

**Speech by H.E. Mr. Piyush Srivastava,  
Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Bahrain**

**At the Special Event (virtual) to celebrate 75<sup>th</sup> Independence Day of  
India – Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**  
*[Sunday, 15 August 2021; 1800 hrs]*

**Your Excellency, Mr. Abdulnabi Al Sho'ala,  
Former Minister and Member of Shura Council, Kingdom of Bahrain;**

**Mr. K.G. Baburajan, Chairman & Managing Director, BKG Holdings and  
Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Awardee;**

**Presidents of Indian Associations;**

**Indian and Bahraini dignitaries;**

**Dear Members of the Indian Community; and**

**Friends of India who have joined online;**

Namaskar,  
Masa ul khair,  
Good evening to all of you,

I welcome you all for joining us in celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Independence Day of India. Let me first of all convey my best wishes and greetings to all of you on this joyous occasion.

2. It is my honour to mark this historic occasion in the Kingdom of Bahrain, with which we share civilizational connect. This year assumes special significance as our two countries celebrate 50 years of establishment of diplomatic relations. Our relations, rooted in history and close trade, cultural and people to people interaction over centuries, have grown and diversified in recent years. It is a special occasion to reaffirm our commitment to further strengthen our bonds of friendship and cooperation between India and Kingdom of Bahrain.

**Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen;**

3. 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' is the nation-wide festival of glorious history, culture and achievements of 75 years of progressive India. It is time to salute our freedom fighters and founding fathers of our modern nation, and to re-dedicate ourselves to service of our great nation. As Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said at the launch of Amrit Mahotsav, and I quote: "During Amrit Mahotsav, the country will not only remember every important

moment of its freedom movement, but will also move ahead with new energy to build the future.”

4. India’s tremendous strides in its journey of 75 years after Independence is there for all to see. As a democratic polity, pluralistic society, innovative economy and a culture of unmatched diversity, our role and contribution have a real weight and value in the international arena.

5. This was evident in India’s global response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Right from the beginning of the pandemic, India has been committed to sharing all its experiences, expertise and resources with the global community in this battle. Despite all our constraints, we have tried to share as much as possible with the world.

### **Distinguished Guests,**

6. After successfully handling the first wave of COVID 19 pandemic, due to the new variants and other unexpected factors, we suffered from a terrible second wave. It was our collective determination to overcome the challenge, and the tireless efforts of our corona warriors, the doctors, nurses and health workers, the administrators, and others that helped us see the weakening of the second wave. The second wave brought our public healthcare infrastructure under stress. The reality is that no infrastructure, even of advanced economies, could withstand a crisis of such enormous proportions. Efforts were made on war-footing to plug the gaps. The leadership rose to the challenge, and the government’s endeavours were supplemented by initiatives of the states, private sector healthcare facilities, the civil society and others. In this extraordinary mission, foreign nations shared the essentials generously, just as India had reached out to many nations with medicine, equipment and vaccines. We are grateful to the global fraternity, including Kingdom of Bahrain that came forward with a helping hand.

7. Due to these efforts, India has now recovered from this severe second wave. Government of India has embarked on an aggressive vaccination drive which is the largest on earth. As on date, over 520 mn people have already got vaccine doses. The daily COVID infection rate has drastically reduced to around 40000, with a significantly improved recovery rate of over 97%.

8. On post-COVID economic recovery front, the ‘Atma Nirbhar Bharat’ or ‘Self Reliant India’ program is leading India to become a pivotal partner in the global supply and value chain. Our recent economic and structural reforms as well as infrastructure and connectivity enhancement, have opened up opportunities for greater trade and economic engagement between India and the world. The resilience of Indian economy and the confidence of investors in India has been reflected from the fact that India received an overwhelming USD 64 bn FDI in the pandemic year 2020 which

is the 5th largest FDI inflows in the world. India's GDP growth rate for 2021-22 is projected at 9.5%.

**Friends,**

9. Over past one year, the global community has seen major disruption due to COVID 19 pandemic. We still continue to grapple with this. Our two countries have had the excellent cooperation and collaboration in dealing with Covid-19 pandemic.

10. Bahrain is among the most successful countries in dealing with the pandemic. The Kingdom's care of Indian diaspora, including providing free vaccination at par with its citizens, is praiseworthy. I take this opportunity to express our gratitude to His Majesty the King, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister and the Government of Bahrain for the same.

11. I take this opportunity to also mention the important role that the vibrant and dynamic Indian community in Bahrain plays in furthering our bilateral relations and the existing goodwill between our two countries.

**Excellency, Distinguished Guests,**

12. I see a bright future ahead for our two countries and trajectory of our bilateral relations. Several measures taken by both governments for post COVID economic recovery have opened up opportunities for further collaboration in sectors such as health & pharmaceutical, IT, FinTech, education, tourism, food security and renewable energy.

13. I once again thank all of you for your presence. Particularly, I would like to thank H. E. Mr. Abdalnabi Al Sho'ala, a great friend of India, for taking time out of his busy schedule and gracing the occasion.

भारत के पचहत्तरवें स्वतंत्रता दिवस की आप सभी को हार्दिक शुभकामनायें।

जय हिन्द।

Tahya al sadaaqa al hindiya al bahrainiya!

*(Long live India-Bahrain Friendship!)*

Thank you.

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