

CM ADDRESS AT THE INAUGURATION OF 14TH PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS -2017
08-01- 2017 / BENGALURU INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE, BENGALURU

Shri Narendra Modi-ji,
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India,

Dr Antonio Costa,
His Excellency Prime Minister of Portugal
and Chief Guest for this event,

Shri H. N. Ananth Kumar,
Hon'ble Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers
and Parliamentary Affairs,

General V K Singh,
Hon'ble Union Minister of State for External Affairs,

Shri M J Akbar,
Hon'ble Union Minister of State for External Affairs,

Hon'ble Chief Ministers of the States of
Assam, Chattisgarh, Maharashtra and Puducherry,

Beloved members of the Indian Diaspora
from across the world,

Distinguished Guests and Invitees,

Media Friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is indeed a great honour for Government Karnataka to be co-hosting the 14th ***Pravasi Bharatiya Divas*** in Bengaluru along with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

I thank the Union Government for giving us this momentous opportunity.

2. My heart swells with pride on this occasion in welcoming every one of you present here, notably, the Chief Guest of this event Dr Antonio Costa and our beloved Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi-ji.
3. The biennial event, **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** is celebrated to commemorate the homecoming of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi from South Africa and it provides an excellent, common forum for addressing issues concerning the Diaspora, especially the Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and the Persons of Indian Origin (PIO).
4. The return of Gandhiji, the most revered ***Pravasi***, galvanized the Independence Movement and gave it momentum.
5. Is it not befitting that Karnataka, a State Mahatma visited as many as **14** times, is hosting the **14th** Pravasi Bharatiya Divas ?
6. It is also worth-while to mention that Gandhiji had stayed at the Kumara Krupa Guest House in the Garden City of Bengaluru for two months, at a stretch.
7. In the last two decades, India has achieved significant growth and development. Today, the Indian economy ranks as the 10th largest economy in the World and third largest in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on Purchasing Power Parity basis.

8. The Indian economic growth is savings and investment led growth story, which is helped by a liberalized foreign investment and trade policy. I feel proud to state that Karnataka is one of the leading States in attracting investments and responsible for driving growth of the Indian economy.
9. Karnataka is the Knowledge Hub of Asia with 201 Engineering Colleges, 114 Medical Colleges and Institutions, 50 Universities, 13 International Schools apart from more than 400 Multi-National Companies having their world-renowned high-end Research and Development Centres. No wonder that the World Economic Forum has identified Karnataka among the top four Innovation Hubs in the world.
10. With good rail, road and air connectivity, logistics support, infrastructure, excellent telecommunication network and peaceful industrial climate, the State has been a preferred destination for investment attracting fourth largest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country.
11. The figures published by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion in August 2016 reveal that Karnataka stands first in the investment attractiveness. We are also the State with the highest export relative to the State GDP. The State is also considered as the fastest growing market in India.

12. Karnataka has been ranked first for its healthy business climate and attracting investments by the World Bank's Investment Climate Index and Bengaluru has been adjudged as the Best Indian City to Live in, according to Quality of Living Survey Worldwide Rankings-2011.
13. From the time our Government assumed office till now nearly 800 Projects to the tune of Rs 2.29 Lakh Crore investment have been approved. These have the potential to create employment opportunities for about 5.79 lakh people. Projects worth Rs 80,000 Crore are in the pipeline.
14. Our Startup Eco System is amongst the top three in the World. As many as 160 new Startups in the areas of Information Technology and IT-enabled Services (IT and ITeS), Electronics, Semi-conductor, Design and Manufacturing (ESDM), Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) and Bio-Technology (BT) have been registered in Karnataka Bio-Technology and Information Technology Services (K-BITS) in the last one year.
15. Realizing the need for forging a symbiotic relationship between Karnataka and its Diaspora, our Government has set up Non-Resident Indian Forum in Karnataka, which has been playing a pivotal role in strengthening linkages between Karnataka Diaspora and several organizations spread across the globe, besides motivating them to bring in investments to the State.

16. I am glad to share with you that we have announced the NRI Policy of Karnataka, just two days ago, with a vision to play a catalytic role in achieving sustainable linkages between the State and Non-Resident Kannadigas and Non-Resident Indians across the globe, so that, a progressive, prosperous, robust and vibrant Karnataka is built.
17. The recent unpleasant incidents in Bengaluru concerning assaults on women have been viewed very seriously and our Government is committed to bring to book the perpetrators of these kinds of heinous crimes. Ensuring safety and protecting the dignity of women remains our top most priority. Effective steps are being taken to increase the rate of conviction in such cases.
18. I would like to draw the kind attention of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to the resolutions passed in the Global Convention of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) held in Bengaluru on January 6, seeking extension of time till December 30, 2017 for NRIs and PIO to exchange and or deposit high denomination specified bank notes in Reserve Bank of India or State Bank of India.

19. The event is being held in the backdrop of many a far-reaching changes across the world. Particularly, the recent changes in the United States of America and the United Kingdom raise questions on effective movement of skilled workers across borders.
20. It would not be out of place to urge the Union Government, the Finance Ministry in particular, to be conscious of these changes and announce suitable concessions for the NRI and PIO Community in the General Budget to be presented shortly.
21. Finally, I sincerely hope that the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention will inspire all of you to proactively participate and exchange your ideas in realizing its theme – ***Redefining Engagement with the Indian Diaspora.***
I wish this event, a grand success.

Jai Hind ! Jai Karnataka !!
