

सत्यमेव जयते

Embassy of India ASTANA

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Embassy of India ASTANA NEWSLETTER

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President of Israel Visits India

President of Israel Mr. Reuven Rivlin paid a State Visit to India from November 14-21, 2016. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi met him on 15th November. He said that the 2000-year old Jewish community in India is a vital part of India's composite cultural mosaic. They agreed that promoting people-to-people contacts, which has a long-shared history, is the shared priority of the two countries.



The leaders identified water management and conservation, and collaboration in scientific research and development as two areas of priority engagement. They agreed that the current trajectory of Indian economy opens up many promising opportunities for Israeli companies, and India's economic initiatives and emphasis on innovation, research and technological development match well with Israel's strengths and capacities. They noted the strength of growing defence partnership between the two countries and agreed on the need to make it more broad-based through production and manufacturing partnerships. They also agreed to intensify their cooperation to combat the forces of extremism and radicalization that threaten all peace-loving nations.

In the joint press conference, Prime Minister Modi said that Indian and Israeli companies can work together in high-technology manufacturing and services sectors. He suggested that partnership on IT services can make a difference for both the economies. He noted that two and a half decades of friendship has brought rich dividends for both the nations and has strengthened voices of peace, stability and democracy globally.

President Shri Pranab Mukherjee hosted a banquet in honour of President Rivlin. He welcomed Israel's interest in participating in India's flagship programmes such as 'Smart Cities', 'Digital India', 'Swachh Bharat', etc. He commented that Israeli participation in India's agricultural sector is valued and benefitting the farmers. He said that India needs to develop its capabilities in management of water resources, agriculture, defence, renewable energy, academic exchanges, science and technology, homeland and cyber security, and Israel has advanced technologies and proven capabilities in these key sectors. President Rivlin said that the Middle East and India have known each other for thousands of years and Israel is ready to share its knowledge with the people of India.

President Rivlin visited Taj Mahal in Agra on 16th November. He also visited Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam Water Treatment Plant, Sikandra, which has applied Israeli innovative technology MBBR (moving bed bio reactor). He laid wreath at Teen Murti Square, which was erected as a memorial for Indian Army regiments that captured the city of Haifa in Israel in World War-I, on 17th November. He visited the Centre of Excellence for Vegetables in Karnal, which was set up in collaboration with Israel, on 18th November to get an overview of Indo-Israeli agricultural projects.

President Mukherjee inaugurated the 12th Agro Tech 2016 in Chandigarh on 20th November in presence of President Rivlin. In his address, President Mukherjee said that he was happy to be present in the heart of Punjab and Haryana, the area where the first green revolution successfully began in the 1960s and continued in the following decades. He appreciated the indomitable spirit of the farmers of these states for having achieved the green revolution and exhorted industry, research institutions, scientists and farmers to come together for bringing about a second green revolution. He noted that India made significant progress from producing 50 million tons of food grain in 1947 to 270 million tons at present. He called for adoption of innovations and technology in agriculture so as to make the farms more productive and use resources more effectively. He complimented Israel for successfully achieving greater productivity per drop of water by applying innovative technology to agriculture.

He visited Mumbai on 21st November and paid floral tributes to the victims of terror attack in the city on 26th November, 2008.

Two MOUs on cooperation in agriculture and water resources management were signed during the visit. Twenty one MOUs were also signed between the Universities/Educational Institutions of the two countries.

BRICS Feedback Session on the "Outcomes of the 8th BRICS Summit in Goa"

The Embassy along with other BRICS Embassies in Astana organised a BRICS Feedback Session on the "Outcomes of the 8th BRICS Summit in Goa on 15th-16th October, 2016" at KAZGUU University on 29th November, 2016. Vice Rector of the University Mr. Miras Daulenov welcomed the guests.

Ambassador of India Shri Harsh Jain chaired the Session and spoke on the Overview of the Summit Outcomes and the Outreach summit. He said that India's BRICS Chairmanship in 2016 added a new dimension to BRICS brand by making it a people's movement by organizing various people centric activities spread across 22 states of India. He underscored that the Goa Declaration that contains the outcomes of the BRICS leaders' discussions lays down a comprehensive vision of cooperation and coordination within BRICS and on international issues.

He mentioned the unprecedented condemnation of terrorism, expressing readiness to support an international convention against chemical and biological terrorism, agreement on increase in representation of developing countries in the UN Security Council and recognition of the role of nuclear energy in meeting the Paris climate change commitments as some of the main achievements of the Summit. He stated that the outreach summit with BIMSTEC highlighted the potential for cooperation in areas such as infrastructure, connectivity, trade, energy, investment, digital economy, counter terrorism and regional integration.

In his presentation on "Political and Security Cooperation", Ambassador of Russia Mr. Mikhail Bocharnikov said that the BRICS group is currently cooperating not only in the economic, but also in the political sphere and its member states established close coordination within the United Nations and other regional and international fora on various issues. He stated that the BRICS member states are intensifying joint efforts to enhance security in the sphere of information and communication technology (ICT), and combating the use of ICT for criminal and terrorism purposes.

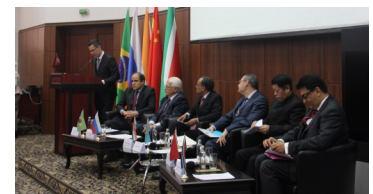
In his presentation on "Cooperation on Sustainable Development and Outreach Component", Ambassador of South Africa Mr. Shirish M. Soni said that the Goa Declaration reiterated the BRICS leaders' support and solidarity with the African Continent, citing Agenda 2063 and its articulation of development, peace and security agenda of the continent. He highlighted the various customary and sectoral meetings organized by India prior to and on the margins of the Summit, as part of promotion of attainment of sustainable development goals.

In his presentation on "Economic Cooperation and BRICS Institutions", Head of Trade and Investment Department of the Embassy of Brazil Mr. Carlos Serapiao gave an update on the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserves Arrangement (CRA).

Ambassador of China H.E. Mr. Zhang Hanhui made a presentation on "Way Forward and Vision of Forthcoming BRICS Presidency". He reaffirmed that during its BRICS chairmanship in 2017, China would strive to create open economy; strengthen dialogue between the North and the South; promote global economy to accomplish dynamic, stable, balanced and inclusive growth; jointly address global challenges; advocate political resolution in hot spots; jointly respond to natural disasters, climate change, infectious diseases, terrorism and other global concerns; contribute to long-lasting international security and stability; and develop NDB and CRA.

Deputy Director in the Asia and Africa Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Zhan Kystaubayev represented the Government of Kazakhstan and read out the speech of Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Akylbek Kamaldinov: "Kazakhstan welcomes the 8th BRICS summit held in Goa. Kazakhstan is maintaining close and friendly bilateral relations with each of the BRICS countries. As member of the SCO and EEU, Kazakhstan will continue enhanced cooperation with BRICS. Friendly ties among our countries demonstrate the unity and solidarity of the majority of global population. We are sure that linking of the expertise of these three international platforms will play a significant role in resolving today's global challenges".

The presentations were followed by a Question and Answer session. About 120 diplomats, government officials, representatives of media, think tanks, academics and students attended the Feedback Session.



President Nazarbayev Attends the VII Congress of Judges of Kazakhstan

President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev attended the VII Congress of Judges of Kazakhstan in Astana on 21st November, 2016. In his address, President Nazarbayev said that special attention was paid to formation of a modern judicial system and carrying out adequate fundamental reforms in the country. He stated that ultimate goal of judicial reform is an independent and incorruptible judiciary, and equality and accessibility of justice.



He highlighted the modernization of judicial system as part of the Nation's Plan "100 Specific Steps" such as elimination of multi-tier judicial system, introduction of modern technology in proceedings relating to investment disputes and wide implementation of audio and video recording of court proceedings. At the same time, he emphasized that much needs to be done to improve the judicial system and mentioned the following as the basic goals: ensuring rule of law, enhanced accountability of judges, efficient judiciary, uniform court proceedings and legal education.

A new Code of Judicial Conduct was adopted at the Congress with a view to establish uniform standards for ethical conduct of judges and improve public confidence in the judiciary. It specifies that the judges are refrained from making comments which may dent the reputation of the judiciary and impair the interest of justice, public evaluation of the activities of the government and demonstration of religious affiliation in the discharge of their duties. The new Code that replaces the Code of Judicial Conduct adopted at the 5th Congress in November, 2009 has factored in the provisions of international instruments such as the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct and the Kyiv Recommendations on Judicial Independence.

The representatives of the judiciary, law enforcement agencies and legal fraternity, Members of Parliament, international organizations and NGOs attended the Congress.

International Conference on "25 Years of Independence of Kazakhstan"

The Mazhilis and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan hosted an international conference "25 Years of Independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan: Outcomes, Accomplishments, Vision for the Future" in Astana on 28th November, 2016. The conference covered a wide range of issues on Kazakhstan's development during its years of independence. The discussions were held on "Major Results of Economic and Political Reforms in Kazakhstan", "Kazakhstan in International Relations", and "Kazakhstan: Vision for the Future."



Speaker of the Mazhilis Mr. Nurlan Nigmatulin said that over the last two and a half decades, Kazakhstan made an incredible transition from a peripheral Soviet Republic, which played a purely raw material-exports role in the Soviet Union, to a full-fledged member of the world community, regional leader, modern state with a strong economy and stable society. He listed the establishment of National Fund, massive increase in industrial output and wages, and creation of more than two million jobs as Kazakhstan's achievements.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Erlan Idrissov spoke about the challenges faced by Kazakhstan at the beginning of its independence and the achievements made in foreign policy by adopting the balanced multi-vector course. He stated that international peacemaking initiatives by Kazakhstan have earned the respect of the international community. He mentioned that Kazakhstan's chairmanship of OSCE in 2010 and OIC in 2011-2012, joining the WTO in 2015, hosting the EXPO 2017 and gaining a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council for 2017-2018 indicate the recognition of the young nation as a respected and reliable partner of the international community. He outlined Kazakhstan's priorities as a member of the UNSC. He reaffirmed that Kazakhstan would use its influence and experience to further promote and strengthen regional and global security.

Representatives of legislative bodies and experts from leading think tanks of various countries participated in the conference. They noted Kazakhstan's impressive achievements in building a modern independent state with strong economy, dynamic civil society, and independent and active foreign policy. They presented their views on the future of Kazakhstan and made recommendations for maintaining positive trends in the socio-political and socio-economic space of the country. Special attention was given to 'Kazakhstan 2041: the Next Twenty-Five Years' - a joint report prepared by the Institute for Security and Development Policy, Stockholm and the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, Washington. The report emphasized the importance of increasing the efficiency of public institutions, improving dialogue and cooperation between the Government and the citizens, strengthening secular foundations, adapting to domestic and regional demographic changes, and establishing equitable and balanced relations with international partners. It recommends Kazakhstan to strengthen its South Asian Vector of foreign policy since South Asia would play increasingly important role in next 25 years.

Mr. Akhlaq A. Usmani, Editor, Hindi Media Pvt. Ltd from India attended the conference.

Celebration of Constitution Day of India in Kazakhstan

The Embassy celebrated the 'Constitution Day' at Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), Astana on 26th November, 2016 to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India by the Constituent Assembly on 26th November, 1949. The celebration began with the reading aloud of Preamble of the Constitution of India followed by screening of documentary "Samvidhaan-The making of the Constitution of India" by Shyam Benegal. Ambassador Shri Harsh Jain addressed the gathering. Mr. Rajib Dahal and Mr. Anoop Sharma also spoke on the occasion. Ambassador awarded prizes to the winners of the essay competition "the Constitution of India" to Mr. P. Jeya Pazham & Dr. Brijesh Gupta (both first prizes); Mr. R. Gururaj & Mr. Rajib Dahal (both second); and Mr. Arman Kozhakeldiyev (third). It was followed by rendition of patriotic songs by children and a short cultural programme by ICC. A book exhibition on the Constitution of India was also organized at the ICC. About 60 people attended the event.



The Representative Office of India in Almaty also celebrated the Constitution Day. The documentary "Samvidhaan-The making of the Constitution of India" by Shyam Benegal was screened, followed by reading aloud of the Preamble of the Constitution of India. Several members of the audience spoke on the occasion. About 100 people attended the event.

The Constitution Day of India was also observed at the Kazakh National Medical University, Almaty; the West Kazakhstan State Medical University, Aktobe; and the QSI International School, Astana by reading aloud the 'Preamble' of the Constitution of India by Indian students and teachers on 25th November. 140 people attended the event at the Kazakh National Medical University, Almaty; 54 at the West Kazakhstan State Medical University, Aktobe; and 12 at the QSI International School, Astana.

Kazakhstan Participates in the 13th World Robot Olympiad in India

The National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) under the Ministry of Culture and India STEM Foundation (ISF) jointly organized the 13th World Robot Olympiad (WRO) at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida on November 26-27, 2016 under the theme 'Rap the Scrap'. Over 2000 students from 51 countries participated in the international championship and showcased innovative solutions using robotics technology to reduce, manage and recycle waste. The competition was held for students in the 9-25 years age group in four categories: Regular category (Elementary, Junior High and Senior High), WRO Football, Open category and Advanced Robotics Challenge.



The WRO brings together the young people all over the world to develop their creativity and problem solving skills through challenging and educational robotics competitions. Applying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) knowledge in forming concrete solutions with the ability to communicate and collaborate with others is the essence of WRO. Schools can enter a team of three students to participate in the competition. The participating teams create, design and build robot models that look or behave like a human athlete.

The national team of Kazakhstan comprising school and university students participated in the WRO. It received the LEGO Education Creativity Award for a creative and innovative project - an orbiting satellite, which has a special umbrella for collecting space debris and sending it towards the Sun for destruction.

ICCR Scholarships for the Academic Year 2017-18 Announced

The Embassy invites applications from citizens of Kazakhstan for scholarships awarded under Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)'s General Scholarship Scheme for the academic year 2017-18 for studying Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Doctoral/Post-Doctoral Research programmes in Universities and Educational Institutions in India. The scholarships are granted for pursuing studies in various subjects such as Arts, Science, Business Administration, Accounts, Commerce, Performing Arts and Humanities. Further information, eligibility conditions and application forms are available at ICCR's website: <http://iccr.gov.in/content/general-scholarships-gcss>.



Interested students may send their filled-in application forms (6 sets) along with enclosures to the Director, Indian Cultural Centre, House No.2, Zhyly Oi Street, Karaotkel Microdistrict No.2, Yesil Area, Astana, PIN-Z05F7E1 (Tel. 449884 & +7 7019431504) latest by 16th January, 2017.

Princess of Thailand Receives the First World Sanskrit Award

Vice President M. Hamid Ansari presented the maiden World Sanskrit Award instituted by ICCR to Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand on 21st November, 2016. The Princess is an eminent scholar of Sanskrit, Pali, cultural and historical studies and is keenly interested in epigraphy and has been a patron of Sanskrit studies in Thailand. After receiving the award that comprises an amount of US\$ 20,000, a Citation and a Lapel Pin, she said that she is honoured and humbled to receive the award. She stated that the Thai language is very different from Sanskrit, but it is very similar culturally.



In his address, Vice President Ansari said that the corpus of scientific, philosophical, sacral and poetic texts produced in Sanskrit is surely one of the richest contributions to global textual culture. He stated that the shaping of Indian genius owes much to Sanskrit, not only in the fields of spirituality and religion but also in the fields of art, poetry, literature, science, ethics, philosophy and knowledge. He pointed out that Thai and other Southeast Asian languages have strong roots in Sanskrit, which reflects their remote past relationship with Sanskrit.

Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn called on President Shri Pranab Mukherjee on 21st November. President Mukherjee said that India looks upon her as a special friend of India. He emphasized that India attaches high priority to its relations with Thailand and would like to see the strengthening of engagement in all fields including political, security, commerce and connectivity. The Princess warmly reciprocated his words.

Students of MIRAS International School Visit ICC

32 students of "MIRAS" International School, Astana, accompanied by three teachers, visited Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), Astana on 17th November, 2016. Shri D.S. Rawat, Director, ICC, briefed them about Indian culture and traditions. Dr. Brijesh K. Gupta, Yoga Teacher, held a master yoga class. Ms. Chandrani Ojah, Kathak Dance Teacher, delivered a lecture-cum-demonstration on Kathak dance. Shri Bhaskar Ojah, Music Teacher conducted a demonstration of Indian musical instruments.



ICC Participates in Annual Inter Cultural Awareness Day at MIRAS School

Indian Cultural Centre, Astana participated in the Annual Inter Cultural Awareness Day at MIRAS International School, Astana on 18th November, 2016. Dr. Brijesh Gupta, Yoga Teacher, Ms. Chandrani Ojah, Kathak Dance Teacher and Shri Bhaskar Ojah, Music Teacher demonstrated Yoga, Kathak dance and Indian music respectively at the Indian Stall set up by students. Seven other countries participated in the celebration. At the final Assembly, the students presented select items of cultural programme of different countries and the group that performed Indian cultural programme was declared winner and awarded the trophy.



ICC Participates in Special Session on "Incredible India" at School-Gymnasium No.31

Indian Cultural Centre (ICC), Astana participated in a special session on "Incredible India" at the School-Gymnasium No.31, Astana on 29th November, 2016. Dr. Brijesh Gupta, Yoga Instructor, Ms. Chandrani Ojha, Kathak Dance Teacher and Mr. Bhaskar Ojah, Music Teacher at the ICC demonstrated Yoga, Kathak dance and Indian music respectively. Mr. D.S. Rawat, Director, ICC briefed the students on culture and traditions of India. Two students of the school made a presentation providing general information on India.



Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, Centre for Indian Classical Dances, Awarded Golden Diploma

Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova, Director, Centre for Indian Classical Dances, Almaty and 'Honoured Artist of Kazakhstan' was awarded the "Golden Diploma" by the International Association of Charity Funds "MAMA" at Almaty on 27th November, 2016 in recognition of her contribution to upgrading social status of women in Kazakhstan.



Incredible India Destination: Thanjavur

Thanjavur in the State of Tamil Nadu was the royal city of the Chola, Nayak and the Maratha rulers. It reached the zenith of its glory between 10th and 14th centuries, especially during the reign of Raja Raja Chola. Thanjavur is well known for its unique painting style called Tanjore Painting and Thavil, a percussion instrument. Apart from hundreds of ancient temples, the place is also known for its exquisite handicrafts, castings, pith craft and South Indian musical instruments.

Brihadeeswarar Temple, Thanjavur Palace, Raja Museum, Sangeetha Mahal and Schwartz Church are some of the major tourist attractions in Thanjavur.

Brihadeeswarar Temple (Big Temple), a UNESCO World Heritage Site, built in 1010 AD is the crowning glory of Dravidian temple architecture. There has been continuous worship for over a thousand years in the temple and the architecture of the temple symbolises the fusion of ritual and philosophic concepts that flowered in the region.

Thanjavur Palace near the temple was built around 1550 AD. Its grand buildings with huge corridors, spacious halls, two palace towers, the armoury and the observation towers are visible from all parts of the city. Raja Museum, located inside the palace, has the best collection of bronzes. A number of stone carvings are also found there.

Sangeetha Mahal, built by Raja Serfoji in 18th century, is an acoustically perfect music hall and is a striking example of the engineering skill of its ancient builders. Schwartz Church was built by Raja Serfoji as a token of affection for his tutor and Danish missionary Rev. C.V. Schwartz.

Gangai Konda Cholapuram (71 km away from Thanjavur) was the capital of Rajendra Chola (1012-1044 AD). He conquered several northern kingdoms in order to bring the holy waters of river Ganga to his kingdom. As a mark of celebration, he created a "liquid pillar of victory", a tank where the vassal kings contributed Ganga water as tribute to the conqueror. Hence, he was called "Gangai Konda Chola" - the Chola king who brought the Ganga - and the town was named after him. The Shiva temple, dedicated to Lord Brihadeeshwara, is similar in many aspects to the temple in Thanjavur.

Nagore (85 km) has a Dargah for Hazarat Meeras Sultan Syed Shahabul Hameed, a great Muslim saint. The Dargah has five spires, one of which is 124 feet high. The annual Kandoori festival there attracts people of all faiths. Point Calimere (Kodiakkarai) Sanctuary (80 km) is renowned for its incredible congregation of migratory waterfowl, Flamingos in particular.



Brihadeeswarar Temple



Thanjavur Palace



Raja Museum



Gangai Konda Cholapuram



Nagore Dargah

PHOTO FEATURE

Ambassador Delivers Lecture at Nazarbayev University



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Celebration of Constitution Day of India in Kazakhstan



ICC Participates in Annual Inter Cultural Awareness Day at MIRAS School



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