



सत्यमेव जयते

Embassy of India ASTANA

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Embassy of India ASTANA NEWSLETTER

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President Visits New Zealand

President Shri Pranab Mukherjee paid a State Visit to New Zealand from April 30 to May 2, 2016. He met Lieutenant General The Rt. Hon'ble Sir Jerry Mateparae, the Governor General of New Zealand in Auckland on April 30.

Governor General Mateparae underscored the importance New Zealand placed on its relations with India and the commonality shared by the two countries. He stated that New Zealand considers India as a vital part of the Asia Pacific Region and would like to partner it in diverse fields. He was highly appreciative of India's Act East policy. He reiterated New Zealand's support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the expanded UN Security Council.

Both leaders agreed on the need for urgent reform of the UN and other international organisations which do not reflect the realities of today's world. They recognised the immense potential for taking the economic cooperation between the two countries to a much higher level. President Mukherjee emphasized that New Zealand could be a partner in India's flagship programmes viz., Skills Development, Make in India, Digital India and Smart Cities as well as in the fields of agriculture, food processing and disaster management. He conveyed India's willingness to work towards an early conclusion of an FTA. He lauded New Zealand's positive contribution as a current member of the UN Security Council.

In the banquet hosted by Governor General, President Mukherjee said that the two countries share a unique bond of trust and mutual understanding based on shared values and synergies.

He noted that New Zealand has made tremendous progress in dairy development, food processing, communications and information technology, clean energy and water, disaster management, biotechnology, healthcare and services and stated that India looks forward to forge new partnerships in areas of common interest. He noted that New Zealand is home to more than 170,000 people of Indian origin who are well integrated into New Zealand society and are contributing immensely to the progress and prosperity of their adopted home. He stated that people to people contacts between the two countries are growing with Indian students increasingly opting for higher studies in New Zealand and enhanced tourist flows in both directions.

Prime Minister of New Zealand Mr. John Key called on President Mukherjee on 1st May. Both leaders held substantive discussions on bilateral relations. President Mukherjee addressed business leaders and invited New Zealand businesses to participate in India's growth story and avail of the significant opportunities presented by government of India's flagship initiatives. He visited the Auckland war memorial museum.

On 2nd May, Prime Minister Mukherjee addressed the students and faculty of the Auckland University of Technology. He invited academicians from the universities of New Zealand to participate in the next Festival of Innovation, which would be held at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi in March, 2017. The government of New Zealand announced a new scholarship scheme, whereby eight universities in New Zealand would offer a total of 35 scholarships to Indian students.

An Air Services Agreement to improve connectivity between the two countries and an MoU for establishment of an ICCR Chair of Indian Studies in the University of Victoria were signed during the visit.



President meets Governor General of New Zealand



Prime Minister of New Zealand calls on President



President addresses Auckland University of Technology

Kazakhstan Celebrates Defenders of Fatherland Day

Kazakhstan celebrated the Defenders of Fatherland Day and the 71st Anniversary of the victory in Great Patriotic War on 7th and 9th May respectively. Commemorative events were held throughout the country. President Nazarbayev congratulated all the people of Kazakhstan on the eve of the Defenders of Fatherland Day and the Victory Day at a concert held on 6th May, 2016. He expressed gratitude to the veterans of the war.

He said that from the ancient times, defenders of fatherland embodied honor, heroism, courage, bravery, patriotism and selfless service to their nation. He underscored that Kazakhstan treasures memory and deeds of all generations of heroes who sacrificed their lives for the sake of freedom and the awards received by forefathers for their successful participation in the battle fields are priceless relics for Kazakhstani families. He stated that Kazakhstan did not have its own army when it gained independence and he established Kazakhstani Army by a Decree of May 7, 1992 and Defender of the Fatherland Day is celebrated on 7th May in glorious anniversary of the birth of Kazakhstan's armed forces.

He said that about 1,200,000 Kazakhstanis fought on the frontlines during the Great Patriotic War in 1941-45 and about 630,000 people lost their lives or went missing. He stated that taking care of the welfare of war veterans is only a fraction of the tribute by the present generation for their sacrifice during the difficult years of war. He reaffirmed that their victory would never be forgotten on Kazakh land.

He stated that creating the national army, air forces and naval fleet is one of the most important pages of sovereign Kazakhstan's biography. He reaffirmed that Kazakhstan makes every effort to ensure that the defense potential of the country is at the highest level with modern equipment and trained personnel. He stated that the funds for defence requirements are allocated on priority and modern military hardware are introduced in compliance with a re-armament programme. He informed that 70 percent of all types of military fleet and army equipment would be renewed, while 100 percent revamping would be made in certain categories in the next few years. He added that issues relating to development of knowledge-intensive industries and transfer of technologies in the defense sector would have to be addressed. He announced that cash allowances would be increased for the Armed Forces personnel from 1st January, 2017 and a new housing scheme would be launched for them this year.

He thanked the servicemen and civilians engaged in the defense industry, and all Kazakhstanis for their high patriotic responsibility and personal involvement in protection of the country. Referring to the Manifest, 'The World. The 21st Century' put forward by him to the international community at the 4th Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, he said that it is a call to join forces against global war and take measures to free the mankind from the threat of self-annihilation.

On the eve of the Defenders of Fatherland Day, President Nazarbayev conferred high military, special and class ranks on servicemen, and law enforcement and national security officers in recognition of their service to the nation. Ambassador attended the concert dedicated to the Defenders of Fatherland Day on 6th May.

Ambassador Attends Ceremony of Laying of Flowers on Victory Day

Prime Minister Mr. Karim Massimov, Senate Chairman Mr. Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev, Speaker of the Lower House Mr. Baktykozha Izmukhambetov, Secretary of State Ms. Gulshara Abykalikova and Minister of Defence Mr. Imangali Tasmagambetov laid flowers at the Monument of the Defenders of Fatherland (Otan Korgaushylar) in Astana on 9th May, 2016 in commemoration of the 71st anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945.

Ambassador Shri Harsh Jain and Defence Attache Col. L.S. Lidder attended the ceremony and laid flowers at the Monument.



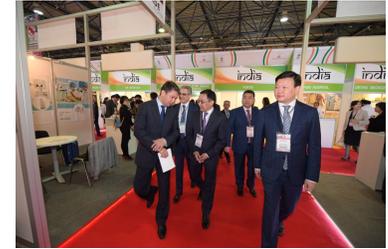
Ambassador Participates in Tree Planting Ceremony

Ambassador Shri Harsh Jain participated in a tree planting ceremony jointly organized by UN Country Office, KAZGUU University and the Earth Foundation "Sustainable Development" at the premises of KAZGUU University in Astana on 6th May, 2016 as part of the campaign to raise awareness about Sustainable Development Goals for 2016-2030 adopted at the UN summit in September, 2015 with the aim to end extreme poverty, promote equity and opportunity for all, and protect the planet in close partnership among the nations. Mr. Norimasa Shimomura, UN Resident Coordinator and Mr. Narikbayev Talgat Maksutovich, Rector of the University addressed the gathering. The students of the University sang a patriotic song and performed a flash-mob dance on environment. Ambassadors and diplomats, UN officials, representatives from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the faculty and students of the University attended the ceremony.



ASSOCHAM Participates in Kazakhstan International Healthcare Exhibition 2016

The 23rd Kazakhstan International Healthcare Exhibition, 2016 was held at the Atakent International Exhibition Centre, Almaty on May 11-13, 2016. It provided a platform for the medical community to present innovations, the latest developments in the healthcare industry, medicine and health tourism. B2B meetings were also organized during the exhibition.



Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) participated in the exhibition. Fifty one Indian manufacturers and exporters from India's healthcare sector showcased a diverse range of medical equipments, pharma and health care products and medical services. The medical equipment on display included high quality compression machines for new pharmaceutical products, orthopedic implants, instruments for knee prosthesis, total hip prosthesis, spinal implant, oral maxillofacial implants, gas, electric & water meters, automatic meter reading instruments, rotary evaporators, recirculating chillers, vacuum pumps and other high tech diagnostic instruments. Major Indian hospitals such as Jaypee Hospital, Fortis Healthcare and Pushpawat Singhania Research Institute offered their medical services.

President of Sri Lanka Visits India

President of Sri Lanka Mr. Maithripala Sirisena paid a working visit to India on May 13-14, 2016. He met Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in New Delhi on 13th May. They discussed bilateral relations between the two countries. Prime Minister Modi stressed the need to develop a mechanism and find a permanent solution to the issue of fishermen straying into each other's waters. President Sirisena attended a dinner hosted by Prime Minister Modi and a reception hosted by India Foundation.



Prime Minister Modi and President Sirisena addressed an International Convention on the Universal Message of Simhashta, an inter-faith event organized on the sidelines of the ongoing Kumbh Mela, in Ujjain on 14th May. Both leaders released Simhashta Declaration, a prescription on how a duty-centred system, which was the origin of Indian philosophy of life, has become most relevant today. Prime Minister Modi described the convention as a modern edition of what might have happened in ancient times, when thought-leaders of society would gather at the sites of Kumbh Melas to reflect and provide a new vision to society. The Kumbh Melas, world's largest religious gatherings, are held in the cities of Allahabad, Haridwar, Nashik and Ujjain once in 12 years by rotation. The Kumbh Mela held in Ujjain is known as Simhashta Kumbh Mahaparv.

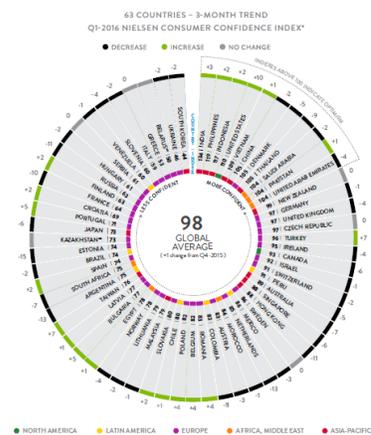
President Sirisena visited Sanchi, the renowned Buddhist pilgrimage centre. He attended a function organized by the Mahabodhi Society of Sri Lanka and unveiled a statute of Dhammapathik Anagarika Dharmapala, a Sri Lankan Buddhist revivalist and writer who was one of the founding contributors of non-violent Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism. He appreciated the government of India for establishing the Sanchi University of Buddhist-Indic Studies.

Indian Consumers, the Most Confident in First Quarter of 2016

Indian consumers were the most confident in the world in the first quarter of 2016 with their confidence index touching a nine-year high, according to a global survey of Consumer Confidence and Spending Intentions by Nielsen, a global performance management company.

The latest online survey conducted by Nielsen from March 1-23, 2016 shows that the Consumer Confidence Index score for India increased by three index points to 134 in the first quarter, the highest for the country since 2007. All three confidence indicators - job prospects, personal finances and concerns - increased from previous quarter in India.

The global consumer confidence edged up one index point to 98, below the optimism baseline score of 100, in the first quarter. The consumer confidence increased in 20 of 61 measured markets (33%), down from 26 measured markets (43%) in the fourth quarter of 2015. The survey polled more than 30,000 online consumers in 63 countries across the world.



Incredible India Destination : Sanchi

Sanchi in the State of Madhya Pradesh is known for Buddhist monuments dating from 3rd century B.C. to 12th century A.D. Sanchi hill is of three layers known as lower shelf, intermediate shelf and crowning shelf. Stupa No.2 is situated on the lower shelf; Stupa No.1, Stupa No.3, the 5th century Gupta Temple No.17 and the 7th century temple No.18 are on the intermediate shelf; and a monastery is on the crowning shelf. The monuments in Sanchi have been declared a world heritage site by UNESCO.

Stupa No.1, known as *Great Stupa*, is the most popular monument in Sanchi and is one of the oldest stone structures in India. The stupa measuring 36.5 mt in diameter and 16.4 mt high, with a massive hemispherical dome, stands in eternal majesty. It was originally built by the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka, the then governor of Ujjayini. The Southern Gateway reveals the birth of Gautama in a series of dramatically rich carvings. The Eastern Gateway depicts the young prince, Gautama leaving his father's palace on his journey towards enlightenment and the dream his mother had before his birth. The Western Gateway depicts the seven incarnations of the Buddha. The Northern Gateway, crowned by a wheel-of-law, depicts the miracles associated with the Buddha as told in the jatakas.

Stupa No.2 stands at the very edge of the hill and its most striking feature is the stone balustrade that rings it. Stupa No. 3 is situated close to the great stupa. The hemispherical dome is crowned as a mark of its special religious significance with an umbrella of polished stone. The relics of Sariputta and Mahamogallena, two of the Buddha's earliest disciples, were found in its innermost chamber.

The Gupta temple No.17 is one of the most rationally organized structures in Indian architecture.

The Ashoka Pillar lying close to the Southern Gateway of the *Great Stupa* is known for its aesthetic proportions and exquisite structural balance. There is a *Great Bowl* carved out of one block of stone, which was used for keeping food to be served among the monks.

There is an Archaeological Museum in Sanchi, which stands witness to India's rich religious and architectural heritage. Display of several rare and antique items makes this museum worth visiting. The Museum has a very verdant setting.



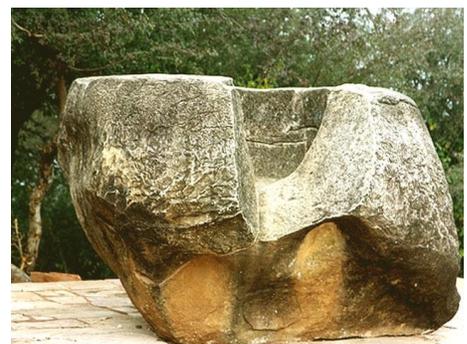
Stupa No.2



Stupa No.3



Ruins of Gupta Temple



Great Bowl



Great Stupa



Archaeological Museum

PHOTO FEATURE

Ambassador Attends Ceremony of Laying of Flowers at the Monument of Defenders of Fatherland



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

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

Ambassador Participates in Tree Planting Ceremony



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