

VALEDICTORY OF 14TH PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS -2017
PRESENTATION OF PRAVASI BHARATIYA SAMMAN AWARDS

HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER'S SPEECH

09-01-2017 / 5-00 P M / BENGALURU INTERNATIONAL
EXHIBITION CENTRE, BENGALURU

Shri Pranab Mukherjee,
Hon'ble President of India,

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

Shri Dnyaneshwar M Mulay,
Secretary (Consular, Passport and Visa Division
and Overseas Indian Affairs),

Dignitaries on the dais and off-the dais,

Members of the Indian Diaspora across the globe,

My cabinet colleagues,

Members of Parliament and Legislature,

Media Friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am immensely delighted to participate in the Valedictory function of the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-2017, in which our beloved Rashtrapati-ji will be conferring Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards.
2. It has been a memorable three-days of the celebrations of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, in which thirteen plenary sessions on important aspects of the theme - *Redefining Engagement with the Indian Diaspora*, were held with great purpose and impact.

3. Apart from the plenary sessions, we had the privilege of listening to the keynote addresses by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi-ji, His Excellency Vice President of Suriname Mr Michael Ashwin Adhin and Hon'ble Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Vijay Goel, addresses by special guests – His Excellency Prime Minister of Portugal Dr Antonia Costa, Malaysian Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Infrastructure for India and South Asia Dato Seri Utama Samy Vellu, Malaysian Minister for Health Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam, Hon'ble Minister for Culture and Arts, Social Integration and Economic Empowerment of Mauritius Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun, besides, the addresses by the Union Ministers and Ministers of State, enthusiastic participation by the Chief Ministers of Assam, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Puducherry as well as my cabinet colleagues for their whole-hearted co-operation.
4. I fondly acknowledge the guidance and support of the Hon'ble Union Minister for External Affairs Smt Sushma Swaraj, who was instrumental in providing Government of Karnataka the opportunity to host this prestigious biennial event.
5. I wish to acknowledge the significant role played by all the Ministers and senior officials from the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports for making this mega event a grand success.

6. I wish to acknowledge my appreciation for my colleague and the Minister for Industries and Infrastructure Development Shri R. V. Deshpande for his dynamic role in making this event a success.
7. I also wish to acknowledge my appreciation for the Chief Secretary to Government Dr Subhash Chandra Kuntia, Additional Chief Secretary to Government in the Department of Commerce and Industry Shri D. V Prasad, the Commissioner for Industrial Development Shri Gaurav Gupta, who have translated our vision into a reality.
8. I express my gratitude to each member from our Diaspora who have travelled from different parts of the world to be with us during these three days.
9. My special thanks to all the Diaspora groups from Malaysia, Qatar, Mauritius and other partner countries for making their presence in large numbers.
10. The three-day event started off with a grand expo and was followed by two excellent days during which we commemorated Mahatma Gandhi's contributions to our nation. Of course, we have celebrated the contributions made by many other Pravasis too !
11. Friends, the greatest hallmark of the Indian Diaspora is its commitment to our common cultural heritage and passion for their motherland.

12. It is a matter of great pride to us that overseas Indians are highly respected for their work culture, discipline, professionalism and successful integration with local communities. Please do remember at all times that wherever you are, you be the brand ambassador of India.
13. During these three days, more than 20,000 delegates attended the event. The plenary sessions saw full attendance wherein a plethora of ideas were discussed and debated.
14. Several business meetings were held. I also know that you were all able to network with many new people. Overall, the event a grand success and it generated tremendous interest nationally and internationally.
15. I wish to make a special mention of the Chief Ministers' session where four Indian States were represented. This session gave the opportunity to our fellow Chief Ministers to showcase opportunities and progress made by their respective states with respect to investment, business potential and tourism.
16. I am very delighted and pleased that this platform has enabled the Diaspora to interact with some of the great political and business leaders besides providing a networking opportunity with entrepreneurs, investors, Government officials, students and citizens of this State. They also got a chance to meet the people of different countries and regions.

17. As promised in my address on August 26 at the Joint Press Conference in New Delhi, besides, holding meaningful conferences covering vast subjects and creating interest for the NRI investor community.
18. We showcased the Art and Culture of Karnataka and had organized special package tours to suit everyone's time and interest. I hope many of you were able to take advantage of these organized tours and had a chance to see our State.
19. In a world which is increasingly depending on digital technology for all forms of communication, the importance of **personal touch** is often undermined.
20. In keeping with the theme of this year's Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, this platform has enabled a personal connection which has helped "Redefine Engagement with the Indian Diaspora". It created new bridges, forged new partnerships and most importantly it has brought all of us closer to our roots and to each other.
21. This event also strengthened the bridge between India and the countries you now reside in. Let us all continue to interact, integrate and work towards shared progress and prosperity.
22. As I stated earlier, Karnataka is ready to receive you with open arms in the future in order to keep our discussions and engagements moving forward.

23. Shortly, our Hon'ble President will be presenting this years Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards. I extend my heartiest congratulations to all the winners.
24. In conclusion, let me reiterate that each one of you can play an important role in the growth and development of India. Whether you are scholars scientists, professionals, businessmen and or even workers, you have within you experience, expertise and knowledge gained as a result of your life abroad which can be of immense benefit to India.
25. Many of you can also help in guiding more Foreign Direct Investment to India by educating your colleagues and friends abroad of the business opportunities that exist in India. India and in particular, Karnataka continues to be an attractive investment destination.
26. On our part, Government of Karnataka will continue to actively engage with the overseas Indian community and explore all possible avenues to make them valued partners in building of a strong and prosperous Karnataka.
27. I wish all of you every success in your life and future endeavors. India looks upon you with affection, pride and hope. Thank you all, once again, for your whole-hearted co-operation and support.

Jai Hind ! Jai Karnataka !
