

**Transcript of Remarks by Sh Sibi George, Ambassador of India to Kuwait,
at the State Facilitation Event: Destination North East - Kuwait, Dec 09,
2020**

Esteemed Panel Speakers for the Event,
Businessmen from the Northern East States of India, and Kuwait,
Distinguished Guests from the Media Community in Kuwait,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Evening to all of you,

It gives me a great pleasure to address you all today and welcome you all to today's event, which is part of a special series of events that the Embassy is organizing to promote various States of India. The Embassy has also been organizing a series of events under the theme 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India)'.

Today's event will showcase the North Eastern States of India, which are not only known for their natural beauty but are also the growth engine of the future for India. The region is a gateway to our ancient cultural relationships with East and South East Asia. The States of North East are also central to two of the fundamental pillars of Government of India's policies - Neighbourhood First and Act East. A powerhouse of talent, be it in the traditional handicrafts to the cutting edge fields in the services sector, the young men and women from the states of the North East have and are continuing to make their mark across the world.

I have a personal connect with the North East. I began my career in Meghalaya as Assistant Commissioner of the District of Shillong. It is there that I spent considerable time learning about State administration. Secondly, my first best friend in Foreign Service was from Nagaland, Shri Himato Zhimomi, who is joining us today from Kohima.

Dear Friends,

Growth and prosperity of North East of India is key to building a Self-Reliant India. I am delighted to share that almost every one of the eight north-eastern states in India is growing in double digits with further enormous

potential to expand in various diverse areas including organic food and renewable energy. I am sure that this region will play a crucial role in fulfilling India's target of becoming a \$5 tn economy by 2024.

To unlock the potential of the region and ignite the entrepreneurial spirit, Government of India, through its "Act East, Act Fast" policy has put in place an effective mechanism for accelerated development. Be it the cluster-based approach for development of agro-industrial hubs, organic farming or development of the immense tourism potential through connectivity projects or the massive investments in building social and physical infrastructure in the region, sustained efforts are being made by the Government to increase the growth and development of the region.

These efforts are also aimed at improving the ease of doing business through active investment promotion which will, in turn, revitalize the demand and supply chains to unlock newer business opportunities. In this context, I quote Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi who said, "Rich natural resources combined with the talent of our youth gives our northeast the potential to play a key role in our development journey. India will not develop until the northeast develops". Unquote.

We have an impressive line-up of speakers from the North Eastern States of India who will deliver detailed presentations, covering among other things, on various aspects of the region, the latest economic developments, overview of various industries, state of business environment and ease of doing business, latest initiatives offered and potential opportunities for further enhancement of trade and investments linkages.

India and Kuwait share historical, age old, close bilateral relations which are strongly anchored in civilizational linkages and nurtured by vibrant people-to-people contacts. Trade and commerce has been an important pillar of this multifaceted relationship; India has consistently been among the top trading partners of Kuwait and Kuwait has been one of the top sources of India's energy supplies.

Indian brands are well known and the exceptional quality of Indian products are well acknowledged not only in the Kuwaiti market but also

across the globe. Indian companies have reasonable presence in the State of Kuwait. However, the full potential of the extremely close bilateral relationship remains to be realized.

This event is therefore an effort in the endeavour to strengthen the existing trade linkages between various states of India and Kuwait; provide a platform to businesses from these States to explore newer avenues for cooperation and to forge a special long term partnerships with businesses in Kuwait. I look forward to work closely with all of you to make this engagement and our subsequent engagements fruitful and provide a mutually beneficial platform.

Thank you.