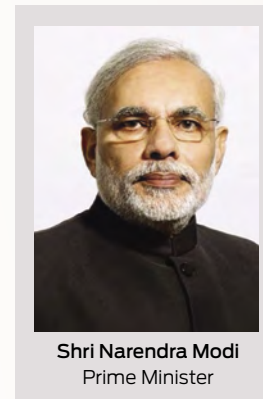


Smt. Droupadi Murmu
President



Shri Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

AMBASSADOR'S MESSAGE

On the occasion of the 77th Independence Day of India, I extend hearty congratulations and warm greetings to all Indians living in Qatar. I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to HH the Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, HH the Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, all Members of the Royal Family, and the Government of the State of Qatar for their continued patronage and support to the Indian community in Qatar.

On our Independence Day, we remember and pay homage to our freedom fighters who laid down their precious lives so that we can hold our heads high and live with pride and dignity. We also fondly recall and be grateful to our fellow Indians who made invaluable contributions in protecting the country and ensuring its progress over the past seven and half decades. India today stands proud as the largest democracy in the world.

India is today the fifth largest economy in the world and is well on its way to becoming a \$5 trillion economy. Despite global headwinds, our real GDP growth in 2022-23 stood at 7.2% and it is projected to be 6.5% in 2023-24. India will thus remain the fastest growing large economy in the world. Government of India has ensured empowerment of all people of India through schemes such as Direct Benefit Transfer, Jandhan Yojana (financial inclusion), Ayushman Bharat (health for all) and providing free foodgrains to 800 million people during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Trade and investment has continued to show robust growth with Government's emphasis on Ease of Doing Business. India's exports reached a record USD 770 billion in FY 2022-23 which was a rise of USD 94 billion than the previous year. India's FDI inflows have also increased multifold and stood at about USD 71 billion in FY 2022-23. Today, India has one of the largest startup ecosystem in the world. India's internet economy is predicted to reach USD 1 trillion by 2030. We have also continued to make excellent progress in the field of manufacturing. India has become the second-largest mobile phone manufacturer globally. India retains its status as the pharmacy of the world.

The country also continues to make tremendous strides in science and technology. It was a moment of pride for all Indians across the globe, when India successfully launched Chandrayaan - 3 mission last month, with an aim to land a rover on the moon. We have the world's largest rural broadband connectivity with about 600,000 km optical fibre cable laid. We have the second largest 5G network in the world, on the back of the fastest 5G rollout with 300,000 sites. India leads the world in digital payments through the indigenously developed instant payment system UPI. In May 2023, more than 9.4 billion transactions took place on UPI of total value of about USD 180 billion.

Government of India has taken some pathbreaking initiatives to address issues facing the humanity. Prime Minister Modi's Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) encourages people to adopt more sustainable and healthier lifestyle. India has declared Net Zero Pledge, to achieve net zero emissions goal by 2070. The National Green Hydrogen Mission has been launched to enable India to be energy independent by 2047.

The year 2023 has also been seminal for India as we made our mark on the global stage through our Presidency of the G-20 as well as SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization). Both these presidencies were an occasion for India to showcase its ethos of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the whole world is one family). This is also reflected in India's G20 Presidency's theme, "One Earth, One Family, One Future". In its presidency of G-20 India has shaped global agenda on issues of common concern such as inclusive and resilient growth, climate change and green development, SDGs, technological transformation and digital public infrastructure, reformed multilateralism, and women-led development. India has also given priority to amplifying the voice and concerns of the Global South and developing countries through its leadership.

Qatar has been one of the foremost partners for India in our quest for development and growth. Our two countries enjoy historical relationship based on the strong foundations of people-to-people contacts. The high-level contacts between India and Qatar have continued apace. In 2022, there were two Vice Presidential visits from India to Qatar, including for FIFA World Cup inauguration. The Indian community rejoiced in the success of FIFA. In February 2023, India hosted the visit of Qatar's Minister of Transport HE Jassim Seif Ahmed al-Sulaiti. In March 2023, our MOS for External Affairs Mr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh visited Qatar to participate in UN LDC5 Conference.

Energy has been one of the main pillars of bilateral cooperation and is expected to remain so. The Joint Task Force on Energy has been actively working to explore further expansion of energy cooperation. Bilateral trade and investment partnership continues to grow. For FY 2022-23, our bilateral trade stood at \$18.7 billion, recording 24% increase from last year. India is the third largest export destination for Qatar and third largest with respect to its imports. QIA's investments in India have also continued to expand which is highly welcome. India has been participating in Qatar's trade events and looks forward to the success of the upcoming Doha Horticulture Expo.

The year 2023 also marks a historic milestone as India and Qatar are celebrating 50 years of establishing full diplomatic relations. I am confident that the bonds of friendship between peoples of both countries would further strengthen through interactions on this special occasion. We look forward to organizing series of events to celebrate this occasion in collaboration with Qatari authorities.

The Indian community in Qatar has always been a part and parcel of Qatar's development story. I have been proud to hear good words of appreciation for the community from the Qatari dignitaries during my previous visits to Qatar. As I take charge as Ambassador of India to Qatar, welfare of Indians, especially those in dire need, would be a high priority for me. Our Embassy will continue to strive to deliver the best services for the community in a timely and transparent manner.

I am happy that over the past year the Indian community in Qatar has celebrated *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* by organizing several socio-cultural and business events. We also need to recommit ourselves to the goal of making India a developed nation in the *Amrit Kaal* as we move from 75 years of independence to the centenary in 2047. As Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has said it is a duty for all Indians towards building a New India, which the future generations will look up to.

I once again extend my warm greetings to my fellow Indians in Qatar on Independence Day of India. Let us all continue to consolidate the bonds of friendship and cooperation between India and Qatar.

Jai Hind!



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Ambassador of India to Qatar

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SPECIAL THANKS

Gulf Times thanks the
Embassy of India, Doha-Qatar,
for the support rendered in
preparing this supplement

