

NAMASKAR! Masa al Khair! Good Evening
Hon'ble Speaker of the People's Assembly
Honourable Ministers from the Cabinet,
Distinguished Members of the Parliament,
Officials from the civil administration and
police, Fellow Ambassadors, Members of
the diplomatic fraternity, my Syrian
brothers and sisters, my compatriots
ladies and gentlemen! I thank you all for
having taken the time out to attend this
function.

Today is the 67th anniversary of the Republic of India. Before India had become a Republic in 1950, a prosperous, culturally rich and spiritually tolerant India had been reduced to its ever miserable condition. During the previous 200 years, India's contribution to the world income had come down from 27% to an unbelievably meagre 3%.

A large skilled force was rendered jobless. Cultural uprooting had led to famines and droughts. The country which in the past had been contributing to the world peace and wisdom was now bleeding with hunger, disease, poverty and slums.

It was high time that the Indians determined to take control of their own affairs from an exceedingly inefficient governance. This gave rise to a resurgent Republic of India. Within decades India turned from a food deficit to food surplus nation.



It transformed into the biggest milk producer in the world



third biggest contributor of the pharmaceuticals



India's low cost high efficiency education system contributed to the modern day inventions of E-mail, Pentium, optical fibres and so on.

In its first ever and extremely low cost mission to moon, Indian rocket Chandrayan discovered the presence of water on moon in its first mission itself. India's present spacecraft on Mars is also expected to contribute in adding to our present knowledge of Mars.



Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) has so far launched a total of 84 satellites of which 51 are for international customers. Lately, the PSLV-C34 accomplished its 35th consecutive successful flight with the launch of 20 satellites in a single mission.



India is also regaining its lost skills, both manual and mental. India is the largest country cutting and polishing diamonds. It is also the country that hosts top global hubs of information technology.



The flagship programmes of the Prime Minister 'Digital India' and 'Skill India' are bound to further grow these sectors.

In brief, modern India is determined to fully regain within the decades what it had lost during the centuries of misrule. When we talk of the resurgence of India we are actually talking of the welfare of 17% or one sixth of the humanity on the earth and the people of the largest democracy. It is one of the most challenging tasks on the earth.

Development is the motto of the present government and this development as Hon'ble Prime Minister of India called it has to be:

Sabkaa Saath Sabka Vikaas

(Everybody's development with everybody's support)



India has always contributed to the world through its message of peace and welfare of the others. New India continues contributing to the world on the same lines. India has been the largest contributor of troops to the United Nations Missions. The all-women Indian peacekeepers in Liberia have inspired several young Liberian women to join the uniformed services and do duty for their nation.

In our neighbourhood here, Indians have offered their valuable services in UNDOF's leadership and logistics. India's contribution is respected by almost all the countries which is apparent from the fact that India secured trust of other nations in the 4 UN nominations recently. India's proposal to mark the International days of Non- violence and Yoga were unanimously adopted.

India has always maintained friendly relations with the other nations. However, its friendship with Syria is unique because the two countries share many things. Both India and Syria are the ancient most civilisations which have survived till the present times.





Both the countries share the true secular values. Both are multi-ethnic societies. And in the present times both countries are suffering from the scourge of terrorism. There has been a continuous exchange of ideas and goods between the two countries since the ages.

The spices are called 'Bharat' in Syria which is the original name of India and which was in vogue millennia before. This indicates the age old trade between the peoples of the two countries.

The immaculate Damascene sword, a land mark in the centre of Damascus, was made from the steel imported from India.



AnasrehadehPhotography.com

The year 2016 has been remarkable in furthering the friendly relations between the two countries. Some of the markers are:

Hon'ble Syrian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mr. Walid al-Moallem officially visited India in January.



**Hon'ble Indian Minister of State for External Affairs
Mr. M.J. Akbar visited Syria in August.**



On 21 June Indian Embassy jointly with the Syrian authorities celebrated UN International Day of Yoga in the city of Lattakia with the gathering of 3000 people.





Over 100 Syrians got short long term scholarships in the reputed academic institutes of India. Together with the participation of the Syrian dignitaries and the past scholars an ITEC Day was celebrated in March 2016



The 8th BRICS summit held in India declared for peaceful resolution of the Syrian conflict taking into account the legitimate aspirations of the people of Syria and through a Syrian-led political process.

The work at Hama Steel Plant has been resumed by the Indian company and is expected to be completed soon. The work at Tishreen Power Project has been agreed to be resumed soon.

Renowned Syrian Actor/Director Sulaf Fawakherji's film Cherry Letters was awarded the best woman director award in the fifth Delhi International Film Festival.



The Syrian team 'Build it ' won second prize in World Robot Olympiad competition held in Delhi.

Hon'ble Minister, India is pained to see the endless suffering of the Syrian people since more than six years now. India has the unique distinction of not having attacked or raised a war on a foreign country during its long history.

India has always believed in peaceful resolution of conflicts through dialogue. Traditionally, in the affairs of the others- India philosophises a non-prescriptive and a non-judgmental approach.

Accordingly, India has always advocated for a peaceful resolution of the Syrian conflict by the Syrians themselves because only Syrians themselves are the best judge of their affairs. Based on these lines, India welcomes the Astana negotiations and hopes that such efforts will bring positive outcomes.

I end-up here praying for an early end to the suffering of the Syrian brothers and sisters.

