations with India.

I am also pleased that we agreed to a number of important steps to promote clean energy and to confront climate change. We very much support India's ambitious goal for solar energy and stand ready to speed this expansion with additional finance. We are also launching new joint projects to improve air quality in Indian cities. The United States will share more data and developed tools to help India assess and adapt to the impact of climate change and help vulnerable communities become more resilient. Going forward, we have agreed to work together to make concrete progress this year towards phasing out Hydro Fluor Carbons under the Montreal Protocol. Prime Minister and I made personal commitment to work together to a strong global agreement in Paris. As I indicated to him, I think India's voice is very important on this

issue. Perhaps, no country could potentially be more affected by the impacts of climate change and no country could be more important in moving forward a strong agreement than India. So, we appreciate his leadership.

We agreed to deepen our defence and security cooperation. We have renewed the framework to guide our defence cooperation for another 10 years. In a major step forward for relation, our defence technology and trade initiative will allow us to jointly develop and produce new defence technology. We've also agreed to a new vision for the Asia Pacific so that we are doing more together to advance our shared security and prosperity in this critical region.

I thank the Prime Minister for India's strong counter-terrorism cooperation and we have (..inaudible..) even as America's combat operation is over in Afghanistan, we are going to continue to be strong and reliable partners for the Afghan people who have benefitted from India's generous assistance over many years.

I thank the Prime Minister for his continued support for on-going efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and arrive at a just diplomatic solution. And finally, we discussed what more we can do as global partners. I reiterated and I reiterate to the Indian people today that we support to reform UN Security Council that includes India as a permanent member. At the time, we see India playing a great role in ensuring international peace and security and meet shared challenges. As a leading contributor to the UN peacekeeping missions for many years, India can help the world to do even more to protect citizens in conflict zones. We welcome India's leadership in combating diseases and promoting global health, the advances to the rights and dignity of citizens around the world.

So, Mr. Prime Minister thank you for welcoming me. I very much look forward to tomorrow's ceremony which I am told are truly spectacular. I am looking forward to a chance to speak directly to the Indian people on the radio and in my speech on Tuesday about what I believe we can achieve together. This new partnership will not happen overnight. It is going to take some time and some patience but it is clear from this visit that we have a new and, perhaps, unprecedented opportunity in deepening our ties with India will remain our top foreign policy priority for my administration. So, let me just say Chale saath saath.





India-U.S. Delhi Declaration of Friendship

January 25, 2015

"Chalein saath saath; forward together we go". Reflecting the close ties between our two great democracies, India and the United States agree to elevate our long-standing strategic partnership, with a Declaration of Friendship that strengthens and expands the relationship between our two countries.

"Sanjha Prayaas, SabkaVikaas; Shared Effort, Progress For All". Each step we take to strengthen the relationship is a step towards shaping international security, regional and global peace, prosperity and stability for years to come.

Signaling the natural affinity enjoyed by our two nations, this Declaration proclaims a higher level of trust and coordination that will continue to draw our Governments and people together across the spectrum of human endeavor for a better world.

The India-U.S. Vision Statement endorsed in September 2014 committed our nations to a long-term partnership for prosperity and peace, through which our countries work together to make our citizens and the global community, safer and more prosperous.

The Declaration makes tangible and enduring the commitment of our two countries to harness the inherent potential of our two democracies, and upgrades the unique nature of our relationship, committing our Governments to work through areas of difference.

Through this Declaration of Friendship and in keeping with our national principles and laws, we respect:

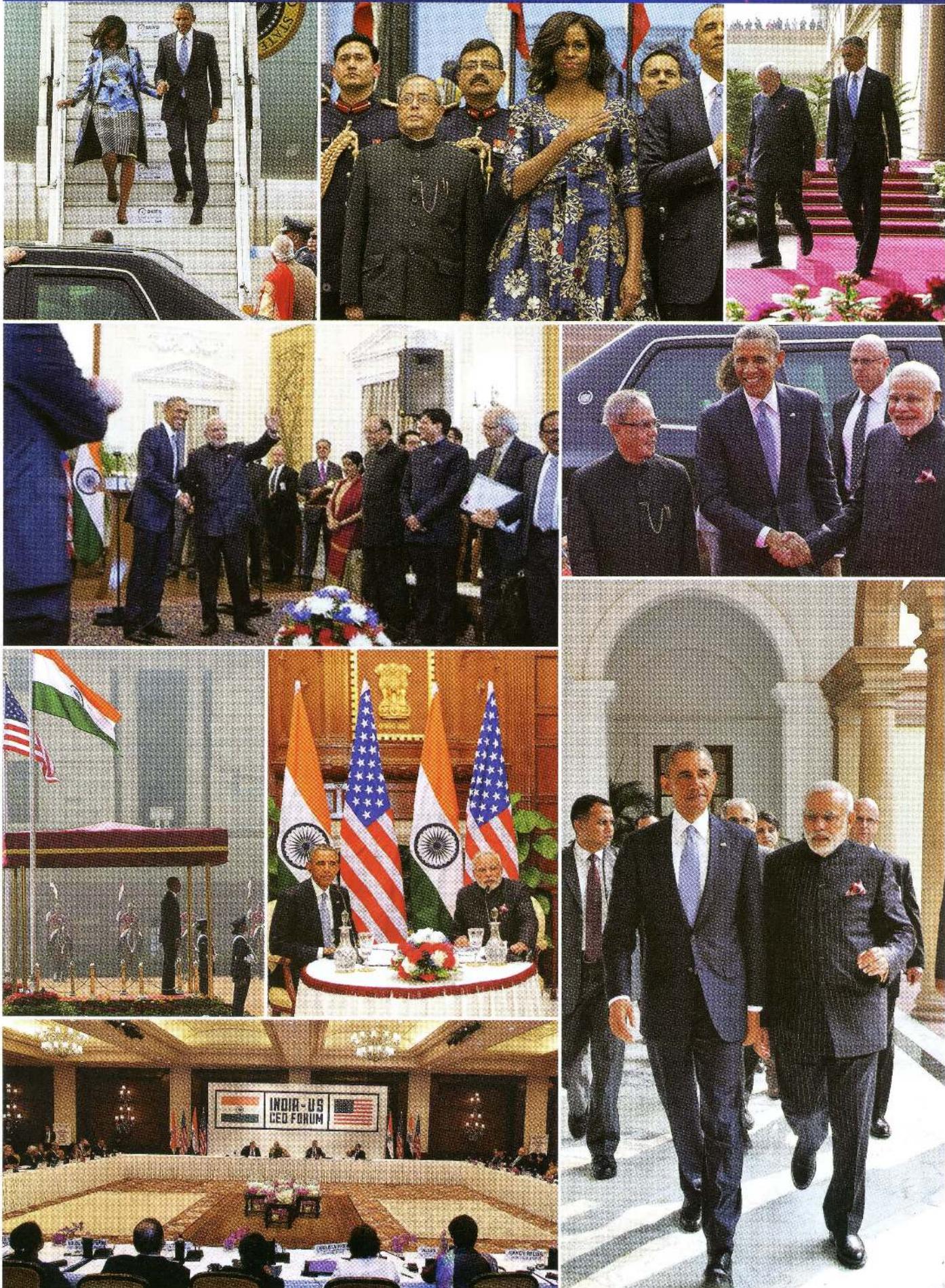
- Equal opportunity for all our people through democracy, effective governance, and fundamental freedoms; An open, just, sustainable, and inclusive rule-based global order;
- The importance of strengthened bilateral defense ties;
- The importance of adapting to and mitigating the impact of climate change through national, bilateral and multilateral efforts;

- The beneficial impact that sustainable, inclusive development will have on our two countries and the world;
- The centrality of economic policies that support the creation of strong and sustainable jobs, inclusive development, and rising incomes; and
- Transparent and rule-based markets that seek to drive the trade and investment necessary to uplift all members of society and promote economic development.

As part of this Declaration of Friendship, we commit to:

- Hold regular Summits with increased periodicity;
- Elevate the Strategic Dialogue to a Strategic and Commercial Dialogue, of which the Strategic elements would continue to be chaired by the External Affairs Minister of India and the U.S. Secretary of State and the Commercial components of the Dialogue would be led by India's Minister of Trade and Commerce and the U.S. Secretary of Commerce. This reflects the United States' and India's commitment to strengthen commercial and economic ties to advance mutual prosperity, regional economic growth and stability;
- Establish secure hotlines between the Prime Minister of India and the President of the United States of America and National Security Advisors;
- Cooperate to develop joint ventures on strategically significant projects;
- Build meaningful security and effective counterterrorism cooperation;
- Hold regional and multilateral consultations;
- Consult and hold regular consultations in multilateral forums; and
- Leverage the talents and strengths of our people to enhance sustainable, inclusive development around the globe.

President Obama at India's Republic Day Parade



State Visit of the President of the Republic of Singapore to India

February 09, 2015

The President of Republic of Singapore H.E. Dr. Tony Tan Keng Yam, accompanied by Mrs. Mary Tan, paid a State Visit to India from 8-11 February, 2015, at the invitation of the Hon'ble President Shri Pranab Mukherjee. His delegation included the Minister in Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister for Environment and Water Resources and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms. Grace Fu, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth and Second Minister for Communications and Information Mr. Lawrence Wong, Parliamentarians and senior officials. His visit highlighted the celebrations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Singapore.

India-Singapore relationship, based on convergence of views and values and Singapore's role as our gateway to ASEAN, is robust and expanding. It encompasses strong political understanding, close defence and security cooperation, growing complementarities in economic engagement, civilisational and cultural linkages and shared interests in bilateral and multilateral fora.

H. E. President Tan was accorded a Ceremonial Welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan following which he laid a wreath at Raj Ghat.

H.E. President Tan called on President Shri Pranab Mukherjee today, who also hosted State Banquet in his honour. He met Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj. They had wide-ranging discussions on enhancement of bilateral

relations and strengthening of cooperation on regional and international issues to raise our partnership to a higher level. The discussions covered new focus areas that will directly feed into our development process. These included specific initiatives to develop Smart cities and urban rejuvenation, promote Skill development, measures to Speed up connectivity and coastal and port development, strengthening linkages with the North East of India, projects to Scale up investments in the new development initiatives launched in India and enhancing exchanges with the State of India. They agreed on sharing of experiences in science & technology, space and other areas to enhance productivity and efficiency as well as broadening cooperation in fighting terrorism. The discussions reflected the spirit of mutual trust, understanding and cooperation that characterise the unique and special relations between the two countries.

H. E. President Tan will inaugurate the Singapore Festival in India tomorrow, launch the commemorative book titled "Singapore and India: Towards A Shared Future", open the Peranakan Exhibition at National Museum and host a Food Festival themed "Flavours Of Singapore". The year long Festival of India in Singapore is currently underway, since August 2014, to showcase our culture, innovation, youth and States.

The State Visit of the President of Singapore reinforced our traditional close exchanges and further enhanced the excellent bilateral relations between our two countries.





State Visit of the President of the Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to India

February 15-18, 2015

President of the Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, H.E. Maithripala Sirisena paid three-day state visit to India from February 15-18, 2015. This was the first overseas visit by President Sirisena after assumption of office last month.

During his visit, President Sirisena met with Indian President Shri Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The President also met several political leaders and other dignitaries.

A special welcome ceremony accorded by Indian President Shri Pranab Mukherjee was held at Rashtrapati Bhawan on Monday, to ceremonially welcome President Maithripala Sirisena and his delegation. The welcome ceremony was followed by a meeting between the two Presidents.

Speaking at the occasion, President Shri Pramab Mukherjee said Sri Lanka occupies a special place in India's worldview and the relationship between the two countries is not merely geographic.

President Shri Pranab Mukherjee noted that in contemporary times, the relations have become multi-faceted, encompassing trade and investment, science, education, security and defence, and above all, people-to-people exchanges.

President Shri Pranab Mukherjee said India takes pride in the strengthening of democracy in Sri Lanka, and stands ready to continue to extend all necessary support for the island nation in its new chapter.

Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said that "the Indian government is most keen to make Sri Lanka among the closest friends of India in the economic sector and Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena's official visit to India give great strength to this," when he

met with the President Sirisena at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Feb.16.

President Sirisena was warmly welcomed by the Indian Prime Minister at the Hyderabad House, where four agreements were signed to further strengthen economic, power and energy, fisheries and cultural affairs between the two countries.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, who expressed his great satisfaction at President Sirisena's decision to make India the venue of his first official visit abroad said this was an occasion that gave rise to a common voice between the two countries and would be most beneficial to the friendship between India and Sri Lanka.

During the discussion among the two leaders with regard to cooperation in matters of regional cooperation, Indian Prime Minister pointed out that it should be useful for Sri Lanka to have an exchange of views with the Maldives.

Both leaders who discussed the issue of fisheries that prevail between India and Sri Lanka, were of the view that both countries should work towards a solution that would bring about the best results to each other.

President Sirisena said Sri Lanka is eagerly waiting to extend a warm welcome to Prime Minister Shri Modi when he undertakes a state visit to Sri Lanka in March.

President Maithripala Sirisena in a Media Statement after the signing of MoUs at Hyderabad House in India said that this first official visit to India by him has been most successful and fruitful and has contributed to the developing and ensuring friendship between the two countries.

"By the signing of MoUs we have already established a good beginning towards future progress, he further said.

Sri Lanka as a country that has a very strong influence of Buddhism and Hinduism, the historic relationship between our two countries extends through culture, economics, commerce and trade, defence and clearly spreads through all these sectors, he added.

"Within a very short time since my election as President of Sri Lanka I chose India or Maha Bharatha for my first foreign visit. The relationship between Sri Lanka and India extends through a very long period. It is a history of several thousand years. Speaking as a Buddhist we see that the philosophy of the Buddha and the philosophy of Hinduism have a very close relationship," the President said.

He also visited the National Museum in New Delhi.

President Maithripala Sirisena also met the former Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Congress Party leader Sm. Sonia Gandhi.

During the meeting both Indian leaders congratulated President Sirisena on his great election victory. They also commended the President for the progress so far of the 100 day programme to develop Sri Lanka.

President Sirisena asked India's assistance for the steps taken for the reconciliation and national development.

A veteran Congress leader Dr. Karan Singh too called on President Sirisena.

President Maithripala Sirisena also visited Bodh Gaya and Tirupathi shrines on Feb.17.



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Media Statement during the State Visit of President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to India

February 16, 2015

It is a great pleasure and privilege to welcome President Maithripala Sirisena and Mrs. Sirisena to India.

We are honoured that you have chosen India as your first overseas destination.

Let me congratulate you on behalf of the people of India for your historic victory. The election reflects the strength of democracy in Sri Lanka.

Your mandate carries the collective voice of Sri Lanka. It represents the aspirations of your people for a united, inclusive peaceful and prosperous nation.

India is Sri Lanka's closest neighbour and friend. The goodwill and support of the people of India will always be with you.

The timeless links of history, religion and culture provide a solid foundation of our partnership.

We also share a broad range of interests - economic development for our countries; peace and prosperity in South Asia; maritime security in the region.

Indeed, I believe that our destinies are inter-linked. Our security and prosperity are indivisible.

President Sirisena and I had excellent discussions today on our bilateral relations and international issues.

President and I are committed to unlock the vast potential of our economic cooperation.

We are pleased to be Sri Lanka's largest trading partner. I know that India enjoys a huge trade surplus. I expressed my support for a more balanced growth in trade in both directions.

I conveyed our readiness to promote greater flow of Indian investments and tourists into Sri Lanka.

We discussed expansion of cooperation in energy sector, both conventional and renewable.

Our Commerce Secretaries will meet soon to review our bilateral commercial relations.

We also intend to further improve air and sea connectivity between India and Sri Lanka.

The bilateral agreement on civil nuclear cooperation is yet another demonstration of our mutual trust. This is the first such agreement Sri Lanka has signed. It opens new avenues for cooperation, including in areas like agriculture and healthcare.

President and I also agreed to expand our defence and security cooperation. We welcomed the progress in our maritime security cooperation, including in the trilateral format with Maldives.

The Indian assisted projects for Internally Displaced Persons in Sri Lanka have made excellent progress. This includes the Housing Project, under which more than 27,000 houses have already been constructed. President and I expressed satisfaction with the progress.

I assured President Sirisena of India's commitment to its development partnership with Sri Lanka. This will continue to cover a broad range of areas, including infrastructure. In this context, I am also pleased with the MoU on cooperation in agriculture.

President and I attach the highest importance to the fishermen's issue. It affects livelihood on both sides. We agreed that there must be a constructive and humanitarian approach to the issue.

We will encourage the fishermen's associations on both sides to meet again soon. They should find a solution that can be taken forward by both governments.

Like cricket, culture provides a strong bond between us. The Programme of Cultural Cooperation signed today will nurture those ties and promote contacts between people.

I am also delighted that Sri Lanka is now part of the Nalanda University Project.

It recalls a link forged 2300 years ago, by Prince Mahindra, known as Arahut Mahinda in Sri Lanka, and his sister Sanghamitra. They went to Sri Lanka as apostles of Buddhism.

Sri Lankan nationals visit the National Museum in New Delhi in large numbers to pay homage to the Kapilavastu relics. We have decided to reduce the fees for them.

I thanked the President for his invitation to me to visit Sri Lanka. I am eagerly looking forward to visiting his beautiful country in March.

I would like to once again welcome President Sirisena to India. We are at a moment of an unprecedented opportunity to take our bilateral relations to a new level. His visit today has set us firmly in that direction.

Thank you.

Sri Lanka and India Signed Four Agreements/MoUs

February 16 2015

Sri Lanka and India signed four agreements/MoU during President Maithripala Sirisena's state visit to India, Feb. 15-18, 2015.

Mr. Patali Champika Ranawaka, Minister of Power & Energy on behalf of Sri Lanka and Mr. Ratan Kumar Sinha, Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy for India signed an agreement on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy.

The agreement would facilitate cooperation in the transfer and exchange of knowledge and expertise, sharing of resources, capacity building and training of personnel in peaceful uses of nuclear energy including use of radioisotopes, nuclear safety, radiation safety, nuclear security, radioactive waste management and nuclear and radiological disaster mitigation and environmental protection.

Sri Lankan High Commissioner in New Delhi Mr. Sudharshan Seneviratne and Secretary, Ministry of Culture for India Mr. Ravindra Singh inked an agreement for a Programme of Cultural Cooperation between Sri Lanka and India for the years 2015-18. The Programme

of Cultural Cooperation for 2015-18 seeks to enhance the level of cooperation in a wide variety of fields such as performing arts, visual arts, libraries, museums, archives & cultural documentation, archaeology, handicrafts, publications and professional exchanges.

Mrs. Chitranganee Waghswara Secretary Ministry of External Affairs on behalf of Sri Lanka and Dr. S. Jaishankar Foreign Secretary on behalf of India inked a MoU on the establishment of Nalanda University.

Mr. Sudharshan Seneviratne, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in New Delhi and Mr. Ashish Bahuguna, Secretary, Department of Agriculture & Cooperation signed a Work-Plan 2014-2015-MoU on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture between India and Sri Lanka.

The Work Plan would facilitate bilateral cooperation in Agro Processing, agricultural extension, horticulture, agricultural machinery, training in farm mechanization, livestock diseases, etc. between relevant institutes and organizations from both countries.



Visit of External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj to Sri Lanka

March 07, 2015

Indian External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj paid an official visit to Sri Lanka from 06 to 07 March 2015. This is the first visit to Sri Lanka by Ms. Swaraj in her capacity as Minister of External Affairs.

During her visit, Minister Smt. Swaraj met with her Sri Lankan counterpart, Mangala Samaraweera and held an extensive and cordial discussion covering a wide range of areas relating to bilateral cooperation.

External Affairs Minister Smt. Swaraj and Foreign Minister Samaraweera also reviewed arrangements relating to the forthcoming official visit to Sri Lanka by Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi next week.

The two Ministers agreed to convene the Ninth Session of the Joint Commission, headed by them in Colombo at an early date. The successful completion of the Commerce Secretary level talks held on 04 March 2015

in Colombo was also noted. During the visit, External Affairs Minister Smt. Swaraj called on President Maithripala Sirisena and was hosted to a luncheon by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. Foreign Minister Samaraweera hosted a welcome dinner in honour of the visiting Minister and her delegation on 06 March 2015.

Associated with the Foreign Minister Samaraweera were Foreign Secretary Mrs. Chitranganee Wagiswara and senior officials of key line Ministries as well as officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

External Affairs Minister Smt. Swaraj had visited Sri Lanka previously as Minister of Telecommunications and as Leader of the Opposition of the Lok Sabha.

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Colombo)



Remarks by External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj at the Dinner hosted by Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka in Colombo

March 06, 2015

Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka and my dear friend Mr. Mangala Samaraweera, Hon'ble Governor of Eastern Province, Hon'ble Members of Council of Minister, Hon'ble Members of Parliament, Distinguished Guests

I am pleased to be in Sri Lanka. This is my first visit as External Affairs Minister of India. But Sri Lanka is not new to me. I have been here many times. I visited this beautiful country last in April 2012 as Leader of the Opposition leading an all-party Parliamentary delegation.

At the outset, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Sri Lanka and Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

Today is Holi. As you know Holi is the Festival of Colors and celebrated in India with joyous abandon. The festival symbolizes the advent of spring, and is harbinger of joy, hope and fulfillment - a reflection of the current state of our bilateral relations. Holi also reflects the diversity and multi-cultural heritage of India.

The past year has been remarkable in the history of both our countries. People in both the countries have voted for change. This has brought new momentum to the bilateral relationship.

Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera was kind

enough to accept my invitation to visit India within a week after the new government was sworn-in. We had a very useful interaction in New Delhi on January 18.

His Excellency President Maithripala Sirisena visited India from February 15 to 18. It was a successful visit. Our countries signed four agreements and MoUs. Prime Minister announced a reduction of entry fees for Sri Lankan citizens visiting the National Museum to pay homage to the Kapilavastu relics. He also accepted President Sirisena's invitation to visit Sri Lanka.

My visit to Sri Lanka is part of the high-level engagement with the new Government of Sri Lanka. It also gives us an opportunity to close the gaps prior to the visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. He is scheduled to visit Sri Lanka on March 13 and 14. As you are aware, the visit is the first bilateral visit of a Prime Minister of India since 1987.

Friends, India and Sri Lanka are bound by ties of history, geography and culture. Our partnership must therefore, progress in the spirit of being the closest of neighbors and friends, whose destinies are intertwined.

Let me raise a toast for India-Sri Lanka friendship and the well being and prosperity of the peoples of the two countries.

Thank you.



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Seychelles

March 11, 2015

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid a visit to Seychelles from March 10 to March 11, 2015. This was a historic visit as Shri Narendra Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Seychelles in 33 long years!

In a series of tweets prior beginning his visit, the Prime Minister had written that India attached paramount importance to strengthening relations with the region. He said India's relationship with Seychelles was a very special one built on the foundation of mutual trust and shared values.

Shri Narendra Modi arrived at Seychelles airport in the evening of March 10th and was given a grand welcome. The President of Seychelles, Mr. James Michel himself was present to receive the Prime Minister. Seeing a huge gathering of the Indian Community eagerly waiting to catch a glimpse of Shri Modi at the airport, he took to twitter and shared the wonderful moment.

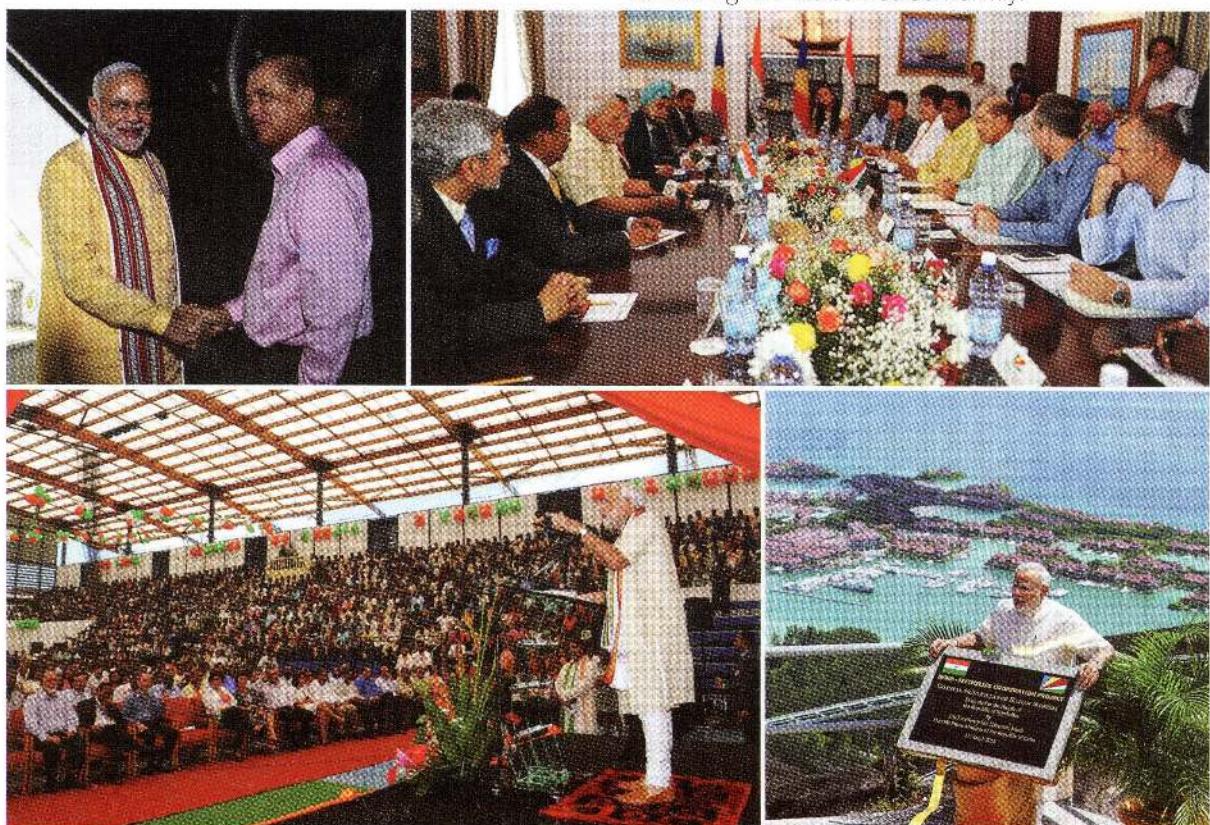
On the morning of March 11th, Shri Narendra Modi was given a Ceremonial Reception after which he visited the State House and signed the Visitors Book. He wrote that India not only considers Seychelles as a neighbour but as a strategic partner too.

Later in the day, Shri Modi and President Michel held

meetings and addressed the statement to media. Shri Narendra Modi appreciated President Michel for his Government's consistent support to India across international forums. Welcoming the launch of direct air services to India by Air Seychelles last December, the PM hoped that ties between India and Seychelles would be deepened further marked by a spirit of respect, equality, enormous goodwill and warmth. The Prime Minister also expressed his gladness to have been able to get a chance to pay a visit to the neighbour in the Indian Ocean. He termed the Seychelles visit to be short but a very productive one. Shri Narendra Modi considered India-Seychelles relationship as unique and special founded on deep sense mutual trust and confidence.

Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, also unveiled the Plaque and Operationalisation of Radar for the CSRS India Seychelles Cooperation Project in Sychelles.

Before concluding his Seychelles visit, the PM addressed a massive gathering at a civic reception. Shri Modi touched upon areas like mitigating climate change, renewable energy and Make in India. The crowd cheered immensely as the PM spoke. The event received an exceptional welcome from the people. The PM thanked his supporters and followers in Seychelles for having him welcomed so warmly.



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Visit to Mauritius

March 13, 2015

After the successful and historic visit to Seychelles, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi touched down Mauritius on evening of March 11th for his two-day visit. Shri Modi was welcomed warmly at the airport with a ceremonial reception. Prime Minister of Mauritius Sir Anerood Jugnauth was present at the airport to receive Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Shri Narendra Modi held extensive meetings with the President of Mauritius, Mr. Rajkeswur Purryag and other delegates the same evening.

Later, the Prime Minister along with the PM of Mauritius addressed the media. Shri Narendra Modi highlighted the special relations shared by both India and Mauritius that are deeply rooted in history. Expressing his gratefulness to be the Chief Guest of National Day of Mauritius on March 12th, Shri Narendra Modi said India and Mauritius have always stood in solidarity and support for each other. PM, Shri Modi also termed the agreement on the development of Agalega Island as a major stride in India-Mauritius cooperation in infrastructure sector.

On March 12th, the Prime Minister began his day by visiting the Ganga Talao in Mauritius. As soon as Shri Modi visited there, he recalled the holy River Ganga that flows through Varanasi. He also praised Mauritius for enriching Hindi literature.

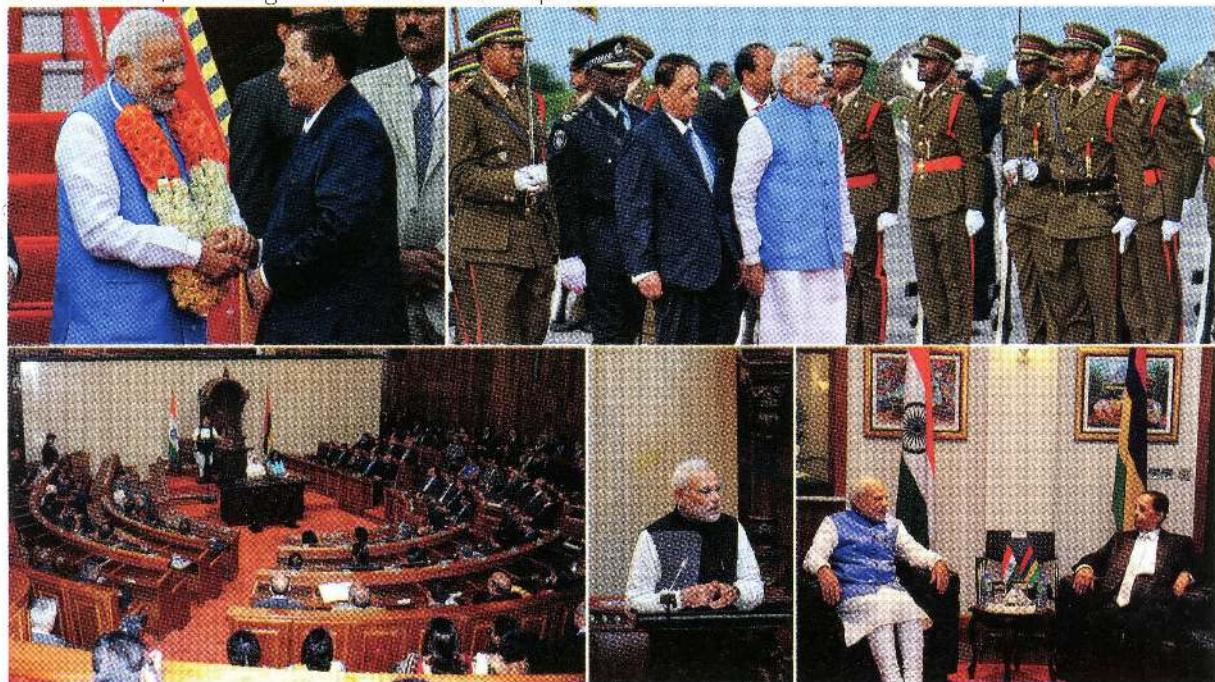
Shri Modi, while giving his address to the National Assembly, remarked that Mauritius has always made smart choices; encouraged hard work and enterprise.

Talking about the first cyber city construction supported by Former PM, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2003, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced for supporting a second such city in Mauritius. Shri Modi gladly mentioned that destinies of India and Mauritius were linked by currents of the Indian Ocean. The Prime Minister hoped that India-Mauritius relationship would always be a source of great joy and strength to the two countries.

Considering the Indian Ocean region to be one among the top policy priorities for both the nations, the Prime Minister expressed contentment about India being a proud partner of Mauritius. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attended the programme to mark the commissioning of the Barracuda, a ship in the service of the National Coast Guard of Mauritius.

Shri Narendra Modi also paid homage to the valiant Aapravasis for their human spirit and also described the Aapravsi Ghat as signifying the enduring links between India and Mauritius.

In the evening of March 12th, Shri Narendra Modi joined the National Day celebrations in Mauritius as the guest of honour. Before leaving for Sri Lanka, the next destination of his thee nation tour, he thanked the people of Mauritius for their warm hospitality and bestowing such love and affection.





Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Sri Lanka

March 16, 2015

Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid a State Visit to Sri Lanka from 13-14 March 2015 at the invitation of President of Sri Lanka, H.E Maithripala Sirisena

Shri Narendra Modi was received on arrival by Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe along with several dignitaries. The visit follows President Maithripala Sirisena's first overseas visit to India in February 2015.

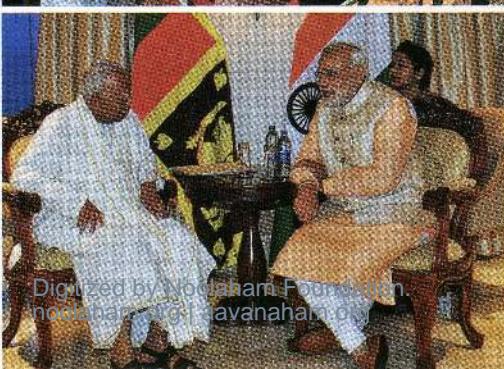
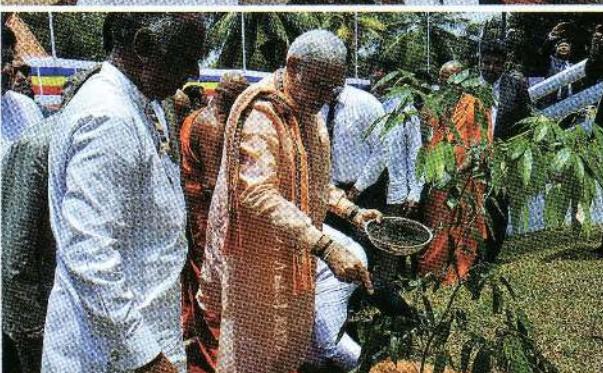
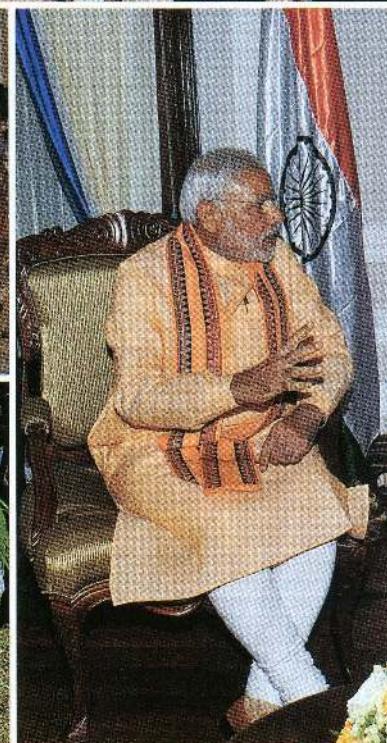
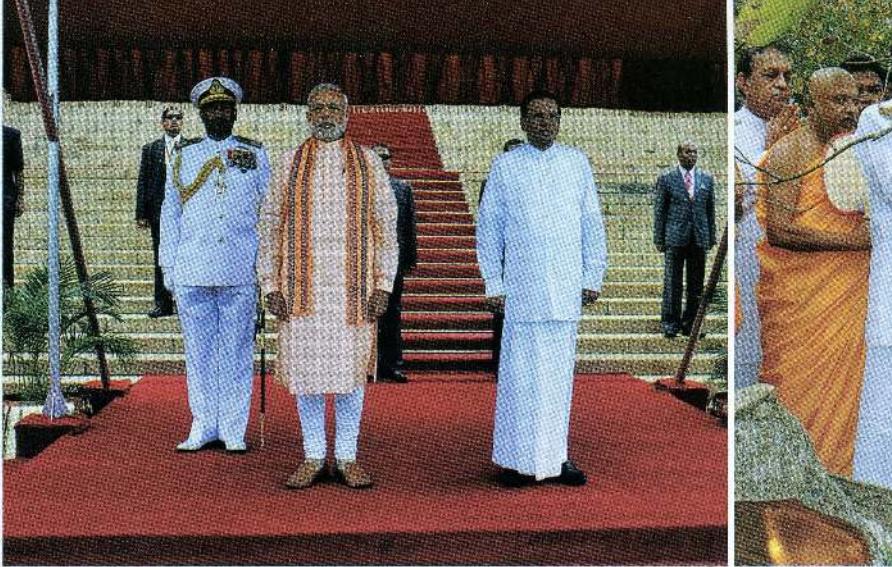
The Prime Minister of India was accorded a ceremonial welcome on 13 March 2015 at the Presidential Secretariat including a Guard of Honour and the Gun Salute. The President of Sri Lanka, accompanied by the Prime Minister Wickremesinghe and several Cabinet Ministers and, officials engaged in bilateral talks with the visiting Prime Minister and the Indian delegation. President Sirisena hosted a Banquet in honour of the visiting Prime Minister. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe hosted a lunch in honour of Prime Minister Shri Modi at which most of the Members of Parliament were present. On Friday (13 March) the Indian Prime Minister addressed a Special Sitting of the Parliament, visited the Mahabodhi Society in Colombo, laid a floral wreath at the IPKF memorial and

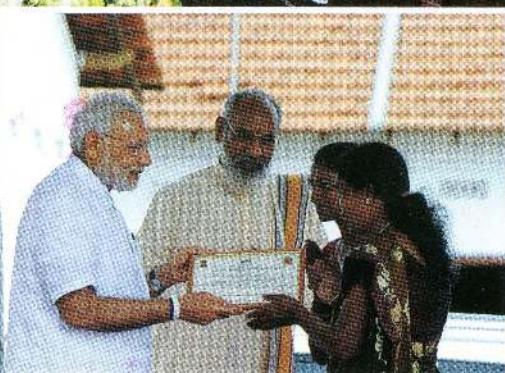
addressed a gathering of the Business Community.

The official discussions on 13 March between the two countries were marked by friendship, mutual respect and understanding. President Sirisena welcoming Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi emphasized the historic nature of the visit which is the first stand alone visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Sri Lanka in 28 years. He recalled his fruitful State Visit to India in February and reiterated his thanks and gratitude for the warmth and generosity accorded to him by the Government and people of India.

Characterizing the visit of Prime Minister Shri Modi as a great honour bestowed on Sri Lanka, President Sirisena said it further consolidates a relationship which spans thousands of years. He observed that the expanse and depth of the areas which at present straddle the bilateral relationship in the political, economic, cultural, and security related spheres and people to people contacts is a manifestation of a relationship which has matured into an excellent example of bilateral understanding.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to Sri Lanka







Prime Minister Shri Modi in his remarks said he was proud that an Indian Prime Minister has undertaken a visit even after 28 years infusing a new energy and confidence to the relationship. He thanked the government of Sri Lanka for the historic opportunity to address the Parliament at its Special Sitting. While views on recent developments in the political sphere were shared, Prime Minister Shri Modi commended the Government for building unity and elevating the level of confidence within Sri Lanka which he said was important to India and the region. He also commended the efforts by President Sirisena to build an inclusive future for Sri Lanka. While assuring that India will not allow its territory to be used for any activities inimical to Sri Lanka the Indian Prime Minister emphasized that India would stand by Sri Lanka to build a future that accommodates all sections of society.

The discussions also particularly focused on all matters of bilateral importance including the multifaceted areas of development cooperation, education, technology, fisheries, connectivity, culture, trade and economic relations, energy, defence and security, anti-narcotics, health, agriculture and Indian Ocean & Maritime Affairs. The two leaders agreed to take forward the discussions of the recent high level visits with concrete initiatives on all areas of mutual interest.

While Sri Lanka's appreciation on India's development assistance valued at US \$ 1.6 Billion including in areas of housing, transport infrastructure, health, was reiterated by President Sirisena, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in turn expressed India's willingness to extend further cooperation on Sri Lanka's needs. The Indian Premier announced an additional credit line for the railway sector valued at US \$ 318 million. A currency swap worth US \$ 1.5 billion between the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and the Reserve Bank of India was also announced.

The two sides have agreed to take forward the several bilateral initiatives at officials/experts level in the areas of ; Ocean economy; electricity grid connectivity; joint development of the upper Oil

Tank Farms in Trincomalee; recommencement of ferry services; and, the establishment of the Ramayana trail in Sri Lanka and the Buddhist circuit in India to reinvigorate tourism and people to people contacts.

Prime Minister Shri Modi announced India's intention to extend a facility of 'on arrival' tourist visa through electronic system for Sri Lankan nationals which will be operationalized on 14th April to coincide with both the birthday of the Indian leader Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and the Sinhala

and Tamil New Year. He also announced the early commencement of Air India direct flights between New Delhi and Colombo; the 'Festival Of India'; and, holding the "Cricket Connect" exhibition which will coincide with the Indian Cricket Team's tour to Sri Lanka in August 2015.

Signifying the continuing momentum of the bilateral engagement, four instruments relating to Customs Cooperation, the establishment of Rabindranath Tagore Auditorium at the Ruhunu University, Youth Development, and, Visa Exemptions for Diplomatic and Official passport holders, were signed.

On Saturday (14 March), the Indian Prime Minister visited the sacred Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi and Ruwanweliseya in Anuradhapura during which he was accompanied by President Sirisena. He also visited Talaimannar where he launched the new signaling system and the railway track and flagged off the train between Madhu Road and Talaimannar Pier Station.

In Jaffna, Prime Minister Shri Modi, laid the foundation stone for the India funded Jaffna Cultural Centre. The Prime Minister was hosted for lunch by the Governor Palihakkara of the Northern Province.

In Ilavalai, Jaffna, the Indian Prime Minister handed over several houses to beneficiaries of the Indian-funded housing units to former IDPs under the 50,000 houses programme.

During the visit, several political personalities in Sri Lanka called on Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.



ज्य रिपब्लिक ऑफ इंडिया

वायसा

On Arrival Visas for Sri Lankans Visiting India – Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi

March 14, 2015

Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, who was on a state visit, announced a special gesture of on arrival visas to Sri Lankans visiting India as a step to enhance people to people contacts. He said that the new visa system will come into effect on April 14, 2015, as a gift on the important occasion of Sinhala and Tamil New Year, which is also the birthday of the great Indian leader Dr Ambedkar.

After bilateral discussions between India and Sri Lanka, Shri Modi announced that the Reserve Bank of India will enter into an agreement with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka to establish a currency swap worth US \$ 1.5 billion to ensure stability of the Sri Lankan Rupee.

Shri Modi announced a US\$ 318 Million credit line to assist development of the Sri Lanka Railways. India will provide rolling stock, develop existing rail tracks and provide other requirements of the railways.

The Indian Prime Minister emphasized that the Indian Ocean does not divide India and Sri Lanka, but unites the two countries. "Maritime security is important not only in this region but in other parts of the world too. The issue of protecting the oceans and the maritime areas of the related countries is common to Sri Lanka, India, Mauritius, Seychelles and the Maldives and all should be alive to the important issue of regional maritime security," Mr. Modi said.

He added that the space security will also become extremely important and these countries should have a common approach on this as well.

The Indian Premier expressed appreciation of the steps taken by the Sri Lanka government to bring about national unity in Sri Lanka. The Indian Government and people prioritize Sri Lanka's interest in national unity, he said. "When a neighbor becomes stronger, we are also strengthened. That is our hope," he added.

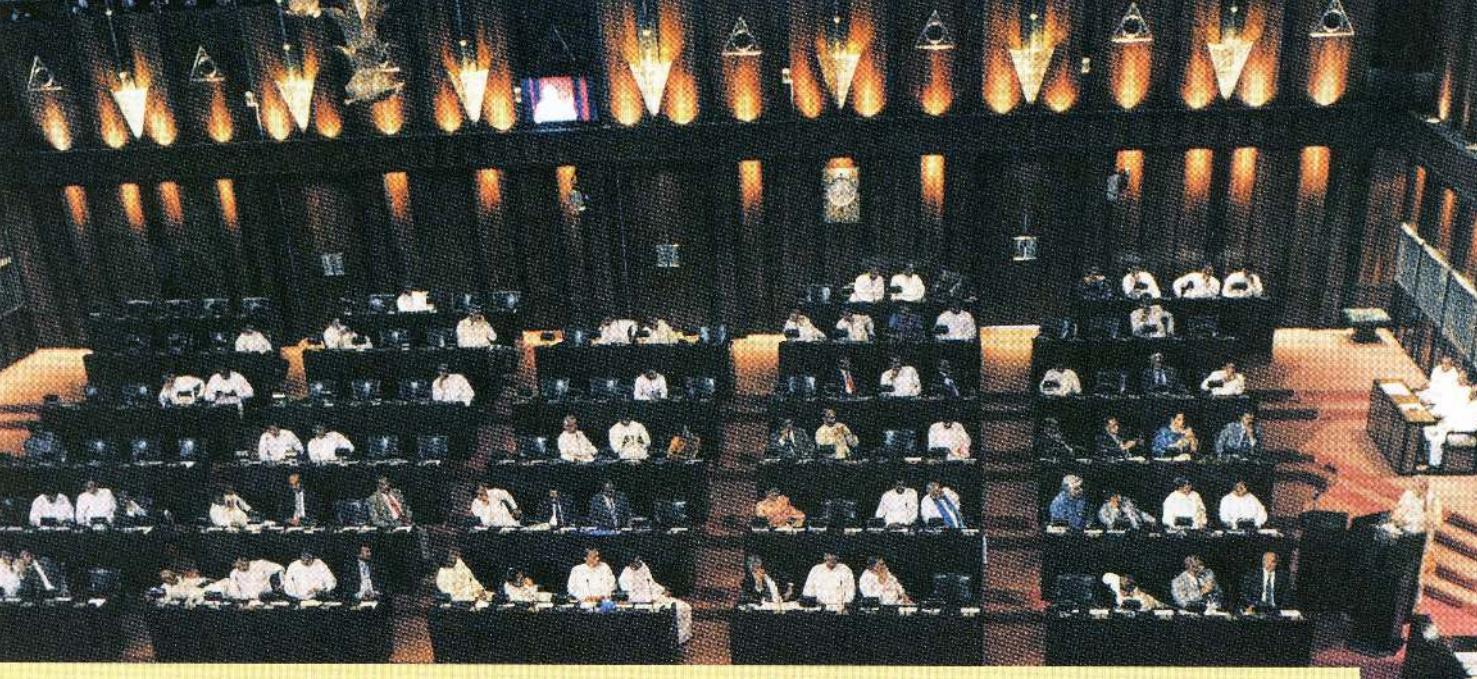
Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi appreciated President Sirisena's actions towards building unity in Sri Lanka, achieving a high level of confidence in a very short time. The steps taken include the initiatives such as giving back land to the people, transfer of governors and officials as required, the release of prisoners and other acts which are highly appreciative, he said.

Shri Modi said that he would expect the country to be stronger after the forthcoming elections having better relations with India.

"India will never allow any activities against Sri Lanka to be done in our territory," Mr Modi declared, and called on Sri Lanka to inform India of any such activities, and expressed India's readiness to share information on such matters. Responding to President Maithripala Sirisena's request for increased training of Sri Lankan defence personnel, the India Prime Minister readily agreed to increase the intake of Sri Lanka soldiers and other services personnel. He also agreed to provide technological services and intelligence sharing of defence matters.

In the bilateral discussions, two sides also discussed Indian assistance to build houses for displaced persons as well as the plantation sector and to improve urban housing. In the health sector, there would be cooperation in ensuring Sri Lanka of a regular supply of allopathic drugs with the Indian health authorities recommending suppliers of good quality drugs and taking steps to avoid delays.

Two countries agreed to look into short term and long term steps required to solve the fishermen issue. Prime Minister Modi asked Sri Lanka to see this as a humanitarian problem and look at it sympathetically. Sri Lankan side emphasized the need to prevent bottom trawlers being brought to Sri Lankan waters. There was agreement to hold further discussions on this matter.



Text of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's address to the Sri Lankan Parliament

Mar 13, 2015

Honourable Speaker of Parliament, Mr. Chamal Rajapaksa ji, Honourable Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Shrimaan Ranil Wickremesinghe ji, Honourable Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Nimal Siripala De Silva, Honourable Members of Parliament, Distinguished Guests,

I am truly delighted to visit Sri Lanka – a land of beauty, culture and friendship.

I am deeply honoured to be in this Parliament. I am conscious of its rich history.

This Parliament represents one of Asia's oldest democracies; and, one of its most vibrant.

Long before many others in the world, Sri Lanka gave every individual a vote and voice.

To the people of Sri Lanka, ayubuvan, Vanakkam.

I bring the greetings of 1.25 billion friends; and millions of fans of Sri Lankan cricket.

I bring the blessings from the land of Bodh Gaya to the land of Anuradhapura.

I stand here in respect for our shared heritage; and, in commitment to our shared future.

Last May, when I took the oath of office, I was honoured by the presence of South Asian leaders at the ceremony.

Their presence was a celebration of democracy's march in our region. It was also recognition of our common destiny.

I am convinced that the future of any country is influenced by the state of its neighbourhood.

The future that I dream for India is also the future that I wish for our neighbours.

We in this region are on the same journey to transform the lives of our people.

Our path will be easier, the journey quicker and destination nearer when we walk step in step.

As I stand here in Colombo and look north towards the Himalaya, I marvel at our region's uniqueness – of our rich diversity and our common civilisational links.

We have been formed from the same elements; and, from our interconnected histories.

Today, we stand together as proud independent Nations – sovereign and equal.

India and Sri Lanka do not have a land boundary, but we are the closest neighbours in every sense.

No matter where you look in India or Sri Lanka, the many strands of our links – religion, language, culture, food, customs, traditions and epics – come together into a deep and strong bond of familiarity and friendship.

Ours is a relationship that is beautifully defined by the journey of Mahindra and Sanghamitra. They carried the message of peace, tolerance and friendship more than two millenniums ago.

It is evoked by Kannagi, the central character of the great Tamil epic Silapathikaram, who is worshipped as goddess the Pattini in Sri Lanka.

It lives in the Ramayan trail in Sri Lanka.

It expresses itself in devotion at the dargah of the Nagore Andavar and the Christian shrine of Velankanni.

It is reflected in the friendship of Swami Vivekananda and Anagarika Dharmapala, the founder of the Maha Bodhi Society in Sri Lanka and India.

It lives in the work of Mahatma Gandhi's followers in India and Sri Lanka.

Above all, our relationship thrives through the interwoven lives of ordinary Indians and Sri Lankans.

Our independent life began at about the same time.

Sri Lanka has made remarkable progress since then.

The Nation is an inspiration for our region in human development. Sri Lanka is home to enterprise and skill; and extraordinary intellectual heritage.

There are businesses of global class here.

Sri Lanka is a leader in advancing cooperation in South Asia.

And, it is important for the future of the Indian Ocean Region.

Sri Lanka's progress and prosperity is also a source of strength for India.

So, Sri Lanka's success is of great significance to India.

And, as a friend, our good wishes, and our support and solidarity have always been with Sri Lanka.

And, it will always be there for you.

For all of us in our region, our success depends on how we define ourselves as a Nation.

All of us in this region, indeed every Nation of diversity, have dealt with the issues of identities and inclusion, of rights and claims, of dignity and opportunity for different sections of our societies.

We have all seen its diverse expressions. We have faced tragic violence. We have encountered brutal terrorism. We have also seen successful examples of peaceful settlements.

Each of us has sought to address these complex issues in our own ways.

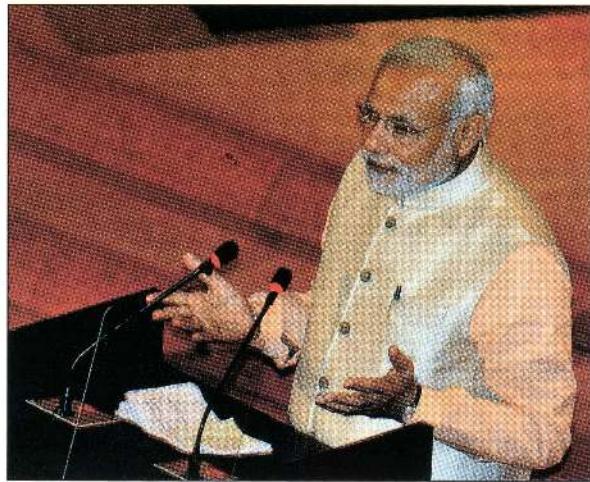
However we choose to reconcile them, to me something is obvious:

Diversity can be a source of strength for Nations.

When we accommodate the aspirations of all sections of our society, the Nation gets the strength of every individual.

And, when we empower states, districts and villages, we make our country stronger and stronger.

You can call this my bias. I have been a Chief Minister for 13 years; a Prime Minister for less than a year!



Today, my top priority is to make the states in India stronger. I am a firm believer in cooperative federalism.

So, we are devolving more power and more resources to the states. And, we are making them formal partners in national decision making processes.

Sri Lanka has lived through decades of tragic violence and conflict. You have successfully defeated terrorism and brought the conflict to an end.

You now stand at a moment of historic opportunity to win the hearts and heal the wounds across all sections of society.

Recent elections in Sri Lanka have reflected the collective voice of the nation – the hope for change, reconciliation and unity.

The steps that you have taken in recent times are bold and admirable. They represent a new beginning.

I am confident of a future of Sri Lanka, defined by unity and integrity; peace and harmony; and, opportunity and dignity for everyone.

I believe in Sri Lanka's ability to achieve it.

It is rooted in our common civilisational heritage.

The path ahead is a choice that Sri Lanka has to make. And, it is a collective responsibility of all sections of the society; and, of all political streams in the country.

But, I can assure you of this:

For India, the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka are paramount.

It is rooted in our interest. It stems from our own fundamental beliefs in this principle.

Hon'ble Speaker and Distinguished Members,

My vision of an ideal neighbourhood is one in which trade, investments, technology, ideas and people flow easily across borders; when partnerships in the region are formed with the ease of routine.

In India, the growth momentum has been restored. India has become the fastest growing major economy in the world.

The world sees India as the new frontier of economic opportunity.

But, our neighbours should have the first claim on India. And I again repeat, the first claim on India is of our neighbours – of Sri Lanka.

I will be happy if India serves a catalyst in the progress of our neighbours.

In our region, Sri Lanka has the potential to be our strongest economic partner.

We will work with you to boost trade and make it more balanced.

India's trade environment is becoming more open. Sri Lanka should not fall behind others in this competitive world.

That is why we should conclude an ambitious Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

India can also be a natural source of investments – for exports to India and elsewhere; and to build your infrastructure. We have made good progress today. Let us get together to harness the vast potential of the Ocean Economy.

Our two Nations must also take the lead in increasing cooperation in the South Asian Region and the linked BIMSTEC Region.

Connecting this vast region by land and sea, our two countries can become engines of regional prosperity.

I also assure you of India's full commitment to development partnership with Sri Lanka. We see this as a responsibility of a friend and neighbour.

India has committed 1.6 billion U.S. dollars in development assistance. Today, we have committed further assistance of up to 318 million dollars to the railway sector.

We will continue our development partnership. We will be guided by your Government. And, we will do so with the same level of transparency that we expect in our own country.

Last month we signed the agreement on cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

More than anywhere else in the region, I see enormous potential to expand cooperation with Sri Lanka in areas like agriculture, education, health, science and technology, and space. Indeed, we are limited only by our imagination.

We hope that Sri Lanka will take full benefit of India's satellite for the SAARC Region. This should be in Space

by December 2016.

People are at the heart of our relationship. When we connect people, bonds between nations become stronger. That is why we have decided to extend the visa-on-arrival facility to Sri Lankan citizens.

We will also increase connectivity between our countries. We will strengthen ties of culture and religion. Last month we announced reduction in fees for Sri Lankan nationals visiting National Museum in Delhi to see the Kapilavastu Relics. We will bring our shared Buddhist heritage closer to you through an exhibition. Together, we will develop our Buddhist and Ramayana Trails. My birth place Varnagarh was an international centre of Buddhist learning in ancient times. Excavations have revealed a hostel for 2000 students and in plans to redevelop the centre.

Mr. Speaker,

A future of prosperity requires a strong foundation of security for our countries and peace and stability in the region.

The security of our two countries is indivisible. Equally, our shared responsibility for our maritime neighbourhood is clear.

India and Sri Lanka are too close to look away from each other. Nor can we be insulated from one another.

Our recent histories have shown that we suffer together; and we are more effective when we work with each other.

Our cooperation helped deal with the devastation of Tsunami in 2004. As a Chief Minister, I was pleased to share our experience in reconstruction after the Bhuj earthquake in 2001.

Our cooperation is also integral to our success in combating terrorism and extremism.

For both of us, local threats remain. But, we see threats arising in new forms and from new sources. We are witnessing globalisation of terrorism. The need for our cooperation has never been stronger than today.

The Indian Ocean is critical to the security and prosperity of our two countries. And, we can be more successful in achieving these goals if we work together; build a climate of trust and confidence; and we remain sensitive to each other's interest.

We deeply value our security cooperation with Sri Lanka. We should expand the maritime security cooperation between India, Sri Lanka and Maldives to include others in the Indian Ocean area.

I often say that the course of the 21st century would be determined by the currents of the Indian Ocean. Shaping its direction is a responsibility for the countries in the region.

We are two countries at the crossroads of the Indian Ocean. Your leadership and our partnership will be vital for building a peaceful, secure, stable and prosperous maritime neighbourhood.

In our deeply interconnected lives, it is natural to have differences. Sometimes, it touches the lives of ordinary people. We have the openness in our dialogue, the strength of our human values and, the goodwill in our relationship to resolve them.

Mr. Speaker,

Sri Lanka and India are at a moment of a great opportunity and responsibility – for realising the dreams of our people.

This is also a time for renewal in our relationship; for a new beginning and new vigour in our partnership.

We have to ensure that our proximity always translates into closeness.

We were honoured that President Sirisena chose India as his first destination last month. I am honoured to be

his first guest here.

This is how it should be between neighbours.

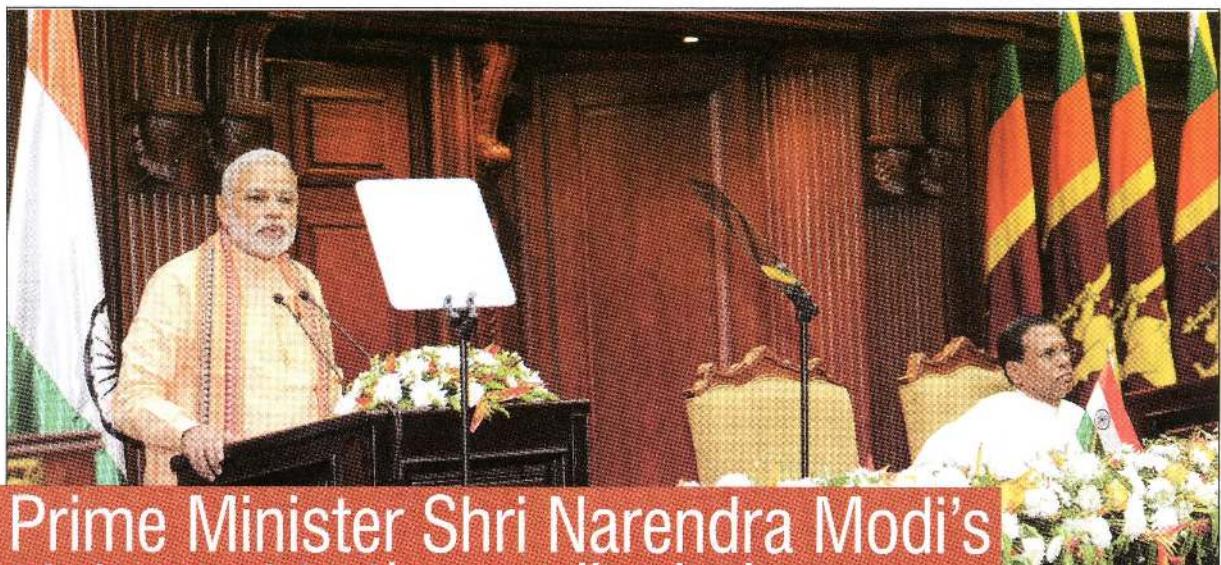
Tomorrow I will go to Talaimannar to flag off the train to Madhu Road. This is part of the old India –Lanka rail link.

I recall the lines of a famous song 'Sindu Nadiyin Misai' composed by the great nationalist poet Subramanian Bharati in the early 20th century:

'Singalathee vukkinor paalam ameippom' (we shall construct a bridge to Sri Lanka)

I have come with the hope of building this bridge – a bridge that rests on strong pillars of our shared inheritance; of shared values and vision; of mutual support and solidarity; of friendly exchanges and productive cooperation; and, above all, belief in each other and our shared destiny. Thank you once again for the honour to be with you.

Thank you very much.



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's statement to the media during visit to Sri Lanka

Mar 13, 2015

Your Excellency Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, President of Sri Lanka,

Members of the media,

I am delighted to be in Sri Lanka, in this beautiful city of Colombo.

I have eagerly looked forward to visiting one of our closest neighbours and a nation with which we share so much.

I am truly honoured by your warm welcome and

friendship.

I am conscious of the significance of this visit. It is the first standalone bilateral visit to Sri Lanka by an Indian Prime Minister since 1987.

Last month, President Sirisena honoured us by making India his first foreign visit as President. I am glad to be here so soon.

This is how it should be between neighbours. We should meet regularly.

It helps us understand each other better; find solutions to mutual concerns; and, move our relationship forward.

That is what we achieved in my meetings with President Sirisena today.

Economic ties are a key pillar of our relationship.

The progress we have made reflects our shared commitment to stronger economic cooperation.

Our trade has seen impressive growth over the past decade. I am aware of your concerns about trade with India. As I said in Delhi, we will try and address them.

The agreement today on cooperation between our customs authorities is a step in that direction. It will simplify trade and reduce non-tariff barriers on both sides.

We are not just looking at addressing problems. We are also focusing on new opportunities.

Today, Lanka IOC and Ceylon Petroleum Corporation have agreed to jointly develop the Upper Tank Farm of the China Bay Installation in Trincomalee on mutually agreed terms.

A Joint Task Force will be constituted soon to work out the modalities. India stands ready to help Trincomalee become a regional petroleum hub.

I also look forward to early commencement of work on the ground in the Sampur Coal Power Project. This landmark project would meet Sri Lanka's energy needs.

The ocean economy is a new frontier that holds enormous promise for both of us. It is a priority for our two countries. Our decision to set up a Joint Task Force on Ocean Economy is a significant step, especially because of our proximity.

People are at the heart of our relations. We have taken a number of decisions to encourage people to people contacts, improve connectivity, and increase tourism.

We will extend the facility of "Tourist Visa on Arrival – Electronic Travel Authorization" Scheme to Sri Lankan citizens from the Sinhala and Tamil New Year on 14 April 2015.

Air India will soon start direct flights between New Delhi and Colombo.

We will cooperate in developing a Ramayana Trail in Sri Lanka and a Buddhist Circuit in India.

We will organize a Festival of India in Sri Lanka later this year. Sri Lanka is where Buddhism has truly flourished. We will be organizing an exhibition showcasing our Buddhist heritage as part of this festival.

The Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in youth affairs is an important long term investment in our relationship.

India is privileged to be a development partner for Sri Lanka.

We will provide a fresh Line of Credit of up to US\$ 318 million for the railways sector. This will be used to procure rolling stock, and to restore and upgrade existing railway track.

We are pleased to provide assistance for the construction of the Rabindranath Tagore auditorium at Ruhuna University in Matara.

Tomorrow, I will visit, some of the projects, being financed by India, including the housing project. I am pleased that more than 27,000 houses have already been built.

The Reserve Bank of India and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka have agreed to enter into a Currency Swap Agreement of US\$ 1.5 billion. This will help keep the Sri Lankan rupee stable.

We discussed the fishermen's issue. This complex issue involves livelihood and humanitarian concerns on both sides. We should handle it from this perspective. At the same time, we need to find a long term solution to this issue.

It is also important that fishermen's associations of India and Sri Lanka meet at the earliest to find a mutually acceptable arrangement. It can then be taken forward by both governments.

I also took this opportunity to convey our admiration for President Sirisena's efforts to build an inclusive future for Sri Lanka.

I conveyed our sincere support and good wishes for Sri Lanka's new journey of peace, reconciliation and progress.

We stand with you in your efforts to build a future that accommodates the aspirations of all sections of society, including the Sri Lankan Tamil community, for a life of equality, justice, peace and dignity in a united Sri Lanka.

We believe that early and full implementation of the 13th Amendment and going beyond it would contribute to this process.

I also conveyed India's commitment to further strengthening our partnership in advancing peace and prosperity in our region, including our common maritime neighbourhood.

I would like to once again thank President Sirisena for the warm welcome and hospitality.

The meeting today has been very productive. It gives me great confidence and optimism about the future of our relations.

Thank you.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's remarks at the Banquet hosted by the President of Sri Lanka

March 13, 2015



Your Excellency President Maithripala Sirisena, Mrs. Jayanthi Sirisena, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you for your kind words. Thank you for your wonderful hospitality.

Since the time we arrived this morning, we have experienced the wonderful hospitality and the warmth of your welcome at every step. We are touched by the affection of the people. We can travel around the world. But, nothing compares with the feeling of comfort and belonging that I get in a neighbouring country.

A country with the gifts of nature, a rich culture and warm and welcoming people is a blessed one. This is Sri Lanka, the paradise on earth. I thank you, Mr. President, your Government and the people of Sri Lanka.

Mr. President, it is a unique moment in the history of our relations.

We are grateful to you for visiting us so soon after your election. We were honoured that you chose India as your first destination. It is my privilege to visit Sri Lanka just a month later – and to be your first guest. Sri Lankans and Indians will always turn to each other with the natural instincts of friendship and kinship.

Mr. President, you won a historic victory in a remarkable election. Your mandate carried the collective voice of Sri Lanka; and, the aspirations of every section of this richly diverse nation.

You and the entire political leadership have shown great wisdom and courage in uniting behind a common purpose. And, together you have taken bold steps towards a future of a more united, more inclusive and

a more prosperous Sri Lanka.

You carry with you the good wishes and hopes of 1.25 billion friends across the Palk Strait. In South Asia, we all tend to be emotional about friendship.

So, we are grateful for the friendship you have shown us. The trust, confidence and friendship of Sri Lanka mean a great deal to us. To know that we live not only in proximity, but also in each other's hearts is very comforting.

We owe it to our shared inheritance that is nearly as ancient as human life in these parts of the world - to the time of Prince Vijaya, or the five Isvarams, the five Abodes of Shiva in Sri Lanka, also revered in ancient India; or, the great age of Ashoka.

We love our cricket and we pray at the same shrines. We are nurtured by the same clouds. Today, we often battle similar challenges; and, we seek the same future for our people. We are two countries that have much to learn from each other; and, so much more to do together.

I have been blessed to experience so much today. Tomorrow, I am excited about visiting Anuradhapur, Jaffna and Talaimanar – places that are symbols of our multifaceted relationship. Sri Lanka's great Gandhian Shri Ariaratne had spoken about blending science and technology and spiritualism for a nobler, more just and more peaceful world. India and Sri Lanka have their shared spiritual heritage and the tools of the modern world to make a difference.

After my discussions with President, Prime Minister and people from different walks of life, I am confident that we can do it. We are better placed and prepared to seize the opportunities and shoulder the responsibilities of our partnership – for the prosperity of our people; and, the larger good of South Asia and our wider maritime neighbourhood.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, may I request you to join me in raising a toast

- to the good health of His Excellency, President Maithripala Sirisena;
- to the continued progress and prosperity of the Sri Lankan people; and
- to closer friendship and cooperation between India and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Thank you.



A New Page in Indo-Lanka Cooperation – President Sirisena

President Maithripala Sirisena said the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Sri Lanka and his own recent visit to India have turned a new page in cooperation between our two countries. The agreements that we have reached today on a wide range of cooperation that covers economic and trade relations, health, education, regional security, sea and air transportation and especially the development of the country, he said.

Addressing the media after bilateral discussions with the Indian delegation headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo, today, the President said India and Sri Lanka have a great historical link which has been strengthened with Buddhist philosophy for thousands of years.

The full text of statement:

India and Sri Lanka have a great historical link which has been strengthened with Buddhist philosophy for thousands of years. Similarly, there is also a long lasting relationship between the two countries on Hinduism, which shows a long historic background.

The great cultures of our two countries which were based on Buddhism and Hinduism have been together through thousands of years. We have seen the relationship between our countries weakened during the time of some regimes. As a result, it took 28 years for this visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Sri Lanka. We see this as a most fortunate event for the government and the people of Sri Lanka. We consider this visit of the Indian Prime Minister as a blessing both to the Government and people of Sri Lanka.

The achievements gained and the bilateral relations enhanced during my recent visit with my Ministers and other delegates to India, are being further strengthened and expanded due to the arrival of the Indian Prime Minister today in Sri Lanka, today.

The agreements that we have reached today on a wide range of cooperation that covers economic and trade relations, health, education, regional security, sea and air transportation and especially the development of the country, and my recent visit to India as well as Indian Prime Minister's visit to Sri Lanka has turned a new page in the cooperation between our two countries.

We are well aware that in the world of technology the Indian state and the Indian people are at a high level of knowledge, achievement and resources in modern technology. We are a developing country. It is therefore, valuable to achieve understandings on research, training and development of physical resources from countries advanced in modern technology, trade and modern commerce in the competitive world that prevails today.

While extending my best wishes to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his delegation for this visit to Sri Lanka, I trust it will help to further improve current relations between the two countries and assist in taking the relationships with minority communities to greater heights.

He will be traveling to several places in our country today and tomorrow. I see his visit to Parliament this evening and to pay homage at the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi in Anuradhapura tomorrow, as well as the later visit to the North as historic occasions.

We invited him to address our Parliament as the highest honor we can confer on him. I conclude my statement by wishing that this visit and the signing of agreements today will help further strengthen the great historical ties between our two countries, and also strengthen in the most humanitarian way, the democracy and freedom that prevail in India and Sri Lanka, and contribute to the most fruitful relationship between our two countries in the future.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's message to Heads of Indian Missions

February 07, 2015

Use the current global environment to position India in leading role

"You are vibrant representatives of a glorious heritage"

India has a great responsibility to help the world counter new threats to global peace

India must lead the fight against climate change; love for nature is part of Indian culture

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, today said that the present global environment represents a rare opportunity, when the world is keen to embrace India, and India is moving forward with confidence. Addressing Heads of Indian Missions from across the world, the Prime Minister urged them to use this unique opportunity to help India position itself in a leading role, rather than just a balancing force, globally. Urging them to shed old mindsets, the Prime Minister said they should be quick to adapt to changing global situations.

Emphasizing the role of "Heads of Missions" in projecting India to the world, the Prime Minister described them as "shining vibrant representatives" (tejasvi, jeevant anshpunj) of India's glorious heritage. He urged them to work ceaselessly and with a clear mind, on India's development priorities, and to advance India's interests abroad.

Speaking of conflicts in the twenty-first century, the Prime Minister said there were new "actors" and new "threats" to global peace and prosperity, and added that India, which always stood for "Vishva-Bandhutva" and peace – the brotherhood of the world – had a great responsibility in helping the world counter these challenges to peace.

On the challenge of climate change, the Prime Minister said protecting the environment is part of India's cultural heritage, and therefore, India must take the lead in countering this challenge, and also work towards a change in global attitudes towards the challenges of climate change. He said Indian culture was replete with illustrations which indicated "prakriti-prem" – "love for nature."

The Prime Minister credited the Indian diplomatic community for their success in the International Day of Yoga being adopted by the United Nations in record time, with a record number of co-sponsors. He said



Yoga should be projected as a possible solution to common everyday problems of people across the world, including stress management.

The Prime Minister said the NITI Aayog has recognized the Indian diaspora as a great strength of our nation, and Heads of Missions must come up with innovative ways, in which to positively build upon this strength.

The Prime Minister called for preparing a compendium of best practices of Missions across the world, and spreading them horizontally. He called upon Missions to contribute towards developing a culture for "Swachhta" – cleanliness, and to remain ahead of the curve on digital diplomacy. He urged Missions to maintain digital libraries showcasing the best of Indian culture, and maintaining regular contact with prominent individuals from countries abroad, who visited or planned to visit India. He said relationships have been important for all mankind throughout history, even as humanity has struggled to deal with challenges.

The Union Minister for External Affairs Smt. Sushma Swaraj, the MoS for External Affairs Shri V.K Singh, and the Foreign Secretary, Shri S. Jaishankar, were present on the occasion.



Delhi-Colombo Bonding: New Frontiers

March 12, 2015

By Manish Chand

New Beginnings, New Hopes and New Horizons.

These expressions may sound like rhetorical hyperboles to some, but summarise the essence of the current transformational moment in relations between India and Sri Lanka, which has acquired a new bounce and energy after the formation of the new government in Colombo in January this year.

Four Visits, New Horizons

In barely three months, there would have been four high-profile interactions, starting from the visit of Sri Lankan foreign minister to India, followed by the February 15-18 visit of President Maithripala Sirisena to New Delhi. President Sirisena's choice of India as his first overseas destination sent a clear message that the India-Lanka relations have moved into the fast lane, and will go on to acquire more strategic weight and economic substance in days to come.

Mr. Sirisena's visit was followed by India's External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj's trip to the island nation. Minister Smt. Swaraj's wide-ranging interactions have set the stage for the visit by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Sri Lanka on March 13-14. The symbolism and importance of Shri Narendra Modi's visit is clear from the fact that this will be the first standalone bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to the island country after late Shri Rajiv Gandhi's trip in 1987.

Modi's Visit: What's on Agenda?

All eyes in the region were on the meeting between Shri Modi and Mr. Sirisena as they unveil an ambitious roadmap for multi-pronged acceleration of bilateral ties across diverse areas, including trade and investment, development cooperation, defence cooperation and reconstruction of the island nation.

The talks are expected to focus

on the political reconciliation process in Sri Lanka and finding a lasting solution to addressing the aspirations of the Sri Lankan Tamils within the framework of the constitution of the country. The issue will also be in focus when Prime Minister Shri Modi visits Jaffna, home to a large population of Sri Lankan Tamils, and Shri Modi's meetings with the leaders and representatives of the Tamil National Alliance and other political leaders across the spectrum in Colombo. "Politically, I think we clearly want to promote and encourage the reconciliation process, support democracy and reform, and we do want to expand our people-to-people contacts including tourism, travel between the two countries," India's Foreign Secretary Shri S. Jaishankar said while outlining broad themes that will frame the prime minister's path-breaking visit to India's key island neighbour.

The fishermen issue should be among key issues on the agenda as this has strong political ramifications in both countries. The two sides will be looking to resolve the issue in a constructive and humanitarian manner. The highlight of the trip will be Prime Minister Shri Modi's address to the Sri Lankan parliament, which will flag off a long term vision for India-Sri Lanka relations and a soaring vision of New Delhi's view of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and opportunity.





(Thalaimannar Pier station) Development Diplomacy

Developmental cooperation forms the key pillar of the burgeoning India-Sri Lanka partnership, and will see a marked upswing during the prime ministerial trip. Significantly, this is the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Jaffna, and fittingly, the focus will be on the transformational aspect of India's developmental diplomacy. India had pledged to build 50,000 houses in Sri Lanka – 42,000 in the Northern Province, 4,000 in the Eastern Province, and 4,000 in the Central and Uva Provinces. This is fast-track development diplomacy, as within a span of barely three years, India has been able to build 27,000 houses. The prime minister would be formally handing over in Jaffna some of these 27,000 houses to those displaced by the civilian war, but are now brimming with hope to refashion their life anew. Away from the glare of media hype and headlines, India's development aid and soft loans have carved a new narrative of renaissance among people who were bereft of hope not too long ago.

Most of India's line of credit of \$800 million have been channelized in transforming and renovating the railways sector and connectivity projects, and the results are for there for all to see. The southern line, which was battered by the tsunami from Kalutara-Galle-Matar, has now been restored and resurrected. Similarly, the northern line from Omanthalai to Kankesanthurai, the northwestern line from Talaimannar to Medawachchiya, the rehabilitation of KKS harbour and the Palali runway are shining examples of India's untiring commitment to do its bit to stimulate the resurgence of a neighbouring country that is scripting its destiny afresh. When Prime Minister Modi unveils a plaque inaugurating the Talaimannar pier railway station, one can expect radiant beaming smiles all around.

Economic Diplomacy

Economically, the two countries will be looking to build on their over \$5 billion bilateral trade and raise the bar. India is expected to unveil some incentives that will enable Sri Lanka to expand its exports, thereby reducing the trust deficit with its larger neighbour.

The signing of the FTA in 2002 was a game-changer of sorts. India is now among the four largest overall investors in Sri Lanka with cumulative investments over US\$ 800 million. In 2013, Indian investment into Sri Lanka amounted to US\$ 50.52 million.

New Energy

Energy security has emerged as a key aspect of the evolving India-Sri Lanka relations, which is foraying into new areas. The two countries signed a pact on cooperation in peaceful uses of civilian nuclear energy during the visit of President Sirisena to New Delhi in February. Shri Modi's visit will seek to push the envelope, and could see visible progress on India building a thermal power plant in Sampur, close to Trincomalee.

Cultural Diplomacy: People's Power

Besides strategic and economic facets, the prime ministerial trip will cohere culture and civilizational bonds that binds the two fraternal neighbours. Buddhist spiritual bonds will be highlighted when Shri Modi visits the ancient heritage city of Anuradhapura and prays at the Mahabodhi Society in Colombo. He will also be inaugurating Jaffna Culture Centre that will underline cultural synergy between the two nations. People-to-people bonds keep India-Sri Lanka relations humming. Facts speak for themselves: there are 118 weekly flights. We are actually the largest source of tourists to Sri Lanka. Around 200,000 Indians visit Sri Lanka every year. And about 260,000 Sri Lankans visit India every year.

The Road Ahead

From building houses, schools and hospitals to constructing roads, airports, and ports, India has been proactively engaged with reconstruction and resurgence of the neighbouring country.

Geography, History, and Culture. Business, Buddhism and Strategy. The relations between India and Sri Lanka are truly multifarious, blending diverse elements, and driven by enduring bonds of friendship and fraternal empathy between the people of India and Sri Lanka. With bilateral trade on an upswing, the focus will be on renewing deep connections of the mind and heart. With both countries looking at each other as a narrative of opportunity, the India-Sri Lanka relations have entered a fast-track phase. With the new government in Colombo upbeat about dovetailing the India story to that of the island's unfolding resurgence, the sky is virtually the limit for India-Sri Lanka relations.

Expect new doors to open up in this time-tested relationship.

(Manish Chand is Editor-in-Chief of India Writes Network, www.indiawrites.org, an e-magazine-journal focused on international affairs and the India Story.)

India constructs 27,000 houses in Sri Lanka

January 01, 2015

The Indian Housing Project in Sri Lanka continues to make excellent progress, with the project reaching its target of constructing 16,000 houses during 2014. With the achievement of this important milestone, a total of 27,000 houses have been constructed or repaired under this project till date. During 2014, 14555 new houses were constructed under the project in the Northern Province, and 1447 in the Eastern Province. In addition, 162 damaged houses were repaired in the Northern Province.

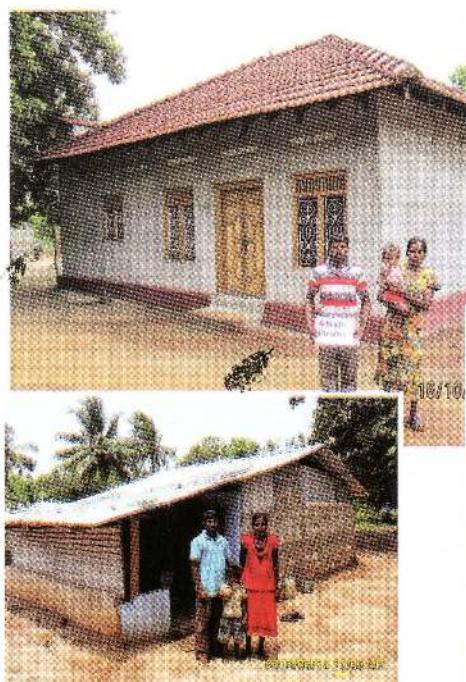
It may be recalled that during the visit of H.E. Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka, to India in June 2010, the Government of India announced that it would construct 50,000 houses as part of post-conflict rehabilitation efforts. The Project is being implemented as full grant assistance amounting to USD 250 million (approximately SLR 30 billion) from the Government of India, making it one of the largest grant assistance projects ever undertaken by India overseas.

Under the pilot phase of the Project, which was completed in July 2012, the Government of India entrusted an agency to construct 1,000 houses for beneficiaries in the Northern Province. The second phase, launched on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 2 October 2012, aims to construct or

repair 45,000 houses in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. An innovative owner-driven model is being pursued to implement the second phase, wherein the Government of India arranges technical support and financial assistance for the owner-beneficiaries to undertake the construction / repair of their houses themselves. Financial assistance of SLR 550,000 per beneficiary (SLR 250,000 in case of repair cases) is released in stages, and transferred directly into the bank accounts of the beneficiaries by the High Commission of India. The project is being implemented in close consultation with the Government of Sri Lanka and other stakeholders, and the highest standards of objectivity and transparency are being followed, both for beneficiary selection and payment mechanism.

With the completion of 26,000 houses under the second phase, 19,000 houses remain to be constructed or repaired under this phase, which is expected to be completed by end-2015.

Separately, preparatory work for the third phase of the Indian Housing Project, which involves construction of 4,000 houses for estate workers in the Central and Uva Provinces, has already commenced, and actual construction is expected to start in mid-2015.



66th Republic Day of India celebrations in Sri Lanka

January 26, 2015

The High Commission of India and the Indian expatriate community in Sri Lanka celebrated the 66th Republic Day of India on Monday, January 26, 2015 at India House in Colombo. High Commissioner Shri Y.K. Sinha unfurled the Indian flag and inspected a Guard of Honour presented by a contingent of the Border Security Force. He read out significant excerpts from the Address to the Nation on the eve of the Republic Day by the Hon'ble President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee.

High Commissioner noted that the President of India had highlighted that the Indian Constitution is the holy book of democracy. It is a lodestar for the socio-economic transformation of an India whose civilization has celebrated pluralism, advocated tolerance and promoted goodwill between diverse communities. In India, the past year has been remarkable in many ways, wherein the people of India voted for a clean, efficient, effective, gender sensitive, transparent, accountable and citizen-friendly governance.

President of India has noted that the most powerful example of India's soft power in an international environment lies in our definition of the relationship between faith and polity. Wisdom of India teaches us: unity is strength, dominance is weakness. Year 2015 is a year of hope. Key economic indicators provide for much optimism. Strengthening of the external sector,

move towards fiscal consolidation, moderation in price levels, early signs of rebound in manufacturing and record agricultural production last year augur well for our economy. Finally, President has said that our national ambition is to raise the quality of life of Indians by quantum leaps and raise generations enlightened by learning, patriotism, compassion, honesty and a sense of duty.

Speaking about the state of India-Sri Lanka relations, High Commissioner highlighted that India shares a special relationship with Sri Lanka which is not just geographical, but dictated by ties of shared religions, cultural practices, family linkages, linguistic commonalities, economic interlinkages, and political understanding between two democracies. He congratulated the people of Sri Lanka on the peaceful conduct of the elections, and stated that India stands ready to continue to provide support and partnership to Sri Lanka in realizing its people's aspirations. He noted that electoral victory of Hon'ble President of Sri Lanka, Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, is a tribute to his capacity to respond to Sri Lankan people's yearning for change.

High Commissioner, Shri Sinha stated that India and Sri Lanka enjoy a vibrant and growing economic and commercial partnership, with both trade and investment expanding sharply in recent years. Bilateral trade witnessed an upswing in 2014 and in the period January- November 2014, amounted to nearly US\$ 4 billion. Robust trade in goods has promoted bilateral investment. Premier Indian companies have displayed

genuine

interest in Sri Lanka. The 'Make in India' initiative will attract more Sri Lanka companies to invest in India. High Commissioner said that both countries should now focus on attention on investments and services sector by forging linkages across the production and supply chains of the two countries.

High Commissioner stated that one important pillar of modern India-Sri Lanka relations is development cooperation, which has been built on the foundation of mutual trust and understanding. The flagship Indian Housing Project in Sri Lanka continues to make excellent progress, with the project reaching its target of constructing 16,000 houses during 2014. With the achievement of this important milestone, a total of 27,000 houses have been constructed under this project till date. The reconstruction of the railway line up to Jaffna, carried out under a concessional Indian Line of Credit of about US\$ 800 million, was a seminal moment. With the inauguration of this segment of the railway track, the "Yal Devi" Express that used to ply on this route, resumed its services to Jaffna, reconnecting Jaffna to Colombo by rail after more than 24 years. All these projects illustrate the tangible benefits that can be achieved through South-South cooperation.

High Commissioner added that the prosperity and security of the two countries is indivisible. India looks forward to working with the new Government of Sri

Lanka to take the bilateral relationship to the next level for the benefit of the people of the two countries and the South Asian region as a whole

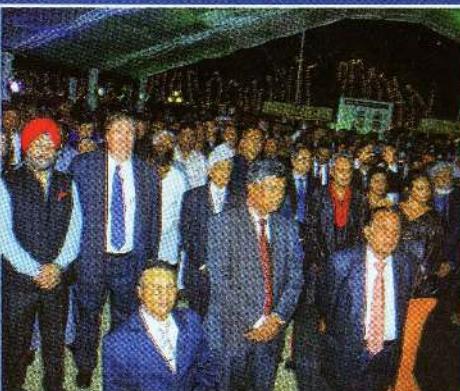
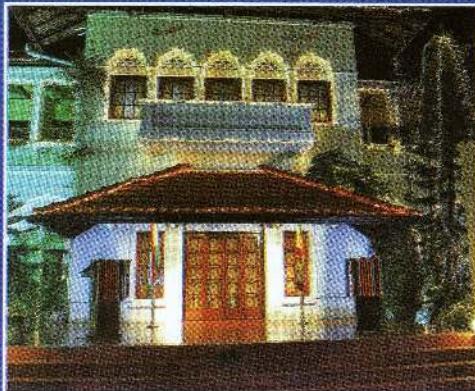
A brief cultural programme organized by the Indian Cultural Centre followed. Its highlights were singing of patriotic songs and dance performances by the students of the Indian Cultural Centre. Subsequently, the High Commissioner of India and other officials of the High Commission paid their respects to the memory of fallen soldiers of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in a solemn ceremony at the IPKF memorial in Colombo.

To commemorate India's 66th Republic Day, famous Indian sitar maestro, Shri Niladri Kumar, and his group, visited Sri Lanka with the sponsorship of the India Sri Lanka Foundation, Indian Council of Cultural Relations, Lanka IOC, Lanka Leyland and Taj Samudra, presented a concert of fusion music titled "Salute: Celebrating India" on January 25, 2015 at the Bishop's College Auditorium, Colombo. Hon. Ms. Rosy Senanayake, State Minister for Child Development of Sri Lanka, was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The performance was extremely well received.

The Consulates General of India in Jaffna and Hambantota and the Assistant High Commission of India in Kandy also celebrated the 66th Republic Day by organizing flag hoisting ceremonies this morning.



REPUBLIC DAY RECEPTION AT INDIA HOUSE



Message on the Occasion of India's 66th Republic Day from Shri Y. K. Sinha, High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka

January 26, 2015



On the occasion of the 66th Republic Day of India, I extend my warm greetings and good wishes to my fellow Indian citizens and to the friendly people and the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

As Indians celebrate the 65th anniversary of the founding of our Republic, there is, coincidentally, a similar fervor in both India and Sri Lanka for reform and a better tomorrow. Both countries have recently experienced an exhilarating renewal of democracy, and the people have reposed their faith in visions that seek to fulfill the aspirations for change and promote social and economic development. I believe that this presents a unique opportunity for further deepening bilateral relations between our two countries.

Ever since the decisive electoral victory of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, in May 2014, there is a mood of optimism for change in the country; the determination to pursue it; and, confidence to achieve it. The Government of India is actively working to promote development for all. Some of the important objectives of the Government include reviving economic growth; creating a policy environment that is predictable, transparent and fair; allowing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in sectors wherever needed for jobs and asset creation; and proactive facilitation for making 'doing business' in India easy. An enormous global interest in India indicates that these efforts are starting to bear fruit.

One of the key initiatives of the new Government of India has been the removal of redundant laws, guided by a belief that governance should fulfill the aspirations of the common man. The establishment of the 'Niti Aayog' (National Institution for Transforming India) in place of the Planning Commission is one such example. The establishment of Niti Aayog (Niti means policy in Hindi) seeks to, *inter alia*, put an end to slow and tardy policy implementation by fostering better inter-ministerial and Centre-State coordination. On the international front, this institution will ensure that India is an active player in the debates and deliberations on the global commons.

"Make in India" is another innovative initiative launched by Government of India. The emphasis is on simplification of procedures, rationalization of existing rules and increased use of information technology to make governance more efficient, effective, simple and user-friendly. Best practices have been identified and disseminated. FDI norms have been made more attractive. In addition, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion is implementing the 'eBiz' project, which will create an investor centric hub-and-spoke based online single window model for providing clearances and filing compliances. This project aims at providing a single platform to avail business and investment-related services.

Mission Swach Bharat (Clean India campaign), yet another landmark initiative, links cleanliness to tourism and India's global interests. There is recognition that world-class levels of hygiene and cleanliness are required at India's top tourist destinations, to bring about a paradigm shift in the global perception of India and to make India truly Incredible.

The past few months have also witnessed various exhilarating moments for the Indian nation, be it the successful voyage of the Mangalyaan spacecraft to Mars; the successful test of a crew module for a future manned space mission; Indian child rights activist Kailash Satyarthi winning the Nobel Prize; India being declared a polio-free country; or the United Nations celebrating Indian heritage by declaring an International Day of Yoga. All these have added to the sense of optimism in India.

In Sri Lanka, too, there is a new sense of optimism and hope. The electoral victory of Hon'ble President of Sri Lanka, Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, is a tribute to his capacity to respond to the people's yearning for change. India congratulates the people of Sri Lanka on

the peaceful conduct of elections, and stands ready to continue to provide support and partnership to Sri Lanka in realizing its aspirations. We hope that this electoral result will advance peace, reconciliation and development in Sri Lanka, and peace and progress in our region. It is an affirmation of the close links between our two countries that Hon'ble Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, Mr. Mangala Samaraweera, visited India within a week of being appointed, and President Maithripala Sirisena has announced that his first overseas visit would be to India. We look forward to welcoming President Sirisena in India very soon.

India shares a special relationship with Sri Lanka - a relationship that is not merely a friendship but a symbiotic twinning. It is an organic affinity that is not just geographical, but predicated on shared religions, cultural practices, family linkages, linguistic commonalities, economic interlinkages, political understanding between two democracies, and much more. Suffice it to say that our two countries share a precious and everlasting harmonious understanding cemented by the ideals of great visionaries like Lord Buddha, Emperor Ashoka, Arahant Mahinda, Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore. The cross-cultural encounters between our two countries have led to cross pollination of ideas, cultures and identities. Anagarika Dharmapala, the great son of Sri Lanka, is one such figure who symbolizes the cultural inter linkages between India and Sri Lanka. Both countries can lay claim on this great Buddhist Revivalist, whose reformist efforts have been acknowledged the world over. It was indeed befitting that as part of the joint celebration of his 150th birth anniversary, Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, released a commemorative postage stamp on Anagarika Dharmapala at Rashtrapati Bhavan on October 25, 2014.

Close civilizational links have promoted vibrant people to people contacts between the two countries over the ages, which in turn have translated in recent years into large tourist inflows from India and vice versa. India has also become a preferred destination for affordable and quality education for Sri Lankan students. Currently, India offers about 290 scholarships to Sri Lankan students for higher studies in India and about 500 scholarships for studies in Sri Lanka. In my view, and as Ananda Coomaraswamy espoused, these links can be fostered by a contemporary web of communication and travel.

It is in that vein that India is implementing the Northern Railway Reconstruction Project on a priority basis. The reconstruction of the railway line up to Jaffna, carried out under a concessional Indian Line of Credit of about US\$ 800 million, was a seminal moment. With the inauguration of this segment of the railway track, the "Yal Devi" Express that used to ply on this route, resumed its services to Jaffna, reconnecting Jaffna to Colombo by rail after more than 24 years. On January 2, 2015, the railway track up to Kankesanthurai was

inaugurated connecting northern and southern parts of the country. The railway line up to Talaimannar would be completed in the very near future. We are also working for resumption of ferry services between Colombo and Tuticorin and between Talaimannar and Rameshwaram, which will enhance connectivity and make travel easier. I look forward to a time when a passenger can board a train in Kataragama in southern Sri Lanka and travel to Srinagar, a city founded by Emperor Ashoka, in the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. Greater connectivity will only further bind our two countries and our peoples in a relationship that the late Hon'ble Lakshman Kadirgamar had so eloquently described as one of "irreversible excellence".

India and Sri Lanka enjoy a vibrant and growing economic and commercial partnership, with both trade and investment expanding sharply in recent years. I believe that the economic component of our bilateral relations will be the defining feature in the years ahead. The India - Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed in 2000 has proved to be a real engine of growth for bilateral commercial interaction, bringing significant benefits to both sides. Bilateral trade witnessed an upswing in 2014 and as per figures of Sri Lankan Customs, in the period January- November 2014, bilateral trade amounted to nearly US\$ 4 billion.

Robust trade in goods has promoted bilateral investment. Premier Indian companies have displayed great interest in Sri Lanka, investing in the country across sectors such as infrastructure, manufacturing, services, and construction. The cumulative FDI approvals for Indian investments stand at around US\$ 1 billion since 2003. In keeping with this trend, in May 2014 the ground breaking ceremony of the Tata Housing project took place, which involves redevelopment of an eight-acre plot of land in Slave Island in cooperation with the Urban Development Authority. The ground breaking ceremony of the 'ITC Colombo One' project took place in November 2014 with ITC committing a total investment outlay of around US\$ 300 million. I am certain that the 'Make in India' initiative will attract more Sri Lanka companies to invest in India. It is important that we now focus our attention on the investments and services sector. A quantum leap in our economic and commercial relations can be achieved by focusing on increasing Sri Lanka's export capacity through Indian investments and forging linkages across the production and supply chains of the two countries.

One important pillar of India-Sri Lanka relations is development cooperation, which has been built on the foundation of mutual trust and understanding. The flagship Indian Housing Project in Sri Lanka continues to make excellent progress, with the project reaching its target of constructing 16,000 houses during 2014. With the achievement of this important milestone, a total of 27,000 houses have been constructed under this project by the end of last year.

India is committed to setting up a Faculty of Agriculture and one for Engineering at the Kilinochchi Campus of Jaffna University at a cost of SLR 600 million. We helped set up vocational training centres in Batticaloa and Nuwara Eliya and propose to set up one in the Vanni region. Our interventions in the health sector include the supply of high-value equipment to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital and the district hospitals in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu. We are in the process of implementing a project to construct a 200-bed ward complex for the District Hospital in Vavuniya. In the Central Province, we are nearing completion of a project to construct a 150-bed base hospital at Dickoya, Hatton. We have taken a number of initiatives to revive the local economy, including rehabilitating the Atchchuveley Industrial Zone, reviving the fishnet factory in Jaffna and setting up Handicrafts Villages in Hambantota and Jaffna.

In the field of culture, we are in the process of setting up a state-of-the-art Cultural Centre that Jaffna will be proud of, at an estimated cost of SLR 1 billion. We are also renovating the Duraiappah Stadium, to give a fillip to sports activities in the Northern Province. All these projects illustrate the tangible benefits that can be achieved through South-South cooperation.

The year 2014 marked the 10th anniversary of the 2004 tsunami. The close cooperation in the years that followed the tragedy demonstrated the solidarity between the two countries. Ten years on, it is heartening to see that the affected communities have been able rebuild their lives and start afresh. Lessons learned continue to influence and improve how the world responds to disasters today. India has taken numerous steps since 2004 to enhance its own early warning systems and improve disaster preparedness, and will continue to work with the Government of Sri Lanka in these areas. Timely Indian assistance to the victims of the tragic landslide in Koslanda in November and the floods in December 2014 is a reflection of our close cooperation in disaster relief.

I would like to conclude on a note of optimism, imbued with hope on the trajectory that is being imparted to the bilateral relationship and the vast vistas of cooperation that beckon us. There is no doubt that the prosperity and security of our two countries are indivisible. India eagerly looks forward to working with the new Government of Sri Lanka to take our relationship to the next level for the benefit of the people of our two countries and the South Asian region as a whole.

Long live India-Sri Lanka friendship!

Reduction of entry fee to The National Museum in New Delhi for Sri Lankan Nationals

February 19, 2015



On February 16, 2015, during the visit of His Excellency Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, President of Sri Lanka to India, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, noting that Sri Lankan nationals visit the National Museum in New Delhi in large numbers to pay homage to the Kapilavastu relics, had announced a decision to reduce the entrance fee to the National Museum for Sri Lankan nationals.

In pursuance of the Prime Minister's announcement,

the entry fee to the National Museum for Sri Lankan nationals has been reduced and brought at par with the fee paid by Indian nationals. The new rates will come into effect from April 1, 2015. Sri Lankan nationals will thereafter have to pay a nominal entry fee of INR 10 (against INR 300 currently) to view the rich and varied collection at the National Museum.

Sri Lanka is the only country to be accorded this special status.

Colombo Dockyard : delivers largest passenger ship MV Lagoons to India

February 26, 2015

MV Lagoons, the second 400 passenger cum 250 ton cargo vessel, was ceremonially handed over by Colombo Dockyard PLC to Union Territories of Lakshadweep Administration on 26 February at the Shipyard premises with the participation of President Maithripala Sirisena.

Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh, Director (Ports, Shipping and Aviation) of Union Territories of Lakshadweep Administration/Managing Director of Lakshadweep Development Corporation, took delivery of the vessel on behalf of Union Territories of Lakshadweep Administration of the Government of India.

Capt.P.K.Chacko, the Ship's Captain, and Dr.M.Sivaguru, Second Secretary (E&C) of the High Commission of India, were present to witness the acceptance of the vessel. At the ceremony the President also symbolically handed over a ship model to Singh and Chacko.

The President commended the technological advancement Colombo Dockyard has achieved and congratulated the entire management and staff for the excellent work and the commitment and dedication in delivering such a magnificent vessel and being the driving force of Sri Lankan industrialisation. The President also stressed that companies such as Colombo Dockyard were an asset to the nation and should be encouraged and supported by all concerned, and wished the company strength and good luck in its future endeavours.

After addressing the gathering the President went on board the vessel to inspect the facilities and was impressed by its sophistication and the level of comfort provided for the passengers and the vessels crew. After disembarking the President mingled with the thousands of staff that had gathered to greet him and left the shipyard after a highlymemorable visit.

This vessel has been designed for the carriage of passengers and general cargo between the mainland and Lakshadweep Islands and interisland routes. Once this vessel gets into operation, it will ease the congestion and will provide uninterrupted service for passengers and freight from Cochin to Lakshadweep islands for a journey which generally takes around 20 hours.

Principal particulars of the vessel Length overall: 99.00 m; breadth mld: 17.00 m; depth: 9.20 m; design draft: 4.20 m; First Class: 10 passengers; Second Class: 40 passengers; Bunk Class: 350 passengers; Crew: 69 persons; speed: 15 knots; fuel oil: 400 T; fresh water: 350 T; dry cargo: 225 T; endurance: 10 days@15 knots; main engines: 2 x YANMAR each engine developing 1,920 kW; propulsion: 2 x BERG controllable pitch propellers; classification: Lloyds Register/Indian Register.

The vessel is designed by world renowned ship design company, Global Maritime Brevik AS of Norway (formerly known as GL Noble Denton/Brevik Engineering) and the detailed design engineering is performed by Neilsoft Ltd of India. This cooperation enabled the convergence of specialists in their respective fields to achieve the best design solutions and Colombo Dockyard performed the arduous task of product realisation.

The fact that the Indian Government placed its utmost confidence in Colombo Dockyard to build these passenger vessels immediately after the delivery of the two numbers 250 passenger cum 100 ton cargo vessels (MV Arabian Sea and MV Lakshadweep Sea), is a clear testimony of the maturity and the status that Colombo Dockyard, has achieved in the field of Shipbuilding in the region and will further strengthen the long and cordial relationship, the two countries have enjoyed over the past years.





Visit of Shri Rajeev Kher, Commerce Secretary of India to Sri Lanka,

March 04, 2015

Subsequent to the announcement by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, during the visit of H.E. President Maithripala Sirisena to India in February 2015, that Commerce Secretaries of both countries would meet soon to review bilateral commercial relations, Shri Rajeev Kher, Commerce Secretary of Government of India visited Sri Lanka on March 04, 2015 for official talks.

The delegation level talks were co-chaired by Shri Rajeev Kher, Secretary, Commerce, Government of India and Mr. S.S. Miyanawala, Secretary, Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Government of Sri Lanka. The Indian delegation also included H.E. Y.K. Sinha, High Commissioner of India and Shri Arvind Mehta, Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce. The current round of consultations was the third round of Commerce Secretary level interactions, the earlier rounds having taken place in Colombo in June 2013 and in New Delhi in January 2014.

Issues discussed included implementation of India-Sri Lankan FTA, trade, investments, economic cooperation and related issues, and upgrading the economic engagement to include investment and services. Issues pertaining to the imbalance in trade, non-tariff barriers were also taken up. Both sides also continued dialogue on moving towards investment-based trade. It was agreed that there was considerable potential to expand bilateral trade, in a balanced manner through optimal utilization of the opportunities available between the two economies.

The two delegations also discussed specific suggestions to expand trade and investment ties. The Indian side reiterated that Indian investments would increase Sri Lankan export capacity and the need for establishment of greater linkages with production and supply chains in the Indian market. The Indian side recalled the earlier Sri Lankan offer of attracting Indian investments, *inter alia*, in the manufacture of automobile parts, pharmaceuticals, textiles and engineering products, in Special Economic Zones. The investments could be

in the form of joint venture projects to encourage Sri Lankan private sector and state enterprises to work together with Indian enterprises.

Cooperation in the energy sector, including in the field of non-conventional energy was also discussed. It was pointed out that Sri Lanka has huge potential in the wind energy sector which could be harnessed. The talks also focused on interconnectivity of grid between the two countries.

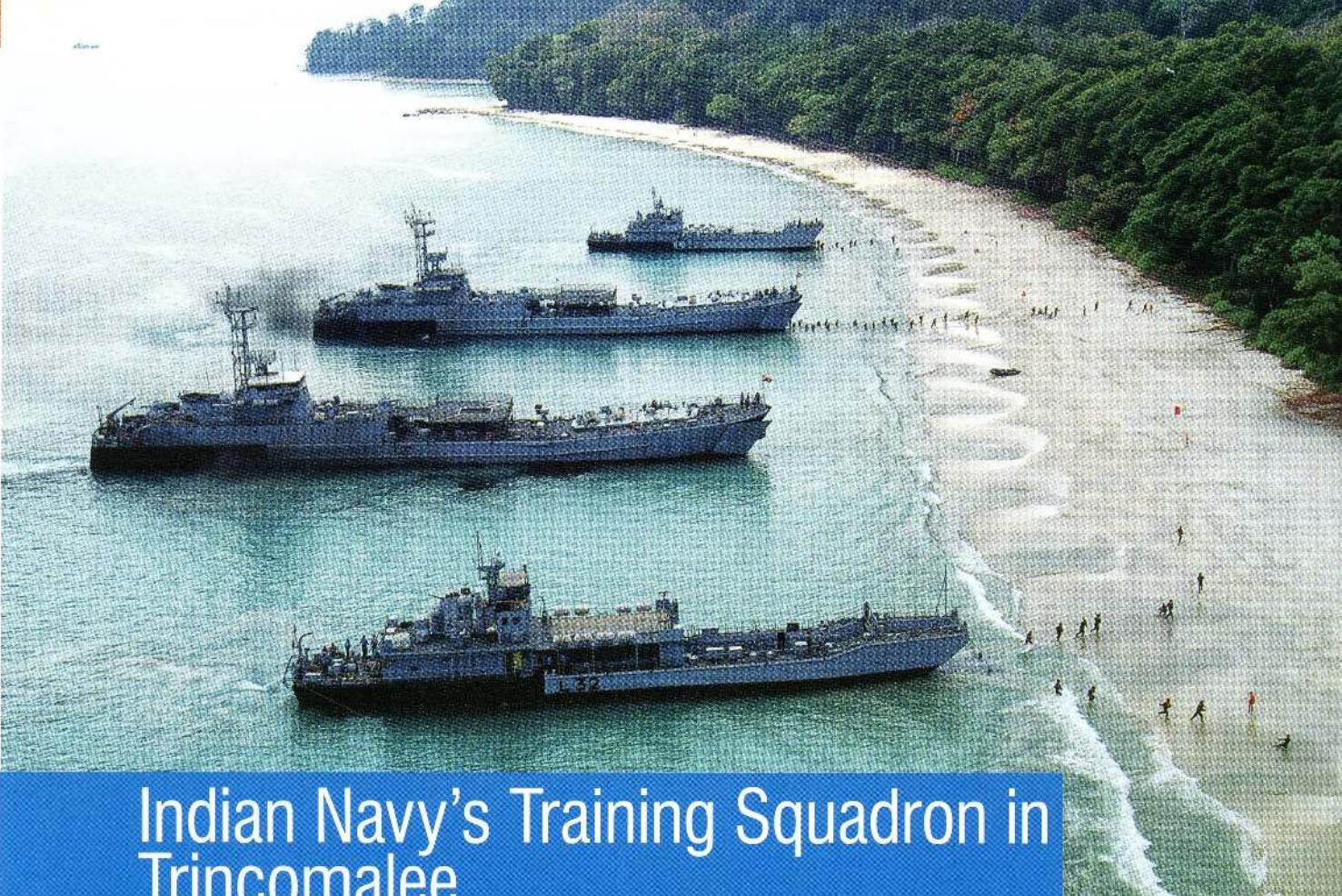
The two sides noted that the Joint Working Group on tourism is likely to meet in April 2015. Both sides noted the importance of connectivity between the two countries and acknowledged that current levels of connectivity though good, needed to be further enhanced to boost tourism. Both sides concurred on the importance of early resumption of ferry service between Talaimannar and Rameshwaram and Colombo and Tuticorin, as well as early conclusion of the Revised Air Services Agreement, which had been initiated in September 2013.

Towards creation of an optimal support framework at both ends, both sides noted that the Revised Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement signed in January 2013 had come into force, the MOU on Cooperation in the Fields of Textiles, Handloom, Powerloom and SMEs was signed in September 2013 and the Joint Working Group under this MOU would meet shortly and the Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters would also be signed shortly.

The two sides agreed to cooperate closely to forge closer economic and trade linkages towards taking the economic and commercial relations to the next level.

Shri Rajeev Kher, Commerce Secretary also called on Hon. Rishad Bathiudeen, Minister of Industry & Commerce of Sri Lanka.

It was decided to hold next round of consultations at a mutually convenient date in India.



Indian Navy's Training Squadron in Trincomalee

March 26, 2015

Four ships from Indian Navy's First Training Squadron, namely Indian Naval Ships TIR and KESARI, Indian Coast Guard Ship VARUNA and Sail Training Ship SUDARSHINI, arrived in Trincomalee from March 27-29, 2015.

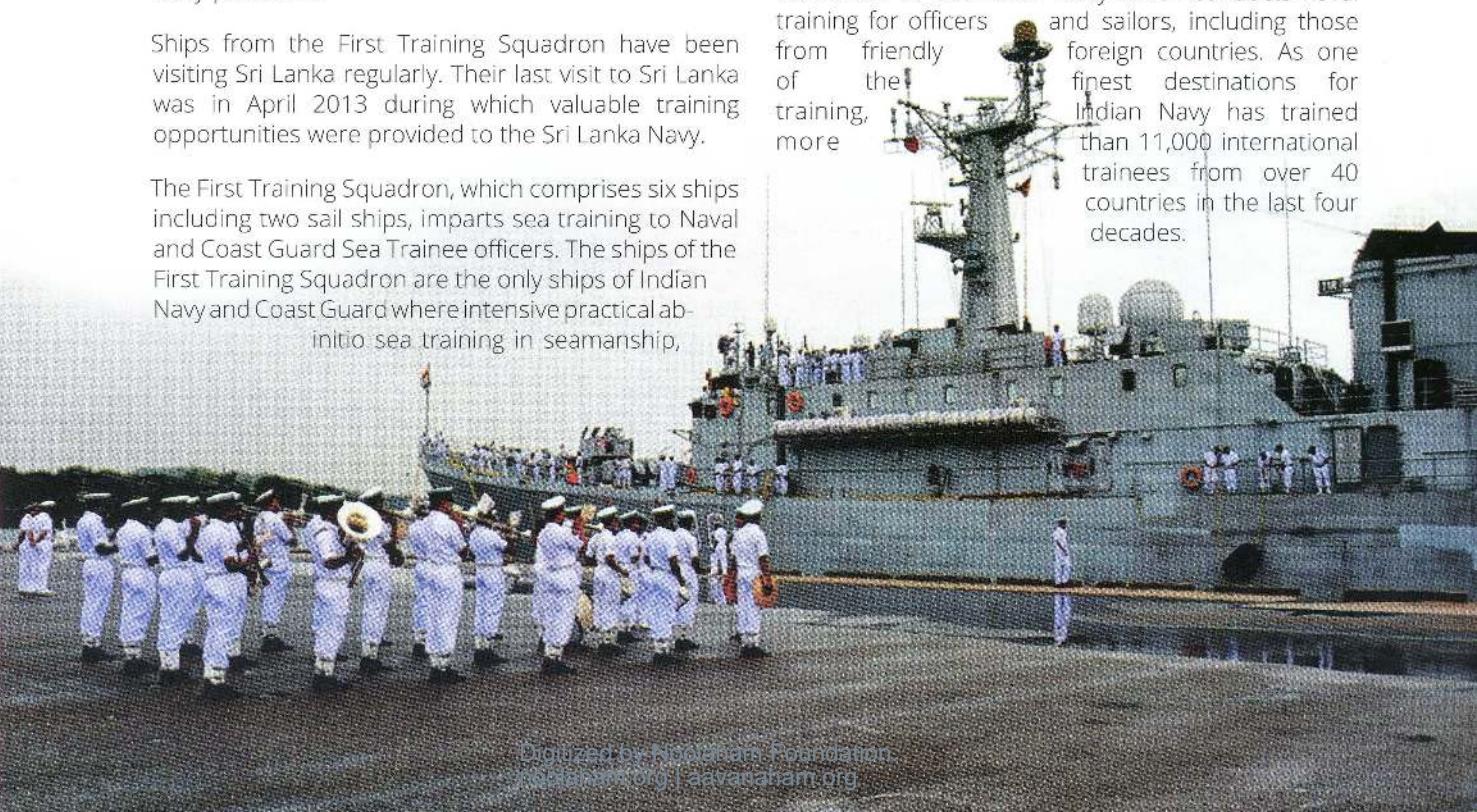
During their stay in Trincomalee, a series of professional, training, cultural and sports interactions will take place between the ships' crew and Sri Lanka Navy personnel.

Ships from the First Training Squadron have been visiting Sri Lanka regularly. Their last visit to Sri Lanka was in April 2013 during which valuable training opportunities were provided to the Sri Lanka Navy.

The First Training Squadron, which comprises six ships including two sail ships, imparts sea training to Naval and Coast Guard Sea Trainee officers. The ships of the First Training Squadron are the only ships of Indian Navy and Coast Guard where intensive practical ab-initio sea training in seamanship,

work and engineering is conducted for officers over a period of 24 weeks. The Training Squadron is headed by Captain SR Ayyar, Senior Officer First Training Squadron and Commanding Officer INS Tir.

The First Training Squadron is a part of Indian Navy's prestigious Southern Naval Command (SNC) headed by Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Vice Admiral SPS Cheema, PVSM, AVSM, NM. SNC is the Training Command of the Indian Navy which conducts naval training for officers and sailors, including those from friendly and foreign countries. As one of the finest destinations for Indian Navy has trained more than 11,000 international trainees from over 40 countries in the last four decades.



India and Sri Lanka agree to extend the ongoing project on Women's Trade Facilitation and Community Learning Centres in Batticaloa

March 27, 2015

India and Sri Lanka have agreed to extend till June 2016 the ongoing project to assist war affected/poor/ destitute women in Batticaloa. In 2010, both countries had signed a Memorandum of Understanding to set up Women's Trade Facilitation and Community Learning Centres in Batticaloa, with SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) of India as the implementing agency, at a cost of SLR 203 million. An Addendum to the MOU to extend the project till June 2016 was signed on March 26, 2015 at the High Commission of India by Shri Y.K. Sinha, High Commissioner of India, and Ms. Sudharma Karunaratne, Secretary, Ministry of Women's Affairs, in the presence of Ms. K.D.M. Chandrani Bandara, Hon'ble Minister of Women's Affairs.

So far, 40 war affected / destitute women from Batticaloa District have been trained in India by SEWA as Master Trainers under a Training of Trainers (ToT)

programme, covering seven vocational subjects:- (i) Textiles and Garments; (ii) Surface Ornamentation; (iii) Agro food processing; (iv) Computers; (v) Enterprise Development; (vi) Solar lantern; and (vii) Roof rain water harvesting. In addition, 50 women have undergone management training in India. The master trainers trained in India have further trained more than 940 grass root trainees at the Centres set up in Batticaloa.

The Addendum signed today provides for training another 25 executive committee members and master trainers, in addition to 250 grass root war affected/poor/destitute women from the Batticaloa region, in the areas of textiles & garments, food processing and information and communication technology. In view of its success, the project was extended till June 2016 at the request of Government of Sri Lanka. The project is likely to be expanded to other areas like Ampara and the Northern Province.



Visit of High Commissioner to Batticaloa and Ampara

March 26, 2015



High Commissioner, Shri Y.K. Sinha, visited Batticaloa and Ampara from March 23-25, 2015. He held wide ranging discussions with various stakeholders including Hon'ble Chief Minister of Eastern Province, Mr. Nazeer Ahamed; Hon'ble Minister of Health, Eastern Province, Mr. M.I.M. Mansoor; and District Secretary, Batticaloa, Ms. P.S.M. Charles, to assess on the ground the impact of Government of India's projects and to understand local priorities and requirements with respect to development assistance.

SEWA Project

On March 24, 2015 High Commissioner reviewed the SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) project in Batticaloa, which is being implemented under Government of India's assistance. The SLR 200 million project aims to empower war affected / destitute women in Batticaloa. High Commissioner also handed over certificates to 20 trainees, who have undergone training in sewing and information and communication technology. The training programme was conducted by the "Eastern Province Women's Self Employed Development Cooperative Society", a society formed by beneficiaries of the SEWA project.

Language Lab Project

In an another event on March 24, 2015 at Addalachenai, Ampara, High Commissioner inaugurated a Language Lab set up by the Government of India under full grant assistance. Hon'ble Minister of Health, Eastern Provincial Council, Mr. M.I.M. Mansoor, also participated in the event. Speaking on the occasion, Hon'ble Minister of Health thanked the Government of India for its continuing assistance in the Eastern Province, covering all sectors. High Commissioner, in his remarks, emphasized Government of India's continued commitment to development partnership with Sri Lanka.

The Language Lab in Addalachenai is one of the nine Language Labs that the Government of India has set up in each of the nine provinces of Sri Lanka. Three Language Labs in Gampaha (Western Province), Bingiriya (North Central Province) and Kandy (Central Province) have already been inaugurated. Other locations where

Language Labs have been set up include Badulla (Uva Province), Jaffna (Northern Province), Matara (Southern Province), Polonnaruwa (North Central Province), and Ratnapura (Sabaragamuwa Province).

The total cost of the Language Lab project is SLR 84 million. As part of the project, Government of India has provided 31 computer units and other related equipment, software and latest sophisticated teaching aids to each Centre, and has also trained five master trainers for each Centre. The objective of the project is to help enhance English Language training infrastructure in Sri Lanka; impart training to English language teachers from schools, colleges and universities in Sri Lanka; upgrade their skills; and raise the general level of proficiency in English language of various sections of society.

Housing Project

On March 25, 2015, High Commissioner Shri Y. K. Sinha, handed over houses constructed under the second phase of the Indian Housing Project to beneficiaries in Vaharai, Batticaloa. He also inspected a few houses in the region. Hon'ble Chief Minister, Eastern Province graced the occasion. In his remarks, he thanked the Government of India for all assistance, including the Housing Project. Hon'ble Chief Minister sought further assistance from the Government of India, mainly focusing on transfer of technologies in the fields of agriculture, inland fisheries and small scale industries. In his remarks, High Commissioner pointed out that in Batticaloa district, more than 1600 houses have been completed and another 1000 are at various stages of construction. While appreciating the progress, he informed that 45,000 houses under the second phase would be completed by end-2015. High Commissioner also highlighted the Government of India's fresh Line of Credit of US\$ 318 million for the railways sector, which was announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India during his visit to Sri Lanka from March 13-14, 2015, and in response to a request for greater rail connectivity of the Eastern Province with the rest of the country, he pointed out that part of the fresh Line of Credit extended by India could be utilized for this purpose.



Joint Celebration of the 'Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Day (ITEC Day) and the 'International Students Day'

March 30, 2015

The annual get-together of the ITEC alumni and Sri Lankan students who studied in India under various scholarship schemes of the Government of India was held on Monday, March 30, 2015, at Hotel Taj Samudra. Hon'ble Dr Sarath Amunugama, Minister of Higher Education and Research, Government of Sri Lanka, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. About 300 alumni of Indian educational and training institutions, coming from various parts of Sri Lanka, attended the reception.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest, Hon'ble Dr Sarath Amunugama, lauded Maulana Azad's leading role in laying the foundation of India's school and higher education system, including the renowned institutions of national importance such as the Indian Institutes of Technology. Minister Amunugama appreciated India's valuable scholarship assistance for Sri Lankan nationals and acknowledged that these educational and technical scholarships helped bridge the gap between demand and supply for such programmes in Sri Lanka, as well as in meeting the increasing aspirations of the people.

In his address, High Commissioner Shri Y. K. Sinha, thanked the Hon'ble Minister for gracing the function as the Chief Guest and appreciated the large turnout of participants who had come from all over Sri Lanka. He noted that India-Sri Lanka cooperation in the field of education had a long history. At present, India offered more than 270 scholarships to Sri Lanka students to study in India and 500 scholarships under the CEWET and the Mahatma Gandhi scheme for students studying in Sri Lanka. The High Commissioner conveyed that ITEC, initiated in 1964 as India's bilateral programme of assistance, was being constantly re-designed and refocused, based on the evolving needs of India's partners, including Sri Lanka. He added that Sri Lanka was the one of topmost partner countries of ITEC, with 208 Sri Lankans, including senior Sri Lankan state

sector officials, going to India annually for training in over 100 courses. High Commissioner also highlighted that this year's function was commemorating the Golden Jubilee of the ITEC Programme.

Several Sri Lankan alumni shared their experiences of studying and participating in training programmes in prestigious institutions in India, recollecting their warm memories, appreciating their useful experience and conveying the manner in which the exposure had helped them in their professional roles and duties in their country. As part of the event, a short film titled "ITEC@ 50 Golden Years, Lessons in Friendship" was also screened.

The ITEC programme was launched more than 50 years ago, in the early 1960s, as India's bilateral programme of assistance in the field of human resource development. Sri Lanka is one of the most important partner countries for the ITEC and the Colombo Plan scholarship programmes. 208 training slots are allocated annually for capacity-building and training in diverse areas like IT, English language, management, rural development, finance, mass communication, remote sensing, etc. The entire cost of travel, training and stay is borne by the Government of India, along with payment of a living allowance of INR 25,000/- per month, book allowance @ INR 5,000/-, study tours, including visit to places of historical importance, and medical facilities.

International Students' Day is observed every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of Independent India and Founder President of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR). Nearly 270 scholarships and self-financing slots are offered each year to Sri Lankan students for higher studies in India. The main categories under which the scholarships are offered are:

- i. Nehru Memorial Scholarship Scheme: 120 ICCR scholarships are offered annually under this programme for higher studies in India. Students can pursue undergraduate courses in all disciplines including Engineering, Science, Business, Economics, Commerce, Humanities and Arts.
- ii. Rajiv Gandhi Scholarship Scheme: This scheme has been initiated from 2012-13, to provide 25 ICCR scholarships every year for 'Bachelor of Engineering' courses in IT, in some of the top-ranked institutes in India.
- iii. Maulana Azad Scholarship Scheme: This Scheme has been added from the academic year 2012-13 wherein 50 ICCR scholarships are provided annually for Masters Degrees. This programme is expected to assist researchers including scholars employed in Sri Lankan Universities to pursue Masters degree in some world class Universities in India. Preference is given to Agriculture, Science and Engineering.
- iv. AYUSH scholarships: About 10 scholarships are offered every year for study in the field of Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy, leading to undergraduate, masters and research degrees.
- v. Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme (ICCR): Under this scheme, 5 scholarships for pursuing Phd in various disciplines are offered.
- vi. ICCR Undergraduate Scholarship for Music, Dancing, and Painting: Up to 10 undergraduate scholarships are offered every year to pursue courses in Dancing, Music and Painting by the
- vii. ICCR.
- viii. Subsidized Self Financed Slots (Engineering, Medicine etc.): The Government of India has reserved up to 40 seats, of which 4 to 5 slots are for Medicine, for Sri Lankan students in some of the most reputed Government institutions. Courses offered under this scheme are Undergraduate courses in Medicine (MBBS), Pharmacy (B.Pharm.) and Engineering (B.E/ B.Tech). Fee for Medicine and Pharmacy courses is subsidized and is usually less than US\$ 1,000 per year.
- ix. Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship: The Government of India offers 150 scholarships to meritorious Sri Lankan students, six from each of the 25 districts. Students are chosen, in consultation with the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka, on the basis of their performance in the GCE 'O' Level examination and on merit-cum-means criteria. Selected scholars receive financial assistance of Sri Lankan Rupees 48,000/- over a period of two years to complete their Advance Level studies.
- ix. Scholarship for Children of Estate Workers: 350 scholarships are offered annually to children of estate workers to pursue their 'A' level and Undergraduate studies. Applications are invited every year from the students in the Month of April and May. Selected students are provided a monthly stipend for a period ranging from 2-3 years, till they complete their studies.

For more details on the scholarship programmes and other educational assistance, please visit the High Commission of India's website <http://www.hcicolombo.org> and for more information on the ITEC please visit <http://itec.nic.in>



Science And Technology in India

Introduction

Modern India has had a strong focus on science and technology, realising the fact that it is a key element of economic growth. Significantly, India is among the topmost countries in the world in the field of scientific research and has positioned itself as among the top five nations in the field of space exploration. It has been regularly undertaking space missions to the moon and the famed Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C26, successfully launched IRNSS-1C, the third satellite in the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS), on October 16, 2014, from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. This is the twenty seventh consecutively successful mission of PSLV.

Recently, official information to the Lok Sabha stated that 27 satellites including 11 that facilitate the communication network to the country are operational, while one more is to be launched in March 2015. India is proving itself time and again and successfully marking itself in growth in space technology. India is to take a leading role in launching satellites for the SAARC nations. Revenue is being generated for space facilities of the nation to be used by other countries.

There has also been a lot of focus on encouraging the scientific temperament in India's youth with the setting up of numerous technical universities and institutes, both in the private and the government sector. India presently has 16 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), 30 National Institutes of Technology (NITs), 162 universities awarding about 4,000 doctorates and 35,000 post-graduate degrees, and about 40 research laboratories run by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) all over the country.

Market size

India is among the top 10 nations in the world in the number of scientific publications. Position-wise, it is ranked 17th in the number of citations received and 34th in the number of citations per paper across the science and technology field (among nations publishing 50,000 or more papers). It is also ranked

ninth globally in the number of scientific publications and 12th in the number of patents filed.

Backed by the government, there has been a lot of investments and developments in different sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, space research and nuclear power through scientific research. For instance, India is gradually becoming self-reliant in nuclear technology through the commercial success of the indigenous reactors like the Dhruva reactor at BARC, which achieved criticality on August 8, 1985.

Investments

According to the latest available statistics by the Government of India, the Indian investment in science and technology in terms of Gross expenditure on Research and Development (GERD) during 2011-12 has been US\$ 36.2 billion Purchasing Power Parity (PPP).

India invested 0.88 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) towards Research and Development (R&D) whereas USA and South Korea spent 2.76 per cent and 4.04 per cent respectively during 2011-12.

A project to build India's largest underground laboratory for advanced research into the smallest particle known to man has been cleared by the prime minister's office. It's a move that could make India a major nuclear physics research hub.

Antrix Corporation Limited, the commercial arm of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), has finalised contracts to launch 16 satellites of six countries in the coming years.

One of Japan's biggest business groups has expanded its engagement with India, which could be a sign of a new momentum in the Indo-Japanese business ties. MOL, world's largest ship operator with over 900 ships, has in partnership with an Indian company setup a cutting edge simulation centre for training seafarers, and said it would step up the number of Indians recruited for its merchant navy.

The India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) will aim to study the properties of atmospheric neutrinos,

which are subatomic particles produced by the decay of radioactive elements. MOL, world's largest ship operator with over 900 ships, has in partnership with an Indian company setup a cutting edge simulation centre for training seafarers, and said it would step up the number of Indians recruited for its merchant navy. The initiative named marine advanced simulation training (MAST) centre is among the most advanced simulation centres in the world, and would be part of the ongoing efforts of MOL and its partner Synergy Group, a ship management firm with over 100 vessels under its management and MOL's partner in the initiative, to step up recruitment of seafarers from India.

Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, has launched a joint Indo-Canadian science programme focusing on clean water technologies. Dr Jitendra Singh said that the new programme will be pursued through a joint collaboration between the Department of Science & Technology under his ministry and the National Science and Engineering Council of Canada.

Government Initiatives

The Narendra Modi government will soon institute a nation-wide consultation process with a view to developing the first, publicly accessible Science and Technology policy. It will be called "Vision S&T 2020" and articulate the road ahead towards self-reliance and technological independence in the 21st Century.

National Council of Science Museums (NCSM), an autonomous organization under the Union Ministry of Culture is engaged in establishment of Science Centres throughout the country. NCSM is developing a Science City at Guwahati, Assam which will subsequently be handed over to the Govt. of Assam for future operation and maintenance. Proposals from various state governments have also been received for setting up of Science Cities. The Science Centres/Cities projects are taken up by NCSM in a phased manner depending upon the availability of resources, project handling capacity of NCSM and the existing level of science centre activities in that particular State.

In the Union Budget 2014-15, the following initiatives in the field of science and technology were taken:

Setting aside an amount of Rs 100 crore (US\$ 16.08 million) for 'Agri-tech Infrastructure Fund'

Identification of technology driven second Green Revolution with focus on higher productivity including 'Protein revolution' as a major area of focus

Allocation of Rs 100 crore (US\$ 16.08 million) for a new scheme 'Ultra-Modern Super Critical Coal Based Thermal Power Technology'

Some of the other government initiatives taken in the recent past are as follows:

The Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of New and Renewable Energy Resources are collaborating through joint expert committee meetings, inter-ministerial consultations and delegations to articulate research and development priorities to come up with energy efficient and environment friendly technologies. Three multi institutional networked virtual joint Clean Energy Research and Development Centres on solar energy, second generation biofuels and building energy efficiency have been set up. The research carried so far has resulted in 72 publications in peer reviewed journals and a patent has also been filed.

Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, has launched a joint Indo-Canadian science programme focusing on clean water technologies.

India's leading research centers are seeking more scientific partnerships for the country's remote areas, particularly the northeastern states while working with the Indo-French Centre for the Promotion of Advanced Research (CEFIPRA). CEFIPRA is India's first and France's one and only bilateral organization, committed towards the promotion of the collaboration between the scientific communities of the two countries across the knowledge innovation chain. The centre was established in 1987 and it receives financial support from the department of science and technology under the central government, and the foreign affairs ministry of France.

Road Ahead

India is aggressively working towards establishing itself as a leader in industrialisation and technological development. There will likely be significant developments in the nuclear energy sector as India looks to increase its nuclear capacity. There is also an indication that nanotechnology will change the face of the Indian pharmaceutical industry. The agriculture sector will also see a major revamp with the government investing heavily for the technology driven Green Revolution. The Government of India, through the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy-2013, among other things, also aspires to position India among the top five scientific powers in the world.

Exchange rate used INR 1= 0.016 as on March 24, 2015

References: Ministry of Finance, Press Information Bureau (PIB), Media Reports and Press Releases, Department of Industrial Y.K. Sinha, visited Batticaloa Policy & Promotion (DIPP) and Department of Science and Technology

PSLV-C27 Successfully Launches India's Fourth Navigation Satellite IRNSS-1D

Press Information Bureau: March 30, 2015

New Delhi: ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C27, successfully launched the 1425 kg IRNSS-1D, the fourth satellite in the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) today evening (March 28, 2015) from Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota. This is the twenty eighth consecutively successful mission of the PSLV. The 'XL' configuration of PSLV was used for this mission. Previously, the same configuration of the vehicle was successfully used seven times.

After the PSLV-C27 lift-off at 1719 hrs IST from the Second Launch Pad with the ignition of the first stage, the subsequent important flight events, namely, strap-on ignitions and separations, first stage separation, second stage ignition, heat-shield separation, second stage separation, third stage ignition and separation, fourth stage ignition and satellite injection, took place as planned. After a flight of about 19 minutes 25 seconds, IRNSS-1D Satellite was injected to an elliptical orbit of 282.52 km X 20,644 km (very close to the intended orbit) and successfully separated from the PSLV fourth stage.

After injection, the solar panels of IRNSS-1D were deployed automatically. ISRO's Master Control Facility (at Hassan, Karnataka) took over the control of the satellite. In the coming days, four orbit manoeuvres will be conducted from Master Control Facility to position the satellite in the Geosynchronous Orbit at



111.75 deg East longitude with 30.5 deg inclination. IRNSS-1D is the fourth of the seven satellites constituting the space segment of the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System. IRNSS-1A, 1B and 1C, the first three satellites of the constellation, were successfully launched by PSLV on July 02, 2013, April 04, 2014 and October 16, 2014 respectively. All the three satellites are functioning satisfactorily from their designated orbital positions.

IRNSS is an independent regional navigation satellite system designed to provide position information in the Indian region and 1500 km around the Indian mainland. IRNSS would provide

two types of services, namely, Standard Positioning Services (SPS) - provided to all users - and Restricted Services (RS), provided to authorised users.

A number of ground stations responsible for the generation and transmission of navigation parameters, satellite control, satellite ranging and monitoring, etc., have been established in many locations across the country.

In the coming months, the next satellite of this constellation, namely, IRNSS-1E, is scheduled to be launched by PSLV. The entire IRNSS constellation of seven satellites is planned to be completed by 2016.



Government has approved India-based Neutrino Observatory Project with estimated cost of Rs 1,583.05 crore

Press Information Bureau: March 13, 2015

New Delhi: The Government of India has approved the India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) Project, to be located in the Theni district of Tamil Nadu and financial sanction has been issued on 06.01.2015.

The project at an estimated cost of Rs.1583.05 crore includes construction of an underground lab and associated surface facilities at Pottipuram in Bodhi West hills of Theni District, in Tamil Nadu, construction of a 50 kilo ton magnetised iron calorimeter detector to study a fundamental particle called neutrino, and setting up Inter-Institutional Centre for High Energy Physics at Madurai. The environmental impact of the project has been taken into account before sanction of the project. Detailed studies on the environmental impact of the project were carried out by Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Coimbatore an autonomous institute under the Ministry of

Environment & Forests, and geotechnical studies were carried out by the Geological Survey of India (GSI).

The Project is located in Tamilnadu and the application for environmental clearance was submitted to the Department of Environment & Forests, Government of Tamil- Nadu. The Government of Tamil Nadu recommended and forwarded the application to the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India for concurrence. The Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India has cleared the project.

This information was provided by MoS in the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, PG & Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh in a reply to an unstarred question in Rajya Sabha today.

ISRO proposes to set up a new launch pad, referred as Third Launch Pad, at Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota

Press Information Bureau: March 13, 2015

New Delhi: Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) proposes to set up a new launch pad, referred as Third Launch Pad, at Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.

The Third Launch Pad is intended to support increased launch frequency, launching requirements of future advanced launch vehicles and also serve as a redundant launch pad for the GSLV MIII class of vehicles. Detailed studies on possible concepts /options and preliminary configuration have been carried out.

The possible site for the Third Launch Pad has been identified in Sriharikota taking into account the safety distances and maximal utilisation of existing launch pad facilities. However, further work on design of the launch pad will be taken up at an appropriate time after finalising the configuration of the advanced launch vehicle, operationalisation of GSLV MIII, programmatic requirements and resource availability.

This information was provided by MoS in the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, PG & Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh in a reply to an unstarred question in Rajya Sabha today.



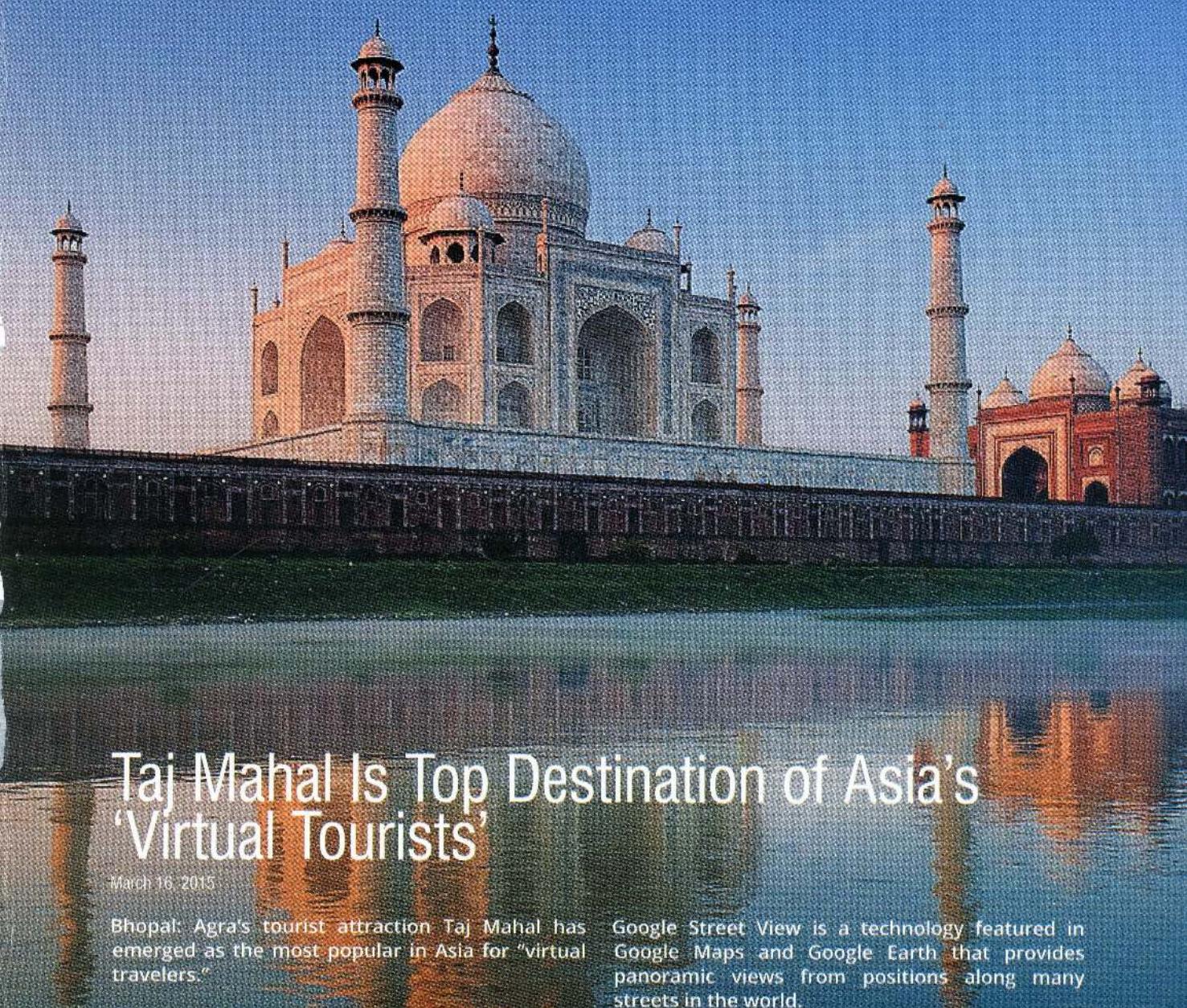
ECONOMIC SURVEY 2014-15

Feb, 2015

The Economic Survey 2014-15, was tabled in Parliament on February 27, 2015, by Mr Arun Jaitley, Union Minister for Finance, Government of India. The Survey forecasts a growth rate of over 8 per cent for FY16, as compared to the growth rate of 7.4 per cent in FY15. As per the Economic Survey, India must adhere to medium-term fiscal deficit target of 3 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). Robust reforms, push for Make in India and a better external environment indicate a double-digit growth trajectory, highlighted the Survey.

The main highlights of the survey are:

- Over 6 per cent points decline in inflation since late 2013.
- Current Account Deficit down from a peak of 6.7 per cent of GDP (in Q3, 2012-13) to an estimated 1 per cent in 2014-15.
- Foreign portfolio flows have stabilized the rupee.
- Real GDP growth at 7.2 per cent since 2013-14, after a nearly 12-quarter phase of deceleration.
- Inflation likely to remain in the 5-5.5 per cent range, creating space for easing of monetary conditions.
- GDP growth expected to accelerate between 8.1 and 8.5 per cent in 2015-16.
- Fiscal deficit target of 4.1 per cent appears achievable.
- Private investment to be the engine of long-run growth.
- Case for reviving targeted public investment as an engine of growth in the short run to complement and crowd in private investment.
- India must adhere to medium term fiscal deficit target of 3 percent of GDP.
- Expenditure control with growth recovery and GST will ensure that medium-term targets are met.
- The quality of expenditure needs to be shifted from consumption to investment.
- The direct fiscal cost of all the subsidies is roughly Rs 378,000 crore (US\$ 61.15 billion) or 4.2 percent of 2011-12 GDP.
- JAM Number Trinity – Jan Dhan Yojana, Aadhaar, Mobile can enable the State to transfer financial resources to the poor in a progressive manner without leakages and with minimal distorting effects.
- Econometric evidence suggests that the railways public investment multiplier (the effect of a Rs 1 (US\$ 0.016) increase in public investment in the railways on overall output) is around 5.
- India has cut subsidies and increased taxes on fossil fuels (petrol and diesel along with a coal cess) turning a carbon subsidy regime into one of carbon taxation. The implicit carbon tax is US\$ 140 for petrol and US\$ 64 for diesel.
- FFC transfers are highly progressive; that is, states with lower per capita NSDP receive on average much larger transfers per capita.
- Food grain production for 2014-15 estimated at 257.07 million tonnes (MT); to exceed that of last 5 years by 8.5 million tonnes.
- Food Subsidy Bill stands at Rs 107,823.75 crore (US\$ 17.43 billion) during 2014-15 (upto January, 2015), an increase of 20 per cent over previous year.
- Groundnut production increased by a massive 105.8 per cent in 2013-14, shows a remarkable increase of 75.9 per cent in productivity.
- Agriculture and allied sectors contribute 18 per cent to GDP and has grown by 3.7 per cent in 2013-14.
- Indian higher education system is one of the largest in the world with 713 universities, 36,739 colleges and 11,343 diploma-level institutions.
- As of December 2013 over 720 million citizens had been allocated an Aadhaar card. By December 2015 the total number of Aadhaar enrolments in the country is expected to exceed 1 billion.
- With over 900 million cell phone users and close to 600 million unique users, mobile money offers a complementary mechanism of delivering direct benefits to a large proportion of the population. And this number is increasing at a rate of 2.82 million per month.
- India has the largest postal network in the world with over 155,015 post offices of which (89.76 percent) are in the rural areas.
- Recovery of industrial production is led by the infrastructure sectors namely electricity, coal and cement.
- Civil aviation sector has seen healthy increase in international passengers and cargo handled at Indian airports during 2014-15.
- Major initiatives are implementation of public-private partnership (PPP) projects at four airports of the AAI, setting up of greenfield airports and development of small airports in tier II and tier III cities.
- India's National Solar Mission being scaled up five fold to 100,000 megawatts (MW).
- Clean energy cess doubled to Rs 100 (US\$ 1.61) per tonne to mop up Rs 17,000 crores (US\$ 2.74 billion) in NCEF.
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Taj Mahal Is Top Destination of Asia's 'Virtual Tourists'

March 16, 2013

Bhopal: Agra's tourist attraction Taj Mahal has emerged as the most popular in Asia for "virtual travelers."

"Taj Mahal has emerged as one of the most popular Asian places for global virtual travelers. The fascination with this grand, symmetrical white marble mausoleum also holds within Asia, with the Taj Mahal ranking as one of the most globally viewed destinations by people in Singapore, Australia, Korea, Philippines, Malaysia and of course, India," Google said in a statement.

"Last year, global virtual tourists had favored Japan for its trails weaving up Mount Fuji, its colorful canal at Dotonbori and its secluded ruins at Hashima Island, as the most popular Google Street View destinations in Asia," it said.

Google Street View is a technology featured in Google Maps and Google Earth that provides panoramic views from positions along many streets in the world.

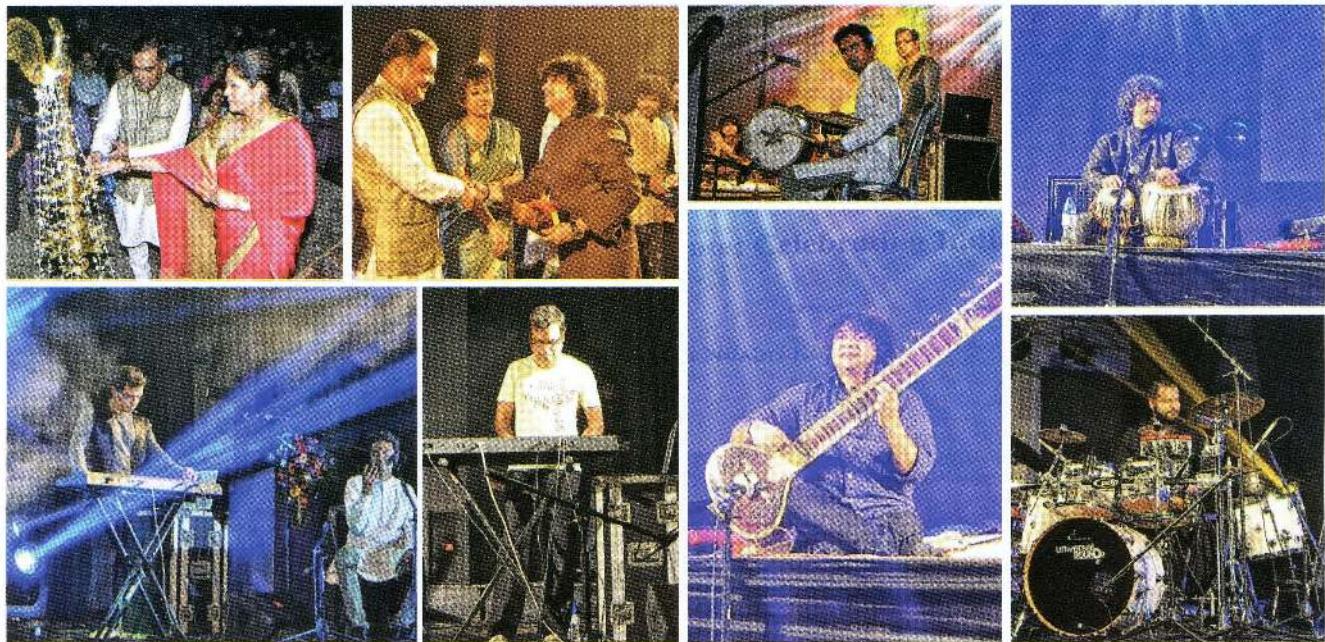
Though Japan still attracts many virtual tourists, cultural monuments and temples across the region are also gaining in popularity, it said.

Other top Google Street View destinations in India include Delhi's Red Fort, Qutab Minar, Humayun's Tomb and Jantar Mantar; Agra Fort; Lavasa, a private city being built near Pune; Pune's Shaniwar Wada; Lovely Professional University in Phagwara, Punjab; and the Indian Institute of Technology in Mumbai, Google said.

“SALUTE: Celebrating India”

January 25, 2015

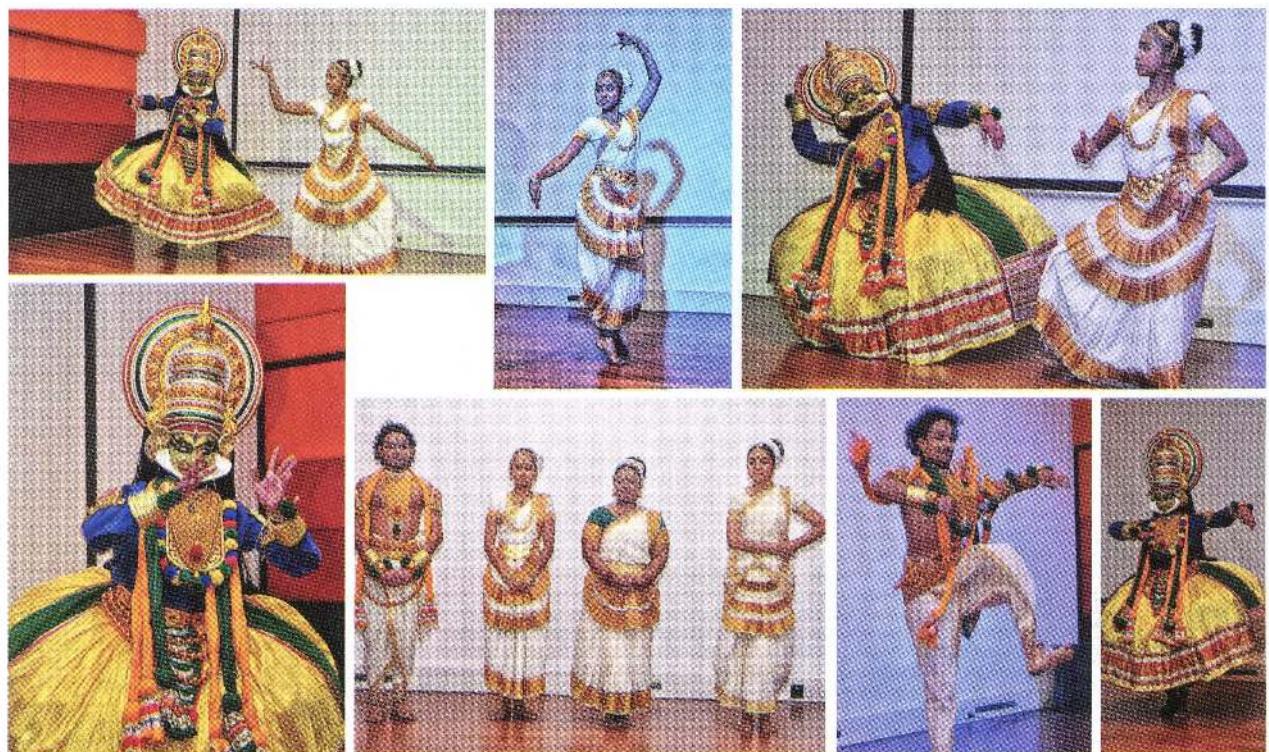
On the occasion of 66th Republic Day of India Performance by Sitar and Zitar Maestro Shri Niladri Kumar and his group held on 25th January 2015 at the Bishops College Auditorium



Shankuleela - A Kathakali and Mohiniyataam Performance

February 23, 2015

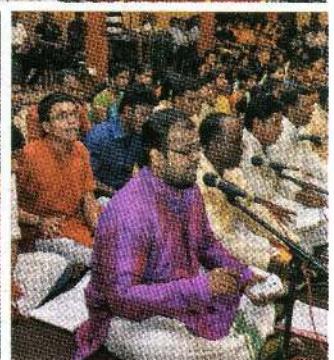
Shankuleela - A Kathakali and Mohiniyataam Performance by Madusanka Piyadesha, Leakhani Wathsala Jayasinghe, Jayatheepa Sakthivel and Nishal Silva on 23 February 2015



Sri Thyagaraja Aaradhana

February 27, 2015

Sri Thyagaraja Aaradhana organized by the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo with the support of Express Newspaper Ceylon Ltd and the Hindu Educational Society



Nav Pratibha 2015

March 18, 2015

A presentation of new talents in Indian Classical Music and Dance by the students of the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo held on 18th March 2015 at the Bishops College Auditorium



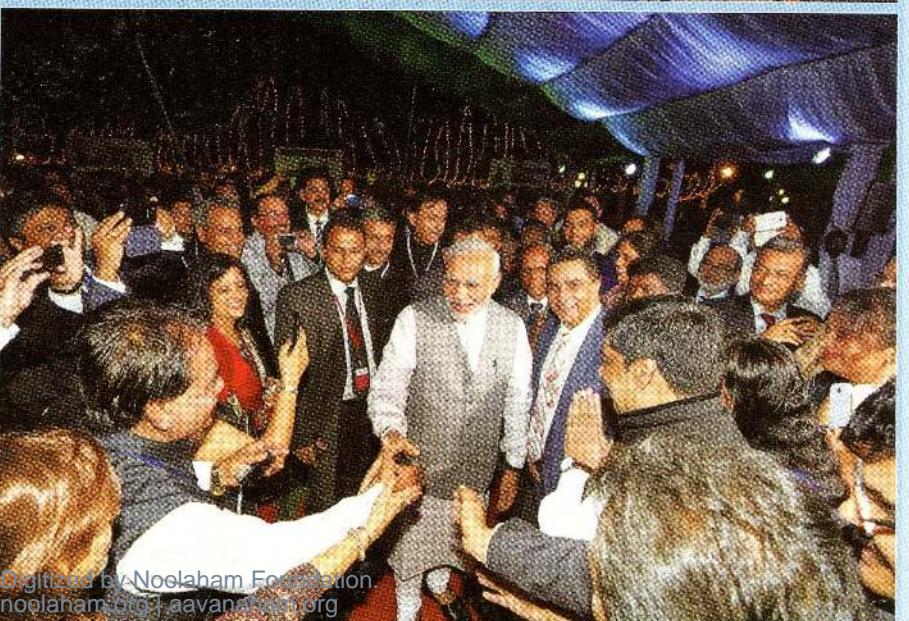
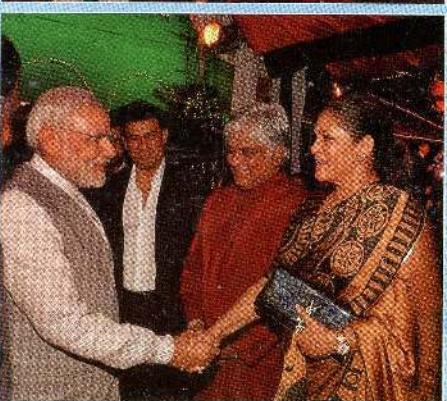
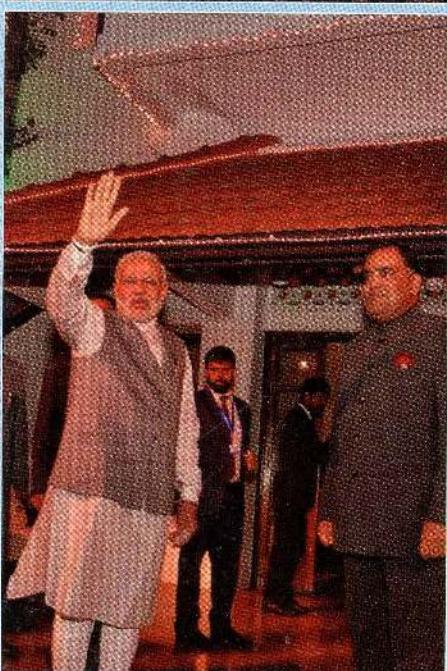
One Hundred Years of Gitanjali

March 27, 2015

Launch of the book - One Hundred Years of Gitanjali followed by Gitanjali-Re-lived: A musical rendition by Dr. Ananda Gupta and group held on 27th March 2015 at ICC, Colombo. Jointly organized by the Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies, University of Colombo & Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo



Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi at India House, Colombo



Incredible India

Incredible India

Incredible India

Incredible India

A Different Kind of Bull Run

The wisdom to pull together
will to win. Quintessential India.

Incredible India

