

PM Modi's New Year's Address:



In his address to the nation on the eve of New Year 2017, PM Modi highlighted that Indians have, with firm resolve and infinite patience, faced difficulties with a smile, re-defining the concept of sacrifice, and lived these ideals. He stated that 125 crore Indians have shown, in their fortitude, the importance of truth and goodness. Modi stated that over the last ten to twelve years, 500 and 1000 rupee currency notes were used less for legitimate transactions, and more for a parallel economy. He underlined that the excess of cash was fuelling inflation and black-marketing. It was denying the poor, their due. Modi stated that lack of cash causes difficulty, but that excess of cash is even more troublesome, and that India's aim is to achieve a balance. He stated:

“We cannot allow this fight against black money and corruption to stop or slow down. Firmness in truth is a guarantee for success. A country of 125 crore, with 65 per cent below the age of 35, having the means, the resources, and the capability, has no reason to stay behind. The new dawn of the New Year, comes with the resolve of new success. Let us all come together, to move ahead overcoming obstacles and constraints. Happy New Year, Jai Hind !!!”

NHO Annual Conference (5 January):



PM Solberg's Speech

Photo: Office of the Prime Minister of Norway

H.E. Debraj Pradhan, Ambassador of India to Norway attended the **2017 Annual Conference of the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO)**, which was held in Oslo on 5 January. The conference gathered some of the most powerful political and business leaders in Norway, and focused on how companies can combine reduced greenhouse gas emissions with value creation and job creation. **In her speech at the conference, Norwegian PM Erna Solberg highlighted three characteristics of the future Norwegian labour market; green, smart and innovative.** Green because competitiveness is needed when reaching the low-emission society, smart because knowledge-based jobs with high profitability are needed to sustain Norway's welfare level, and innovative because Norway faces a major restructuring of its economy which requires new jobs in new industries.

The 14th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention was held in Bengaluru from 7-9 January, 2017. The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards were conferred by the Hon'ble President at the PBD Convention and is the highest honour conferred on overseas Indians.



President of India delivered the Valedictory Address

Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit (10-13 January):



PM's Speech at Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2017

In his speech at the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2017, held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from 10 – 13 January, PM Modi stated that over the last two and a half years, India had worked relentlessly to realise its potential, and to set right the economy. He highlighted that the results had been encouraging, and stated that there had

been substantial improvement in key macro-economic indicators like GDP growth, key inflation, fiscal deficit, current account deficit as well as foreign investments. PM Modi highlighted that India has become the fastest growing major economy in the world, and has registered excellent growth despite the global slowdown. He stated that India is seen as the engine of global growth. In 2014-15, India contributed 12.5 per cent of global growth. Its contribution to global growth is sixty eight per cent higher, than its share of the world economy. Modi also underlined that his top priority was to create an enabling environment for business and attracting investments.

In his **Inaugural Address at Second Raisina Dialogue, held in New Delhi on 17 January**, PM Modi highlighted that India's economic and political rise represents a regional and global opportunity of great significance, and that it is a force for peace, a factor for stability and an engine for regional and global prosperity.



PM Modi's Inaugural Address at Second Raisina Dialogue

PM Modi stated that his vision for India's neighbourhood puts a premium on peaceful and harmonious ties with

entire South Asia. He highlighted that India alone cannot walk the path of peace, and that this also has to be Pakistan's journey to make. He underlined that Pakistan must walk away from terror if it wants to walk towards dialogue with India.

Business Climate Survey Presentation (11 January):



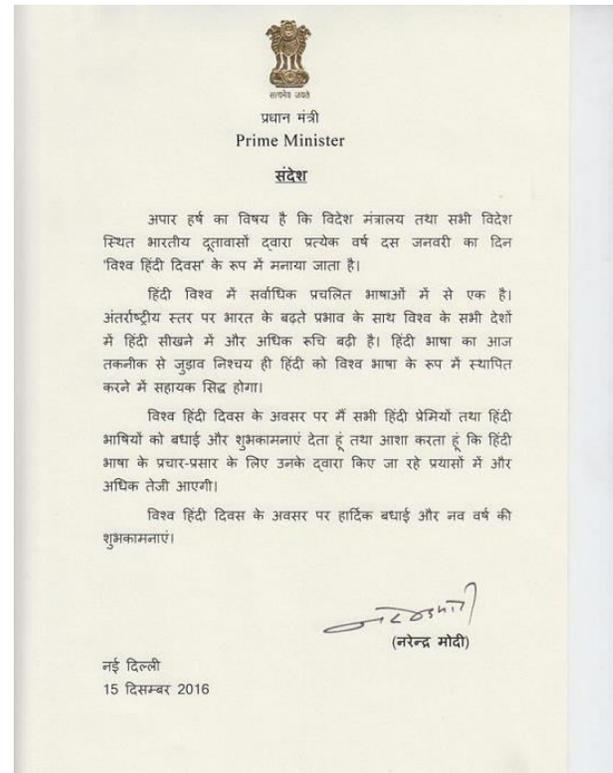
*Executive Director Svein Oppegaard of NHO greeted guest of honour H.E. Ambassador Debraj Pradhan
Photo: NICCI*

The first ever Business Climate Survey for Norwegian companies in India was presented at the headquarters of the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) in Oslo on 11 January. The survey assesses the current and near future business climate for Norwegian companies in India. **The survey captured the input from 90 plus Norwegian companies established in India.** Present and engaged in the presentation was also H.E. Debraj Pradhan, Ambassador of India to Norway as well as Torbjørn Holthe, Consul General in the Royal Norwegian Consulate General in India. The implications of the report were discussed in a panel discussion about challenges and opportunities for Norwegian companies in India. The event was

organized by NHO, Norway India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NICCI), the Royal Norwegian Consulate General in Mumbai, Innovation Norway in India and the Norwegian Business Association India (NBAI).

Vishwa Hindi Diwas (10 January):

Vishwa Hindi Diwas was celebrated on 10 January 2017. The following message from Hon'ble Prime Minister, on the occasion of Vishwa Hindi Diwas, was read out by H.E. Debraj Pradhan, Ambassador of India to Norway.



PM's Message

Oslo International Tourism Fair (13 January):

On 13 January, H.E. Debraj Pradhan, Ambassador of India to Norway inaugurated the India Tourism Stall participating at Oslo International Tourism Fair. Tourist Office, Frankfurt

and 8 Indian tour operators participated in the Tourism Fair.

Arctic Frontiers 2017 (22-27 January):

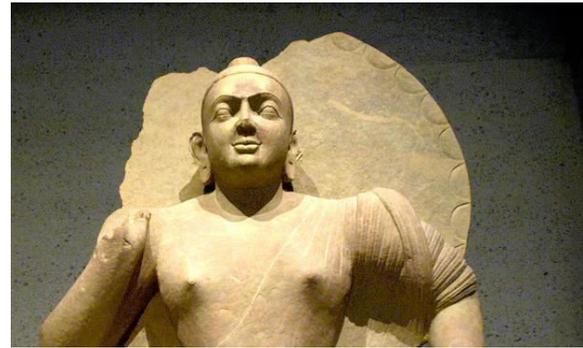


*PM Solberg at Arctic Frontiers 2017
Photo: Terje Mortensen/ Arctic Frontiers*

H.E. Debraj Pradhan, Ambassador of India to Norway attended the annual conference Arctic Frontiers 2017, held in Tromsø, Norway from 22 – 27 January. The conference gathered around 2000 politicians, researchers, business representatives, environmental organisations and representatives of indigenous peoples to discuss the future of the Arctic. **In her speech at the conference, PM Solberg stated:**

“We must ensure that present and future activities do not come at the expense of the Arctic environment. At the same time we must make use of the economic opportunities that are opening up, to the benefit of the 4 million people who live in the Arctic”. Norway will launch a national ocean strategy in spring 2017, outlining the country’s policies for employment, growth and value creation in the ocean-based industries. PM Solberg stated that Norway’s ambition is to facilitate the transfer of expertise and technology across industrial sectors, and to support the development of environmentally friendly technologies.

Repatriations of Indian cultural wealth, illegally exported out of the



*Three Indian origin antiquities were returned from Australia to India
Photo: Mark Graham/ AAP*

country in the past few years has got momentum in the recent past at the initiative of the Hon’ble Prime Minister and the Minister of Culture. National Gallery of Australia (NGA) at Canberra, Australia showed willingness to return three objects and the objects reached India on 7th December 2016. The objects are (i) a Seated Buddha Image from Mathura Region, (ii) a Buddhist panel from Amaravati region, and (iii) a Pratyangira Image from Tamil Nadu. Govt. Of India stated on 16 January that it will showcase these three objects at the National Museum, New Delhi.

Republic Day (26 January):



H.E. Ambassador Debraj Pradhan read out Hon'ble President of India's Message

The 68th Republic Day of India was celebrated at the Embassy of India, Oslo on 26 January. H.E. Debraj Pradhan, Ambassador of India to Norway read out the Hon'ble President of India's Message to the Nation. In his address, Ambassador briefed the Indian community about developments in India, Norway-India relations and called for integration in home country and formation of umbrella organization to project Indian interests and related activities in Norway. Around 200 people participated at the celebration.

Republic Day Celebrations (28 & 29 January):

After the Flaghoisting Ceremony at the Embassy of India in Oslo on 26 January in celebration of Republic Day, separate programmes were organized in celebration of Republic Day by the South Indian Gathering (SIG) on 28 January and All Indians Association on 29 January.



All Indians Association



South Indian Gathering (SIG)



All Indians Association