

सत्यमेव जयते

Embassy of India ASTANA

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Embassy of India ASTANA NEWSLETTER

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Prime Minister of Japan visits India

Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Shinzo Abe visited India from December 11-13, 2015 for the Annual Summit to strengthen Strategic and Global Partnership between the two countries. He attended Japan-India Innovation Seminar organized by business associations viz., CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM on 11th December.

Prime Minister Abe along with Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi attended India-Japan Business Leaders Forum on 12th December. In his remarks, Prime Minister Modi emphasized that he wanted India and Japan to move ahead together not just in the sphere of high-speed trains, but also for high-speed growth. Prime Minister Abe said that a strong India was good for Japan and a strong Japan was good for India. He stated that Prime Minister Modi's economic policies were like Shinkansen—high speed, safe and reliable and carrying many people along.

Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe called on President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee. President Shri Pranab Mukherjee said that the projects undertaken through Japanese Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) had directly impacted the lives of ordinary Indians in a positive way. He added that India would like to see an expansion of ODA projects and more Japanese business activities as well as an enhancement in the flow of FDI into India. Japanese Prime Minister warmly reciprocated the President's sentiments. He said that relations between the two countries are built on common values and strategic interests and the cooperation between the two countries is important for the peace and security of the entire India-Pacific region.

Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Modi held restricted session followed by delegation-level talks. In the joint media statement, Prime Minister Modi said that India deeply values the Special Strategic and Global Partnership with Japan, which

enjoys unmatched public goodwill and political consensus in India. He emphasized that the Memorandum signed on civil nuclear energy cooperation is not just an agreement for commerce and clean energy, but is a shining symbol of a new level of mutual confidence and strategic partnership in the cause of a peaceful and secure world. He appreciated the Japan's extraordinary package of US\$ 12 billion in loan and technical assistance on very easy terms for High Speed Rail Project on Mumbai-Ahmedabad sector. The project is a 508 km railway line costing a total of Rs. 97,636 crore (US\$ 15 billion). Prime Minister Modi emphasized that the two agreements signed on security cooperation would deepen defence relations between the two countries and promote defence manufacturing in India. He added that it would build on the decision to expand staff talks to all three wings of Armed Forces and make Japan a partner in Malabar Naval Exercises. He announced that India would provide "visa on arrival" to Japanese citizens from March 1, 2016. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said that the India-Japan partnership had the greatest potential of any bilateral relationship. He announced that both public and private sectors of Japan would act in unison to support growth in India. He also announced that Japan would extend multiple entry visas to Indian nationals.

Prime Minister Modi announced that for the first time, India would export to Japan cars made domestically by Maruti Suzuki under the 'Make in India' initiative. Prime Minister Abe along with Prime Minister Modi visited Varanasi. They performed Ganga Aarti, an Agni Pooja (worship to fire) dedicated to Lord Shiva at Dashashwamedh Ghat in Varanasi on the banks of river Ganga.



Japanese PM calls on President



India-Japan Business Leaders Forum



Prime Minister Abe meets Prime Minister Modi

16 Agreements/MOUs were signed on Peaceful uses of nuclear energy, Cooperation on developing Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Corridor with financial and technical assistance of Japan, Defence and Security cooperation, Protection of classified military information, Double taxation avoidance, Technical cooperation in railways, Safety in train operation, Cooperation between Indian Department of Science & Technology and the Japan Science & Technology Agency, Young researchers' exchange programme between Indian Department of Science and Technology and the Japan Society for Promotion of Science, Medical products regulation, Cooperation between educational institutions of two countries and support for exchange of aspiring students, Analysis of issues related to energy sector, Cooperation between Andhra Pradesh and Toyama Prefecture, Cooperation between Kerala and Lake Nakaumi, Lake Shinji and Mt. Daisen, Cooperation between Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad and National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, and Cooperation on Forestry.



Vice President of India Visits Turkmenistan

Vice President of India Mr. Mohammad Hamid Ansari visited Turkmenistan from December 11-13, 2015 to attend the events relating to 20th anniversary of the permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan in Ashgabat and groundbreaking ceremony of TAPI Gas Pipeline Project in Mari. He called on President of Turkmenistan Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow on 11th December. President Berdimuhamedow said that they were looking forward to moving on the TAPI project as quickly as possible. Vice President Mr. Ansari mentioned that TAPI is not just a pipeline but a regional connectivity initiative. The leaders touched upon the possibilities of cooperation in fertilizers, particularly in the production and the long-term uptake of urea.



Vice President calls on President of Turkmenistan

Vice President Mr. Ansari addressed the international neutrality conference attended by a number of leaders and dignitaries on 12th December. He said that the policy of neutrality is that of peace, non-violence and peaceful resolution of disputes. He mentioned that the formal proclamation of neutral status was a historic event for Turkmenistan and it set the stage to chart out its path for development and progress on its own terms while respecting the fundamental principles of international peace and cooperation. He added that this wise yet pragmatic vision guided the nation to transform into a fast growing economy marked by political stability.



Vice President pays respects at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi

Vice President Mr. Ansari paid his respects at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi. Turkmen children who are studying Hindi impressed the gathering by singing some Hindi bhajans and songs.

Vice President Mr. Ansari visited Mari on 13th December. He addressed the groundbreaking ceremony of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) Gas Pipeline Project in presence of President of Turkmenistan Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, President of Afghanistan Mr. Ashraf Ghani and Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Nawaz Sharif. He said that the launch of the project marks the first step towards fulfilling the vision of an economically integrated region stretching from the Bay of Bengal to the Caspian Sea. He emphasized that the TAPI project is a reflection of the common desire of the four member countries to re-connect and a way to re-claim the shared geography and revitalize an age-old legacy of mutually enriching interactions.



Leaders press the button to begin the welding process of TAPI Gas pipeline

The four leaders signed a memorial note and shovelled earth to signify the beginning of TAPI construction.

India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians

The India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI) is a not-for-profit Trust established by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to serve as a credible institutional avenue to enable Non Resident Indians/Persons of Indian Origin to engage in philanthropy to supplement India's social and development efforts. The IDF-OI channelizes the philanthropic propensities and resources of the overseas Indian community into national development and social projects. The Trust is exempt from the provisions of Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 2010. The IDF-OI offers projects pertaining to Swacch Bharat Mission, National Mission for Clean Ganga and projects in States of India for contributions by overseas Indians. The overseas Indians can select a project in totality or an individual component of a project as per the state or sector of their preference. Details of the projects are available at <http://www.idfoi.org/>



Ambassador Visits Semey

Ambassador Harsh Jain visited Semey in East Kazakhstan Region on December 14-15, 2015 at the invitation of Mr. Toleby Rakhypbekov, Rector of Semey State Medical University. He was accorded warm welcome on arrival at the Semey airport. The Rector gave him a tour of the Medical Centre and the University Campus during which he interacted with the faculty and the students. He held discussions with the Rector on future plans of the University and welfare of over 300 Indian students studying at the University.

Accompanied by the Rector, Ambassador inaugurated the beautifully decorated "Indian Room" in the main building of the University Campus. The Indian Room would provide an opportunity to the Indian students to showcase Indian culture and promote cross cultural awareness among the students and guests of the University.

The University organized an impressive concert programme in honour of the Ambassador. Before the start of the Concert, the Rector conferred on the Ambassador the title of Honorary Professor of the Semey State Medical University. In his address, Ambassador highlighted the historical and cultural linkages, trade links and close bilateral relations between the two countries. He especially dwelt on the cooperation in the field of education and capacity building between the two countries. He thanked the University for offering opportunity to aspiring Indian students to receive medical education at the prestigious university and taking the initiative to dedicate a room to promote Indian culture. He assured the University of all possible support for the Indian room to make it a vibrant centre of activity.

Ambassador concluded his remarks by wishing all the people of Kazakhstan a very happy Independence Day on 16th December and thanking the University, especially the Rector for the invitation and the warm hospitality extended to him during the visit.

Semey (formerly known as Semiplatinsk) is a city in the East Kazakhstan Region. It was founded in 1718, when Russia built a fort beside the river Irtysh, near a ruined Buddhist monastery. The monastery's seven buildings lent the fort and later the city the name Seminplatinsk (Russian for "Seven chambered"). The city has a population of about 300,000. The Semey state Medical University was opened in 1953. It is one of the leading medical universities in Kazakhstan.



Photo Exhibition on Bishnoi Community of India

The Embassies of India and France in Astana jointly hosted a photo exhibition of the works of Photojournalist Mr. Franck Vogel on the life of Bishnoi community in India at the Marriott Hotel on December 12, 2015. The event coincided with the conclusion of COP 21 Summit in Paris. About 150 guests attended the function. In his address, Ambassador Harsh Jain noted that climate change, triggered by industrial revolution that began about 250 years ago, is one of the biggest challenges confronting the planet today. He mentioned that ecological awareness at community level can be an important element in tackling the climate change. He recalled that the concept of ecological awareness and high reverence for all forms of life goes far back in the history of India as reflected in aphorism "Parasparopagraho Jivānām", which means that all life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence.

Ambassador spoke about Bishnoi community's dedication to preservation of animal and plant life. He narrated an incident where several Bishnois are believed to have laid down their lives by clinging to the trees being cut on the orders of the King in 1730 AD. He stressed that even today, Bishnois are fiercely protective of their traditions and make it their life's mission to plant as many trees as possible. He emphasized that their conservational ethics are an inspiration to modern society. Ambassador commended Mr. Franck Vogel for bringing to light the life and ethos of Bishnoi community to the wider global audience by vividly capturing their lifestyle in photographs and documentaries. The photographs of Mr. Franck Vogel on Bishnoi community were also displayed on large screens at the City Centre in Astana.



India's Industrial Output Growth Hits Five-Year High

India's industrial output, measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), grew by 9.8 per cent in October, 2015 on an annual basis riding on the back of a robust growth in consumer products and capital goods. This growth rate is the highest in the last five years. The industrial revival heralds optimism that people are spending more on goods and services nudging companies to invest and hire more. The business associations termed it as a booster for the economy. The President of ASSOCHAM (Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India) Mr. Sunil Kanoria commented that the high industrial growth on the back of an impressive double digit expansion in manufacturing would be considered a morale booster for the economy. FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry)'s Secretary General Mr. A. Didar Singh said that the outlook for growth remains positive and can be strengthened in coming months if pace of reforms continues.



Diplomatic Charity Bazaar 2015

The Diplomatic Charity Bazaar 2015 was held at Hotel Radisson, Astana on 6th December, 2015. The Bazaar was hosted by Ambassadors Spouses, Astana. The Diplomatic Missions and International organizations and Businesses operating in the Republic of Kazakhstan participated in the Bazaar by putting up their respective stalls and contributing to the raffle prizes and sponsorships.

The Indian Embassy in Astana participated in the Diplomatic Bazaar under the guidance of Smt. Vandana Jain, spouse of Ambassador.

The Indian stall was one of the main attractions at the Bazaar. It was decorated in the traditional Indian style and sold Indian souvenirs, garments, costumes, jewellery and handicrafts. The Indian stall also offered application of henna tattoos (mehandi) and Indian snacks and tea that were a big attraction for the visitors.

In all, the 51 stalls at the Bazaar collected an amount of KZT 28 Million for the Charity. The Indian Stall contributed an amount of KZT 2,80,000/-. The money will be donated to improve the lives of local people in need.



Director of Centre for Indian Classical Dances Ms. Akmaral conferred State Award

Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, Director, Centre for Indian Classical Dances, Almaty was awarded the title of "Kazakhstanyn Enbek Sinirgen Kairatkeri" i.e., "Honoured Worker (Artist) of the Republic of Kazakhstan" by the Secretary of State Ms. Gulshara Abdykalikova at the President's Palace in Astana on the eve of Independence Day of Kazakhstan on 15th December, 2015. The title was given in recognition of her work for the past 18 years in uniting the people through her dance, strengthening friendship, spirituality and cultural ties, enriching the knowledge about Kazakhstan abroad, spreading the main principles of humanity, healthy life style through spiritual Indian classical dance and undertaking educational work including Asian philosophy among young people.



This honorary title, introduced in 1993, is awarded to prominent state and public figures, representatives of science, culture, art, manufacturing and social spheres in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The title is signed by President of Kazakhstan Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Ms. Akmaral is an ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) alumna and graduate of Kalakshetra College of Fine Arts, Chennai and holder of Diploma in Indian Arts awarded by Nalanda Dance Research Centre, Mumbai.

Participation of Kazakh Professionals in ITEC Courses

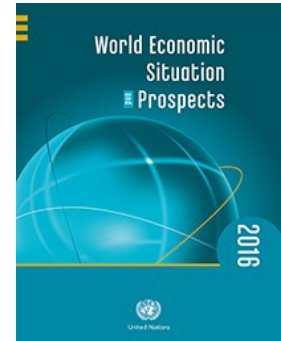
Shri Ram Kumar, SS(PPS/ITEC) handed over air tickets to the following six candidates for their travel to India : (i) Mrs. Elvira Rustenova, Head of Accounting Department in Zhangir Khan West Kazakhstan Agrarian Technical University, selected for the course 'General Management Programme for Senior Executives' conducted by 'Administrative Staff College of India, New Delhi' from 4.1.2016 to 29.1.2016; (ii) Mrs. Ulpan Azhikenova, English Teacher in Eurasian Industrial and Economic College, Uralsk, selected for the course 'Certificate of Proficiency in English and IT Skills' conducted by 'Aptech, New Delhi' from 7.1.2016 to 16.3.2016; (iii) Ms. Dinara Zhandabayeva, HR Specialist in JSC Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, selected for the course 'Certificate of Proficiency in English and Business Communication' conducted by 'Aptech, New Delhi' from 14.1.2016 to 23.3.2016; (iv) Ms. Zhanna Smagulova, Manager in the Office of Deputy Minister of Justice, selected for the course 'Progress to proficiency—basic' conducted by 'English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad' from 7.1.2016 to 30.3.2016; (v) Ms. Zhanar Konys, Internal Auditor in JSC NC Kazakhstan Engineering, selected for the course 'Government Accounting and Financial Management' conducted by 'Institute of Government Accounts and Finance, New Delhi' from 4.1.2016 to 22.1.2016; and (vi) Mrs. Gulsim Tulepova, Teacher in Zhangir Khan West Kazakhstan Agrarian Technical University, selected for the course 'International training programme on solar energy technologies and applications' conducted by 'National Institute of Solar Energy, Gurgaon' from 4.1.2016 to 22.1.2016.



India to Remain Fastest Growing Economy in 2016 : United Nations

The United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2016 report said that India would continue to be the fastest growing economy in the world in 2016 and 2017 by recording an economic growth of 7.3 per cent and 7.5 per cent in 2016 and 2017 respectively. The report noted that the projected growth is a marginal improvement from the growth of 7.2 per cent India achieved in 2014-15. It further said that China would see a slowdown in growth in 2016 to 6.4 per cent from 6.8 per cent it had achieved in 2015.

The WESP report stated that the world economy, which stumbled in 2015, would see only a modest improvement in 2016-17 as a number of cyclical and structural headwinds persist. The global growth is estimated at a mere 2.4 per cent in 2015, marking a downward revision by 0.4 percentage points from the UN forecasts presented six months ago. The report said that the world economy is projected to grow by 2.9 per cent in 2016 and by 3.2 per cent in 2017 supported by generally less restrictive fiscal and still accommodative monetary policy stances worldwide.



UNESCO declares Varanasi and Jaipur under Creative Cities Network

The UNESCO declared Varanasi in the State of Uttar Pradesh and Jaipur, the capital of the State of Rajasthan, under its Creative Cities Network in the categories of Music and Crafts & Folk Art respectively on 11th December, 2015.

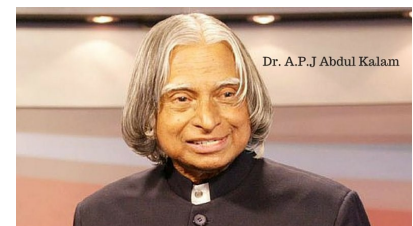
The Varanasi School of Music or the Benaras gharana along with semi classical genres like Hori, Chaiti, Tappa and Daadra are rich in musical heritage. The ghats, havelis and temples have housed the Benaras gharana and nurtured it. The city has over 250 public and private music institutions, 10 auditoria, 55 venues of art promotion and nearly 12,000 students of music. In Jaipur, 36 varieties of crafts were identified including the ones related to Sculpture, Pottery, Textiles and Jewellery making. Right from King Sawai Jai Singh II of Jaipur in 18th Century to his successors, the city has been nurtured as a centre of artistic excellence. 30 per cent of the City's economy is sustained by small scale craft industries.



The UNESCO Creative Cities Network aims to strengthen cooperation with and among cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of sustainable development as regards economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.

US University Declares Rs.1 Crore Scholarship Named After Dr. Abdul Kalam

The University of South Florida, an American metropolitan public research University situated in Tampa, Florida, announced a new scholarship named after former President of India, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam from the academic year 2016-17. The recipients will receive a stipend worth US\$ 18,000 every year and will get waiver in fees amounting to US\$ 84,500 for four years. Indian students enrolling for PhD courses in specific fields of Science and Engineering are eligible for the scholarship. Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, a Scientist by profession, had been 11th President of India from 2002 to 2007. He passed away on 27th July, 2015 at the age of 83.



India Corporate Internship to Students of Indian Origin

Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) set up by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), launched India Corporate Internship initiative at the Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in Los Angeles on November 14-15, 2015. The initiative brought together 23 top Indian companies such as Apollo Hospitals, Blue Star, Flipkart, Forbes Marshall, Godrej, Infosys, Kirlosker Brothers, TATA Chemicals, TATA Consultancy Services, TATA International, TATA Trust, Trent, Wipro, etc to offer over 60 short term (2-6 months) paid internships to the students of Indian origin and NRI students pursuing Post Graduate Programmes outside India in Management, Engineering and Science & Technology. The students will have an option of working in diverse sectors such as Aerodynamics, Automotive, Banking & Financial Services, Healthcare, Incubation Centres for Indian start-ups, IT, Manufacturing, Power, Retail, e-Commerce, etc.



The initiative offers an opportunity for Overseas Indian Students to experience global work culture of top Indian companies, work in a multi-cultural environment and connect with their roots in India. It will offer a platform for them to enhance their profiles. The internships will begin in summer of 2016. The students can apply through OIFC website <http://www.oifc.in/india-corporate-internship/about>.

Incredible India Destination : Varanasi

Varanasi, also known as Banares or Kashi, is situated on the banks of the River Ganges or Ganga in the State of Uttar Pradesh. It is one of the oldest living cities in the world. Legend has it that anyone who dies there will be liberated from the cycle of life and birth, making it one of the holiest cities for Hindus.

The river banks at Varanasi are lined with an endless chain of stone steps—the ghats—progressing along the whole of the waterfront, altering in appearance with the dramatic seasonal fluctuations of the river level. Each of the 100 ghats occupies its own special place in the religious geography of the city. Most of the ghats are bathing ghats, while others are used as cremation sites. The early morning ghats are teeming with bathers, Brahmin priests offering puja and people practising meditation and yoga. The ghats are an integral complement to the Hindu concept of divinity represented in physical, metaphysical and supernatural elements. The extensive stretches of ghats enhance the riverfront with a multitude of shrines, temples and palaces built tier on tier above the water's edge. A morning boat ride on the Ganges across the ghats is a popular tourist attraction. Dashashwamedha ghat, Kedara ghat, Harishchandra ghat, Chauki ghat, Man mandir ghat, Scindia ghat and Panchganga ghat are some of the popular ghats in Varanasi.

The old city at the heart of Varanasi is dotted with numerous shrines and lingams tucked into every corner and buzzing with the activity of pilgrims, pandas and stalls selling offerings to the deities. Among the estimated 23,000 temples, the Kashi Vishwanath temple of Shiva, the Sankat Mochan Hanuman temple and the Durga temple are the most popular temples in Varanasi.

The well-known Buddhist site of Sarnath, which has long been a place for religious pilgrimage, is at a distance of 10 kms from Varanasi. Buddha delivered his first sermon after getting enlightenment about 2500 years ago at Sarnath. Chunar, 40 kms away from Varanasi, has an immense fort overlooking the Ganga. The fort has a sun dial and a huge wall, and provides a splendid view of the Ganga. Chandraprabha Wildlife Sanctuary, 70 kms from Varanasi, is a beautiful spot for picnics. Kaimoor Wildlife Sanctuary, 130 kms away from Varanasi, has a variety of wildlife. The Mukha waterfall in the sanctuary is a popular attraction.



Offering on the Ganges, Varanasi



Kashi Vishwanath Temple



Dhamek Stupa, Sarnath



Chunar Fort



Waterfall in Chandraprabha Wildlife Sanctuary

PHOTO FEATURE

Director of Centre for Indian Classical Dances Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova conferred State Award

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Photo Exhibition on Bishnoi Community of India on December 12, 2015



Ambassador's Visit to Semey on December 14-15, 2015



Diplomatic Charity Bazaar 2015



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