

PRESIDENT OF INDIA ADDRESSES NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF VIETNAM; LEADS DELEGATION-LEVEL TALKS; SAYS VIETNAM IS PIVOTAL TO INDIA'S "ACT EAST" POLICY

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President's Secretariat

President of India addresses National Assembly of Vietnam; leads delegation-level talks; says Vietnam is pivotal to India's "Act East" policy

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The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, addressed the National Assembly of Vietnam today (November 20, 2018) in Hanoi, on the final day of his visit to Vietnam. He also held bilateral meetings with the President of Vietnam as well as led delegation-level talks. On the occasion, the two countries signed and exchanged four agreements:

- An agreement between the Ministry of Information and Communications of Vietnam and the Ministry of Communications of India
- An agreement of cooperation between the Department of Foreign Affairs of Provinces, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vietnam, and the Indian Business Chamber in Vietnam
- An academic agreement between the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, Hanoi, and the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
- An agreement between the Confederation of Indian Industry and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Addressing members of the National Assembly this morning, President Kovind noted that Vietnam is the first ASEAN and Southeast Asian country he is visiting in his capacity as President of India. Vietnam is always on our minds, he said, and always in our hearts. It is pivotal to India's "Act East" policy. The President emphasised that India's association with Vietnam has many aspects. We have robust business, political and people-to-people bonds. We are both stakeholders in the commerce, security and stability of the Indo-Pacific Region.

The President said that India offers a cooperation model that does not require its friends to make choices but rather expands choices and expands opportunities for all; that opens not one but many roads. India has consistently supported ASEAN's unity and centrality and ASEAN-led mechanisms for regional security and economic architecture – to promote peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific Region.

The President said that the ocean system is a resource for Vietnam and India and for many other countries and communities. Vietnam and India share a vision for the Indo-Pacific Region, of which the South China Sea is a critical component. We share a vision of a rules-based order that respects sovereignty and territorial integrity, ensures freedom of navigation and over-flight, as well as unimpeded, lawful commerce.

The President said that India looks forward to enhanced bilateral cooperation in the maritime domain – for instance, through our first Bilateral Maritime Security Dialogue to be hosted by Vietnam in early 2019. Maritime security, piracy, and drug trafficking using the oceans are issues of common concern. “I am confident,” President Kovind said, “that the programme of regular and friendly visits to each other’s ports by naval and coast guard ships from our countries will upgrade cooperation.”

In a separate engagement this morning, the President paid his respects at the monument of National Heroes and Martyrs as well as at the Mausoleum of Ho Chi Minh. Later, he visited the Presidential Palace, where he was received by President Nguyen Phu Trong and accorded a ceremonial welcome.

During the subsequent discussions with President Nguyen Phu Trong, the President thanked him for his gracious hospitality. The President said that he had a memorable visit to Da Nang yesterday. The Cham temples are a fascinating aspect of our shared heritage. Subsequently, the President led the Indian side in delegation-level talks. He said Indian investors are keen to strengthen their presence in Vietnam. India seeks Vietnam’s support in facilitating Indian investments in sectors like renewable energy, infrastructure, agriculture, textiles, pharmaceuticals, and oil and gas. India also looks forward to cooperation with Vietnam in improving agricultural productivity.

The President issued a media statement on his visit to Vietnam.

Later this afternoon, the President will have a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of Vietnam, Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc. This will be followed soon after by a banquet hosted in honour of the President of India by the President of Vietnam, Mr Nguyen Phu Trong. Thereafter, President Kovind will emplane for Sydney, Australia – on the final leg of his two-nation visit to Vietnam and Australia.

[Click here to access President's address at the National Assembly of Vietnam](#)

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