

# Independence Day

Gothenburg  
15 August 2023

## Remarks

Ambassador Tanmaya Lal

- Namaskar
- **Greetings** to all of you on the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of India's Independence Day
- Good to see the **Maharashtra Mandal Gothenburg** organising a special event to mark this occasion.
- India is a **nation rooted in one of the oldest civilizations** and is defined by its **democracy** and **great diversity** among its people who represent **one sixth of the entire humanity**.
- There is a **fundamental unity** despite our megadiversity of languages, ethnicities, cultures and faiths many of whom have their origins in India.
- From **Yoga** and **Ayurveda** to concept of **Zero** to advances in **mathematics, calculus, astronomy, metallurgy, surgery, ship building** to **urban planning, water harvesting** and remarkable **architecture, Indian civilization is known for its remarkable achievements**.
- Indian **cultural imprint** is visible in a number of countries in our region.
- India was among the two **leading global economies not so long ago**. The **colonial phase** disrupted societal and economic structures.
- Independence was won after a **long hard, largely non-violent peoples' struggle**. But freedom came at a huge cost. A **traumatic partition and massive forced migration**. As an independent nation, India started from a very difficult situation.
- We have come a **long way** since our independence.
- And now as we have entered **Amrit Kaal**, the pace of change is **exponential**.
- Despite global headwinds, India has emerged as the **fifth largest economy** and the **fastest growing** large economy of the world. It is estimated that as much as

14% of global growth in the next five years will come from India. India is on way to becoming third largest global economy in absolute terms.

- The **scale and speed of transformation** that is underway in India - in **Digital** sphere, in **Green** transition, **manufacturing** and **infrastructure** - offer unprecedented opportunities of collaboration with our partners.
- India's **talent pool** is also **unmatched** in its importance for global economy.
- India's **role and capabilities** in collectively addressing **global challenges** whether it is climate change or global health or peace & security are also growing significantly.
- This is a **special year** for India Sweden partnership as we celebrate **75 years of our diplomatic relations**.
- **This year is special for both our countries also in the context of their international responsibilities** at a **time of serious global challenges**.
- India holds the Presidency of G20 and we **compliment Sweden on a substantive EU presidency**, which had several **significant initiatives** where **India** was also actively involved.
- One of the highlights of Sweden's EU Presidency was the **EU-Indo Pacific Ministerial meeting** in May in Stockholm where External Affairs Minister Dr. Jaishankar was a keynote speaker.
- Another very significant development has been the first ministerial meeting of the **India-EU Trade and Technology Council** during Swedish presidency. This brings India and EU closer as trusted technology partners.
- Sweden has also continued to support an early finalization of the **India EU Trade and Investment Agreements**.
- Over the last nine months or so, there have been **nearly 10 ministerial engagements** between our countries.
- **Ministerial delegations from the states of Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu** have had good visits to Sweden exploring investment and technology linkages. High-profile **business delegations** have been exchanged.
- Sweden's Deputy Prime Minister alongwith our Minister for Science & Technology addressed the **India Sweden Innovation Day**. We had a substantive **Engaging India** seminar **at Almedalen**.

- Minister for Foreign Trade attended our **Republic Day** celebrations. Minister of Infrastructure attended the celebrations to mark 20 years of **Sweden India Business Council**.
- Yoga enthusiasts celebrated **International Yoga Day** across Sweden.
- Last September **Namaste Stockholm** festival drew thousands of visitors.
- And in Gothenburg, Indian groups dazzled **Gothenburg Kulturkalas** marking 400 years of the city.
- **Gothenburg**, of course, has very vibrant connections with India. Building upon the long legacy when Swedish ships sailed to explore trade with India and beyond nearly 300 years ago.
- **It is great to see Indians doing well in Sweden.** In the past one year alone we have seen several Indians making mark in Sweden. To refer just a few :
- **In Gothenburg, Prof Madhav Marathe** from University of Virginia was awarded an **Honorary Doctorate by Chalmer's University** this February.
- Also in Gothenburg, the **Hasselblad award for Photography** was awarded to **Ms. Dayanita Singh** from India last October.
- **Prof Rishikesh Bhalerao** from Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Umeå has been elected as **Member of the European Molecular Biology Organisation** last month.
- And a young scholar **Mr. Kunal Deoskar** whose **Warli art design** now adorns a student housing complex approach in Stockholm.
- An interesting initiative has been the publication of a children's book- **Farmors och Mormors Sagor** - that introduces timeless Indian fables in Swedish language. Complements to **Ms. Ujjwala Andersson Chaphalkar**.
- There are many other examples also.
- We are proud to see the **contribution of Indian Diaspora** to the Swedish economy, science, culture and society.
- In May we were happy to welcome representatives from Maharashtra Mandal Gothenburg to the interaction with Hon. External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar in Stockholm.
- **You all are ambassadors for India.** Your contributions and friendships are the bedrock of **India Sweden Sambandh**.

- Once again greetings on Independence Day and may we all continue to work for strengthening of India Sweden friendship.

Jai Hind

Thank You