

**Speech by H.E. Mr. Piyush Srivastava
Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Bahrain
At the Reception organised on the occasion of
74th Republic Day of India 2023
(January 26, 2023; 1900 hrs.)**

**Your Excellency Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani,
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Bahrain;**

**Your Excellency Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa
Undersecretary for Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;**

**Your Excellencies, Members of Shura Council and Council of
Representatives; Governor of Capital Governorate;**

**Your Excellencies, Heads of Councils, Authorities, Higher Offices of the
Government of Bahrain;**

**Your Excellencies, Heads of Diplomatic Missions and Members of Diplomatic
Corp;**

**Distinguished Senior officers of Govt. of Bahrain, Members of Business
community and other invited guests;**

Dear members of Indian community;

Friends from Media;

Ladies & Gentlemen;

Namaskar!

السلام عليكم

Good evening to all of you!

I thank you all for joining us in our celebration of the 74th Republic Day of India. I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to everyone on this joyous occasion.

2. Republic Day is an occasion to celebrate the establishment of the Republic of India, the largest republic in the world. On this day in 1950, the Constitution of India was put into effect. It is an occasion to celebrate the rich heritage and cultural diversity of India. The day is celebrated with fervour by all Indians, both in India and abroad.

Friends,

3. Indian economy has gained new momentum, and is now the world's 5th largest economy, crossing the export figures of USD 400 billion dollars. Indian

healthcare sector including traditional medicine and pharmaceutical industry are among the leaders in the world. Our defence manufacturing sector has made significant progress. India's first indigenous Aircraft Carrier INS Vikrant was commissioned in September last year. Today, India is a leading global player in scientific and technology advancements especially in the areas of IT, digital technology, space, agriculture and renewable energy. India successfully launched 177 foreign satellites from 19 countries in last 5 years as a result of global use of self-reliant space technology. We also boast of one of the largest start-up ecosystem in the world, with more than 75000 start-ups and more than 100 unicorns.

4. The year ahead will be important as well as exciting for India, as it chairs both G20 and SCO, taking global leadership roles and working for collective prosperity and growth. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi said that India's G-20 Presidency will be inclusive, ambitious, decisive and action-oriented. This spirit is reflected in our G20 Presidency theme "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", which means "One Earth. One Family. One Future."

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

5. The bilateral relations between India and Kingdom of Bahrain acquired a new vigour. His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kingdom of Bahrain and Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi held telephonic conversation at the beginning of the last year. This was followed by the 5th Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) in New Delhi in March 2022, which were led by H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdulla, Undersecretary, Political Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Bahrain and H.E. Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. The visits and interactions by political, official, security, defence and trade and commercial delegations also increased. High level delegations from both sides participated in each other's flagship conferences and events, including Bahrain International Air Show and Manama Dialogue hosted by Bahrain; and Defence Expo, Interpol General Assembly and 'No Money for Terror' Ministerial Conference hosted by India. H.E. Dr. Mohammed bin Mubarak bin Daina, Minister of Oil & Environment participated in the 'Voice of the Global South Summit,' virtually hosted by India earlier this month.

6. In significant milestones last year, Bahrain joined International Solar Alliance as Member. India joined Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Headquartered in Bahrain as Associate Partner.

7. India and Bahrain have achieved record levels of bilateral trade and investments last year. Bilateral trade registered growth of about 55% in the year 2021-22 and reached its highest ever level of USD 1.65 billion. Close to 10 physical and virtual B2B meetings in diverse sectors have given great push to our economic collaboration, with Indian investments into Bahrain reaching approx. USD 1.5 billion.

8. Our economic and commercial cooperation is expanding from traditional areas to new and emerging areas. We see a lot of potential for furthering bilateral trade and investment in IT, fintech, space technology, renewable energy,

education, health and pharma, logistics and supply corridors, and food security sectors.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen,

9. Last year, our two countries celebrated golden jubilee of establishment of their diplomatic relations. The celebrations of our deep-rooted historical bonds of friendship, shared culture and heritage further strengthened bonds of friendship between our people, particularly the youth of our two countries.

10. The vibrant Indian diaspora in Bahrain, which proudly represents India's rich history, cultural diversity and heritage, has played an important part in strengthening our bilateral ties, and at the same time, has maintained strong connect with their motherland. A strong participation of about 100 members of Indian community in Bahrain in the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas Convention held in India earlier this month is a testimony to the same. Government of India is committed to and is making continuous efforts to closely engage with Indian diaspora, work for their welfare and make them an integral part of India's growth story.

11. Bahraini people have welcomed their Indian friends with open arms. Indian community has also reciprocated in equal measure. They have significantly contributed to the development of this beautiful Kingdom. They consider Bahrain as home, thanks to Kingdom's open society and its policies of harmony and peaceful coexistence, and providing freedom to practice their faith and culture.

12. I take this opportunity to convey our thanks and gratitude to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for their vision and guidance in strengthening our bilateral ties as well as their warmth, care and affection towards Indian community.

I once again thank all of you for taking time out of your busy schedule and gracing the occasion.

Long live India-Bahrain Friendship!

आप सभी को गणतंत्र दिवस की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं!

जय हिन्द!