

## HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA IN NAMIBIA

भारतीय राजदूतावास, विंडहोक, नामीबिया



सत्यमेव जयते

JULY 2019

### VISIT OF PRESIDENT OF INDIA TO BENIN, THE GAMBIA AND GUINEA (JULY 28 -AUGUST 3, 2019)

President of India, Mr. Ram Nath Kovind, paid a State Visit to Benin, The Gambia and Guinea during July 28-August 3, 2019. This was the first ever visit of Head of State or Head of Government of India to all the three countries. The President was accompanied by Mr. Pratap Chandra Sarangi, Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises/ Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries and Member of Parliament Mr. Dilip Ghosh.

During the visit in Benin, President Kovind held talks with President of Benin Mr. Patrice Talon in Cotonou, Benin. He travelled to Porto Novo, the seat of Beninese Parliament. In a special honour extended to India by Benin, President Kovind addressed the National Assembly in Porto Novo. President Kovind also met members of the Indian Community.



Also during the visit, India and Benin signed the following MoUs / Agreements: Cultural Exchange Programme between India and Beni, MoU on Telemedicine & Tele-education (e-VidhyaBharati / e-ArogyaBharati Network Project).

Agreement on Mutual Exemption from Visa requirement for holders of Diplomatic, Official / Service Passports, and MoU on cooperation in the field of Export Credit and Investment Insurance.

President Kovind announced a soft Line of Credit of USD 100 million to Benin for its national priority projects. President Kovind also announced that a special ITEC course in English proficiency and a special Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats from Benin.

During the visit to The Gambia, President Kovind held delegation talks with President of The Gambia, Mr. Adama Barrow in capital Banjul. As a special gesture, the National Assembly, which was in recess, held a special session for the address of President Kovind. The other elements of the visit included inauguration of exhibitions on Mahatma Gandhi and Khadi, and Indian community reception.



A Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy was signed during the visit.



During the visit to Guinea, President Kovind was received by President of the Republic of Guinea, Prof. Alpha Conde in Conakry. President Kovind held delegation level talks with President of Guinea.



Also during the visit, the following three Memorandum of Understanding [MoUs] were signed in presence of the two Presidents:

(i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Guinea and the Government of India on Cooperation in the Field of Traditional System of Medicine and Homeopathy.

(ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Guinea and the Telecommunications Consultants India Limited [TCIL] for Participation in the e-VBAB Network Project [Technology Upgradation of Pan Africa e-Network Project].

(ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Guinea and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the Field of Renewable Energy.

President Kovind also announced a new Line of Credit of US\$ 170 million for Water Supply Project of Metropolitan city of Conakry.

Other elements of the programme included attending State banquet and interaction with the Indian community.



President's visit to Benin, The Gambia and Guinea, was his fourth visit to the African Continent. The visit of President Kovind further deepen India relations with the African nations.

## FARM SHALOM – AN INDIAN-OWNED FARM THRIVES IN THE NAMIB DESERT

New Era, a Namibian Newspaper, recently reported how a farming project has successfully harnessing India-Namibia partnership in agriculture to bring innovative farming techniques and produce a bounty of fresh flowers, fruits and vegetables in the middle of desert.



The stretch of land east of Swakopmund is vast, extremely arid and it appears lifeless but in the Namib Desert where one would not have expected an agronomic venture is where Farm Shalom thrives, growing a variety of veggies such as peppers, spinach and different types of flowers.

Namibia is the driest sub-Saharan country and is the most severely affected by climate change, with rising temperatures, rainfall variability and severe flooding but AvaGro grows flowers and vegetables on a commercial basis in the Namib Desert.

According to Mr. Ranjit Patil, the head of agronomist at AvaGro, the eight-hectare Shalom farm is located 10 kilometres outside of Swakopmund on the banks of the Swakop River. It has 27 greenhouses where they grow cucumbers, peppers and tomatoes.



On the piece of land turned into farmland in the oldest desert in the world, Patil and his team, the majority of whom are Namibians employed as salaried workers, also grow roses and gerberas, beetroot, eggplant, herbs and spinach “using open field cultivation.”

They use high tech agriculture as climate change threatens traditional farming methods. The high-tech agriculture methods are tried and tested in India and they are replicating success here in Namibia.



This involves setting up greenhouses to create a controlled environment and use of hydroponic methods like the growing media, cocopeat. Cocopeat has high water holding capacity, is heat stabilising and has high levels of porosity, which makes it ideal for farming in challenging environmental conditions,” narrated the head agronomist who holds a Master’s degree in agriculture.

The Indian company bought the plot in 2015 and set up its first greenhouses in 2016 and 97 percent of its staff compliment of 30 employees are Namibian creating much-needed jobs for locals. Productive-wise, the farm harvests six tonnes of tomatoes, three tonnes of peppers and 10,000 pieces of cucumber per greenhouse (350 square metre) per season (comprising six months). They have two seasons per year and harvest on a regular basis.



The farm work with smallholder farmers, agripreneurs and established medium and large-scale cultivators to develop bespoke production plans to advance food sovereignty.

In terms of market access, they have off-take agreements with local wholesalers and retailers. Shalom Farm is contributing to the shift from traditional farming to precision agriculture. This involves applying efficient water-use systems, augmenting the soil and using hydroponic mediums to grow crops.

At Shalom agronomists are showing what is possible with the right mix of determination, technology and skills. If sustainable agriculture can be fostered in the desert, where constraints – water, soil and climate – are amplified it can be done anywhere.

### **ICCR AND ITEC SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS 2019 FROM NAMIBIA MET HOC**

ICCR and ITEC scholarship holders 2019 from Namibia who travelled to India for study courses at various Indian institutes/universities, visited the High Commission and interacted with Head of Chancery Vipul Bawa.



This was one batch of ITEC and ICCR. For ITEC, there are many more slots that remained to be utilized throughout the year. To apply, visit [www.itecgoi.in](http://www.itecgoi.in).

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

**India is the world's 7<sup>th</sup> largest country by area and the 2<sup>nd</sup> most populous country in the world with more than 1.3 billion residents.**





The 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of Global Exhibition on Services (GES) 2019, which was earlier scheduled to be held from September 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 has been rescheduled to September 12-14, 2019 at the same venue i.e., Palace Grounds, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India. The event will host exhibitions, focused knowledge sessions and a large number of B2B, B2G and B2C meetings. A robust participation from Indian State Governments and Union Territories is also expected. Potential participants from Namibia including Industry associations, Chambers of commerce are encouraged to attend the event. The buyer's nomination will be purely on first come first served basis. Selected buyers will get return economic class air fare and hotel accommodation. The last date of registration for "Foreign Buyers" is August 20, 2019. The buyers may register online at website [www.gesindia.in](http://www.gesindia.in) with a copy to the email address: [hoc.windhoek@mea.gov.in](mailto:hoc.windhoek@mea.gov.in) and [comm.windhoek@mea.gov.in](mailto:comm.windhoek@mea.gov.in). For further information, Ms. Nidhi Kapoor, Deputy Director, CII can be contacted at email: [nidhi.kapoor@cii.in](mailto:nidhi.kapoor@cii.in), or Mr. J. Shankar, General Manager-CII at email: [J.shankar@cii.in](mailto:J.shankar@cii.in), or Ms. Jyoti Kaur, Deputy Director General, SEPC at email: [ddg.sepc@gmail.com](mailto:ddg.sepc@gmail.com).



The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is organizing the first edition of the ASIA HEALTH 2019 from October 16-19, 2019 in New Delhi. ASIA HEALTH 2019 is envisaged as a unique health platform converging multiple stake holders in the Health eco-system to deliberate and discuss the future of Health. It will look to develop a cohesive industry engagement with core cross sectoral policy dialogues and strategic exchanges enabled through high profile plenary sessions, focused capacity building workshops, bespoke B2Bs, Industry delegations, disruptor talks as well as an exhibition of the latest technologies disrupting the sector. Potential participants in the health sector in Namibia are encouraged to participate in ASIA HEALTH 2019. For further information, Ms. Elizabeth Jose, Deputy Director, CII can be contacted at email: [Elizabeth.jose@cii.in](mailto:Elizabeth.jose@cii.in), or Ms. Aakangshita Dutta, Deputy Director-CII at email: [aakangshita@cii.in](mailto:aakangshita@cii.in), or visit CII website at [www.cii.in](http://www.cii.in).

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