

## **HON'BLE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO CHINA**

### **WRITTEN ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS OF XINHUA NEWS AGENCY**

**Q.1. Mr. President, President Patil visited China in 2010. In the past 5 years, the relationship between the two countries has undergone a deep change. You will be paying a visit to China shortly, how do you evaluate India-China relations at present?**

**A:** We accord high priority to our relations with China. Our Closer Development Partnership is broad based and covers the political, security, economic, educational and cultural fields. Both countries have established a range of mechanisms in all areas of cooperation, including at the Ministerial level, such as the Strategic Economic Dialogue, High Level Meeting Mechanism on Security and the Joint Economic Group on Trade and Investment. The sharing of relevant developmental experiences is an important aspect of ties. We regularly exchange views on regional, global, and multilateral issues of mutual interest. As two major Asian countries, the two sides are aware of the potential that bilateral relations hold. Both sides are engaged to find an early resolution to the outstanding issues which hold back development of bilateral relations to its fuller potential. We wish to have a strong partnership with China based on mutual trust and friendship, and sensitivity to each other's concerns, interests and aspirations.

During my forthcoming State Visit, I expect to exchange views on all aspects of our ties with the leadership of China. I will also share our ideas on how both sides can anchor our ties in a people-centric partnership. I firmly believe that it is essential for the peoples of both countries to walk together on the world stage in order to make this century a truly Asian Century.

I am confident that my visit will add further depth to our partnership and open new opportunities for cooperation in a wider number of fields. China is one of our most important partners and we are committed to intensifying engagement.

**Q.2. Mr. President, the leaders of the two countries have repeatedly stated that the world has enough space of both China and India to develop together. The two countries have achieved the fruitful cooperation in Asian infrastructure Investment Bank, the United Nations climate change negotiations, and WTO negotiations. Communication between the common people has increasingly deepened; trade and investment trends have shown a good impetus. How you do think China and India should continue to push forward the cooperation in these areas.**

**A:** India's role and partnership in the process of bringing into existence the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank as two fledgling Multilateral Development Banks (MDB) display our commitment in strengthening the global financial architecture to foster enhanced regional cooperation, sustain growth, promote economic and social development in the region.

As the founding member and major shareholder of these new Multilateral Development Banks (MDB), India is committed to work closely with other partners and international community to achieve the above goals.

India has signed the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on the Earth Day marking a milestone in the ongoing process for Global Cooperation on Climate Change. As developing countries, both India and China understand the need for balanced yet ambitious actions to address climate change based on the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. We recognize the imperative to evolve sustainable patterns of consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead, and the importance of climate justice, in strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change without putting inappropriate economic burden on developing countries.

**Q.3. There are some sensitive problems left over from history between India and China. The outgoing Chinese Ambassador to India, while describing the relations between the two countries said that is that the future is brilliant but there is a need to shoulder the heavy burden and embark on a long journey. In your opinion, what measures should be taken to properly handle the differences between the two sides and prevent the boundary problems from interfering with the normal development of bilateral relations.**

**A:** In the last two decades, we have witnessed unprecedented expansion and diversification of our bilateral relationship. Our shared civilizational past and our common Asian identity was the basis for both countries to develop together and live in friendship in pursuit to make the 21<sup>st</sup> century an Asian Century. We would like to expand and diversify our engagement with China across various fields while proactively addressing outstanding issues including the boundary question. We seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question and, pending the boundary settlement, to maintain peace and tranquility in the border areas. Both sides should strive to ensure that the outstanding issues are addressed in a manner that demonstrates mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns, interests and aspiration. Only in this manner can we ensure that these differences will not come in the way of continued development of bilateral relations. We should enhance our mutual trust and understanding through stepped-up dialogue on political, security and strategic issues. We should expand our defence exchanges and increase economic engagement, especially through greater investments. Functional cooperation at international fora should be stepped up and cultural as well as people-to-people contacts deepened. We must foster links at the state/provincial and local levels.

**Q.4. The “One Belt and One Road” initiative proposed by President Xi Jinping has been favourably received by the countries along the “One Belt and One Road”. India also attaches great importance to the construction of inter-connectivity in the South Asia Region. How does India, as**

**an important South Asian country, view the “One Belt and One Road” initiative? Accordingly to you, what opportunities will the “One Belt and One Road” initiative bring for regional cooperation in South Asia?**

**A:** Building connectivity is an important aspect of our national development. Connectivity can benefit the people and impart a fresh momentum to regional development. In India, a number of projects are being undertaken including in co-operation with other countries.

A better connected Asia requires that all concerned countries consult together on determining the best way forward. Such cooperation should be governed by commonly agreed international norms and practices and should reflect the interests of all concerned parties.

**Q.5. The people of China and India have a long history of friendly exchanges. For thousands of years, the people of both countries have set up the model of intercultural communication through cultural exchange and played an important role in advancing the progress of human civilization. In your view, what positive impact does expansion of cultural and personnel exchanges have on promoting the development of bilateral relations?**

**A:** Culture is the bedrock on which the historical relations between India and China have flourished, and its promotion will nourish our people-to-people friendship. The history of cultural and academic relations between our two civilizations serves as

example for modern cultural interaction based on mutual respect and equality.

India and China have complemented each other. Studies have shown that while knowledge flowed freely between us, it was enhanced by the other so that both civilizations were enriched without either dominating the other. So harmonious was our cultural understanding that even when the two civilizations came into contact in South East Asia and Central Asia, there was a give-and-take that allowed the rise of syncretic cultures in these regions.

I believe it will be much easier for us to draw upon our glorious ancient past to enlarge points of synergy and interface between India and China. This will enable us develop a matrix of cross-cutting contacts that help enhance our mutual understanding and enrich the bilateral discourse.

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