



Newsletter for the month of October 2019

India

2nd India-China Informal Summit:



PM Modi and President Xi at the 2nd India-China Informal Summit

From 11 to 12 October, the 2nd India-China Informal Summit was held between India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and China's President Xi Jinping in Chennai, India. Issues such as deepening of bilateral interaction to reflect the growing role of both countries on the global stage, preservation and advancement of a rules-based and inclusive international order, strengthening of the rules-based multilateral trading system, the threat posed by terrorism, enhancement of greater dialogue and understanding between cultures and civilizations, and the importance of addressing global developmental challenges including

climate change and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were discussed. The two leaders also decided to establish a High-Level Economic and Trade Dialogue mechanism with the objective of achieving enhanced trade and commercial relations, and better balance the bilateral trade.

Celebration of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas:



Celebration of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas at the Statue of Unity, Gujarat

Celebrations of Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, were held in India on 31 October. Sardar Patel, who is popularly known as the "Iron Man of India", played a leading role in the country's struggle for independence and was an architect of the integration of India. On the occasion of his

birth anniversary, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid floral tributes to him at the Statue of Unity at Kevadiya, Gujarat. PM Modi stated that Sardar Patel was the stalwart who unified India, highlighting that his contribution to the nation was monumental.

Ayushman Bharat Scheme: On 14 October, India achieved a major milestone of providing benefit to more than 50 Lakh people (5 million) under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme. The scheme, which was launched one year ago, is the world's largest health insurance scheme and aims to provide easy access to medical facilities to more than 10.74 crore poor people (107.4 million) in the country. On the occasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the efforts made in the health sector.

Indian States / Festivals

Tamil Nadu:



*Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras
Photo: Collegedunia.com*

Tamil Nadu is located in South India. The state economy is the second largest among India's 37 states and union territories with an estimated GDP of USD 250 billion in 2018-2019, and it is a fast-growing state economy with estimated GDP growth rate of 8% from 2018-19 to 2019-20. Tamil Nadu is well-known for its strong human resource pool. With 59 universities, 40 medical colleges, 517 engineering colleges, 447 polytechnics and 20 dental colleges,

the state has a highly qualified, skilled, disciplined and productivity-oriented population. The state ranks first among the Indian states in terms of number of factories and industrial workers, is the largest producer of cotton yarn and plays a leading role in several industries like automobiles and auto components, engineering, pharmaceuticals, garments, textile products, leather products, chemicals and plastics. Moreover, Tamil Nadu has 50 formally approved Special Economic Zones (SEZs), 47 notified SEZs and 38 exporting SEZs as of July 2018, and there are well-developed road and rail networks, three major ports, 15 minor ports and seven airports across the state. Several initiatives have been adopted by the state government to promote Tamil Nadu as an investment destination, including hosting of the second Global Investor Meet (GIM) in January 2019, construction of better roads, implementation of the Green Energy Corridor Project at an estimated cost of USD 247.25 billion to improve transmission infrastructure, boosting of renewable energy policies and incentives like capital subsidies and tax exemptions to investors.



*Airavatesvara Temple
Photo: Wikipedia*

As of 2017, Tamil Nadu ranked first in India in terms of number of domestic tourist arrivals, and second in number of foreign tourist arrivals. The state is famous for its remarkable temple architecture, and

has four UNESCO World Heritage sites including Airavatesvara Temple near Kumbakonam, Brihadisvara Temple near Thanjavur, the Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple in Jayankondam and the group of monuments at Mahabalipuram. Other major tourist attractions include the state capital Chennai, which is known as the cultural capital of India, hill stations such as Ooty and Kodaikanal, natural environment attractions and the Nilgiri Mountain Railway, which together with two Himalayan railways has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site under the name “Mountain railways of India”.

Diwali Festival:



Diwali Festival

Photo: Subir Basak / Getty Images

The Diwali Festival, which is also known as the “Festival of Lights” and is the biggest festival in India, was celebrated across the country from 25 to 29 October, with the main celebrations happening on the third day, 27 October. Diwali signifies the triumph of light over darkness; good over evil; and knowledge over ignorance. On this day, small clay lamps called diyas and candles are lit and placed in houses, and fireworks are let off everywhere. The festival is also celebrated by exchanging of gifts and sweets and worshipping Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha together on Diwali seeking prosperity and happiness.

International commercial & business activities in India

22nd India International Security Expo:



22nd India International Security Expo

Photo: Indiatradefair.com

The 22nd India International Security Expo (IISE) - “Defence and Homeland Security” was co-organized by the India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO), a Government of India Enterprise, and the business association Punjab, Haryana & Delhi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) in New Delhi from 3 to 5 October. IISE is India’s most reputed exhibition on security equipment and a strong business platform offering opportunities for partnerships, and showcase of capabilities, products and services for Indian and foreign companies.

India-Norway:

Equinor opens permanent India office:

In October, the major Norwegian energy company Equinor (former Statoil) opened a permanent office in New Delhi which will function as the the company’s headquarters in India and lead the company’s increasing activity in the country. Equinor, which is a world-leading producer of oil, gas and renewable energy, has in recent years embraced business models to reduce carbon footprint, is developing technologies for carbon capture, use and storage (CCUS) and has grown to become a major wind power actor.

Indian Community:

Symposium/Satya Varta on Mahatma Gandhi:



Symposium/Satya Varta on Mahatma Gandhi

As a part of celebration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Mission organized a Symposium/Satya Varta (True Talk) on "Mahatma Gandhi: An Apostle of Peace and Non-Violence" on 20th October, 2019 at the Litteraturhuset, Oslo. Guests of the Honour of the event were: Ms. Lisa Golden, Director, Section for South Asia and Afghanistan, MFA, Mr. Erik Solheim, former International Development Minister and Environment Minister, and Mr. Himanshu Gulati, MP. During the event, Mission organized Satya-Varta (True Talk) talks delivered by the three distinguished speakers - Mr. Erik Solheim; Professor Asim K. Duttaroy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Oslo and Mr. Frank Tomlinson, Vice President, "Bike for Peace". In addition, Mission organized screening of the video "Vaishnav Jan To" by a Norwegian singer Ms Mocchi Ryen, displaying of the painting of Mahatma Gandhi painted by a renowned Norwegian artist Mr. Bjørge Rædfjell and prize distribution to the winners of "Quiz of

Mahatma Gandhi" organized by Embassy. A musical performance/ singing of Mahatma Gandhi's favourite hymns was given by Mr. Patrick Vedlog, Mr. Tarak Dutta, Mr. Terry Oldfield and Ms. Soraya Saraswati.

Dandiya for Sewa:



Dandiya for Sewa

On 19 October, the non-profit organization Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) Norway organized the event Dandiya for Sewa at the Vallhall Arena, Oslo. The event included dancing to the tunes of Garba and Dandiya music, and the profit from the event was donated to flood victims in various parts of India through the organization Sewa International.

Launch of book "Det moderne India":

On 26 October, the book "Det moderne India" (The modern India) written in Norwegian by author Ms. Rina Sunder was launched in Oslo. Speaking at the launch, Ms. Rina Sunder stated that the book was an easy read and practical introduction to Indian culture, business, geography, demography and regional politics. Also, as Norwegian universities plan to utilize the book in their curriculums, "Det moderne India" will unequivocally serve as the benchmark for the Norwegian business community regarding the sentiment of India.