

**75th Anniversary
Independence Day of India Celebrations**

Luleå
13 August 2022

**Remarks by Ambassador
Tanmaya Lal**

Dear Friends,

It is a privilege to greet you on this special occasion as India celebrates 75 years of Independence.

It is wonderful to see this enthusiasm in Luleå. A city that is at the forefront of cutting-edge global efforts on industry transition even as it celebrates 400 years of its heritage.

Friends,

This Festival of IndiaAt75, or the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, is a proud occasion to look back at our remarkable journey.

India became an independent nation after a long hard non-violent peoples' struggle. Freedom came at a huge cost. A traumatic partition and massive forced migration. We started from a very difficult situation.

However, a complete transformation is underway in India.

India is a nation rooted in one of the oldest civilizations and is defined by its democracy and great diversity among its people who represent one sixth of the entire humanity.

Several world faiths have their origin in India. There are more than 20 major languages. There is a bewildering variety of Indian cuisines, music, dance, art and cultural traditions. Yet there has always been a fundamental unity in this diversity.

India is sometimes referred to as a subcontinent. One of the world's 12 mega Biodiversity countries with six climate zones ranging from the tropical to Alpine. And a 7,500 km coastline.

Nearly 50 Indian cities have a population of more than one million each. Three Indian cities have more than 10 million each.

Despite the huge challenges of our colonial past, tremendous progress has been achieved.

According to IMF, India is the fastest growing large economy today - world's fifth largest economy with a GDP of nearly 3 trillion dollars. Our exports and FDI levels are now at record levels.

Last year, despite Covid, 44 Unicorns – Startups with more than 1 billion dollar valuation - came from India. Highest in the world.

Today India is the global leader in real time digital payments. Mobile data usage in India is the largest in the world.

Digital technology is scaling up development at speed.

According to World Bank, even during Covid19, extreme poverty has declined in India.

India produced indigenous Covid vaccine within 11 months. The world's first ever DNA based vaccine also came from India.

India has already administered more than 2 billion doses of Covid vaccines in 18 months' time!

India is the first nation whose spacecraft reached Mars orbit in its first attempt! Under a team of scientists and engineers led by women. A manned space mission is now being prepared.

India is moving ahead on a Deep Ocean Mission.

India today has research stations in Arctic, Antarctic and Himalaya, contributing to the global science & research.

Indian scientists are actively engaged in a series of global mega science projects -from thermonuclear reactor ITER to Thirty Meter Telescope TMT to Laser Gravitational Observatory LIGO.

India today manufactures supercomputers to fighter aircraft to aircraft carriers.

India is among the few nations who are delivering on transformational climate action, setting and achieving ambitious targets. Airports to Metros are now being run on solar power.

India today is also a big international development partner – building roads, dams, irrigation, metros, power transmission lines, schools, hospitals in a number of partner countries.

India is among the first responders for humanitarian emergencies in the Indian Ocean region.

Affordable vaccines and generic drugs made in India are lifeline in many developing countries.

At a time of disruption of food supply chains, India is providing food grains to people of a number of countries.

India is the largest contributor to UN Peacekeeping. The first ever All Women UN Police Peacekeeping team came from India.

All this transformation is being achieved within an inclusive democratic framework.

Whether it is climate change or global health or international peace & security, India is working closely with partner countries including Sweden.

India Sweden partnership continues to intensify.

Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson had their first meeting recently. Our Foreign Ministers have met on multiple occasions this year alone. Our Trade Ministers met recently. Our Environment Ministers co-chaired the Leadership Group on Industry Transition in Stockholm.

Next year as we mark 75 years of our diplomatic relations, India will take over G20 Presidency and Sweden will assume the Presidency of the EU.

H. E. Foreign Minister Ann Linde made a special mention of the contribution of Indian diaspora in Sweden earlier this year.

The Indians in Sweden are known for professionalism, hard work and dynamism. You are ambassadors also of India's diversity, heritage and the spirit to live in harmony.

My best wishes to all of you and our Swedish friends.

Jai Hind.

Long live India Sweden Friendship.