

सत्यमेव जयते

Embassy of India ASTANA

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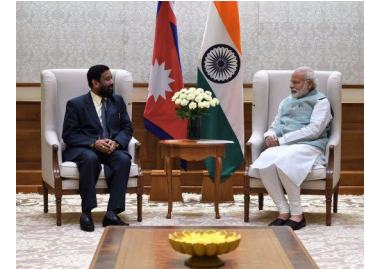
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Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal Visits India

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs of Nepal Shri Bimalendra Nidhi visited India from March 13-17, 2017.

He called on Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in New Delhi on 17th March, 2017. He briefed Prime Minister Modi about the recent developments in Nepal. Prime Minister Modi said that India is fully committed to strengthen the age-old ties of friendship and kinship between the people of the two countries and support the Government of Nepal in all its endeavours for socio-economic development of Nepal.



External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj received Deputy Prime Minister Shri Bimalendra Nidhi on 16th March 2017. The leaders held discussion on bilateral matters of mutual interest including high-level exchanges between the two countries. They reiterated their commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation in diverse sectors. Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj reiterated India's support to the initiatives of the Government of Nepal in taking the constitutional implementation process forward through dialogue and meeting the aspirations of all sections of the society.

Deputy Prime Minister Shri Bimalendra Nidhi attended the 3rd Counter Terrorism Conference organized by the India Foundation on 14th March, 2017. The conference focused on terrorism in Indian Ocean Region. Vice President Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari inaugurated the conference. In his address, Vice President Ansari said that the countries in the region should unite and fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations to curb and eliminate the scourge of terrorism. He emphasized that the States sponsoring terrorism must be isolated by international community and forced to abandon the use of terrorism as a tool of state policy.

Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Visits India

Mr. Yuri Trutnev, Deputy Prime Minister and Plenipotentiary Envoy of the President of Russia for the Far Eastern Federal District, visited India from March 15-18, 2017. A high level delegation comprising Governors from the Regions of the Russian Far Eastern Federal District, senior government officials and representatives of Russian industry accompanied him.

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj received him in New Delhi on 17th March. The leaders discussed issues related to bilateral trade and investment cooperation between India and the regions of the Russian Far East. Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Yuri Trutnev addressed a business event where an MoU between Invest India and the Far East Investment and Export Agency was signed.

During his visit to Mumbai on 15th and 16th March, 2017, he visited the Special Notified Zone for diamond trading. He presided over a business round-table organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and interacted with Indian businessmen interested in exploring engagement with Russia's Far-East Region.



The visit was primarily aimed at spreading awareness amongst the Indian business community regarding the investment opportunities available in the resource-rich Far-Eastern Region of Russia. The visit enabled further consolidation of bilateral cooperation in the areas of mining, diamond processing, infrastructure, agriculture and agro-processing.

Dr. Laura Yerekeshva Presented the ICCR's Distinguished Alumni Award 2016

Minister of State for External Affairs Gen. (Retd) V.K. Singh presented the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)'s "Distinguished Alumni Award 2016" to Dr. Laura Yerekeshva of Kazakhstan and four others in New Delhi on 20th March, 2017. The award is given to ICCR alumni who make significant achievements in their respective fields and/or make outstanding contribution to the promotion of understanding, goodwill and friendship between India and their respective countries. The award comprises a Citation, a Plaque and a Lapel Pin. Ambassador Shri Harsh Jain extended his hearty congratulations to Dr. Yerekeshva on the occasion.



Dr. Laura Yerekeshva is Deputy Director of International Affairs; Head of the Department of Central and South Asian Studies; and Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair "Science and Spirituality" at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Almaty. She is also Professor at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Oriental Faculty, Almaty. Her areas of research interest include international relations, history, politics of identity in Central and South Asia. She is author of 2 monographs and more than 60 research articles and co-editor of four books. She is a promoter of the Kazakhstan-Indian Foundation, a public foundation aimed at expanding cultural and academic links between Kazakhstan and India.

The Embassy Organizes Seminars on "Yoga Therapy"

The Embassy of India, Astana along with Yoga Family, Astana and Yoga Sanskar, Almaty organized a Seminar on "Yoga Therapy" at Hotel Radisson, Astana on 26th March, 2017 as part of celebration of the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kazakhstan. The day-long seminar was conducted by Dr. Prafullachandra Dorle, an eminent Yoga Therapist, Naturopath and Homeopath from India.



Ambassador Shri Harsh Jain inaugurated the Seminar. In his address, he expressed gladness that the India-Kazakhstan bilateral relations have grown steadily in the last 25 years and transformed into an enduring strategic partnership. He cited the extensive popularity of yoga in Kazakhstan as an outstanding example of the bilateral cooperation and deep-rooted cultural and historical linkages.

He said that yoga is an ancient Indian practice and way of life, which combines elements of physical training, breathing control and meditation to enable a person to lead a healthier life and realise the presence of peace, awareness and joy within. He added that it promotes flexibility, suppleness, strength and stamina, tones the internal organs of the body, makes mind calmer and more controlled, and improves concentration. He informed that yoga has been used in India for thousands of years to promote health and prevent disease. He took the opportunity to inform the participants about the celebration of 3rd International Day of Yoga in Astana in third week of June and invited them to attend it.

The seminar focused on addressing lifestyle problems relating to spine, heart and diabetes and provided information on yogic way of dietary control. About 385 people attended the seminar. Dr. Dorle also conducted similar seminars at the Representative Office of India, Yoga Dom, Hotel Altyn Kargaly and Classical Yoga Ashram in Almaty from March 19-25, 2017.

Concerts Organized in Chennai and New Delhi

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Kalakshetra Foundation organized a concert at Kalakshetra Foundation, Chennai on 25th March, 2017 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kazakhstan and pay tribute to founder of Kalakshetra Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale. The concert comprising Indian classical dance "Bharatnatyam" and Kazakh folk dances was performed by the Centre for Indian Classical Dances, Almaty led by Honoured Artist of Kazakhstan and alumna of Kalakshetra Ms. Akmaral Kainazarova. Guru Kalaimamani N.S. Jayalakshmi attended the concert as the Chief Guest.



In New Delhi, the same concert was organized at the Azad Bhawan Auditorium of ICCR on 28th March; Delhi Karnataka Sangha on 29th March; and Vasant Valley School on 31st March, 2017 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kazakhstan and the 10th anniversary of establishment of the Centre for Indian Classical Dances, Almaty.

Deputy Director General of ICCR Shri Vanlalhuma was the Chief Guest at the concert held at the Azad Bhawan Auditorium of ICCR. Ambassador of Kazakhstan to India Mr. Bulat Sarsenbayev graced the concert at Delhi Karnataka Sanga as the Chief Guest and Managing Director of Nayak Group Mr. Arvind Nayak attended the concert as the Guest of Honour. A large number of students and the faculty attended the concert at the Vasant Valley School and participated in the Question and Answer session that followed the concert.

President Nazarbayev Meets the Representatives of Media

President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev met the representatives of electronic and print media on 16th March, 2017 and responded to their questions on various issues of national importance.

Asked about the current status of political system, President Nazarbayev said that the country is moving towards democracy. He stated that the recently-introduced constitutional amendments would significantly strengthen the role of Parliament in the affairs of the state including in the formation of the government, make the government more independent with powers to manage the economy, and modernize the constitutional framework of law enforcement and judicial systems. He emphasized that expansion of powers of the Parliament and the government would contribute to a more effective achievement of the objectives of the Third Modernization of Kazakhstan.



He said that employment and housing are primary requirements for the people. He stated that the principle of "economy first, politics second" intends to make the people prosperous. He added that both economic development and political reforms are progressing in the country. He noted the significance of small and medium enterprises in the development of the economy and highlighted the support offered to such enterprises in the form of loans and subsidies. He informed about his request to the Governors of Regions to educate the public about launch of new businesses and provide other necessary assistance. He emphasized the need to support export-oriented enterprises. He stated that for the products to be competitive at international markets, manufacture of quality products at reasonable prices is essential, which can be accomplished by adopting new technologies and labour productivity.

When asked about the possibility of holding early parliamentary elections, he replied that the current Parliament would complete its full term till 2021. While answering a question whether he was tired of presidency, he said that he has been elected to serve as the President for a term up to 2020 and his services are needed for the country. In response to another question whether the country would continue the strategy he had chosen, he replied that the strategic course of the development of country would remain unchanged even after he demits of office.

On the question of mandatory teaching of English language in schools, he explained the importance of English language for the students to enable them to be abreast of the latest developments and inventions taking place around the world. On the foreign policy front, he highlighted Kazakhstan's non-proliferation efforts. He said that Kazakhstan is the first country in the region to become a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, which is due to its contribution to strengthening peace and stability in the world.

President Nazarbayev Congratulates Kazakhstanis on Nauryz

President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev congratulated the people of Kazakhstan on the occasion of Nauryz on 21st March, 2017. He wished them happiness, prosperity and wellbeing. The Nauryz was celebrated across the country by organizing fairs, concerts, sports and entertainment events.

At a celebratory event dedicated to Nauryz, President Nazarbayev said that the festival is celebrated beyond ethnic or religious preferences saying that it remains the symbol of trust, friendship, brotherhood and stability in the country. He said that Nauryz reminds the people about the importance of such eternal values as kindness, solidarity and mutual assistance.



He stated that this year, Nauryz is celebrated in a different atmosphere after the country has embarked upon the path of serious reforms. He recalled the recent launch of third modernization of Kazakhstan involving political and economic reforms in the country and amendment of the Constitution aimed at improving public administration, making the country more stable, and securing guarantee of immutability of the country's independence, unitary status, territorial integrity and the presidential form of government.

He visited an ethno-aul (village) in Astana where traditional yurts were erected with facilities for national sports and delicacies.

ICC Participates in Nauryz Celebration at Republican Physics and Mathematics School

Ms. Chandrani Ojah, Kathak Dance Teacher and Mr. Bhaskar Ojah, Music Teacher at the Indian Cultural Centre, Astana performed at "Nauryz" celebration at the Republican Physics and Mathematics School, Turkestan, Astana on 18th March, 2017. The students of the school set up stalls dedicated to several countries. The Indian stall was beautifully decorated in traditional style. A group of Indian students from Astana Medical University recited a Punjabi song and danced.



India Becomes Net Exporter of Electricity

India has turned around from a net importer of electricity to net exporter of electricity. According to a report released by the Central Electricity Authority on 29th March, 2017, India exported about 5,798 Million Units to Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar as against an import of around 5,585 Million Units from Bhutan during the year 2016-17.

Ever since the cross border trade of electricity started in mid-eighties, India has been importing power from Bhutan and marginally exporting to Nepal. The export of power to Nepal got a boost with the commissioning of Muzaffarpur(India)- Dhalkhebar(Nepal) 400 KV transmission line in 2016. The export of power to Bangladesh commenced with commissioning of first cross border Interconnection (400 KV) between Baharampur(India) and Bheramara(Bangladesh) in September, 2013. About 600 MW power is currently exported to Bangladesh.

A few more cross border links with neighbouring countries are in pipe line which would further increase export of power. India's considerable investment in power generation infrastructure and massive surge in the local supply of raw materials like coal in the past two years have helped power companies boost output.



First Fully-Owned Airbus Training Centre in Asia to be Set Up in New Delhi

The Airbus is setting up a greenfield training facility at Aerocity, New Delhi, to support India's growing need for Airbus aircraft pilots and maintenance engineers. The ground-breaking for the Airbus India Training Centre was performed on 17th March, 2017. The training centre will be built in a modular concept in order to become operational by end-2018 with two A320 full flight simulators, increasing to four and potentially to six simulators in due course. It will start with an initial capacity to train over 800 pilots and 200 maintenance engineers annually. It will cater primarily to Airbus operators in India and the region. Airbus has more than 250 aircraft in service in India and over 570 are on order by Indian airlines.



CEO of Airbus Mr. Tom Enders said that the training centre would be the first such facility fully owned by Airbus in Asia. India is the fastest growing domestic aviation market in the world and is expected to continue to grow at an annualised 9.3% over the next 20 years, outpacing the world average of 4.6%.

Liberalized Indian Visa Regime Comes into Force on 1st April, 2017

Pursuant to a decision taken by the Government of India to liberalize the visa regime on 30th November, 2016, its implementation was announced on 31st March, 2017 and came into effect on 1st April.

The e-Visa issued for tourism purposes has been expanded to cover business and medical visas in the revised visa policy. The window for application under e-visa scheme has been increased from 30 days to 120 days and duration of stay on e-Visa has been increased from 30 days to 60 days with double entry on e-Tourist and e-Business visas, and triple entry on e-Medical visa. The number of

airports through which e-Visa holders can enter India has been increased from 16 to 24. Separate immigration counters and facilitation desks have been provided at major airports to assist medical tourists. A new category of visa titled Intern Visa (I) has been introduced to enable foreigners to pursue internship in Indian companies, educational institutions and NGOs. Another new category of Visa, titled Film Visa (F) has been introduced for film makers. The minimum salary limit for grant of Employment Visa has been liberalized.

VISA REFORMS	
E-visa facility has been extended to the nationals of 161 countries for entry through 24 airports and 3 Indian Ports.	
The window for application under e-visa scheme has been increased from 30 days to 120 days.	A new category of visa titled Intern (I) Visa has been rolled out for foreigners intending to pursue internship in India.
The duration of stay on e-visa has been increased from 30 days to 60 days with double entry on e-Tourist & business visa and triple entry on e-Medical visa.	Separate immigration counters and facilitation desks to assist medical tourists have been provided at six major Indian airports.
A new category of Visa, Film (F) Visa, has also been introduced with maximum duration of one year with multiple entry facility.	

India Home to 101 Billionaires: Forbes

India is home to the fourth largest number of billionaires in the world. According to the Forbes List of the World's Billionaires, 2017 released on 20th March, 2017, there are 101 billionaires in India. Chairman of Reliance Industries Mr. Mukesh Ambani tops the Indians list with a net worth of US\$ 23.2 billion.

The number of billionaires in the world jumped by 13% to 2043 from 1810 last year and their combined net worth amounted to US\$ 7.67 trillion, a record 18% increase over the past year.



Incredible India Destination: Konkan Coast

Extending from Bordi in the north to Redi Jetty and Shiroda in the south, the Konkan region in the state of Maharashtra is a shoreline of astounding natural beauty. A coastal strip of land bound by Sahyadri hills on the east and Arabian Sea on the west, it is rich in mineral resources, and offers long stretches of clean, sandy beaches and bustling seaside towns such as Ratnagiri and Ganapatipule.

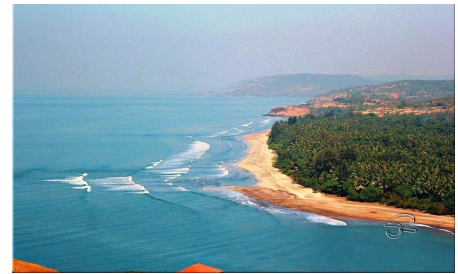
Ratnagiri is the best place to base oneself while exploring the Konkan coast. This charming port town is famous for alfonso mangoes, coconuts, jackfruits and a long stretch of black sandy beach with a backdrop of a 15th century fort. Mirya Bay, Mandvi Beach, Pandre Samudra, Bhatye Beach and Ganeshghule Beach are beautiful warm water beaches in Ratnagiri.

Fish Research Centre, Ratnadurg Fort and Tilak Memorial are some of the major tourist attractions in Ratnagiri. Fish Research Centre has an aquarium and a museum housing various marine species. Ratnadurg Fort, surrounded by the Arabian Sea, was constructed between 1350 and 1500 AD. A Bhagwati Temple is situated inside the fort. Tilak Memorial is the birth place of freedom fighter Lokmanya Tilak. Patitpavan Mandir, Veer Savarkar Smarak and Peer Babar Sheikh Dargah are other places of interest in Ratnagiri.

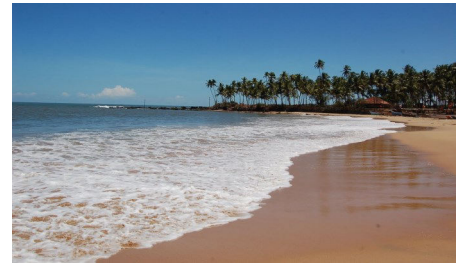
Ganapatipule (50 km from Ratnagiri) has a beautiful beach and an ancient temple of Shree Ganapati (believed to be 400 years old). Malvan (156 km), a beautifully developed coastline, is known for the Sindhudurg Fort built by famous Maratha King Chhatrapati Shivaji. The Marine Sanctuary there covers an area of 29.25 sq km and is rich in coral and other sea life. Tarkarli (173 km), situated at the confluence of the river Karli and the Arabian Sea, is one of the most beautiful beaches and a scenic place. The water is so clear that the seabed up to a depth of 15 feet can be seen.

Sindhudurg (180 km) offers exciting underwater snorkelling and scuba diving opportunities. Vengurla's coast line (185 km) is dotted with some of the most exotic and virgin beaches. Amboli (205 km), engulfed by dense forests and steep valleys, is situated at an altitude of 690 metres in the ruggedly sculpted Sahyadri hills. With breath-taking mountain range, spectacular waterfalls and steep valleys, Amboli presents some of the best panoramic views in the region.

Jaigad creek (33 km), Purnagad fort (40 km), Chiplun industrial town (95km), Kunkeshwar beach (108 km), Anjarle beach (152 km) and Harnai beach (174 km) are some of the other tourist attractions near Ratnagiri.



Anjarle Beach



Malvan Beach



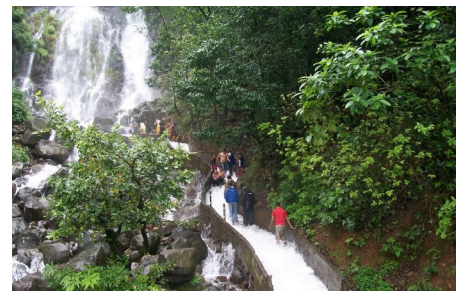
Sindhudurg Fort



Tarkarli



Vengurla



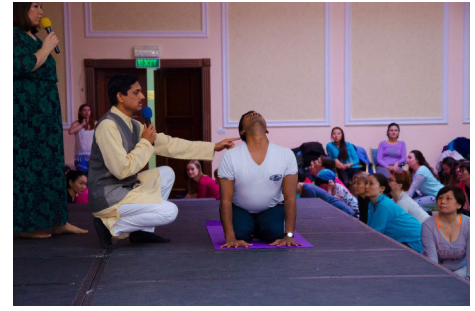
Amboli



Ganapatipule

PHOTO FEATURE

The Embassy Organizes Seminars on "Yoga Therapy"



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