

Remarks by Amb Sibi George at the Aatmanirbhar Bharat event in Kuwait,

Sept 11, 2020

Good Afternoon,

Hon'ble Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hon'ble Shri Dharmendra Pradhan Sir, President and other Office Bearers of the Bharathiya Pravasi Parishad in Kuwait, Distinguished Guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I am so happy to join this important meeting today. I am so happy to welcome Hon'ble Minister within a month of my arrival in Kuwait. I recall welcoming Hon'ble Minister to Switzerland in 2018 for the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos. Thank you sir for joining us today as Chief Guest and deliver this key note address on this very important topic of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. Your presence here is reflective of the importance that Government of India attaches to Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.

While each of the countries in the world fight their battle against COVID 19, both nationally and internationally, we also continue with our economic engagement for the benefit of all. India has faced the COVID-19 situation with fortitude and a spirit of self-reliance. To overcome these testing times, Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi came up with Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (Self-reliant India) that promotes local economy, while closely working with our international partners.

Let me quote Hon'ble Prime Minister who said, "1.3 billion Indians have embarked on one mission - to make an 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' or self-reliant India. 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' merges the local with the global. It ensures India's strengths act as a global force multiplier. Time and again, India has shown that our goal is global good. Despite our large local needs, we did not shy away from our global responsibility. The responsibility of being the world's leading producer of generic medicines. We ensured constant supplies to the world. We are also at the forefront of research on the vaccine for Covid-19. A self-reliant and peaceful India ensures a better world. 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' is about transforming India from being just a passive market to an active manufacturing hub at the heart of global value chains." Unquote.

Sir, we always consider Kuwait and countries in the Gulf region as partners in our economic transformation. Kuwait is a very important country in our extended

neighborhood. Both India and Kuwait are having an excellent relationship, stretching back to several decades. The leadership of the two countries are in regular contacts giving us clear guidance and roadmap to strengthen our partnership at all levels. In April this year our Prime Minister held a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister of Kuwait. Our Foreign Ministers are in regular contact. In fact, India – Kuwait relationship is a partnership not only between governments and officials, it is a partnership involving several stakeholders; business establishments, industry and commercial chambers, investment boards, industry groups, factories, universities, science and technology establishments, academicians, scholars, students, innovation and research organizations, and importantly our Indian community with its most vibrant people to people contacts. I would like to call our relationship a Longstanding Dynamic Partnership.

The two countries are among each other's major trading partners. Geographic proximity, historical trade links, cultural affinities, people to people connect and growing cooperation in key areas of mutual interest, including energy security, trade and investment, infrastructure development projects, petrochemicals and education continue to strengthen and broaden our longstanding partnership. There are other crucial areas, apart from trade and investment such as security, maritime lanes, anti-terrorism, defence, science and technology. Some of the areas of mutual interest include information and communication technology, biotechnology, small and medium enterprises entrepreneurship, alternative energy sources. In fact, there are so many key sectors that India and Kuwait can cooperate and partner for the economic prosperity of the people of our two countries. There is huge potential in developing our mutually beneficial partnership.

Today's Aatma Nirbhar Bharat event initiated by Bharathiya Pravasi Parishad is an important step in building that partnership.

Sir, I am happy to report that the Embassy has launched a series of events under the banner Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.

I once again thank Hon'ble Minister for his presence and look forward to hearing his address.

Thank you Sir, thank you all.