

India thanks the world for its support in ICJ

Court of the world: Peace Palace, the headquarters of the ICJ, in The Hague. AP

India on Tuesday thanked UN members for supporting the re-election of its judge to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and said the process reflected respect for its constitutional integrity and independent judiciary.

In the official press statement following Judge Dalveer Bhandari's return to the ICJ at The Hague, the Government of India expressed appreciation for the U.K. that chose to withdraw its candidate at the last moment, even as officials highlighted that the diplomatic campaign that backed the victory was "unprecedented".

Independent judiciary

"The UN Security Council and the General Assembly voted overwhelmingly in support of India. Judge Dalveer Bhandari received all 15 votes in the UN Security Council and 183 out of the 193 votes in the UN General Assembly. The extraordinary support from the UN membership is reflective of the respect for strong constitutional integrity of the Indian polity and independence of the judiciary in India," said the Government of India in a press release.

Earlier Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the diplomatic team headed by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, who had campaigned for the re-election of Judge Bhandari to fill the fifth vacancy for the 2018-2027 term.

"Congratulations to External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her entire team at the Ministry of External Affairs and diplomatic missions for their untiring efforts that have led to India's re-election to ICJ. Our gratitude to all the members of UN General Assembly as well as UN Security Council for their support and trust," Mr Modi said on Twitter.

He also congratulated Judge Bhandari. "His election is a proud moment for us," Mr Modi remarked.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj used the social media platform and said, "Vande Mataram — India wins election to the International Court of Justice — Jai Hind."

Official sources said the entire election process indicated the Indian diplomatic team's ability to mobilise UN members at short notice.

The Indian National Group to the Permanent Court of Arbitration had re-nominated Judge Bhandari as India's candidate in June 2017. *The Hindu* had reported that the election had become a contest between Judge Bhandari and the U.K.'s Christopher Greenwood.

To be appointed at the ICJ, the candidate would have required a majority in both the General Assembly and the Security Council of the UN.

Jadhav case

The re-election is also crucial as it ensures India's continued influence at the ICJ where the Kulbhushan Jadhav case against Pakistan will come up next month.

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