

Embassy of India

Muscat

Reception on the occasion of India's 74th Republic Day

January 26, 2023

'INDIA MATTERS'

Remarks by Ambassador of India H.E. Amit Narang

नमस्कार,

राजदूतावास के मेरे सभी सहकर्मियों की ओर से ओमान सरकार का प्रतिनिधित्व कर रहे गणमान्य अथितियों और भारतीय समुदाय के सभी मित्रों का मैं हार्दिक अभिनंदन करता हूँ। सभी भारतीय और भारतीय मूल के मित्रों को गणतंत्र दिवस की बहुत बहुत शुभकामनाएँ और बधाई।

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

أهلاً وسهلاً بكم في هذا المساء الجميل في السفارة الهندية

Your Excellency Dr. Mahad Al Baowain, Hon'ble Minister for Labor;

Your Excellency Sheikh Khalifa Al Harthi, Undersecretary for Diplomatic Affairs, Foreign Ministry;

Your Excellency Shri Pankaj Khimji, Advisor to Minister of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion and Sherpa of His Majesty for the G-20;

Your Excellency Faisal Al Rawas, Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry;

Honored members of the Omani official delegation,

Respected members of the Royal Family,

Distinguished Ambassadors,

Members of the Indian community,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the proud occasion of the 74th Republic Day of India, it is my honor and pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you to today's Reception.

In 2022, Indians the world over celebrated 75 glorious years of their independence. Today we celebrate the Indian constitution that has made the rise of India as the world's largest democracy and the fastest growing major economy possible.

This year, India becomes the most populous country in the world, a development as rich with possibilities as it is imbued with challenges.

Why does India matter?

What does the rise of India mean for the world?

Size and scale and obvious answers.

With 1/6th of the human population, India's successes will be wins for the whole world; and its problems a challenge for everyone. But beyond its size and scale, India's rise has important implications.

For the first time in human history, the world's most populous country will be a multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-ethnic liberal political democracy.

India's conscious choice of political democracy for its citizens and the embrace of the ideals of socio-economic justice, liberty, fraternity, equality, pluralism and

tolerance was a leap of faith at the time of its independence. Most observers were skeptical of India's survival, let alone its success.

Yet, 75 years hence, India has not only survived, it has thrived. Its embrace of full political democracy for all its citizens has helped unleash the creative potential of its people, enriched by their diversity and made stronger by their belief in dialogue and cooperation.

Second, in a world racked by questions of identity, race and religion and where the very idea of multiculturalism is coming under strain, India provides a model of a composite culture that is living proof of the possibility of a confluence of civilizations.

India's model of pluralism, inclusivity and tolerance has shown that there is no contradiction between growth and a polity that celebrates diversity – of religion, language and beliefs.

Third, India matters for the world economy and global growth.

Just 10 years ago, Indian GDP was the 11th largest in the world. It is the 5th largest now and in another 5 years, India is expected to become the world's 3rd largest economy.

As the world goes through a turbulent, uncertain time, India today is the lone bright spot on the horizon.

The output of its farms and factories, the demand of its booming markets and the pace of its own economic growth will entail that India will be a crucial economic engine for global growth and prosperity in the 21st century.

Fourth, India is ground zero for the digital future of the world.

Today, India is in the midst of a great digital revolution.

In 2021, 40 percent of all real-time digital payments worldwide took place in India; at 48 billion transactions, it was three times that of China and more than six times that of the US, Canada, UK, France, and Germany combined.

India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) processed payments worth more than US\$ 1 trillion in FY 2022 and in December 2022, India crossed the milestone of 7 billion monthly transactions on this platform.

With more than half of its population under the age of 27, India's policy choices and technological innovations will play a crucial role in determining the future of the new digital order.

Fifth, India brings to the global table, its firm belief in multipolarity, fair globalization and reformed multilateralism. India believes in peace not conflict, partnership not domination, and willful sharing of expertise and resources not exploitative zero-sum exchanges.

Today, Indian defence and naval prowess is a force for collective good, protecting the maritime global commons and helping maintain peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

What does India look like after 75 years of its independence?

India@75 is a story of its digital delivery, public health response, green growth and development as well empowerment of all sections of its society.

India today has emerged as the world's food basket, contributing to global food security. It is the world's largest exporter of rice; the largest producer of milk, pulses, spices, tea, cashew and jute and the 2nd largest producer of wheat, fruits & vegetables, sugarcane and cotton.

India's initiative led to the declaration of 2023 by United Nations as the 'International Year of Millets'. Delicacies made of these wonder grains are being served in tonight's Reception.

India today is a vaccine and pharmaceutical powerhouse, having administered over 2.2 billion doses of Covid vaccine to its people and supplying it to over a 100 countries.

At 32 million strong, India today has the largest diaspora of any country in the world, living in peace and contributing to the growth and wellbeing of the countries in which they are resident.

India today is a trading powerhouse, with its total trade exceeding US\$ 1 trillion for the first time in 2022, an important market and a reliable supplier in the global supply chains.

India today is the start-up capital of the world, with nearly 70,000 start-ups and over 100 Unicorns.

Excellencies,

India and Oman are maritime neighbours, their destinies linked together by the blue waters of the Arabian Sea.

Ours is a historic relationship but also a partnership for the future.

Today, India-Oman relations stand at the cusp of a transformation.

Our bilateral trade grew by nearly 90% last year to reach close to US\$ 10 billion; and in just the first 6 months of this financial year, the bilateral trade is already higher than annual figures recorded in the last 4 years.

Over 6,000 India-Oman joint ventures with investments of more than US\$ 7.5 billion are boosting the Omani economy and creating local jobs.

An agreement between the Central Bank of Oman and the National Payments Corporation of India has opened up new possibilities for a digital future.

Our bilateral education links, which formed the bulwark of our strong people-to-people ties, are being revived with new mechanisms and new arrangements.

Our defence and security cooperation that plays an important role in maintaining peace in the Indian Ocean and protecting the global maritime commons is being strengthened.

New areas of cooperation including renewable energy, space, minerals and skill development are expanding the boundaries of our partnership.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Oman is an oasis of peace in the region and an unfailing advocate of tolerance, inclusiveness and dialogue.

India deeply appreciates Oman's leadership role in pursuing solutions to issues through patient dialogue and diplomacy, especially as it is in sync with India's own foreign policy approach premised on universal tolerance, open dialogue and collective action.

India's overall philosophy of international engagement is echoed in the theme of our Presidency of the G-20: 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

And the strong convergence of this philosophy with Oman's efforts and outlook – not to mention our very special friendship - is the motivation for the invitation that we have extended to the Sultanate of Oman to attend the G-20 under our Presidency as our Honored Guest.

I am proud to have unveiled the logo signifying India-Oman Together in G-20 today together with His Excellency the Minister of Labour.

We look forward to active participation of Sultanate of Oman in the meetings of the G-20 leading up to the Summit hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in September this year.

We are convinced that having our brothers and sisters from Oman as part of our G-20 Presidency will not only enrich the discussions with Oman's meaningful insights and perspectives but will also provide an additional platform to further deepen and strengthen our friendship and cooperation.

Before I conclude, let me take this opportunity to wish, on behalf of the Government and people of India, warm greetings and wishes to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Government and the kind people of Oman for continued peace, progress and prosperity.

It is a privilege to host all of you tonight.

धन्यवाद , Thank you, Shukran Jazeelan.

Jai Hind!
