

SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE
AT THE BANQUET HOSTED IN HIS HONOUR BY THE GOVERNOR
GENERAL OF NEW ZEALAND, H.E. LIEUTENANT GENERAL THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR JERRY MATEPARAE

Government House, Auckland: 30th April 2016

Good evening your Excellency Lieutenant General The Right Honourable Sir Jerry Mateparae. Excellences distinguished guests ladies and gentlemen.

1. I thank you for your gracious words. It is indeed a pleasure and a great honour for me to be here on this first ever State Visit by a President of India to New Zealand.
2. Excellency as I mentioned you this morning though this is my first visit to this beautiful land and city is not unknown to me as I had this privileged of representing my country as days of my Foreign Minister in 1995 at the conference of heads of Common Wealth. As this particularly significant as Nelson Mandela for the first time as Head of the State of South Africa attended the conference of the Commonwealth Heads of Government.
3. I may conveyed in this trip to your beautiful country by our Union Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan and senior Members of the Indian Parliament representing different political parties and regions of our country. We bring the good will and best wishes of the Government and the people of the Republic of India.
4. Excellency, at the very outset I would like to thank you for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to me and to my delegation. We are delighted to be in your beautiful country New Zealand.

5. The Governments and the people of India and New Zealand have, over the years, developed a close and fruitful relationship of friendship and co-operation. We share a unique bond of trust and mutual understanding - based on our shared values of synergies. Though we may be separated by geographical distances, our co-operation has, in recent years, become increasingly multifaceted, dynamic and rewarding.
6. We note with satisfaction a new momentum in our bilateral relations - especially since the visit of Prime Minister, the Right Honourable John Key, to India in June, 2011. In 2013, our bilateral trade crossed one billion US dollars. However, given the relative size of our economies and the wide convergence of interests in many areas, we both agree that the present level of trade and investment needs to be vigorously advanced in order to realise its substantial potential.
7. Excellency, ingenuity and innovation are qualities for which New Zealand is well known. I understand that popular local culture holds that Kiwis can do anything with "a piece of number eight wire". The fencing wire for which New Zealand farmers found many uses is firmly entrenched in the heritage of your pioneering nation. New Zealand has made tremendous progress in dairy development, food processing, communications and information technology, clean energy and water, disaster management, biotechnology, healthcare and services, to mention a few. We would very much like to enhance our bilateral co-operation in these areas, learn from the successful experience and practices of New Zealand and collaborate with you in creating new and innovative products and technology. India looks forward to new partnerships with New Zealand in areas of common interest. We invite investors and entrepreneurs from New Zealand to join Indian

counterparts in the "Make in India" initiative of my Government.

Excellency, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Our two nations share an extraordinary convergence of values and aspirations. We have demonstrated a remarkable degree of independence of spirit in defending and upholding democratic values that are vitally important to the comity of nations. Both our countries are active participants in regional and international fora and have worked together in close cooperation on matters of shared interest and concern. We both recognize the imperatives of strengthening the UN system and other international organizations. We would like to see them reformed so that they remain relevant and effective in addressing the challenges that confront the world today. In this context, India stands ready to shoulder greater responsibilities in the international arena. In the United Nations Security Council, New Zealand has addressed issues of global security and highlighted the challenges faced by smaller states. The impressive support that New Zealand garnered in last year's UNSC election revealed both the quality of your diplomacy and the trust that other countries have placed in you. We look forward to enhanced cooperation between our two countries both in the regional as well as global context.

9. Excellency, New Zealand is home of more than 170,000 people of Indian origin. Our people to people contacts are growing. Indian students are increasingly opting for higher studies in New Zealand and we are seeing enhanced tourist flows in both directions. The most famous New Zealander known to Indians remains Sir Edmund Hillary - for being the first climber to reach the summit of Mount Everest along with Tenzing Norgay. Today, cricketers from New Zealand are household names in every part of India.

Excellency,

10. We both recognise that we have a broad convergence of interests on regional and global issues. India deeply appreciates New Zealand's support for India as a member of a reformed and expanded UN Security Council.
11. Both New Zealand and India share common concerns in our fight against international terrorism. We have been working together in regional and multilateral fora on this and other key issues including disarmament, climate change and sustainable development.
12. Even as we look back with satisfaction at the road we have traversed in building our strong friendship, we both agree that there is enormous untapped potential to be realised. Going forward, as we pursue our bilateral dialogue and implement our decisions, I am confident that we can open more doors to each other as we establish a robust trade, economic and political partnership.

Excellency, with these words, I thank you once again for your gracious hospitality.

Thank you! Jai Hind !

