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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

“Indian Diaspora are ambassadors of India's growth story”: Shri Kiren Rijiju

Group of 40 Indian Diaspora youth called on the MoS (Home)

New Delhi: December 8, 2018

A group of 40 Indian Diaspora youth called on the Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijiju here today. The participants from eight countries are in India as part of the 25-day visit under the 49th 'Know India Programme' (KIP), being organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with Andhra Pradesh Government.

Interacting with the participants, Shri Rijiju said the Indian Diaspora should act as ambassadors of India's growth story and spread the good word about their experience in India upon their return. “Government recognizes the importance of the Indian Diaspora and has a well laid down policy for engaging with the Diaspora community. Our Diaspora community has been an important partner in India's development. Over the course of your visit across India, you must have seen the development happening across the country,” he said.

Shri Rijiju said the government has instituted many revolutionary reforms for accelerating the development of the country that offer tremendous gainful opportunities to Diaspora. “Government of India has over the last four-and-a-half years launched several measures / programmes with scope of foreign/ NRI investment like Start-up India scheme, Make in India project along with significant reforms to improve Ease of Doing Business, Liberalization of FDI norms etc. The Government of India has given special focus on disinvestment strategy which offers significant scope of investment to NRIs,” he said.

Shri Rijiju encouraged the Indian Diaspora to avail of several schemes targeted towards the youth. “I invite the Indian origin youth to know more about scholarship programme GIAN (Global Initiative for Academic Network), VAJRA Faculty Scheme which aims to bring a strong international connect to the R&D ecosystem of India, Mission Shodh GANGA (Global Alliance for New Generation Acceleration), Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC) and Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC),” he said.

The KIP is an important initiative of Government of India with an aim to engage and make the young Indian Diaspora in the age group of 18 to 30 years feel a sense of connect with their motherland, to be motivated and inspired by transformational changes taking place in India and to give them an exposure to various aspects of contemporary India and its varied forms of art, heritage and culture.

“India is the only country which has an ocean named after it,” Shri Rijiju said. “India is a vast experience, - from the coast to the mountains and from the marshes and deserts to the mangrove forests. Find time and visit remote villages located at more than 15,000 feet high altitudes,” Shri Rijiju told the curious youth.

Shri Rijju said the next Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention is significantly being organized in the ancient Varanasi city next month. “We are adding components of the Kumbh Snan and Republic Day celebrations for the Diaspora. We are also inviting the KIP groups to participate in the PBD Convention 2019. We are also organizing a special Pravasi Teerth Yatra for the elderly Diaspora. I would urge you to tell your relatives participate in these programmes in great numbers,” he said.

In its aim to connect with the overseas community, the MEA in partnership with the State Government of Andhra Pradesh is organising the 49th KIP from 20th November to 14th December, 2018. Besides Andhra Pradesh and Delhi, the 25-day tour also takes them to Agra, while during their stay the group has interacted with senior functionaries in the Central & State Governments in order to have the first hand experience of the contemporary development in India. They are looking for the opportunities available for the Indian Diaspora youth in India and also for remaining connected with India.

Since 2004, the MEA has conducted 48 Editions of KIP with participation of 1,612 Overseas Indian youth. The participants are selected on the basis of nominations recommended by the Indian Missions/ Posts abroad. The participants are provided full hospitality in India with economy class return journey air ticket at a nominal contribution of 10% of the cost of air ticket.

There are 40 participants including 22 females in this edition of KIP from eight countries namely Fiji (11), Guyana (06), Myanmar (06), Netherlands (1) South Africa (06), Sri Lanka (01), Suriname (03), and Trinidad & Tobago (06).

BB/NK/PK/SS