

सत्यमेव जयते

Embassy of India ASTANA

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Prime Minister of Nepal Visits India

Prime Minister of Nepal Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' paid a State Visit to India from September 15-18, 2016 on his first bilateral visit abroad after assuming office in August 2016. He met Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 16th September. Prime Minister Modi stated that the visit would help further strengthen the age-old bonds of fraternal relations between the people of India and Nepal, and expand the multi-dimensional cooperation between the two countries. Prime Minister Prachanda reaffirmed that he would make efforts to explore newer areas of mutual cooperation and partnerships and take the age-old and unique ties to new heights, while reinvigorating the existing mechanisms for enhancing mutual benefit.



Prime Minister Prachanda thanked India for the prompt and extensive assistance provided in the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes of 25th April and 12th May, 2015 including special assistance package of US\$ 1 billion provided for the post-earthquake reconstruction. Prime Minister Modi announced an increase in contribution from NRs 2 lakh to NRs 3 lakh each for 50,000 households for reconstruction of houses. The two leaders stressed the need to ensure that the open border, which is a unique feature of India-Nepal bilateral ties, is not allowed to be misused by unscrupulous elements posing security threats to either side.

The leaders noted the successful completion of two roads under Phase-I of Terai road project and emphasized expeditious completion of construction of feeder roads. To facilitate smooth and faster movement of people and goods, they emphasized early completion of construction of Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) at Raxaul, Jogbani, Birgunj, Biratnagar, Nepalgunj and Bhairahawa. They reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the two ongoing India-Nepal cross-border rail-link projects - (a) Jayanagar-Bijalpur-Bardibas and (b) Jogbani-Biratnagar and agreed to initiate steps to facilitate development of three other cross-border rail-link projects (Nepalgunj-Nepalgunj road; Kakarbitta-New Jalpaiguri; and Bhairawaha - Nautanwa).

The leaders welcomed the likely completion of construction of transmission lines (i) from Kataiya to Kusaha, and (ii) from Raxaul to Parwanipur by December, 2016 to augment grid connectivity and power supply between the two countries. They reviewed the progress of major hydro-power projects viz., Pancheshwar, Upper Karnali and Arun-III and welcomed the commencement of work for construction of a Dharmashala at the Pashupatinath Area.

In a joint press conference, Prime Minister Modi appreciated the role played by Prime Minister Prachanda in strengthening the democratic institutions in Nepal. He expressed confidence that the agreement signed for a line of credit of US\$ 750 million for post-earthquake reconstruction of Nepal would bring relief to millions of people affected by last year's devastating earthquake. He announced an additional Line of Credit for new projects such as Phase-2 of Terai Roads, power transmission lines, substations and a polytechnic in Kaski.

Prime Minister Prachanda called on President Pranab Mukherjee on 16th September. President Mukherjee lauded Prime Minister Prachanda for his contribution to bringing peace to Nepal. He said that India deeply values its historical and traditionally close ties with Nepal.

Prime Minister Prachanda interacted with Indian business community at an event jointly hosted by ASSOCHAM, CII and FICCI on 16th September. He visited Nathpa Jhakri hydro-electric power project in Himachal Pradesh on 17th September.

Three Agreements/MOUs were signed during the visit on providing a new Line of Credit for US\$ 750 million for post-earthquake reconstruction projects in Nepal, providing Project Management Consultancy Services for improvement of road infrastructure in Terai area of Nepal and reappportioning unutilized funds provided under an agreement for a Line of Credit of US\$ 1 billion signed in November, 2014 for post-earthquake reconstruction projects.

Vice President Ansari Visits Mali

Vice President Shri M. Hamid Ansari visited Mali on September 29-30, 2016. He met Prime Minister Mr. Modibo Keita in Bamako and held talks covering the entire gamut of bilateral relationship. The leaders identified new areas of cooperation in the fields of agro, meat and cotton processing, healthcare, ICT, renewable energy and mining.



Vice President Ansari announced gifting of vehicles and IT equipment to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gifting of ambulances for general public use and assistance for setting up of an English Language Learning Lab. He condemned destruction of historical sites and announced a cash assistance of US\$ 500,000 towards revival of world heritage site of Timbuktu. Prime Minister Modibo Keita appreciated India's developmental assistance. Both countries, being victims of terrorism, condemned it in all its forms and manifestation and decided to step up cooperation in this critical area.

He addressed the National Assembly of Mali on 30th September. In his address, Vice President Ansari said that India's relations with Africa were not a transactional partnership. He said that the African impact on India is found in its genetic make-up, cultural and linguistic traditions, artefacts, gastronomic choices and common world view. Looking forward, he said that he has come to share the vision of a peaceful and prosperous future where India and Africa stand shoulder to shoulder claiming their rightful destinies and justice for their people. Outlining India's approach, Vice President Ansari said that India's relations in Africa were driven by the aim of empowerment, capacity building, human resource development, access to Indian market and support for Indian investments in Africa.

He expressed confidence that with its sagacious leadership, abundant natural resources and talented youth, Africa is well on its way to realize the vision of "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want". Vice President Ansari emphasized that India sees itself as a partner in Mali's reconstruction, economic development and growth. He noted that economic and trade relations were expanding, with bilateral trade having trebled in the last five years. He expressed confidence that continued stability and peace would encourage Indian companies to look at Mali as an attractive investment destination.

Vice President Ansari called on President of Mali Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita. He interacted with the members of Indian community. Two Agreements/MOUs on Standards and Cultural Exchange Programme were signed during the visit.

Vice President Ansari Attends the 17th NAM Summit

Vice President Shri M. Hamid Ansari visited Venezuela to attend the 17th Summit of Non Aligned Movement (NAM) on September 17-18, 2016. The Summit deliberated on issues of contemporary relevance and concern such as terrorism, UN reform, the situation in West Asia, threats to peace and security, UN peacekeeping operations, climate change, sustainable development, economic governance, south-south cooperation, refugees and migrants, and nuclear disarmament.



In his address, Vice President Ansari said that theme of the NAM for the next three years - "Peace, Sovereignty and Solidarity for Development" - is in congruence with its founding principles. He stated that the Development Cooperation is an essential means of promoting and developing international solidarity, of putting a human face on the impact of economic globalization.

He underscored that sustainable development is both the bedrock and the highest aspiration of the Movement's efforts and hence the Movement attaches the importance of solidarity to achieve it, as has been epitomised in the theme of the Summit - Solidarity for Development. He stated that the other two elements of the triad of objectives - Peace and Sovereignty - are a pre-requisite for development. He emphasized that a peaceful global environment is essential for development and development cooperation, and such cooperation must be undertaken in exercise of the sovereign will of each member of the community of nations. He highlighted that the interdependence of the three is thus evident and essential, and urged that the impediments to each must be discerned clearly.

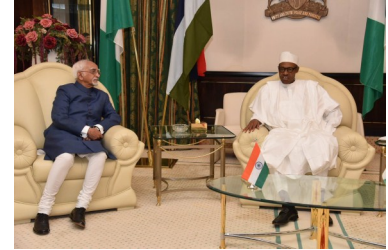
He said that the biggest threat to international peace and sovereignty of states is terrorism and no cause justifies the indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians as a means to achieve a political goal or change of policies. He pointed out that it is imperative for the NAM to galvanize the international community to address the menace of terrorism, including by adopting the draft Comprehensive UN Convention on Terrorism.

On the sidelines of the Summit, Vice President Ansari held bilateral meetings with President of Venezuela Mr. Nicolas Maduro Moros, President of Iran Mr. Hassan Rouhani, President of Cuba Mr. Raúl Castro and Vice President of Nepal Mr. Nanda Kishor Pun.

Vice President Ansari Visits Nigeria

Vice President Shri M. Hamid Ansari visited Nigeria from September 26-29, 2016. He called on President Mr. Muhammadu Buhari in Abuja on 27th September.

Vice President Ansari met Vice President Mr. Yemi Osinbajo. They recognized that Nigeria and India share a close relationship and underlined the need to deepen and expand bilateral cooperation in the areas of energy, infrastructure, agriculture, manufacturing, health, renewable energy and space technology. They agreed to strengthen the existing cooperation in oil and gas sector and explore government to government agreements on oil and gas purchase from Nigeria.



Vice President Yemi Osinbajo conveyed appreciation for India's concessional loan of US\$100 million extended for three power projects in Nigeria. Reiterating India's continued support in technical cooperation and capacity building, Vice President Ansari announced an increase in training slots from 200 to 300 a year under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. Vice President Yemi Osinbajo appreciated the offer of military training to the Nigerian Armed Forces. Both the leaders noted that international terrorism is a scourge and a threat to the entire world and condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations including violent extremism.

The two leaders attended the Nigeria-India Business Forum jointly organized by Abuja Chamber of Commerce, Nigerian National Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and ASSOCHAM in Abuja on 27th September. In his address, Vice President Ansari stated that over 100 Indian companies have made Nigeria their base to operate in West Africa, employing the largest number of Nigerians after the Federal Government.

He pointed out that there is a considerable potential for expanding trade in the areas of automotive components, automobiles, engineering products, IT, pharmaceuticals, bio-technology and healthcare. He suggested that India's expertise and proven capabilities in production of pharmaceuticals, especially generic medicines at affordable cost, advancement in healthcare sectors and science & technology, high quality education at reasonable cost could also be potential areas of investments by both countries.

Vice President Ansari visited Nigerian National Defence College in Abuja on 28th September. In his address, he said that the decline in inter-state warfare in the first decade and a half of the present century has been coupled with an increase in lower intensity civil conflicts; and hence, the idea of security has expanded beyond the traditional sphere of military security and there is a growing recognition that security of any society is also impacted by several non-military factors, including political, economic, environmental, social and human domains.

Vice President Ansari visited Lagos and addressed the University of Lagos on 29th September. In his address, he said that India, the largest democracy in the world, rejoices at the gains made by Nigeria, the largest democracy in Africa, in the past 18 years. He elaborated how Indian national movement not only secured independence from colonial rule and delivered political power to Indians, but also helped secure social and economic justice, and dignity for every Indian.

Vice President Ansari inaugurated a new chancery building of the High Commission of India in Abuja. He also interacted with the members of Indian community. An MOU was signed between the Bureau of Indian Standards and Standards Organization of Nigeria during the visit.

Indian and Kazakhstani Armies Participate in Joint Exercise in Karaganda

A 20-member contingent from Indian Armed Forces (1/9 Gorkha Rifles) led by Major Ankit Khattri participated in the India-Kazakhstan Joint Exercise on Counter Terrorism "Prabal Dostyk", meaning "Robust Friendship", at Spassk Training Area, Karaganda from September 3-17, 2016. The exercise was conducted with the aim to enhance interoperability while undertaking counter terrorism and counter insurgency operations in rural and semi-urban environment under the umbrella of United Nations.



The exercise was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, troops of both armies were familiarized with each others' tactics, drills, weapons and equipment and in the second stage, they jointly executed a helicopter borne operation in a simulated environment. Combat battle drills and physical fitness were the focal point of the exercise. A two-member observer delegation led by Brig. Rajiv Gautam visited Kazakhstan from September 14-17, 2016 to observe the final phase of the Joint Exercise. The contingent called on Ambassador Shri Harsh Jain on 16th September.

President Nazarbayev Attends Celebration of Millennial Anniversary of Almaty

President Nazarbayev congratulated the residents of Almaty on the occasion of 1000th anniversary of the city on 18th September, 2016. He was attending an event "25 peaks of Almaty" at the new Almaty Arena Ice Palace to mark the 1000th anniversary of the city. The 12,000-seat Ice Palace is the central facility of the upcoming 2017 Winter Universiade, which is designed to host hockey matches, figure skating, short track competitions, etc.



President Nazarbayev said that the 1000th anniversary of Almaty has been included in UNESCO's calendar of commemorative and anniversary dates of humanity, which emphasizes the unique role of the city in regional and global development. On the historical importance of the city, he said that it was situated along the Great Silk Road, the first major trade route, and it became the big cradle of the Kazakh Khanate 550 years ago.

President Nazarbayev stated that the socio-economic development of Almaty has always been a priority for the government. He pointed out that Almaty's development programme until 2020 was adopted last year as a concrete action plan to improve the lives of citizens and the ecological situation in the city, creating favourable conditions for business. He highlighted that modern Almaty has become a reflection of the steady and sustainable development of the whole of Kazakhstan and one of the main centres of the unique urban culture of Central Asia.

He informed that Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) produce a quarter of the products and services in Kazakhstan and Almaty is home to the largest number of SMEs in the country. He drew attention to the preparations for the Winter Universiade, which have given fresh impetus to development of tourism industry in the city. He informed that the event would bring together more than 2,000 athletes from 57 countries.

India Participates in Central Asia Fashion Show 2016

A 14-member delegation led by the Wool & Woollen Export Promotion Council participated in the "Central Asian Fashion Show-2016" held in Almaty from September 18-20, 2016. The Indian companies showcased woollen products such as shawls, scarves, coats, pouches, embellishments, etc., which attracted large number of visitors.



Central Asian Fashion Show-2016 in Almaty is a periodical exhibition for fashion products and accessories in Central Asia. It offers a platform for interaction among the region's leading distributors, traders, manufacturers and professionals.

Indiatourism Participates in "Astana Leisure 2016"

Indiatourism, Frankfurt, participated in the "Astana Leisure 2016 - 13th Kazakhstan International Tourism Exhibition" in Astana from September 29 to October 1, 2016. Mr. Marat Igali, Director, Department of Tourism Industry of Kazakhstan inaugurated the Indian pavilion. Indian Cultural Centre, Astana conducted Kathak dance, Flute Recital and Yoga Demonstration at the inauguration of the Indian pavilion.



Astana Leisure is an autumn professional tourism event in Kazakhstan, which presents tourism potential of Kazakhstan, informative work-shops, and special offer for leisure and novelty tourism industry. The event caters to both the B2B and B2C markets and features a vibrant mix of inbound and outbound destinations.

Embassy Organizes Workshop/Lecture-cum-Demonstrations on Bharatnatyam

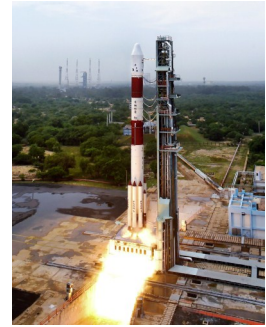
The Embassy organized Workshop/Lecture-cum-Demonstrations on Bharatnatyam by Dr. P.T. Narendran, a renowned Bharatnatyam Exponent from India and Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, Director, Centre for Indian Classical Dances, Almaty at Indian Cultural Centre, Astana on 20th September, 2016, and at QSI International School of Astana, Palace of School Children and Kazakh National Academy of Choreography in Astana on 21st September, 2016.



ISRO Successfully Launches 8 Satellites into Two Different Orbits

Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) successfully launched eight satellites into two different orbits in a single flight for the first time from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota on 26th September, 2016. ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C35) injected SCATSAT-1 Satellite and seven co-passenger satellites into orbits. The total weight of all the eight satellites carried on-board PSLV-C35 was 675 kg. The mission, completed in 2 hours 15 minutes and 33 seconds after lift-off, was the longest of the PSLV missions so far. The successful launch marks another milestone in ISRO's history.

The data sent by SCATSAT-1 Satellite will help provide weather forecasting services and in detection and tracking of cyclone. Of the seven co-passenger satellites, five were international customer satellites: three from Algeria and one each from Canada and the USA. The total number of satellites launched by the PSLVs so far has reached 121, of which 42 are Indian and the remaining 79 are from abroad.



3 Guinness World Records at the Mega Camp at Navsari, Gujarat

Three Guinness World Records were made at the Mega Camp inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 17th September, 2016 at Navsari, Gujarat where more than 11,330 persons with disabilities were provided with various aids and assistive devices. The camp was conducted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and organized by the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India.



The first record "highest number of oil lamps lit simultaneously at single location" was set on the eve of the Mega Camp on 16th September. An incredible 989 Divyangs (persons with disabilities) came together to set an all-new record - almost doubling the minimum of 500 participants needed to achieve the title. The challenge was for each person to light the lamp exactly at the same time after a given signal within 30 seconds. The second record was formation of the "Biggest Wheelchair Logo" on 17th September. 1000 participants in wheelchairs depicted a message saying "Happy Birthday PM" in tri colour. It bettered the previous record of 346 participants. As many as 600 people were fitted with hearing aids, which made the third record, "Most people fitted with Hearing Aid in 8 Hours - Single Location". Free assistive devices/kits were handed out to thousands of Divyangs throughout the weekend in addition to the hearing aids distributed during the attempt for the world record.

IGI Airport Becomes First Carbon Neutral Airport in Asia-Pacific

The Airports Council International (ACI) announced that Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport in New Delhi has become the first airport in Asia-Pacific Region to achieve the "carbon neutral status" during the Airport Carbon Accreditation certificate presentation ceremony held in Montreal, Canada on 27th September, 2016. The Airport Carbon Accreditation has upgraded the IGI Airport to 'Level 3+, Neutrality', which is the highest level of achievement available to airports across the world. The carbon neutrality occurs when the net carbon emissions over an entire year is zero.

Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), which manages the IGI Airport, is focussing on energy conservation and exploring alternative solution for generating green energy. The various emission saving measures implemented by DIAL have resulted in 51% reduction in specific greenhouse gas emission (kgCO₂/Pax) during the last five years. DIAL has taken proactive approach towards environment management and sustainability development. Terminal 3 of the IGI Airport is a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design) Gold certified green building. Other energy efficient and environment friendly infrastructure at the airport include sewage treatment plant, water treatment plant, advanced fuel hydrant systems, fixed electric ground power units and preconditioned air supply systems.



Two Indians Among UN Young Leaders

Two Indians, Ms. Trisha Shetty and Mr. Ankit Kawatra are among 17 people in the age group of 19-30 years selected for the inaugural class of UN Young Leaders for Sustainable Development Goals. They were chosen from over 18,000 nominations from 186 different countries in recognition of their leadership and contribution to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. Ms. Shetty, 25, is the founder and CEO of 'SheSays', a platform launched by her to educate, rehabilitate and empower women to take direct action against sexual assault. Mr. Kawatra, 24, is the founder of 'Feeding India', which addresses the issues of hunger and food waste, particularly by distributing excess food from weddings and parties to the needy.



Incredible India Destination: Gwalior

Gwalior in the State of Madhya Pradesh is believed to have been founded in 8th century AD by a chieftain known as Suraj Sen who, when struck by a deadly disease, was cured by a hermit-saint Gwalipa. As a mark of respect to the saint, he built the city of Gwalior after the name of the saint. Steeped in its past splendor, it was ruled by several dynasties including the Pratiharas, Kachwahas and Tomars who have left imprints of their rule in the city of outstanding palaces, sacred temples and glorious monuments. It is also the birthplace of great musician, Mian Tansen.

Gwalior Fort, built in the 8th century AD on Gopachal hill, is the Gwalior's main attraction. Its 35-foot walls bear testimony to the fact that it was one of the most invincible forts of India. There are a number of elaborately carved sculptures and paintings within the fort. The formidable structure of the fort inspired the first Mughal Emperor Babur to describe it as "the pearl in the necklace of the forts of Hind".

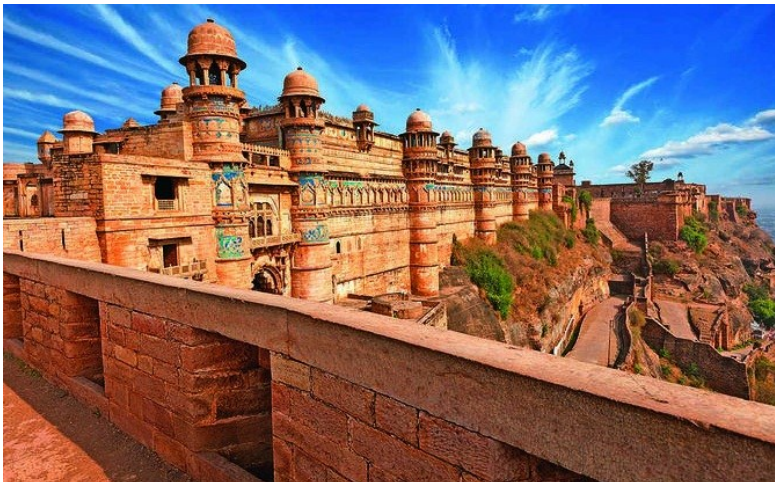
There are several Jain sculptures carved on the slopes of the Gopachal hill. There is a series of 26 Jain statues in a single line. Built between 1398 and 1536 by Tomar Kings, these Jain Tirthankar statues are a treasure trove of old Indian heritage and culture.

Gujari Mahal, built in the 15th century by Raja Mansingh Tomar for his Gujar Queen Mrignayani, is a monument of love. Man Mandir Palace was built by Raja Mansingh between 1486 and 1517. One of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's brothers, Murad, was executed there in 1659. Close by is Jauhar Pond, where in the Rajput tradition, the queens preferred death to disgrace and performed Jauhar involving mass immolation of the females to preserve themselves from captivity by invaders.

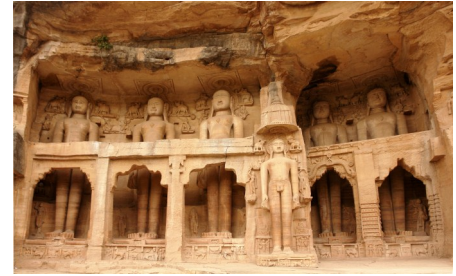
The tomb of Mian Tansen, a great singer and one of the 'Nine Jewels' of Akbar's court, is a part of Gwalior's living cultural heritage. Ghaus Mohammed's Tomb, built in the 16th century AD, is the sandstone mausoleum of Afghan prince, Ghaus Mohammed. Sarod Ghar, Museum of Music, houses ancient instruments of great Indian Masters of yesteryears. Jai Vilas Palace was built in 19th century on the style of the 'Palais de Versailles' in France.

Sonagiri, 60 km away from Gwalior, has 77 Jain temples of 9th and 10th centuries built in rows on hills. The sacred place is popular among devotees and ascetic saints to practice for self-discipline, austerity and attaining Nirvana.

Kala Vithika, a repository of the arts; Gurudwara Data Bandhi Chhod; Sas-Bahu Temple; Sun Temple; and Gwalior Zoo are some of the other major tourist attractions in Gwalior. Tigra Dam (23 km from Gwalior), Ghatagaon Sanctuary (30 km), Pawaya archaeological ruins dating back to the 1st to 8th centuries (68 km) and Kuno - Palpur Sanctuary (86 km) are some of the other major tourist attractions near Gwalior.



Gwalior Fort



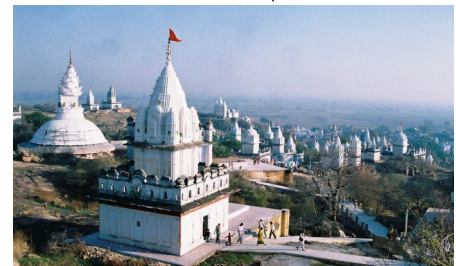
Jain Sculptures on Gwalior Fort



Jai Vilas Palace



Sas-Bahu Temple



Sonagiri Jain Temples



Tigra Dam



Elephant ride at Kuno-Palpur Sanctuary

PHOTO FEATURE

Indian and Kazakhstani Armies Participate in Joint Exercise in Karaganda



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India Participates in Central Asia Fashion Show 2016



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Embassy Organizes Workshop/Lecture-cum-Demonstrations on Bharatnatyam




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