

# **INDIA SPEAKS**

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## **BILATERAL ISSUES**

### **a. EGYPT**

#### **1. India at the Cairo International Fair, Cairo, 17 March 2016**

Indian companies are back at the Cairo International Fair after a five year gap with a bang. The Egyptian Expo and Convention Authority (EECA) conferred on India the Guest of Honour status, in recognition of India's large, diverse and significant presence. Indian exhibitors brought beautiful handicrafts for display and sale, items which are highly valued in Egypt. A special feature of the Indian pavilion was the team of SME manufacturers from Karnataka.

Prime Minister Sherif Ismail visited the specially designed Indian pavilion after the inauguration of the event. He was accompanied by Minister of Trade and Industry Tarek Kabil, Minister of Investments Ashraf Salman, Minister of Supplies Khaled Hanafy and senior officials. The dignitaries were received by Ambassador of India to Egypt Sanjay Bhattacharyya who escorted them around the India pavilion which featured beautiful motifs from Indian tradition and modernity.

PM Sherif was impressed with the beautiful zardozi (handmade embroidery) from Bareilly, contemporary ladies wear from New Delhi (supplier to European chains like Zara), handcrafted leather goods from Udaipur, exquisite Kundan jewellery from Jaipur, Islamic silverware from Delhi and intricate jewellery made of paddy and Katha embroidery from Kolkata.

Ambassador Bhattacharyya introduced the artisans to PM Sherif and the Ministers and explained the growing role of handicrafts in India, their contribution to employment, earning of foreign exchange and continuous innovation. He also told them of their role in community development, women empowerment and social progress.

PM Sherif was keen to know more about Khadi and the various products of KVIC and recalled the link between Mahatma Gandhi and Khadi. He was very impressed with the fine jewellery

from Jaipur and saw connections between Egyptian and Indian industry and culture. Trade Minister Kabil welcomed the SME entrepreneurs and encouraged them to set up links in Egypt.

The Indian exhibitors felt greatly honoured by the visit of PM Ismail and his keen interest in their products. For many of them, it was their first visit to Egypt. They were excited to be in Egypt and said a lot that was similar to India. They hoped to attract many visitors and make good business in the days to come.

In total, 28 Indian companies are participating in this year's fair. The Indian participation was organized by the India Trade Promotion Organization. There are also members from the Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Ministry of Micro Small & Medium Enterprises. The fair is open up to 25 March 2016.

*Source: Embassy of India, Cairo, [http://www.indembcairo.com/en-us/presscentre/pressreleases.aspx?udt\\_656\\_param\\_detail=45452](http://www.indembcairo.com/en-us/presscentre/pressreleases.aspx?udt_656_param_detail=45452)*

## **2. ICCR to establish first Indian Chair in Arab world at Ain Shams University, Cairo, 30 March 2016**

The Indian Ambassador to Egypt Sanjay Bhattacharyya and Prof. Abdel Wahab Ezzat, Acting President of Ain Shams University signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the Zafran Palace, Cairo, between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt, for the establishment of an ICCR Indian Chair. It was a historic moment in academic exchanges between the two civilization partners as the ICCR Chair will be the first, not only in Egypt but, also in the Arab world.

Under the terms of agreement, ICCR, in consultation with Ain Shams University, shall appoint an Indian academician to hold the Chair. Taking note of the technological advancements in India and the growing demand in Egypt, the first visiting Indian Professor will be in the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology. The agreement also provides flexibility to appoint Professors in other disciplines, as per the requirements of the University. The Chair would commence from September 2016 and will be the hub of cooperation between India and Egypt for academic exchanges.

Ain Shams University (ASU) is a beacon for high quality education in Egypt and a crucible for the political leadership. It is the third largest Egyptian university, founded in July 1950. ASU is well known for its leading role in developing strong cultural ethos, inculcating scientific temperament, enriching human knowledge and promoting political participation among the youth. The prestigious University has 15 faculties in arts, sciences, management and technology, has two high institutes in Nursing and Medicine; and hosts the Ain Shams Specialized Hospital. Recently, ASU commenced the teaching of Hindi and use of Devanagari script in its Faculty of Languages.

Ambassador Bhattacharyya said, "Establishment of the first ICCR Indian Chair in Egypt is an epochal step. It is a huge leap in building bridges between the youth. The Chair will enhance awareness about technological advancements in India, foster educational exchanges and promote enduring cultural bonds."

*Source: Embassy of India, Cairo, [http://www.indembcairo.com/en-us/presscentre/pressreleases.aspx?udt\\_656\\_param\\_detail=45458](http://www.indembcairo.com/en-us/presscentre/pressreleases.aspx?udt_656_param_detail=45458)*

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## **b. IRAN**

### **3. President of India's Message on the eve of Nouroz Day of Iran, New Delhi, 20 March 2016**

The President of India, Pranab Mukherjee has extended his greetings and felicitations to the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the eve of the Nouroz day of the Islamic Republic of Iran (21 March 2016).

In his message to His Excellency Dr. Hassan Rouhani, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the President has said, "On behalf of the people, the Government of India and on my own behalf, I extend warm greetings and best wishes to you and to the friendly people of Iran on the joyous occasion of Nouroz.

The close and friendly bilateral relations between India and Iran are built on historical, civilization and cultural ties reinforced over centuries. Iran is an important neighbour and partner of India in trade and economic cooperation, and we look forward to further developing our collaborative partnership across diverse areas".

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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## **c. ISRAEL**

### **4. Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha on a Visit to the State of Israel, Tel Aviv, 27 March 2016**

Chairperson of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) and Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha is on a four day goodwill visit to the State of Israel. The visit is aimed at consolidating the existing robust bilateral military to military cooperation between India and Israel.

During his visit to Israel, the Air Chief is scheduled to call on the Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya'alon. He would also meet Lieutenant General Gadi Eisenkot, Chief of the General Staff, Israel Defence Forces (IDF), Major General Amir Eshel, Commander of Israeli Air Force and Ophir Shoham, Director of the Ministry of Defence (MOD), Directorate for Research and Development MAFAT. The meetings would essentially focus on a wide range of bilateral issues pertaining to the ongoing defence cooperation between the two countries.

During his visit to the various operational air bases, Air Chief Marshal Raha would also visit the Israeli Air Force, Flight School, at Hatzetim air base. He would also be updated on the progress of various defence projects being carried forward as joint ventures between the two countries.

The itinerary also includes a visit to `Yad Vashem', Israel's Memorial to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, established in 1953 and a visit to the 'Memorial of Indian Soldiers' built in commemoration of sacrifice of the Indian soldiers who laid down their lives during World War I in the liberation of Haifa.

In recent years, there have been several close and high level contacts at the political and military levels between the two countries. Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha's visit to Israel would further boost bilateral relations between two Air Forces and is likely to provide greater convergence at the operational level.

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

#### **d. KUWAIT**

#### **5. Latest position on Disposal of Mortal Remains of Indian Nationals, Kuwait, 1 March 2016**

The Embassy will henceforth, on daily basis, provide the details of the deceased Indian nationals, whose death has been reported/ registered with the Embassy. Details regarding disposal of mortal remains of the deceased Indians by way of local burial or transportation to India from 1 March 2016 are below for information: -

2014	July	August	September	October	November	December
2015	January	February	March	April	May	June
	July	August	September	October	November	December
2016	January		February			March

Sl. No	Particulars of the deceased	Sex	Date of death	Date of <u>intimation</u> / <u>registration</u> with the Embassy	Cause of death (as per death certificate issued by local authorities)	Disposal Mode	Airway/ Flight Number/ Destination/ Date	Number of days taken.	Visa No. Art.	Remarks
49	Hemalata Ulluri PPNO.G329472 DOB:06.04.1976 39YRS	F	26.03.2016	28.03.2016 29.03.2016	Road accident	Transported to India	GF220/GF274 30.03.2016 Hyderabad	2	20	--
48	Krishnakumar Vadakkath PPNO.K965461 7 DOB:24.07.1962 53YRS	M	26.03.2016	27.03.2016 28.03.2016	Heart attack	Transported to India	EK860/530 29.3.2016 Cochin	2	18	--

47	Farida Shabbir Husain Amjawala PPNO.K465743 5 DOB:11.08.1963 52YRS	F	01.03.2016	02.03.2016 28.03.2016	Natural	Buried locally	--		22	--
46	Murali Koottumakkal Kuttan PPNO.Z252004 6 DOB:05.05.1959 56YRS	M	26.03.2016	27.03.2016 28.03.2016	Road accident	Transported to India	KU351 28.3.2016 Cochin	2	18	--
45	Emapiedade Diniz Carvalho PPNO.L666123 1 DOB:18.06.1930 85YRS	M	25.03.2016	26.06.2016 27.03.2016	Natural	Buried locally	--		22	--
44	Cherian Palackappillil Varkey PPNO.G727763 7 DOB:28.05.1976 39YRS	M	26.03.2016	27.03.2016 27.03.2016	Road accident	Transported to India	KU351 27.03.2016 Cochin	1	18	--
43	Ali Raza Shah PPNO.L518277 4 DOB:12.04.1971 45YRS	M	19.03.2016	20.03.2016 27.03.2016	Natural	Buried locally	--		20	--
42	Varghese Joseph PPNO.M671484 7 DOB:25.05.1955 60YRS	M	22.03.2016	23.03.2016 23.03.2016	Natural	Transported to India	KU331 26.3.2016 Trivandrum	1	22	--
41	Mohamad Husen Abdul Husen Munsil PPNO.L145857 6 DOB:07.11.1938 77YRS	M	13.02.2016	14.02.2016 23.03.2016	Natural	Buried locally	--	--	18	--

40	Sameer Chandrakant Patil PPNO.K927770 2 DOB:23.09.1969 46YRS	M	19.03.2016	20.03.2016 21.03.2016	Natural	Transported to India	EK860/540 22.3.2016 Mumbai	2	18	--
39	Narasimhulu Gandham PPNO.J9806581 DOB:12.06.1966 49YRS	M	20.03.2016	21.03.2016 21.03.2016	Road accident	Transported to India	EK876/544 21.03.2016	1	20	--
38	Aji Chathamkudam Paramu PPNO.M671661 6 DOB:17.12.1968 47YRS	M	19.03.2016	20.03.2016 21.03.2016	Natural	Transported to India	KU351 21.3.2016 Cochin	2	2	--
37	Shajahan Ponakuzhi Saidu PPNO.H757328 3 DOB:20.05.1970 45YRS	M	20.03.2016	20.03.2016 20.03.2016	Natural	Transported to India	EK860/530 20.03.2016 Cochin	1	20	--
36	Thurairaj Jayaseelan PPNO.L835480 4 DOB:16.01.1956 60YRS	M	18.03.2016	18.03.2016 19.03.2016	Natural	Transported to India	KU331 21.03.2016 Trivandrum	2	18	--
36	Benny Manuel Thomas PPNO.M6100446 DOB:02.02.1970 46YRS	M	19.03.2016	19.03.2016 19.03.2016	Heart attack	Transported to India	KU351 20.3.2016 Cochin	1	18	--
35	Rameswar Lal PPNO.L982021 7 DOB:05.07.1975 40YRS	M	17.03.2016	18.03.2016 19.03.2016	Heart attack	Transported to India	(W571 9W2053 Jaipur	2	18	--
34	Kalyana Sundarapuram Sitaraman Krishna Moorthy	M	17.03.2016	17.03.2016 17.03.2016	Heart attack	Transported to India	KU351 19.3.2016 Cochin	1	22	--

	PPNO.M104110 3 DOB:04.03.1931 85YRS									
33	Pullaiah Jalli ECNO.X054343 9 DOB:10.06.1974 41YRS	M	12.03. 2016	14.03.2016 17.03.2016	Suicide	Transported to India	AI976 26.3.2016 Chennai	3	20	--
32	Jose Fernandes PPNO.K791971 3 DOB:28.09.1958 57YRS	M	14.03. 2016	14.03.2016 15.03.2016	Natural	Transported to India	AI976 17.03.2016 Goa	1	18	--
31	Husaini Ibrahim Popat PPNO.J3506050 DOB:19.08.1966 48YRS	M	05.03. 2016	06.03.2016 15.03.2016	Heart attack	Buried locally	--		18	--
30	Sangram Kesharijena PPNO.Z334396 4 DOB:25.03.1976 39YRS	M	11.03. 2016	12.03.2016 14.03.2016	Natural	Transported to India	KU381/ AI075 16.3.2016 Bhubaneswar	2	18	--
29	Venkatramaraju Medidaraju PPNO.K792207 0 DOB:25.06.1977 38YRS	M	11.03. 2016	12.03.2016 14.03.2016	Heart attack	Transported to India	AI988 16.03.2016 Chennai	2	18	--
28	Mandalamma Mamidi Setty PPNO.G768736 1 DOB:23.10.1967 48YRS	F	12.03. 2016	13.03.2016 13.03.2016	Natural	Transported to India	EK858/524 14.3.2016 Hyderabad	1	20	--
27	Gaffoor Shaik PPNO.J3507906 DOB:18.09.1968 47YRS	M	25.02. 2016	27.02.2016 13.03.2016	Heart attack	Buried locally	--		20	--
26	Mohammad Syeed PPNO.M464317 2 DOB:04.05.1978 37YRS	M	12.03. 2016	12.03.2016 13.03.2016	Heart attack	Transported to India	EK876/EK570 14.3.2016 Kolkata	2	20	--

25	Sifghatulla Syed PPNO.L841526 9 DOB:24.12.1994 21YRS	M	09.03. 2016	09.03.2016 10.03.2016	Other accident	Transp orted to India	EK876/544 11.3.2016 Chennai	2	18	--
24	Abdul Raheem Painatt PPNO.K976605 8 DOB:01.05.1986 29YRS	M	10.03. 2016	10.03.2016 10.03.2016	Heart attack	Transp orted to India	QR1089/538 10.03.2016 Calicut	1	20	--
23	Saju Karunakaran Nair PPNO.G683315 3 DOB:27.05.1984 31YRS	M	08.03. 2016	09.03.2016 10.03.2016	Suicide	Transpo rted to India	EK876/520 11.3.2016 Trivandrum	2	18	--
22	Hem Raj Nayak PPNO.N165143 3 DOB:27.09.1979 36YRS	M	09.03. 2016	09.03.2016 10.03.2016	Suicide	Transpo rted to India	EK858/EK538 10.03.2016 Ahmadabad	1	18	--
21	Saturnim Rodrigues Valerian Paul PPNOK8032283 DOB:19.01.1951 65YRS	M	29.02. 2016	02.03.2016 10.03.2016	Natural	Buried locally	--		18	--
20	Brian Rolson Rego PPNO.Z218225 0 DOB:09.04.1978 37YRS	M	08.03. 2016	08.03.2016 09.03.2016	Heart attack	Transp orted to India	(W571 10.3.2016 Bombay	1	18	--
19	Sreenivasulu Chavitipalli PPNO.H196752 3 DOB:10.10.1976 39YRS	M	06.03. 2016	07.03.2016 09.03.2016	Bomb blast (work site accident )	Transpo rted to India	AI976 12.3.2016 Chennai	2	20	--
18	Adolph Felix Gerard D'souza PPNO.J5547401 DOB:19.09.1960 55YRS	M	05.03. 2016	06.03.2016 09.03.2016	Heart attack	Buried locally	--		18	--



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17	Imam Hossain PPNO.M068355 4 DOB:24.09.1993 22YRS	M	27.02. 2016	04.03.2016 08.03.2016	Suicide	Transp orted to India	KU381 9.03.2016 Agartala	5	18	--
16	Habeeb Unnisa PPNO.H183047 8 DOB:10.06.1949 66YRS	F	07.03. 2016	07.03.2016 08.03.2016	Natural	Transp orted to India	EK860/526 9.03.2016 Hyderabad	1	22	--
15	Sikandar Shaik PPNO.L223496 9 DOB:05.07.1985 30YRS	M	28.02. 2016	02.03.2016 08.03.2016	Road accident	Buried locally	--		20	--
14	Rajesham Alle PPNO.G549021 2 DOB:15.08.1978 37YRS	M	17.02. 2016	05.03.2016 07.03.2016	Suicide	Transp orted to India	QR1079/ QR500 Hyderabad	19	18	--
13	Rupert Alex Louis PPNO.N297509 8 DOB:26.02.1958 58YRS	M	02.03. 2016	05.03.2016 07.03.2016	Under investig ation	Buried locally	--		18	--
12	Jayaraju Satrada PPNO.G756825 9 DOB:23.11.1986 29YRS	M	03.03. 2016	04.03.2016 07.03.2016	Natural	Transpo rted to India	AI988 9.03.2016 Hyderabad	3	20	--
11	Arvind Kumar Govardhanlal PPNO.F9260440 DOB:12.08.1977 38YRS	M	04.03. 2016	05.03.2016 06.03.2016	Natural	Transpo rted to India	WY644/267 9.03.201 Lucknow	2	20	--
10	Rendla Krishna Reddy PPNO.L650564 7 DOB:10.06.1968 47YRS	M	04.03. 2016	04.03.2016 05.03.2016	Natural	Transp orted to India	EK876/544 06.03.2016 Chennai	2	20	--
09	Parimal Kumar Manilal Tandel PPNO.M121739 2 DOB:04.05.1980	M	29.02. 2016	01.03.2016 02.03.2016	Drowni ng	Transp orted to India	EK858/500 4.03.2016 Mumbai	2	18	--

	35YRS									
08	Naresh Tuniki PPNO.F7574377 DOB:10.02.1986 30YRS	M	02.02. 2016	01.03.2016 02.03.2016	Heart attack	Transpo rted to India	AI988 06.03.2016 Hyderabad		20	--
07	Ansar Basha Shaik PPNO.N297641 4 DOB:16.03.1974 41YRS	M	22.02. 2016	24.02.2016 02.03.2016	Road accident	Buried locally			17	--
06	Mirajimat Sekh PPNO.K121411 0 DOB:01.01.1984 32YRS	M	26.02. 2016	27.02.2016 01.03.2016	Heart attack	Transpo rted to India	EK876/570 5.03.2016 Kolkata		4	--
05	Muriparambil Alikunhi Abdul Kadar PPNO.M231258 9 DOB:01.01.1959 57YRS	M	29.02. 2016	29.02.2016 01.03.2016	Heart attack	Transpo rted to India	EK860/530 01.03.2016 Cochin	1	18	--
04	Rama Krishna Penubala PPNO.N091211 6 DOB:16.02.1983 32YRS	M	28.02. 2016	29.02.2016 01.02.2016	Road accident	Transp orted to India	AI976 3.3.2016 Chennai	2	20	--
03	Samsudeen Kamal Basha PPNO.K535273 5 DOB:05.03.1974 41YRS	M	23.02. 2016	26.02.2016 01.03.2016	Heart attack	Transpo rted to India	GF222/270 02.03.2016 Cochin	3	18	--
02	Viswanathan Veeramani PPNO.M228614 6 DOB:09.05.1970 45YRS	M	27.02. 2016	29.02.2016 01.03.2016	Heart attack	Transpo rted to India	GF216/068 02.03.2016 Chennai	2	20	--
01	Rajeshwari Thota PPNO.G229650	F	27.02. 2016	28.02.2016 01.03.2016	Natural	Transpo rted to India	AI982 4.3.2016 Chennai	3	20	--

3	DOB:10.02.1975									
	41YRS									

*Source: Embassy of India, Kuwait, <http://indembkwt.org/Pages/MortalRemains.aspx>*

### **6. Number of Indian Nationals residing in Kuwait, Kuwait, 30 March 2016**

As per the latest statistics (10 February 2016) received by the Embassy from the Kuwaiti authorities, the number of Indian nationals legally residing in Kuwait has reached 8.8 lakh mark. In addition, there are approximately 28,000 Indian nationals who have overstayed their visas and, therefore, are staying illegally in the country. Some highlights from the latest figures are:-

- The Indian community in Kuwait has grown by 10 percent in 2015. Our community remains the most preferred community in Kuwait.
- The gender ratio of Indians in Kuwait is highly skewed as they are more Indian males than Indian females in the country.
- Out of 8.8 lakh Indians, nearly 3 lakh are domestic workers (i.e. drivers, gardeners, cleaners, ayahs, cooks and housemaids).
- The majority of Indians (4.26 lakh) are deployed in private sectors (i.e. construction workers, technicians, engineers, doctors, chartered accountants, IT experts, etc.). In addition, there are about 1.1 lakh dependants i.e. spouses/children. Out of these, there are about 42,000 Indian students studying in 20 Indian schools in the country. With Indian companies being awarded EPC contracts of over US\$ 5 billion during last 2 years, Indian nationals working in private sectors may continue to rise in the coming 2-3 years.
- There are about 27,000 Indians working for the Kuwaiti Government in various jobs like doctors, nurses, para-medics, engineers in National Oil Companies and a few scientists. The demand for Indian nurses remains strong in Kuwait.
- The Kuwaiti authorities have deported 1,700 illegal Indians staying in the country from 1 December 2015 to 21 February 2016.

*Source: Embassy of India, Kuwait, <http://www.indembkwt.org/DispNews.aspx?ID=930>*

### **e. LEBANON**

#### **7. ITEC Day Celebration, Beirut, 30 March 2016**

The Embassy organized a cocktail reception on the occasion of ITEC Day on 30 March 2016 in the Chancery from 6pm to 8pm. Forty Lebanese Officials who had undergone ITEC training, both civil and defence, in India attended the Reception.

During the celebration, a small audio visual programme on India was shown which was followed by speech of Ambassador. Two of the ITEC candidates also spoke about their experiences in India during ITEC training followed by a cultural event where Ajay Kumar Singh, Dance teacher

cum performer from ICCR had an half an hour interactive session on dance in daily life, Indian dances including Bollywood dance with the guest.

The guests enjoyed the programme and also participated enthusiastically in the interactive session on Indian dance and gave their feedback on various aspect of their stay in India during ITEC training.- See more at:

<http://indianembassybeirut.org/pressreleases/display/41/15#sthash.3lTvcKB2.dpuf>

*Source: Embassy of India, Beirut, <http://indianembassybeirut.org/pressreleases/display/41/15>*

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## **f. LIBYA**

### **8. Advisory for Indian nationals in Libya, Tripoli, 1 March 2016**

This is in continuation of Embassy's earlier advisories, the last one being of 9 December 2015 for all its citizens to exit from Libya at the earliest due to continued worsening of the security situation in different parts of Libya.

As the overall security situation remains fragile and in view of the recent incidents in Sabrata, the situation is likely to further deteriorate, including in the conflict zones, Sirte, Derna, Ajdabia, parts of Benghazi, western region and several other regions throughout the country. The Embassy reiterates its earlier advisories to its citizens to exit from Libya without further delay using all available means in view of imminent safety and security risks.

The Indian nationals are further advised not to take up employment in Libya till the situation normalizes. Those in Libya are advised to take extreme precaution while moving within Libya and to plan their movement/ travel after ensuring the safety of the route.

*Source: Embassy of India, Tripoli, [http://indianembassylibya.in/news\\_detail.php?id=22](http://indianembassylibya.in/news_detail.php?id=22)*

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## **g. OMAN**

### **9. ITEC Day 2016 was celebrated by the Indian Embassy, Muscat, 1 March 2016**

ITEC Day 2016 was celebrated by the Indian Embassy in Muscat on 29 February 2016 in presence of over 150 ITEC Alumni from Oman and eminent guests, including H.E. Hafiz bin Salem Ba Omar, Chief of Arab Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and H.E. Mohsin bin Khamis Al-Balushi, Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, in his welcome speech, thanked the International Cooperation Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Oman for its cooperation in implementation of the ITEC Programme in Oman. He referred to the historical ties between India and Oman, maritime neighbours, stressing that India's relationship with Oman is based on mutual understanding and respects for each other's interests, priorities, sensitivities and concerns. He noted that four key pillars of India-Oman strategic partnership are security, defence, trade & investment and Indian community. He underlined the priority accorded by the Embassy to enhancing bilateral trade and investment relations and outlined the mutual benefits of boosting trade and investment.

Referring to the priorities of Oman, including diversification of economy, development of non-oil sectors, development of SMEs, Skill development and Omanisation, Ambassador noted that development of human resources and skill development are the key to achieving these goals. He underlined that ITEC Programme of India provides a perfect opportunity to Oman for development of its human resources and skills. The ITEC Programme, the Government of India's flagship Programme for sharing its developmental experience and offering its expertise to developing countries for their capacity building, is offered to 161 countries. A wide variety of training courses are offered under the ITEC Programme, which are open to both governmental officials and non-governmental nominees, chosen by the Government of Oman. Given the importance that India attaches to its relationship with Oman, the number of ITEC slots for Oman has been increasing year after year to reach 150 slots during April 2014 to March 2015. India has again offered 150 slots during April 2015 to March 2016. Ambassador underlined the need for full utilization of the slots offered to Oman. He also stressed the need to nominate candidates who are qualified, who are likely contribute in future and who come from priority fields for human resource and skill development identified by the Government of Oman.

ITEC Alumni were invited to speak to share their experience of training under the ITEC Programme in India. They spoke about the benefits of ITEC courses not only in providing knowledge and expertise but in giving an opportunity to interact with trainees from other countries and learn more about India and its culture and traditions. The idea to create a regular platform for interaction among the ITEC Alumni - a WhatsApp or FB Group - was also presented. Over sumptuous Indian dinner, ITEC Alumni and other distinguished guests interacted and shared their impressions of India.

*Source: Embassy of India, Muscat, <http://www.indemb-oman.org/inner.aspx?type=AllPressRelease&id=0>*

### **10. Sixtieth anniversary of India-Oman Diplomatic Relations, Muscat, 23 March 2016**

India and Oman a maritime neighbours, share historical ties, which are traced back to 5,000 years. In 2015, the two countries celebrated the 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations. During these six decades the relationship between India and Oman has evolved into a strategic partnership, with growing cooperation in security and defence, increasing bilateral trade and mutual investment and expanding cultural, educational and tourism exchanges. The growing presence of Indian community, numbering around 800,000 and comprising workers and professionals, has been a key facet of India's partnership with Oman. The Indian community in Oman has been making immense contribution to growth and development of both India and Oman.

To commemorate the 60th anniversary of India-Oman Diplomatic Relations, a number of activities have been organized both in Oman and in India. The celebrations to mark the 60th anniversary began with the visit of External Affairs Minister of India H.E. Sushma Swaraj, to

Oman on 17-18 February 2015. It was her first visit to Oman and provided a new momentum to bilateral relations. Some of other events held throughout 2015 were as follows:

- An Indian Film Festival was held, in association with City Cinema and Yash Raj Films, in Muscat during 27 – 29 April 2015.
- A Lecture on ‘India-Oman Relations in a Historical and Contemporary Perspective’ was organized on 14 May 2015.
- Four Indian Naval Ships from Western Fleet visited Oman on 19 - 22 September 2015.
- Indian Navy Sailing Ship, INS Tarangini, and the Royal Navy of Oman Sailing Ship ‘Shabab Oman’ undertook a joint voyage from Muscat to Kochi on 24 November 2015, tracing the ancient trading route between India and Oman.

In view of the historical importance of the 60th anniversary of India-Oman Diplomatic Relations, Oman Post has prepared to issue a special commemorative stamp. Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, and Chief Executive Officer, Oman Posts, Abdul Malik Abdul Karim Al Balushi, will release the special commemorative India-Oman Postage Stamp at a function at the Embassy of India Auditorium on 5 April 2016. The release of the commemorative stamp would mark the culmination of the special events which have been dedicated to commemorate the 60th anniversary of establishment of India-Oman Diplomatic ties.

*Source: Embassy of India, Muscat, <http://www.indemb-oman.org/inner.aspx?type=AllPressRelease&id=0>*

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### **11. Indian Embassy Hosts Business Event, Muscat, 30 March 2016**

India and Oman, maritime neighbours, enjoy excellent political relations. Under their strategic partnership, cooperation and exchanges between the two countries have been expanding. Bilateral trade, which had grown to US\$ 5.77 billion in 2013-14, has since been declining in value. It had amounted to US\$ 4.18 billion in 2014-15. Mutual investment between Oman and India is estimated at US\$ 7.5 billion. As per the information made available by Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Oman, there are over 2900 Indian enterprises in Oman with an estimated investment of US\$ 4.5 billion. Omani investments in India are estimated at US\$ 3 billion. There is a huge potential for collaboration between India and Oman in the health-care, IT, Food Processing, Construction & Infrastructure and Mineral and Mining sectors. The Embassy has accorded a high priority to promoting bilateral trade and mutual investments.

The Embassy, in association with Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry (OCCI), is organizing a trade and investment promotion event on 30 March 2016 with focus on Healthcare, Food Industry, Information Technology, Mining & Mineral and Construction & Infrastructure sectors. Apex Chambers in India like Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Federation of Indian Export Organization (FIEO), National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) and Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI) will be organizing delegations of Indian companies to showcase their products and services in the above sectors to the Omani

business enterprises. The purpose is to provide Indian companies from these sectors a platform to explore opportunities for exports, business tie-ups, investments and project work in Oman.

A meeting will be held at Hotel Crowne Plaza, Muscat on 30 March from 0900 hrs. Omani enterprises dealing in the above mentioned sectors are invited to attend the meeting with Indian companies. Sixty Indian companies have indicated their presence. For further information and details they should contact at [commasst@indemb-oman.org](mailto:commasst@indemb-oman.org) or Tel no- 00968-24684326. Further, the Embassy will host a briefing Seminar for Indian enterprises to make them aware of the opportunities in Oman for exports, project work and investments. Omani corporates in above sectors will make presentations to representatives of the participating Indian companies.

*Source: Embassy of India, Muscat, <http://www.indemb-oman.org/inner.aspx?type=AllPressRelease&id=0>*

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## **h. Qatar**

### **12. Important Advisory: For Information and Compliance, Doha, 10 March 2016**

Attached is Circular No. 2014/12910/05 dated 18 November 2014 from Supreme Council of Health, State of Qatar, containing 'Procedures and Regulations for carrying the medicines which contain either drugs or psychotropic substances by the visitors coming to State of Qatar or departing from Qatar [for their personal use].

In this context, Embassy of India, Doha, requests all Indian Nationals travelling to the State of Qatar to strictly comply with these instructions.

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#### **Supreme Council of Health State of Qatar**

Procedures and regulations for carrying medicines which contain either drugs or psychotropic substances by the patients coming to State of Qatar or departing from here for their personal use.

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Procedures and regulations related to carrying the medicines which contain either drugs or psychotropic substances by the patients coming to State of Qatar or departing from here for their personal use, or by the Official Missions (only) coming to State of Qatar or departing from here for their use.

It is prohibited to carry medicines and substances which are banned internationally and locally.

It is prohibited to carry medicines mentioned in the list (a) and list (b) of Law (9) issued in the year 1987, regarding anti-drugs and dangerous psychotropic substances. Likewise the items registered at schedule No. (3) of the same Law.

In order to carry such medicines, an application is to be given to the Department of Pharmacology and Drugs Control in the Supreme Council of Health.



Permission would be granted to carry the medicines by the patients coming to State of Qatar for their personal use as per following conditions:

To attach detailed medical report attested by the hospital treated the patient. Medical report should not be older than six months. The report must contain the following :

Personal details of the patient.

Medical diagnosis.

Treatment and Duration.

Medical Prescriptions.

Scientific name of the medicine, Form and scheduled doses.

Or to attach the medical prescription in the name of the patient, attested by the same hospital and the prescription should not be older than six months. The prescription must have the following information:

Diagnosis of the disease

Scientific name of the medicine, Form and scheduled doses.

How to use and duration of the treatment.

Seal of the hospital.

To pledge that only patient will use the medicine and will use on his responsibility.

To attach a copy of ID card of the patient.

Approval can granted to carry medicines of 30 –days as the maximum period or for the duration of the stay of the patient in Qatar, whatever is less, subject to validity of the medicines. The patient has to keep in mind the following:

In case the medicine exhausts, the patient has to contact the specialist physician licensed to practice in a hospital, to check whether he needs to continue the same medicine.

In case, the physician confirms that the patient needs to continue the same treatment, a specific medical file has to be opened in that hospital and the appropriate medicine would be prescribed through a medical prescription attested by the same hospital. The medicine would be provided from the local pharmacy for required period. The patient will continue to do follow ups with same hospital for his continuous treatment if his medical condition warrants so.

In case, this medicine or its alternate is not available in the local markets, the hospital treating the patient can secure this medicine through one of the drugs distributors after obtaining approval from the Department of Pharmacology and Drugs Control in the Supreme Council of Health.

If the medicine is in form of injection, the approval can be obtained under supervision of any local hospital in the name of the patient. The medicine would be registered in the file of the hospital meant for the personal use as per the followed procedure for such medicines.



Excess medicine can be destroyed through the Department of Pharmacology and Drugs Control in the Supreme Council of the Health.

Departing patients from Qatar would be treated as par with one coming to Qatar according to the above-mentioned paragraphs No. (1), No. (2), No. (3) and No. (4). Quantity of medicine would be allowed for 30 days only.

In case, the medicine is not carried by the patient but was carried by one of his relatives like (parents, children, brothers or spouse), a copy of his ID would be taken. In case, the medicine was carried by the representative of the patient, the written consent of the patient for carrying medicine has to be attached. A copy of his ID would be taken.

In case, the medicines contain drugs or psychotropic substances are to be carried by the diplomats or government officials (only) coming to State of Qatar for the patients working with the diplomatic mission. The procedures would be as following :

The Mission has to send an application to the Department of Pharmacology and Drugs Control in the Supreme Council of Health, mentioning the name of head of the Mission or name of the custodian of the drugs. If not so, the accompanying physician would be the custodian of the medicine. The application should be attached with the following:

Details of the desired medicines, certified by the concerned authority in the country of the Mission, including the scientific name of the drug and psychotropic substance, form, concentration, size and quantity. Medicines containing drug and psychotropic substance have to be brought through aerial transportation only.

To pledge that the medicines would be used by the members of the Mission/delegation only on their responsibility, and it would not be sold or it would not be utilized for any other purpose. To pledge that the excess medicines would be carried back and all used bottles would be destroyed while going back. To pledge to provide details of medicine utilization, reasons for utilization, excess medicine and destroyed ones before the departure of the delegation to the Department of Drugs and Pharmacology Control in the Supreme Council of Health.

Once application is approved, permission would be granted for carrying the medicine.

*Source: Embassy of India, Doha,*

<http://www.indianembassyqatar.gov.in/pages/importantannouncements.php>

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### **13. INS Beas visits Doha, Qatar for International Maritime Defence Exhibition (DIMDEX), Doha, 28 March 2016**

Indian Naval ship Beas is on an official visit to Doha, Qatar from 28 March to 2 April 16 to participate in the fifth edition of Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition (DIMDEX).

DIMDEX is held biennially at Doha and provides an ideal platform for showcasing our indigenous shipbuilding capability and technological prowess as well as innovation in Naval systems. INS Beas, an indigenous Brahmaputra Class frigate commissioned on 11 July 05 will represent the Indian Navy at DIMDEX 16. Built by our Defence shipyard (DPSU), M/s Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited, at Kolkata, the ship is a modern anti-submarine warfare frigate equipped with state-of-the-art weapons and sensors. The ship represents a unique amalgamation of Western and Eastern origin as well as indigenous equipment and leverages innovation to provide a potent mix of surface, anti-air and anti-missile as well as anti-submarine capabilities.

During the visit, the ship will have professional interactions with the Qatar Emiri Navy. The visit will also afford an opportunity to interact with other participating warships from various countries. These interactions will contribute towards strengthening ties, enhancing mutual understanding and building 'Bridges of Friendship'. The ship is Commanded by Captain Deepak Bhatia, who is a Navigation and Operations specialist.

The Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba, PVSM, AVSM, ADC, will also visit Doha during the period of the ship's stay. During the visit, the Flag Officer will also address the Middle East Naval Commanders' Conference (MENC).

The visit by INS Beas to Doha for DIMDEX 16 will serve to showcase Indian indigenous shipbuilding capability and maritime prowess, enhance maritime ties with Qatar as well as other participating countries.

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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**14. A Talk by Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba, PVSM, AVSM, ADC Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command at the Middle East Naval Commanders Conference [MENC] held at the ongoing DIMDEX 2016, Doha, 30 March 2016**

Saliency of Maritime Domain in the Security Architecture of the Arabian Sea and Adjoining Areas – an Indian Navy Perspective

**Introduction**

His Excellency Chief of Staff of the Qatar Armed Forces, His Excellency Commander of the Qatar Emiri Naval Forces, distinguished Heads of Delegations, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a distinct honour and a proud privilege for me to be present here and share my views at the Middle East Naval Commanders Conference. I must thank the organizers of DIMDEX 2016 and Qatar Armed Forces for extending me the honour of addressing this august gathering. The participants of this conference represent not only the military leadership of the Middle East and North African region, but also the collective naval leadership of the Indian Ocean Region and the wisdom of maritime experts from around the globe.

The fifth edition of DIMDEX, and today's conference come at a time when warm and cordial relations between India and the Middle East are stronger than ever before. Our strong civilizational linkages go back thousands of years. It is of particular significance that the strong bonds between our two civilizations are mainly ascribed to sea borne regional trade and commerce that flourished through the medium of the global commons of the region and the interaction between our peoples, for ages. This region constitutes India's immediate neighbourhood, with the waters of the Arabian Sea washing the shores on either side. We are indeed united through the sea and India has a vital stake in the security and stability of this region.

### **Historical Significance of the Arabian Sea**

In India's immediate maritime environment, the Arabian Sea has played an eminent role in the evolution of mankind. World's earliest civilizations thrived in the littorals surrounding the Arabian Sea, and in its adjoining areas including the river basins of Nile, Euphrates, Tigris and Indus. These ancient civilizations evolved into vibrant societies of the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent. Major religions that originated in this region spread mainly through the sea routes to other parts of the world.

The Arabian Sea has also been central to international trade and global economic political affairs for several millennia. Hindered by the Himalayan barriers on land, the Arabian Sea provided easier avenues for extensive interaction among our civilizations. Maritime commerce flourished among the littorals of the Arabian Sea, with extensive trade linkages between India and the Middle East region. Thus, through the ages, the Arabian Sea emerged as a melting pot of different societies and cultures. The inherent natural wealth of the Arabian Sea littorals attracted extra-regional powers to this region. The arrival of Europeans on Indian shores in the late 15th century, initiated an imperial race that led to European powers jostling for influence and domination, ultimately resulting in colonization of this region.

### **Importance of Arabian Sea and its littorals in the 21st Century**

The dependence on the seas for global trade and commerce continues to rise in the 21st century, even as we increasingly look towards the seas for resources, fisheries and livelihood, in our bid to encash the Blue Economy. There is an evident shift in world's focus towards the maritime domain. At the same time, globalization and sustained economic progress of several Asian nations have emphasized the geo-strategic significance of Arabian Sea littorals. Therefore, today this region commands increasing attention and focus of the international community.

Notwithstanding the discovery of unconventional energy sources in many other parts of the world, the Middle East continues to be the world's largest oil producing region, with more than 50 percent of world's total oil reserves. The region's rich hydrocarbon reserves fuel the global economy, thus retaining it as the Centre of Gravity of global energy security. With more than 17 million barrels of oil passing through the Strait of Hormuz, it is the world's largest oil transit

Choke Point. A large percentage of this oil is meant for nations beyond the Indian Ocean Region, both to the East and West. The Middle East is thus a prime facilitator of global economic growth. Security and stability in this region, and its maritime domain is therefore of vital significance for all nations of the world.

### **Rise in Threats and Challenges in the Maritime Domain**

At the same time, developments in the post-Cold War period have heralded a new era of geo-political instabilities, which has facilitated the spread of radicalism, terrorism and trans-national crimes. Resource competition and energy security, combined with geo-political instabilities have moved the Arabian Sea and its adjoining areas further to the centre of global geo-strategic agenda.

Security issues originating on land, unless resolved, frequently transgress into the maritime domain. Majority of these security issues do not recognize international maritime borders. Unless checked, the contiguity, connectivity and the homogeneous character of the seas enable these security issues to proliferate to adjoining areas through the maritime domain. The current century is witnessing a proliferation of non-traditional threats in the maritime domain. Primary amongst these being terrorism, piracy, drug, arms and human trafficking, environmental security issues, and natural disasters.

To complicate matters further, there has been an increasing blurring of lines between traditional and non-traditional challenges. This development is redefining the nature of international security. These challenges have necessitated changes in maritime strategies, force structures, operating methodology, training and cooperative mechanisms.

### **In Maritime Strategy to Address Non-Traditional Threats**

In India's perspective, threats and challenges in the maritime domain can be addressed effectively by building a Favourable and Positive Maritime Environment, to enhance Net Maritime Security in the region. A favourable maritime environment would preserve peace, promote stability, maintain security, and thereby facilitate trade, commerce and cooperation. Accordingly, the Indian Navy is re-aligning its operating philosophy and seeking to make effective contributions to global and regional collective response mechanisms.

Indian Navy's efforts to shape maritime stability are exemplified by continuous deployment of our ships in the Gulf of Aden since 2008 to counter maritime piracy. Cooperative actions by state agencies, maritime forces and industry have succeeded in curbing piracy off Somalia. The fact that there have been no piracy incidents anywhere in the Arabian Sea since 2013 showcases the latent potential of maritime cooperation.

Effective information exchange and transparency of the seas are primary pre-requisites to counter the varied threats in the maritime domain. Developing and enhancing Regional Maritime Domain Awareness or MDA has therefore seen several navies taking cooperative steps. India has

developed a Coastal Surveillance Radar System chain to augment the extent of information bubble around our continental landmass and island territories. We are also cooperating with island nations in the Indian Ocean to develop similar facilities, thereby enhancing the awareness and information envelope around respective areas of various stakeholders. Sharing and interlinking the radar, AIS and white shipping information has enabled integration of individual information bubbles to facilitate a broader comprehensive MDA across the region, which in turn furthers both marine safety and maritime security.

India's vision for its maritime neighbourhood was clearly enunciated by our Honourable Prime Minister last year, in the acronym SAGAR – which means 'Security And Growth for All in the Region.' Over the years, the Indian Navy has been taking initiatives for assisting incapability development and capacity enhancement of the smaller maritime forces of the region through training, technology support, hydrographic assistance, and provision of surface and airborne assets.

We have also enhanced our presence in our coastal areas and the Exclusive Economic Zones along with our maritime partners, to counter the threats of maritime terrorism, curb Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing, human and drug trafficking, and other non-traditional maritime challenges.

The vagaries of climate change have led to an increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters. The tsunami of 2004 caused extensive damage to life and property. The mounting of relief operations and rehabilitation work clearly demonstrated how navies with diverse operating philosophies could cooperate and work together for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief. The 2004 disaster also underscored an immediate requirement for nations to cooperate in evolving a robust collective mechanism, to foresee and respond to any future calamity in the region. As many as 27 ships of the Indian Navy had sailed to different areas of India and neighbouring countries, struck by Tsunami, for relief operations.

More recently, the Indian Navy successfully evacuated Indian and foreign citizens from conflict zones of Lebanon and Yemen. The high degree of effectiveness of our actions was possible only because of active cooperation of the governments and security agencies of many Middle East nations, whose representatives are also present here today. These missions indicate our willingness and collective resolve to preserve the safety and security of the seas in the region.

### **Strategy to Counter Maritime Threats and Challenges**

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is evident today that globalization has increased the vulnerability of oceans. Much as we would like the seas to remain a benign medium, the potential of vessels at sea being turned to be a source of threat cannot be ruled out and thus, we need to be ready. It is not feasible for any single nation or navy to counter the myriad security threats facing our region's maritime domain. This requires a collective and cooperative response by all stakeholders. Operating in international waters or the high seas, where there are no boundaries

but numerous threats and challenges, demands cooperation between navies and other security agencies.

Our collective experience of the last few decades has also demonstrated that lasting peace and stability can best be ensured by regional maritime forces. Threats in the maritime domain therefore need to be met through regional efforts, coordinated by a regional entity. There is an emergent need for maritime forces of the region to contribute to security operations in the region, and re-align their maritime strategies to counter the rise in maritime threats and challenges.

It is also vital that regional navies with adequate capacity and experience contribute in regional capability development. We need to develop regional architectures to discuss and develop cooperative measures. The Indian Navy's initiative of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) that took shape in 2008 has grown significantly in size as well as scope. We view the Middle East Naval Commanders Conference as a significant contributor to furthering such dialogues between regional maritime agencies. I take this opportunity to complement and acknowledge this present initiative for enhancing regional maritime cooperation among all littorals of the Arabian Sea and adjoining areas.

Before I conclude, I would once again reiterate that increasing instabilities on land, and the growing vulnerabilities in the Arabian Sea present unique challenges to the region's maritime forces. It is incumbent on navies of the region to adapt and evolve to counter contemporary threats, even as we prepare for future challenges to humankind.

Security and stability in the maritime domain is the shared responsibility of all coastal states. It is therefore vital that we establish cooperative mechanisms and contribute towards sustained peace and stability of the maritime domain. It is indeed our collective responsibility to ensure that we hand over a better, more secure maritime environment to future generations, which will facilitate unhindered economic growth of our nations, and this region.

Thank You.

*Source: Embassy of India, Doha,*

[http://www.indianembassyqatar.gov.in/pages/press\\_release\\_detail.php?id=155&page=1](http://www.indianembassyqatar.gov.in/pages/press_release_detail.php?id=155&page=1)

**15. Remarks of Sanjiv Arora, Ambassador of India at the Official Reception on board Indian Naval Ship INS Beas on Wednesday, 30 March 2016 during the visit of INS Beas to Qatar from 28 March to 2 April 2016 for Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (DIMDEX) 2016, Doha, 31 March 2016**

His Excellency Akbar Al Baker, Group CEO of Qatar Airways;  
Other officials from the Ministry of Defence and Qatar Armed Forces;  
Esteemed Qatari Guests from other sectors;  
Distinguished colleagues from the Diplomatic Corps;



Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, and Mrs. Reena Lanba

Inspector General SK Goyal, Deputy Director General, and Commandant Manoj Pande, Joint Director, Indian Coast Guard

Captain Deepak Bhatia, Commanding Officer of INS Beas and all his colleagues on board  
Members of the vibrant Indian community in Qatar;

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to join the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Indian Navy's Western Command Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba and Commanding Officer of Indian Naval Ship Beas, Captain Deepak Bhatia and his team in extending a warm welcome to all of you on board INS Beas, an indigenously designed and built Guided Missile Frigate.

In the framework of the deep-rooted friendly ties and multi-faceted and growing cooperation between India and the State of Qatar, Government of India has deputed a high level delegation and Indian Naval Ship Beas to participate in the Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (DIMDEX 2016). INS Beas, an indigenously designed and built Brahmaputra Class Guided Missile Frigate of the Indian Navy, is based at Mumbai, under the administrative and operational control of the Western Naval Command, aptly called 'the sword Arm' of the Indian Navy.

We deeply appreciate the support and cooperation of the Government of the State of Qatar, Organizing Committee of DIMDEX 2016, Qatar Emiri Naval Forces, and Qatar Coast Guard in making the visit of our delegation and of INS Beas, a highly pleasant and productive experience for both sides.

This wonderful ship is named after the Beas River, which flows from a height of 14,308 ft at Rohtang Pass in the Indian State of Himachal Pradesh, from where it flows through the Kullu valley towards south, adding from various mountains bound tributaries. The river passes through the northern Indian States of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. It is one of the five rivers, from which Punjab, meaning 'five rivers', gets its name. The river serves as a source of water to all the cities, towns and villages that fall in its course, and adds to the natural beauty of the Himalayas.

The visit of INS Beas is the third visit by Indian Naval Ships to Qatar in the last three years. INS Aditya & INS Tabarand INS Delhi & INS Trishul had sailed on friendly voyages to Doha Port in September 2013 and September 2015, respectively. Three ships of the Indian Coast Guard have also visited Doha in the last three years – ICGS Samudra Prahari in February 2013, ICGS Vijit in December 2014 during the celebrations of Qatar National Day and ICGS Sankalp in January, 2016 in celebration of India's 67th Republic Day.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A majority of the ships of Indian Navy and Coast Guard that have visited Qatar in last three years have been indigenously built in India; in fact, all the three Coast Guard ships that sailed to Doha during this period are made in India. This would well illustrate the ship-building and defence production capabilities of India, which are poised for substantial expansion in the wake of the launch of Make in India campaign by Honourable Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi in September, 2014 and the increase in Foreign Direct Investment [FDI] limit for the defence sector from 26 percent to 49 percent in July 2014.

India and Qatar have a Defence Cooperation Agreement, which was signed in November 2008. The Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) provides a useful implementation mechanism for this Agreement. Four meetings of JDCC have been held so far and the fifth meeting would be taking place in Doha during this year.

The participation of a high level delegation from India at DIMDEX 2016, led by Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Western Naval Command, and their meetings with His Excellency the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of Qatar; His Excellency the Minister of State (Cabinet Rank) for Defence Affairs; and other dignitaries and senior officials, are a reaffirmation of the mutual keenness of both sides to further expand defence cooperation.

It is also heartening that a number of senior officials of Qatar Emiri Navy recently participated in the International Fleet Review of 2016 [IFR 2016], a signature global event hosted by the Indian Navy at Vishakhapatnam, one of the major sea ports on India's eastern coast from 4-8 February 2016, and a high level mission led by the Deputy Commander of Qatar Emiri Land Forces is participating at the Ninth International Land, Naval, Internal Homeland Security and Defence System Exposition - 'DEFEXPO INDIA-2016', being held in Goa from 28 to 31 March 2016, co-terminus with the fifth DIMDEX currently taking place in Doha.

Vice Admiral Lanba delivered an Address on "Salience of Maritime Domain in the Security Architecture of the Arabian Sea and Adjoining Areas – An Indian Navy Perspective" at the Middle East Naval Commanders' Conference (MENCC) earlier today. I would like to quote a few lines from his highly acclaimed Address:

"India's strong linkages with the Middle East go back thousands of years. It is of particular significance that the strong bonds between our two civilizations are mainly ascribed to sea borne regional trade and commerce that flourished through the medium of the global commons of the region and the interaction between our peoples, for ages. This region constitutes India's immediate neighbourhood, with the waters of the Arabian Sea washing the shores on either side. We are indeed united through the sea and India has a vital stake in the security and stability of this region".

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,



The visit of Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba and his accompanying delegation, along with that of INS Beas, is another milestone in our historic friendship and growing partnership with the State of Qatar, and with the Gulf and the Middle East.

I thank you all and wish you fair winds and following seas.

*Source: Embassy of India, Doha,*

<http://www.indianembassyqatar.gov.in/pages/importantannouncements.php>

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## **i. SAUDI ARABIA**

### **16. Extension of time limit to apply for OCI cards in lieu of PIO card, Riyadh, 2 March 2016**

The last date for submission of application for registration as OCI cardholder in lieu of the existing PIO card has been extended from 31 March to 30 June 2016. This service is provided free of charge, if availed on or before the last date.

Please click <http://www.indianembassy.org.sa/Content.aspx?ID=732&PID=688> to know eligibility criteria and details of the revised OCI Scheme and procedure to apply for OCI card. Please click <http://www.indianembassy.org.sa/Content.aspx?ID=731&PID=688> for queries related to the erstwhile PIO Scheme, its validity etc.

*Source: Embassy of India, Riyadh,*

<http://www.indianembassy.org.sa/Content.aspx?ID=790&PID=691>

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### **17. Ban to carry Satellite Phones to India, Riyadh, 2 March 2016**

It has come to the notice of Government of India that some foreigners are carrying Satellite Phones with them during their visit to India on Tourist Visa. These foreigners were intercepted and their satellite phones were seized. As per Indian laws, carrying satellite phones by foreigners into India is banned.

*Source: Embassy of India, Riyadh,*

<http://www.indianembassy.org.sa/Content.aspx?ID=790&PID=691>

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### **18. Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia calls on the Prime Minister, New Delhi, 8 March 2016**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia Adel Bin Ahmed Al Jubair. Prime Minister conveyed that India attached high importance to its close and friendly relations with Saudi Arabia.

The Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia conveyed that relations with India were accorded a high priority in their Foreign Policy. He deeply appreciated the constructive role being played by the Indian community in the development of Saudi Arabia.

Both leaders exchanged views on further strengthening bilateral relations, including in the fields of trade, investment, energy, and security cooperation. They also discussed regional situation. They agreed that the two countries have shared interest in peace and stability in the region.

Prime Minister expressed confidence that his forthcoming visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would provide an opportunity to elevate the bilateral strategic partnership to a new level.

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi,*

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/pmreleases.aspx?mincode=3>

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**19. H.E. Ahmad Javed, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia met with the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia H.E. Adel Al-Jubeir, Riyadh, 16 March 2016**

H.E. Ahmad Javed, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia met with the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia H.E. Adel Al-Jubeir and presented a copy of the 'Letter of Credence' to him. The Ambassador of India and the Honourable Minister discussed about the bilateral relations and ways to strengthen them.

The Ambassador also met separately with H.E. Ambassador Azzam bin Abdul-Kareem Al-Gain, Deputy Minister for Protocol Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

*Source: Embassy of India, Riyadh,*

<http://www.indianembassy.org.sa/Content.aspx?ID=790&PID=691>

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**20. Prime Minister of India H.E. Narendra Modi is paying an official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 2-3 April 2016, New Delhi, 22 March 2016**

Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi is paying an official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 2-3 April 2016 at the invitation of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

This is the highest-level visit from India to Saudi Arabia after the visit of the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Riyadh in 2010.

During the visit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold discussions with King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

India and Saudi Arabia share friendly relations based on close people-to-people contacts. The 'Strategic Partnership' established through Riyadh Declaration in 2010 envisions a deeper engagement in political, economic, security and defence areas. In recent years, there has been significant progress in bilateral cooperation in such key areas of mutual interest.

Saudi Arabia has become our 4th largest partner with bilateral trade exceeding US\$ 39 billion in 2014-15. Saudi Arabia is also India's largest crude oil supplier accounting for about one-fifth of our total imports.

Indians form the largest expatriate community in Saudi Arabia and their contribution in the progress and development of their host country is well recognized. There are over 2.96 million Indian nationals presently working in Saudi Arabia.

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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**21. Prime Minister's statement prior to his departure to Belgium, USA and Saudi Arabia, New Delhi, 29 March 2016**

Following is the text of the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's departure statement prior to his visit to Belgium, USA and Saudi Arabia today:

“On 30 March, I will be in Brussels to meet with the Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel. I would also be holding the 13th India-EU Summit with the EU leadership. No words are enough to salute the resilience and spirit of the people of Belgium. We stand shoulder to shoulder with them in the wake of the horrific attacks in Brussels and share the grief of those who lost their loved ones.

Our relations with Belgium are deep rooted and have stood the test of time. Within the E.U., Belgium is India's 2nd largest trading partner. My meeting with the Prime Minister aims to expand trade, investment and high technology partnership with this important E.U. member.

Along with Prime Minister Charles Michel, I would remote activate the India-Belgium ARIES (Aryabhata Research Institute for Observational Sciences) Telescope.

The European Union is a vital trading partner and the biggest export destination for India. This Summit will advance our multifaceted engagement across a whole range of domains.

In Brussels, I would also be meeting with the Members of European Parliament (MEPs), Indologists, Belgian CEOs as well as a wide cross section of the Indian diaspora in Belgium. I would also interact with the Board Members of the Association of Diamond Traders in Belgium.

The same evening, I will address a Community Programme and interact with the Indian community. After Belgium, I will be in Washington DC on 31 March to participate in the 4th Nuclear Security Summit, where several nations and global organizations would be represented.

The Summit would deliberate on the crucial issue of threat to nuclear security caused by nuclear terrorism. Leaders would discuss ways and measure through which to strengthen the global nuclear security architecture, especially to ensure that non-state actors do not get access to nuclear material.

On the sidelines of the Summit, I would meet with several world leaders to carry forward the agenda of bilateral cooperation with those nations. I also look forward to my interaction with the scientists associated with LIGO project. On 2 and 3 April, at the invitation of H.M. King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, I will be visiting Saudi Arabia.

India's ties with Saudi Arabia are special. Robust people-to-people ties constitute a key component of our engagement. I plan to work with the Saudi leadership to expand and deepen our bilateral relations. Discussions on the regional situation would also be on the agenda.

Our economic ties are also expanding. Saudi Arabia is India's fourth largest trading partner, and is also India's largest crude oil supplier.

In addition to meeting with H.M. King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, I also look forward to my discussions with other important members of the Royal family.

We want the prominent Saudi businesses to partner with India's development priorities. That would be one of the key objectives of the business event planned in Riyadh.

I will visit the Masmak Fortress, 'L&T Workers' Residential Complex and TCS All Women IT & ITES Centre in Riyadh."

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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## **j. Tunisia**

### **22. His Excellency Beji Caid Essebsi, President of the Republic of Tunisia received the Letter of Credence of His Excellency Prashant Pise, Tunis, 3 March 2016**

His Excellency Beji Caid Essebsi, President of the Republic of Tunisia received the Letter of Credence of Ambassador Prashant Pise at the Presidential Palace, Carthage. Ambassador Pise also presented the Letter of Recall of his predecessor. Thereafter, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Tunisia granted audience to Ambassador Prashant Pise.

*Source: Embassy of India, Tunis,*

*<http://www.embassyofindiatunis.com/pdf/Presentation%20of%20Credentials.pdf>*

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### **23. President of India's message on the eve of National Day of Tunisia, New Delhi, 19 March 2016**

The President of India, Pranab Mukherjee has extended his greetings and felicitations to the Government and people of the Republic of Tunisia on the eve of their National Day (20 March 2016).

In a message to His Excellency Beji Caid Essebsi, the President of the Republic of Tunisia, the President has said, "On behalf of the Government, the people of India and on my own behalf, it gives me immense pleasure to extend to Your Excellency and to the friendly people of Tunisia warm greetings and felicitations on the occasion of your National Day. I admire the significant progress made by the Government and leadership of Tunisia in the transition towards an enduring democracy. Relations between our two countries are close and friendly. I appreciate Tunisian Foreign Minister's participation in the 3rd India – Africa Forum Summit in October 2015 and your Foreign Minister's interaction with our External Affairs Minister at Manama, Bahrain during the first India-Arab Ministerial meet on 24 January 2016. I am confident that these bonds of friendship and cooperation will be further strengthened and diversified in the coming years to the mutual benefit of our two countries. I take this opportunity to extend my best wishes for the progress and prosperity of the people of Tunisia."

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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## **k. UAE**

### **24. Memorandum of Understanding signed between India and United Arab Emirates on Technical Cooperation in Cyber Space and Combating Cyber-Crime, New Delhi, 10 March 2016**

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its ex-post approval for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Technical Cooperation in Cyber Space and Combating Cyber-Crime signed last month.

This agreement would provide help in handling of the issues related to the cyber-crime between the two countries. Both the countries shall cooperate in cyber space and combating cyber-crime in all forms, particularly through coordination and exchange of information in relation with cyber crime, cooperation and training in cyber-crime investigation, etc. between India and UAE. The Ministry of Home affairs will be the nodal agency on the Indian side responsible for the implementation of this agreement. Similarly, the nodal agency of the UAE side will be the Directorate General of Criminal Security, Ministry of Interior and the State Security Department with regards to matters pertaining to State security, terrorism and crimes related to unconventional weapons.

The enhancement of technical cooperation between India and UAE in cyber space and combating cyber-crime comes in the wake of the serious threat of cyber-crime on the security, interest and safety of the people.

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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**1 Crore = 10 million. Lakh = 100,000**

### **Compiled by Jatin Kumar**

**Jatin Kumar is a Doctoral candidate at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Email: [jatintango@gmail.com](mailto:jatintango@gmail.com)**

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