# Embassy of India
## Nur-Sultan
### NEWSLETTER

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External Affairs Minister’s message on Passport Seva Divas

It is a matter of great pleasure for me to felicitate all our Passport Issuing Authorities in India and abroad on the occasion of the Passport Seva Divas. The Ministry of External Affairs, in association with the Central Passport Organization, is celebrating this occasion with renewed commitment to provide passport and passport-related services to the citizens in a timely, reliable, accessible, transparent and efficient manner.

The year 2018 saw the continued growth in passport and passport-related services. More than 1.24 crore passports were issued in India and abroad. The mPassport Seva Mobile App for submission of passport applications and the scheme that allows to apply for passports from anywhere in the country, have contributed to this process. We have continued with the twin objectives of further simplifying the passport rules and expanding our outreach efforts to take passport services nearer to our citizens.

There are 93 Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) and 412 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSKs) functioning today, taking the total number of PSKs serving the Public to 505. We have been working closely with the Department of Posts in taking passport services closer to the people by setting-up new POPSks in far flung places in the country. More than 18,500 appointments are being released daily at these POPSks. The success of this initiative is borne by the fact that nearly 3 million passport applications have been processed at these POPSks since they were set up in January 2017.

The process of Police Verification has been simplified and made citizen-friendly. With the concerted efforts of the Ministry of External Affairs and the State police authorities, the average time for police verification has come down to 19 days.

Further, the Ministry has successfully integrated the passport issuance systems in our Missions/Posts in Australia; Bahrain; Canada; Kuwait; Malaysia; Oman; Qatar; Saudi Arabia; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Thailand; United Arab Emirates; United Kingdom and the United States of America into the Passport Seva Project. This is enabling us to deliver passport and related services to our diaspora abroad in a more efficient manner.

I take this opportunity to request all the Passport Issuing Authorities in India and abroad to commit themselves to the mantra of our Government: ‘Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas’™, and to continue further enhancing the Performance, Transparency and Delivery of the governance system.
Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi participated in the SCO Summit held at Bishkek on 13-14 June 2019. He congratulated President Jeenbekov and Kyrgyz Republic for the efficient leadership of the SCO Summit. He also thanked him for the generous hospitality and the grand welcome. The essential discussions of the Summit revolved around terrorism, Afghanistan, the economic issues especially the opportunities that are there for economic cooperation. As far as terrorism is concerned there need felt for close cooperation among the member countries including using the platform of RATS – Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure based in Tashkent.

On the Afghanistan issue, Prime Minister reiterated well known Indian position that any process in Afghanistan should be Afghan led, Afghan owned and Afghan controlled and as a friend of Afghanistan India reiterated its commitment to working for the peace and stability of that country.

In his address, Prime Minister said that he history, civilization and culture of India, have been interconnected with the SCO region for thousands of years. The shared area needs better connectivity in the modern era. Initiatives like International North South Transport Corridor, Chabahar Port, Ashgabat Agreement, clearly emphasize the focus of India on connectivity. India has also operated Air Freight Corridor between Kabul and Kandahar and New Delhi and Mumbai since 2017. Respect for sovereignty, regional integrity, good governance, transparency, practicality and reliability should be the basis of connectivity initiatives. The importance of people-to-people contact is no less than physical connectivity. E-tourist visa services by India are available for most of the SCO countries.

He also touched upon things like renewable energy, environment protection and solar energy. He said India has its strengths and is ready to work with the countries of Shanghai Cooperation Organization to improve their energy basket and work for common good in terms of climate change.

In his address he said, “we should have a vision to strengthen healthy co-operation in our region. The letters HEALTH can be a good template for our collaboration.” He described HEALTH as:

H for Health Care Cooperation
E for Economic Cooperation
A for Alternate Energy
L for Literature and Culture
T for Terrorism free Society
H for Humanitarian Cooperation.

He again thanked His Excellency, President Jeenbekov and offered his wishes and congratulated President Vladimir Putin for heading the SCO next year and assured full cooperation of India to the Russian Federation for the successful presidency of the SCO.
On the occasion of 5th International Day of Yoga, PM leads Mass Yoga Demonstration at Ranchi

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, participated in a Mass Yoga Demonstration at Ranchi on the occasion of International Day of Yoga on 21st June 2019. "Let our motto be Yoga for peace, harmony and progress", exhorted the Prime Minister as he commenced his address, shortly before the Yoga session.

Greeting everyone on the occasion, he complimented media personnel, and those associated with social media, for the key role they have played in spreading the message of Yoga.

The Prime Minister said that he now wants to take the message of modern Yoga, from the cities to the villages, and to the homes of the poor and tribal communities. He emphasized that Yoga must become part of the lives of the poor and the tribals, because they suffer the most on account of illness.

The Prime Minister said that today, with changing times, our focus should be on wellness too, besides preventing illness. He said Yoga can give us this strength. He said this is the spirit of Yoga, and of ancient Indian philosophy.

The Prime Minister said Yoga is not accomplished merely by the activities that we perform for a while on the ground or the mat. He said Yoga implies discipline and dedication, and this must be practiced throughout our lives.

The Prime Minister said Yoga transcends the barriers of age, colour, caste, community, thought, sect, rich or poor, State, and border. He said Yoga belongs to everyone.

The Prime Minister said that today, from drawing rooms to board rooms, parks to sports complexes, and streets to wellness centres, Yoga has caught the imagination of people.

Shri Narendra Modi said that Yoga is both ancient and modern. It is constant and evolving, he added.

For centuries, the essence of Yoga has remained the same: healthy body, stable mind, spirit of oneness, the Prime Minister said. Yoga provides a perfect blend of knowledge, work and devotion, he said.

The Prime Minister said that as the world adopts Yoga, we should lay stress on research related to the subject. He said Yoga should connect with disciplines such as medicine, physiotherapy, and artificial intelligence.

Indian Army Mountaineering Expedition to MT Makalu (8485M) 2019

First Indian Army Mountaineering Expedition to Mt Makalu (8485 M) 2019 has been ‘Flagged In’ by Hon’ble Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh on 28 June 2019. The Indian Army Mountaineering team achieved a singular distinction by placing sixteen members on the summit of Mt Makalu, the fifth highest peak of the world, on 16 May 2019. Indian Army has now climbed all eight-thousander peaks in Nepal.

The team led by Major Manoj Joshi was ‘Flagged Off’ by Director General of Military Training on 26 March 2019 at New Delhi. A highly experienced and balanced team was shortlisted and trained for the expedition which required sheer determination, team spirit and logistic support. The team experienced many difficulties and challenges en-route wherein they fought against nature’s fury, negotiated deep crevasses, withstood now blizzards and climbed near vertical rocks and ice walls but the sheer determination of the valiant climbers and the cohesive team effort brought laurels for the Army and the Nation.

The expedition has shown that given an opportunity, Army team is capable of reaching any height in any terrain under any circumstances.
Celebrations Of 5th International Yoga Day (IDY) In Kazakhstan

Embassy of India in Kazakhstan celebrated the 5th International Day of Yoga (IDY 2019) in a series of programmes at 11 venues in ten cities across Kazakhstan. The week long celebrations of IDY 2019 started in Nur-Sultan on 15 June 2019 at Yoga Park. Mr. Yeregali Yegemberdy, Akim of Saryarka District was the chief guest on the occasion.

The Embassy, in collaboration with "Nataraja" (an Ensemble of Indian classical Dance and Yoga studio), celebrated the 5th IDY-2019 in Arkalyk city on 16th June 2019. The event was held at the Central stadium, Zhiger, Arkalyk. Ms Kunsulu Bukeshovna Seidildina, Head of Laboratory Department of City Hospital was the Chief Guest of the event. The event included the Common Yoga Protocol, and was followed by a cultural programme by Natraja Dance Group, Arkalyk. People from all walks of life actively participated in the event including some govt officials. Popularity of Yoga is on the rise in the town with celebrations of Yoga Day. On the same day, the Embassy in collaboration with "Shakti" (a Studio of Indian Dance), organised the 5th IDY-2019 at Kostanay at the Riverfront of the 25th Anniversary of Independence, Gasheka Street, Kostanay. Mr. Kurbanov Damir, Chief Specialist of the Department of Physical Culture and Sports of Akimat of Kostanay city was the Chief Guest of the event. Other local organisations, viz. Lakshmi Yoga Studio, (Ms. Anastasia Shirina, Director and Yoga teacher), Studio StarKids (Ms. Anastasia Serikova, Director), and Zumba Dance Studio (Ms. Yuliya Kazantceva, Dancer and Choreographer) also collaborated in organising the IDY-2019 at Kostanay.

On 21 June 2019 Embassy, in collaboration with Akimat of Taraz City, organised the 5th IDY-2019 at Taraz at Zhelthoksan Tolqyny Square, Taraz. Ambassador Prabhat Kumar welcomed the Chief Guest, Mr. Kenzhebek Olzhabai Mayshbaiuly, Dy. Mayor of Taraz Akimat, who thanked the Ambassador for organising the event in this city. Approximately 300 participants performed the Yoga and approx 1000 casual observers attended the event. In addition to the Common Yoga Protocol conducted by the Yoga teacher, Mr. Sandeep Jadhav, several local yoga schools and groups also gave demonstrations of different forms of yoga. The event which was planned and organised as a ‘Yoga Fest’ with rock bands, Indian cultural performances by artistes trained under ICCR and different forms of Yoga. The show left an indelible mark on the citizens of Taraz. The concept of fitness through Yoga has really caught the imagination.
At Temirtau, the 5th IDY-2019 celebration was organized by the Embassy in collaboration with M/s Arcelor-Mittal Temirtau (AMT), on 22 June 2019 at AMT’s Convention Centre. About 120 Yoga fans from Temirtau attended the event. Shri Shailendra Pokle, Head of Material & Technical Procurement welcomed the participants.

5th International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Atyrau, Karaganda, Zerenda, Uralsk and Almaty on 23.06.2019.

In Atyrau the event was organized with the support of Mr. Subhashis Saha at the Atyrau University Sports Complex. The Chief Guest for the event was 28-year old sportsman, Mr. Erzhan Salimgereev. In spite of losing an arm and a leg in an accident when he was a boy, he went on to become eight times World Champion in para swimming. He won two gold medals in Asian para swimming in Jakarta 2018. He is also a two time Asian Champion and 9 times Champion in Kazakhstan.

Embassy in collaboration with Karaganda Yoga Academy organized the event at the Central Park of Karaganda. Mr. Alexander Bondarenko (Swami Akhilesh), Head of the Karaganda Yoga Academy was the chief guest on the occasion.

Embassy in collaboration with the Centre for Indian Classical Dances (CICD), Almaty celebrated 5th International Day of Yoga in Zerenda, at Ak Danat Holiday Resort on 23 June 2019. Mr. Berikzhan Abutalipov, Mayor of Zerenda District and Mr. Shinarbek Batirhanov, Chairman of Tourism Association attended the programme as Chief Guests. Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, Director of CICD, also organized a cultural programme of Indian Classical Dance. A Yoga Workshop was also organised by the CICD at the Ak Danat Resort at Zerenda from 24-28 June 2019.
5th IDY was celebrated in Uralsk in collaboration with Hera Yoga Club and Academy of Healthy Lifestyle at the local Youth Stadium. Mr. Mukanov Dauren Akedilovich, Head of Department of Physical Education and Sports of West Kazakhstan Region was the Chief Guest of the event which was attended by over 600 participants.

Embassy in collaboration with the Yoga Family of Astana, organized the Finale of the week-long celebration of the 5th International Day of Yoga (IDY) in the Forecourt of the National Museum of Kazakhstan, Nur-Sultan on 22 June, 2019. Mr. Almaz Nurazkhan, Director of the National Museum of Kazakhstan graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Many dignitaries including members of the diplomatic corps, journalists attended the event. Ambassador Prabhat Kumar, read out a passage from the Prime Minister’s speech at IDY-2019 celebrations at Ranchi on 21 June 2019 during his address. Ambassador Prabhat Kumar also informed the participants about the announcement of the ‘Prime Minister’s Award for Outstanding Contribution for Promotion & Development of Yoga’ this year which includes two categories for the international practitioners and promoters of yoga, namely Individual and Organisation. He encouraged the yoga practitioners – individuals and organisations of Kazakhstan to strive for this prestigious award by putting up their best efforts.

The celebrations of the 5th International Day of Yoga (IDY) across 10 cities of Kazakhstan concluded in Almaty on 23 June 2019 where a grand event was organised by the Embassy of India, and Representative Office of India (RoI), in collaboration with InCham, Kazakhstan, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (KazNU), and Massimov Medical Centre. Amb. Prabhat Kumar, welcomed the Chief Guests, Prof. Galymkair Mutanov (Rector, KazNU), and Mr. Vlastimil Samek (Head, UNDPI, Almaty), and also the family representatives of the late Kazimkhan Kasymovich Massimov, who passed away early this year. Chief Guest, Prof.Galymkair Mutanov also paid tribute to Mr. Massimov and announced to dedicate newly established Yoga Hall in his University to the late Kazimkhan Massimov. This hall, ‘Kazimkhan Massimov Yoga Hall’ was later jointly inaugurated by the Ambassador and Prof. Mutanov. 1000 people registered for the IDY-2019 celebrations and altogether 1500 people attended the event.
The Embassy jointly with Hotel Rixos, Borovoe organised a YOGA FEST on 29 June 2019, at Borovoe. It was the extended part of the celebrations of the 5th International Day of Yoga (IDY), which was celebrated across Kazakhstan at 11 venues in ten cities. Ambassador Mr. Prabhat Kumar and Mrs. Tilottoma Kumar attended the event. The program began with Ambassador’s welcome speech followed by Common Yoga Protocol conducted by Mr. Trilok Narayan Tarak, Yoga Teacher, SVCC. The yoga session was followed by a short cultural program presented by Ms. Shruti Ghosh, Kathak Dance Teacher at SVCC along with dance students of SVCC. The cultural program consisting of classical Kathak and Bollywood folk and contemporary dances was thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated by the audience.

Briefing session on overseas electrols by Shri Sushil Chandra, Hon’ble Election Commissioner of India

A briefing session on online voters’ Registration and Electronic Transfer of Ballot System (ETPBS) and registration and participation of Overseas Voters by Shri Sushil Chandra, Hon’ble Election Commissioner of India was organized in the Embassy on 08.06.2019. Indian community, including Embassy officers, residing in Nur-Sultan attended the briefing. An informative presentation on overseas voters and procedures/facts about General Election 2019, was presented by Shri Vikram Batra, Director, Election Commission of India. Shri Sushil Chandra also interacted with the Indian Community and replied to their queries regarding overseas voters. He also gave very interesting facts/information about the General Election 2019 which included the challenges faced to conduct the election successfully in the largest democracy in the world. He also patiently listened to the suggestions made by the participants and assured to propose them to the concerned committee. Ambassador Prabhat Kumar thanked the Hon’ble Election Commissioner for attending the briefing session. A briefing session was also conducted in ROI Almaty for the Indian community residing in Almaty.
Embassy organized a special training course for English Teachers from Kazakhstan under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme. Twenty four teachers were selected for this training programme and Ambassador met them before they left for India. The “Proficiency cum Professional Development Course for Teachers from Kazakhstan” has been conducted by the English and Foreign Language University (EFLU), Hyderabad from 3rd July to 14th August 2019 and is fully funded by the Government of India.

The main aim of this training is to raise the teachers’ proficiency levels to enhance their self-confidence and self-image and sensitize them to different approaches to teaching English as a foreign language. The training course will enable them to adopt effective techniques for improving the learners’ language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking, study skills, knowledge of grammar and vocabulary) and to adapt teaching to suit individual learner needs/different learning situations and to use tests as an effective means of assessing the overall teaching/learning experience.

This is second time that a special course has been organized by Embassy for the English Teachers from Kazakhstan under ITEC Programme. Last year a batch of 25 English Teachers from Kazakhstan attended this six weeks special course at EFLU from 25th June to 03rd August 2018.

The Embassy wishes them all the best and hope that they will come back with enhanced knowledge and improved personality.

**Second Tree Plantation event organized by the Embassy**

To mark the World Environment Day, Indian Embassy in collaboration with Akimate of Saryarka District organized a Tree Plantation event on 5 June 2019 at intersection of Zhenis Avenue and Bogenbay Batyr Avenue (Aqaiyq Park), Nur-Sultan. The event commenced with tree plantation by Mr. Temirzhan Edigenov, Deputy Mayor of Saryarka District, Nur-Sultan city, Mr. Prabhat Kumar, Ambassador of India and the other participants. This was followed by Deputy Akim’s and Ambassador’s address on the occasion. Ambassador thanked Deputy Akim for the support provided for the event and appealed everyone to plant as many trees as possible for saving our planet. Teachers/students of SVCC, Nur-Sultan and local artists presented a Cultural show. This was the second Tree Plantation event organized by Embassy in Nur-Sultan to mark the World Environment Day.
Incredible India
Destination: KURUKSHETRA

Kurukshetra is described as Dharamkshetra i.e. ‘Region of righteousness’. Kurukshetra is a place of great historical and religious importance, revered all over the country for its sacred association with the Vedas and Vedic culture. It was here that the battle of Mahabharata was fought and Lord Krishna preached his philosophy of ‘Karma’ to Arjuna at Jyotisar, as enshrined in the holy Bhagwad-Gita.

According to Hindu mythology, Kurukshetra is spread over, a circuit of about 48 Kos (1 Kos = 2.25 miles), which includes a large number of holy places, temples and sacred tanks connected with the religious events or related to Mahabharata and the Kurus, the ancestors of Kauravas and Pandavas. Kurukshetra is intimately related to the Aryan civilization and its growth all along the sacred Saraswati River. Kurukshetra is well known for the Battle of Mahabharata. The city is dotted with numerous temples and sites of historical and mythological value. It is believed that the holy waters of all sacred rivers flow or converge into Kurukshetra's Samnehit Sarovar. It is believed that those who bathe in the tanks in Kurukshetra go to heaven after death.

BHADRAKALI TEMPLE
The temple is famously known as “Savitri Peeth”, “Devi Peeth”, “Kalika Peeth” or “Aadi Peeth”. According to Hindu mythology, Goddess Sati could not bear the slander of her husband, Lord Shiva and committed ‘Sati’ (immolation). Holding her burning body, Lord Shiva started pacing the universe, watching this entire incident God Vishnu cut her body into 52 parts with his ‘surdarshan chakra’. Due to this, all the body parts of Goddess Sati fell in different directions forming the various ‘Shakti peeths’.

It is believed that the right ankle of Goddess Sati fell where the Bhadrakali Temple is located. Legend has it that before leaving for the battle of Mahabharata, Lord Krishna along with Pandavas worshipped here for their victory and offered the horses of their chariots. The same tradition of offerings is continued till date, suiting ones expenses. Also, the ‘mundan’ (head shaving) ceremony of Lord Krishna and his brother Balram is believed to have been performed at this shrine.

SANNIHIT SAROVAR
Measuring up to 550 ft in width and 1500 ft in height, Sannihit Sarovar is believed to be the meeting point of seven tributaries of Saraswati River and the home of Lord Vishnu. Sannihit Sarovar is situated at a distance of 3 km from Kurukshetra on Pehowa Road. It is believed that the entire range of ‘Tirthas’ assembles here on the day of ‘amavasya’ and as per legend, if a man performs ‘shradh’ at the time of a solar eclipse and takes a bath in this tank, he acquires the fruit of 1000 ‘Ashwamedh’ sacrifices.

During a solar eclipse, pilgrims gather at this holy spot. Interestingly, visitors to this place can learn about their ancestors from the ‘Purohits’, locally known as Pandas, who for ages have been the record keepers of pilgrims coming from various parts of the country. It is also believed that many Sikh Gurus too visited this holy place from time to time. It is believed that bathing on the day of Amavasya or on the day of an eclipse would fetch the fortune of an aswamedha yajna. Sarovar premises also houses shrines of Dhruv Narayan, Sri Hanuman, Lord Vishnu, Dhruv Bhagat, Laxmi Narayan and Goddess Durga.
BRAHMA SAROVAR
Brahma Sarovar, as its name suggests, is a water tank in Thanesar in Haryana. It is considered sacred by Hindus and is incredibly beautiful. It is said that the water inside the tank can help those taking a dip in it to attain salvation. It has been currently renovated and is equipped with modern state-of-the-art facilities. Brahma Sarovar is the most exquisite and breathtaking site in Kurukshetra. Tourists can spend hours here watching the sunset with its reddish and golden reflection in the water.

This place is colourful and remains lively throughout which attracts visitors and make them visit multiple times. There are handicraft shops and a variety of cuisines from different states to feed on making it a must-visit place. A beautiful temple is situated inside the water which can be reached via a concrete bridge. The religious aartis conducted here during sunrise and sunset offer an infinite sense of calm. The Bramha Sarovar also has a shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva in the middle which can be accessed via a small bridge. Pilgrims and tourists visit the Brahma Sarovar in huge numbers during the Solar Eclipse.

BHOR SAIDAN CROCODILE FARM
Bhor Saidan Crocodile Farm was established over an area surrounding a tank full of crocodiles. In 1982, the farm was taken over by the Forest Department and the periphery was fenced. The department obtained four pairs of crocodiles from the Crocodile Bank in Madras to help balance the ecosystem. The current population of the farm is 25 and these majestic reptiles can be observed from close range from a high mound created inside the farm.

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SHEIKH CHILLI'S (OR CHEHALI'S) TOMB
This beautiful tomb and the madrasa (school) are associated with the Sufi Saint Abdu'r-Rahim alias Aabd-ul-Razak, popularly known as Shaikh Chehli (also pronounced Chilli) believed to be the spiritual teacher of the Mughal Prince Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Emperor Shahjahan. The tomb, overlooking the madrasa and standing on an artificial terrace, is octagonal in shape with the entrance in the South. It is built of buff sandstone and is crowned with a pear-shaped dome of white marble standing on a high circular drum. The cenotaph of the saint occupies the centre of the chamber, while his grave is located in the lower chamber, which conjoins the madarasa through a narrow gallery.

The madrasa has nine-arched openings on each side of a central courtyard that has in the centre a stone masonry tank. The attraction is a stunning illustration of Persian architecture with beautiful floral designs. The antiquities recovered from the excavations at ‘Harsh ka Tilla’ and ‘Bhagwanpura’ (both fall in the district of Kurukshetra) are displayed in two small museums of the madrasa building. The complex has Sheikh Chilli's and his wife's tomb, a mosque made of red sandstone, madrasa, beautifully maintained lawns and an Archaeological Museum making it a perfect tourist attraction.
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Nur-Sultan

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PHOTO FEATURE

Ambassador’s meeting with H.E. Mr. Nurlan Nigmatulin, Speaker of

Glimpses of Celebrations of 5th International Day of Yoga in
Kazakhstan (15-23 June 2019)

Nur-Sultan 15.06.2019
Arkalyk 16.06.2019
Kostanay 16.06.2019
Taraz 21.06.2019
Nur-Sultan 22.06.2019
Temirtau 22.06.2019
Karaganda 23.06.2019
Zerenda 23.06.2019
Almaty 23.06.2019
Uralsk 23.06.2019

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