

## **MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA ON HIS STATE VISIT TO THE GAMBIA**

**Banjul, July 31, 2019**

1. Today is a historic day in The Gambia-India relations. It is an honour for me to be paying the first ever State Visit from India to The Gambia. I am grateful to President Barrow and the people of The Gambia for their exceptional warmth and hospitality. I was greeted with fraternal embrace and affection by the people of The Gambia on my arrival yesterday.
2. India and The Gambia share longstanding warm and friendly relations. As two Anglophone democracies, today, we are both members of the Commonwealth of Nations. I look forward to addressing the Special Session of the Gambian National Assembly later today. I thank my hosts for this very special gesture.
3. I had fruitful discussions with President Barrow. I felicitated him on his determination to foster greater democracy and inclusive growth in The Gambia, and for the steps he is taking towards stability and nation building. We reviewed the entire spectrum of our bilateral relations and discussed regional and global issues of mutual interest.
4. I conveyed India's deep commitment to enhance its traditional ties with The Gambia and contribute to its development. We agreed that we should expand our partnership in the spirit of South-South cooperation for the progress, prosperity and development of our peoples. I also took the opportunity to convey the recent transformation in India-Africa relations. As President of India, after my three-nation trip to West Africa, I would complete State Visits to 10 African countries in just over two years.

5. To further our bilateral agenda, today we signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy. As two ancient societies, both our countries have much to offer to the world from the fields of Ayurveda and other forms of traditional health practices. We received the instrument of ratification of the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement from The Gambia. This will open up new opportunities of collaboration between the two countries on solar energy and help in combating climate change. To take it forward, we are keen to implement a grant based solar project in select villages in The Gambia.
6. We are aware that The Gambia is keen to achieve good governance, accountability, social cohesion, national reconciliation and a revitalized and transformed economy under its National Development Plan 2018-21. I am pleased to inform you that during our discussions we have identified specific areas of cooperation. We have decided to extend assistance of half-a-million US dollars in support of skill development and cottage industry project. We also agreed to offer training in the fields of judiciary, police, administration and technical expertise, as per the request and in line with the priorities of the Gambian side.
7. On global issues, I thanked President Barrow for supporting India's candidature in various international and for our permanent membership of the UN Security Council. We also agreed to work in close coordination at the United Nations to strengthen the global fight against terrorism.
8. I also conveyed my deep appreciation for the support given by the Gambian government to the Indian community in the country. President Barrow acknowledged the positive role played by them for the progress and prosperity of The Gambia.
9. India remains committed to partner The Gambia in its

progress and prosperity. We look forward to our continued friendship and ever-growing partnership based on mutual trust and confidence. I have invited President Barrow to pay a visit to India. I once again thank him for his warmth and gracious hospitality.

Thank you! Jarangen Jef!