



INDIA'S 70TH REPUBLIC DAY



Role of Indian Diaspora in building New India

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the plenary session of the 15th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas (Non-Resident Indian Day, PDB) at Deendayal Hastkala Sankul in Varanasi, India, on Jan. 22.

In his address, Prime Minister Modi said it is the love and affection of the diaspora for the land of their forefathers which has brought them to India. He called upon the NRI (Non-resident Indian) community to join hands for building a new India.

PM lauded the role of Indian diaspora in keeping alive the tradition of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. He said the NRIs are not only the Brand Ambassadors of India but also represent its strength, capabilities and characteristics. He urged the diaspora to participate in building a New India, specially in research and innovation.

PM said that with its rapid progress, India is being seen on a high pedestal across the world and is in a position to lead the global community. International Solar Alliance is one such example. Modi added that local solution and global application is our mantra. He termed International Solar Alliance as a step in the direction of One World, One Sun, One Grid.

Prime Minister said that India is on course to become a global economic powerhouse. It has one

of the largest start-up ecosystems and world's largest healthcare scheme to its credit. "We have moved on with great strides in Make in India. A bumper harvest production has been our major achievement," he said.

PM said the diaspora is equally important in our resolve for a New India. He added that their safety is also "our concern" and cited how the government took upon the challenge of evacuating more than 2 lakh (200,000) Indians stranded in conflict zones.

Speaking about the welfare of Indians overseas, Modi said passport and visa rules have been simplified and e visa had made it much easier for them to travel. All Pravasi Bharatiya (NRIs) are now being linked to Passport Sewa and efforts are in to issue chip based E passport.

PM said that a Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana (sponsored religious tours for NRIs) is being taken up. He urged every overseas Indian to invite five non-Indian families to visit India. PM also requested them to spread the values of Mahatma Gandhi and Guru Nanak Dev and become a part of their anniversary celebrations. He said that "we feel proud that global community joined us in compilation of Bapu's (Gandhi's) favourite bhajan (prayer), Vaishnavajan".

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj addressing the millennials at the Youth PBD high-



Honoring the high-achieving Indian diaspora: Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj (second left) and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (third right) pose together for a photograph following the announcement of the winners of the 2019 Pravasi Bharatiya Samman awards, which honor the Indian diaspora who have made great achievements across the globe.

lighted the fact that India has the largest diaspora in the world at almost 31 million which is spread throughout the globe. Lauding the diaspora, she said, "the story of your forefathers' journey to distant shores is a tale brimming with courage, enterprise and character." Congratulating the diaspora, she said, "Since the 1970's, young Indian professionals have been migrating abroad to corporate boardrooms, research laboratories, engineering workshops and university faculties. We have seen the growing emigration of doctors, nurses, engineers, managers, plumbers, and electricians to West Asia and the Gulf. Today, we have people of Indian origin, as heads of the state and heads

of the government, and as heads of large multi-national corporations, raising India's global profile. The success of each and every one of our emigrants is a testimonial to their unbeatable spirit, their dedication, and their patience and forbearance in the face of extreme hardships."

She also appreciated the role that the diaspora has played in helping build India's global profile and said, "our diaspora has dramatically changed the world's perception of Indians, and of India as well. They have kindled a new wave of appreciation for this land which has produced and exported so many achievers. The benchmarks for success, which the PDB community has set, is a motivation

for us in India. They encourage us to create a business, investment and economic climate, which is as conducive to success as anywhere else in the world."

She called upon the diaspora to leverage India's strength in education and research sector and said, "Today, the education sector in India has become very lucrative for your children to pursue higher education in India. India today is home to some of the best world-class university infrastructures and Research and Development (R&D) capacities such as IITs (Indian Institute of Technology) and IIMs (Indian Institute of Management). Along with high-quality education, we want India to be

a hub for high-end R&D capacities. We have started various programs such as VAJRA, GIAN and Mission Shodh Ganga to enable overseas scientific community to conduct high-end research and development in India".

She asked the diaspora to have better connectivity with Indian missions abroad under the slogan, "Indian Embassy: Home away from home" and said "Our embassies have been proactive on the digital media, providing consular help and guidance. Whether it is Facebook or Twitter, help is just a message away from any Indian national in distress. She said, "Help is Just One Tweet Away."

Embassy of India Jakarta



Together again: Members of the Indian diaspora pose with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (sixth right) and Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj (seventh right) during the Non-Resident Indian Day meeting on Jan. 22 in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.



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