



HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

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16th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention - “Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat” on Saturday 9th January 2021



This afternoon, the High Commission of India in Brunei Darussalam organized the Screening of the Inaugural Session of the virtual 16th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) Convention being held by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), at its Chancery. Over 60 members of the Indian diaspora were present.



2. PBD is celebrated on 9th January every year to mark the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of India. January 9 was chosen as the day to celebrate this occasion since it was on this day in 1915 that Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest Pravasi, returned to India from South Africa, led India's freedom struggle and changed the lives of Indians forever.



3. The PBD Convention is the flagship event for the Indian Government's engagement with the Indian Diaspora all over the world. The theme of this year's Convention is "Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat".



4. Prior to the PBD Convention 2021, five Pre-PBD Conferences were also organized in virtual format from 9th December 2020 to 8th January 2021 which included (i) Role of Diaspora in promotion of Indian Culture Abroad; (ii) Targeting US\$ 5 Trillion Aatmanirbhar Bharat Economy by boosting Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); (iii) India and the Gulf : Leveraging energy partnerships, Investment opportunities and emerging technologies for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', and India and the Gulf : Skill sets of the future for Indians in the Gulf; (iv) Forging media and entertainment partnerships to showcase India@75; and (v) PBD Conference on Youth.

5. In his opening remarks, H.E. Mr. Ajaneesh Kumar emphasized upon the initiatives and programmes of Government of India for its continuous engagement with the members of Indian diaspora all over the world.



6. During the Inaugural Session of this Convention, in his opening remarks H.E. Dr. S. Jaishankar, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister of India highlighted that the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention is part of a tradition that began two decades ago, when the then Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji envisioned a comprehensive framework for Pravasi outreach. He also said that even as we strengthen our bonds, the success of Pravasis abroad is a source of immense pride for all of us.



7. In his Keynote Address, the Chief Guest H.E. Mr. Chandrikapersad Santokhi, President of Republic of Suriname said that India and Suriname are bonded at many levels - historically, religiously, linguistically and culturally.



8. During the Inaugural Session, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India addressed the members of the Indian diaspora spread all over the world many of whom were watching this event live in virtual format. He said that although the internet has connected all the Indians abroad with India, but their hearts were always associated with their motherland India and they are also connected with affinity for each other.



9. The Indian Diaspora constitutes a significant economic, social and cultural force in the world today. Overseas Indians estimated at over 28 million are spread across the world. Over the years, they have emerged as a successful and respected community on account of their industry, enterprise, education, expertise and economic acumen.



Brunei Darussalam, 9th January 2021