

**Remarks by H.E. Mr. Vinod K Jacob, Ambassador of India at the
induction ceremony of the new executive committee of Kannada
Sangha, Bahrain, 06 October 2023**

Dr. G. Parameshwara, Hon'ble Home Minister, Government of Karnataka, Dr. Arathi Krishna, AICC Secretary, In-charge-Indian National Congress, Mr. Ravi Kumar Gowda, Hon Member of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly, Mr. amaranth Rai, President of Kannada Sangha, Members of the Executive Committee of the Kannada Sangha, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good evening,

I am happy to attend today's induction ceremony of the new executive committee of Kannada Sangha, Bahrain.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Hon'ble Home Minister of Karnataka, Dr. G. Parameshwara to Bahrain. I understand this is your first visit and I wish you all success. Last month, Hon'ble Education Minister of Karnataka, Shri Madhu Bangarappa visited Bahrain. Earlier in August, the whole of India rejoiced at the success of the Indian Space Research Organization which is headquartered in Bengaluru on the occasion of the descent of the Vikram lander and Pragyaan rover of the Chandrayaan-3 mission at the south pole of the moon. I would like to share with the visitors from Karnataka that the Cabinet of the Kingdom of Bahrain welcomed the success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission.

We all know that Karnataka is home to 400 out of Fortune 500 companies and is ranked No. 1 in NITI Aayog's Innovation Index. The state is the largest software exporter in India, the largest producer of aerospace and defence equipment in India and the largest producer of coffee in India. Karnataka is well connected to all major markets with 2 international airports, 47 national highways, 145 state highways and a rail network of 3,818 km. The state has a coastline of 320 km with 13 minor ports and one major port in Mangaluru. The Bengaluru - Mumbai Economic Corridor and Chennai - Bengaluru Industrial Corridor pass through the Karnataka.

I understand that there has been Bahraini interest in Karnataka.

Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB) – the Kingdom's investment promotion agency – and the Department of Information Technology; Biotechnology; and Science & Technology, Government of Karnataka, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote cooperation in AI, FinTech and other emerging technologies while fostering innovation and start up growth.

Investcorp, a leading global manager of alternative investments from Bahrain has invested in Karnataka based FreshToHome, one of the world's largest fully integrated online brands in fresh fish and meat. Similarly, co-living and home rental start-up Zolostays secured funding from Investcorp. Also, Investcorp entered into an agreement to acquire Unilog, a leading Software as a Service (SaaS) based e-commerce solutions provider to small and medium businesses headquartered in greater Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and with international headquarters in Bengaluru. Most recently in July 2023, Investcorp made

investment of INR 500 crores (approximately \$60.8 million) in NDR Warehousing, one of India's largest warehouse development and operating platforms spread across 10 cities in India including Bengaluru.

These are positive developments and augur well for the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage Bahraini investors to invest in Karnataka.

Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me now turn to the cultural dimension.

I would like to congratulate Kannada Sangha on the grand opening of the Lounge today. I understand that "Kannada Bhavana" inaugurated last year is the first Kannada Bhavana outside India. The infrastructure caters to not only the Kannada community, but also the larger Indian community.

Kannada Sangha which was established in 1977 has played an active role and the State Award bestowed on the Sangha by the Karnataka Government in 2002 testifies to this role. I therefore hope that the establishment of the Kannada Bhavana here in Bahrain along with the enthusiastic efforts of the new Executive Committee will yield closer ties between India and Bahrain.

I thank you all.