

# **PRESIDENT OF INDIA IN THE HAGUE; MEETS PRIME MINISTER OF THE NETHERLANDS AS WELL AS PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND PRESIDENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Rashtrapati Bhavan : 06.04.2022**

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of his stay in the Netherlands (April 6, 2022), the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind visited The Hague where he met Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mr Mark Rutte; President of the Senate, Mr Jan Anthonie Bruijn; and President of the House of Representatives, Ms Vera Bergkamp.

During interaction with the Presidents of Senate and House of Representatives, the President said that he was happy to be in the Netherlands in this special year of 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between India and the Netherlands. Both our countries are vibrant parliamentary democracies with rich parliamentary culture and traditions. India is the world's largest democracy with strong tradition of debate and discussion. Netherlands is a natural democracy and is a strong voice in Europe.

The President said that parliamentary exchanges between our two countries would help in promoting mutual understanding and exchange of ideas. There is need of more regular exchanges among our two Parliaments. He said that India would be happy to receive visit by a parliamentary delegation from the Netherlands and a similar goodwill delegation could visit Netherlands at mutually convenient time.

Later, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands hosted the President over lunch. During one-to-one meeting with Prime Minister Rutte, the President congratulated him on his remarkable leadership and continuing fourth term in office. He said that it demonstrates the faith of people of Netherlands in his leadership. He noted that in the past 11 years, the Indo-Dutch bilateral relationship has gone from strength to strength.

Subsequently, in response to the opening remarks by the Prime Minister Rutte, the President thanked him for warm reception. He said that together with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he has provided a new impetus to the

bilateral cooperation. He expressed confidence that under his leadership our bilateral relations would achieve new heights.

The President said that India and the Netherlands are long-standing partners with historical ties of friendship and collaboration. In the 75 years of our diplomatic ties, we have worked together in wide-ranging areas of mutual interest. These include our cooperation in water, agriculture, healthcare, science and technology, urban development and smart cities. Our partnership has been both meaningful and impactful, contributing to improving lives of our people. He said that reflecting on these strengths of our two countries, he would like to call for a new-age partnership between India and the Netherlands. This can focus on three broad elements. First, we become knowledge and innovation partners with our people joining hands to undertake pioneering work in the fields of digital technology, artificial intelligence, semiconductors and fintech. Second, as two responsible members of the international community, we play a more proactive role in addressing common global challenges including climate change and adaptation. Third, India and the Netherlands as key partners in defence and security working for a stable global order.

The President said that our new-age partnership must act to combine the resources, expertise and knowledge with the skill to address contemporary challenges, add strategic direction to the cooperation, and maximize benefits for both countries. He said that India is a land of opportunities as well as aspirations. India offers growth in scale, ambition and results. We welcome the Netherlands to be part of our growth story. As home to one-fifth of the world's youth population, the needs and aspirations of the young Indians are critical to the future of India and the world at large.

Yesterday evening (April 5, 2022), the President attended a banquet hosted in his honour by King Willem and Queen Maxima at the Royal Palace in Amsterdam. Speaking on the occasion, the President thanked the King and Queen for their warm hospitality. He said that he was happy to be in the Netherlands, the land of tulips; the birthplace of famous painters, scholars and explorers; and a fulcrum of modern trade and commerce. As the saying goes, 'God made the world and the Dutch made the Netherlands'. The unique ability of the Dutch to plan and prepare for future challenges as reflected in your motto of 'Meten is Weten' is worthy of high praise.

The President said that the Netherlands is an important player in the Indo-Pacific and EU. As key advocates for a free and open Indo-Pacific, we share a common commitment to work for global peace, security and prosperity. The Netherlands can also play a pivotal role in strengthening India-EU ties in areas of connectivity, energy transition and trade & investment.

The President thanked the Netherlands for its solidarity with India during the COVID-19 pandemic. He said that our mutual support during the pandemic has highlighted the synergy in the area of healthcare and has shown that we can partner to develop and produce vaccines for the world.

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