



For Immediate Release

ASEAN-India Expo & Forum: The New Connectivity for the Betterment and Growth of World Economy

Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha today (Aug 3, 2017) presided over the opening ceremony of “ASEAN-India Expo & Forum”, the landmark interregional event jointly participated by high-ranking executives in government and private sectors from ASEAN nations and India.

Organized by the Ministry of Commerce of Thailand in collaboration with various partners from both the public and private sectors, ASEAN-India Expo & Forum was set to leap for the mutual prosperity by strengthening the strategic partnership between the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and India, multiply trade and investment, strengthen tourism connectivity, and attract business and investment from outside the region. In the first of its kind in Bangkok, the event running from August 2 and 5, covers the entire area of Queen Sirikit National Convention Center.

The opening ceremony of ASEAN-India Expo & Forum: Strategic Economic Partnership & Connectivity took place this morning (August 3, 2017) at the Ballroom of Queen Sirikit National Convention Center. Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha officiated at the ceremony and gave the keynote speech while India’s Commerce and Industry Minister Mrs Nirmala Sitharaman, also gave opening remarks and participated in the round table discussion. Leading her executive team to greet all participants was Commerce Minister Mrs Apiradi Tantraporn who joined the same round table discussion

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Ministry of Commerce
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On the same day, the forum had a kickstart with a series of discussions on “Untapped Trade Potential” by Mr Rolf Dieter Daniel, president of EU-ASEAN Business Council; “ASEAN’s 50th Anniversary and Beyond” by Mr Le Luong Minh, the Secretary General of the ASEAN; “Trade and Investment Opportunities in AEC” by Commerce Minister Mrs. Apiradi Tantraporn; “Linkage between ‘Make in India’ and AEC” by Mrs Nirmala Sitharaman, India’s Minister of Commerce and Industry; “ASEAN-India as One Destination” by Mrs Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul, Thailand’s Minister of Tourism and Sports; “India’s Economic Policies and Strategies towards ASEAN” by Mr Amitabh Kant, CEO of the National Institution for Transforming India, and a special address on “The Direction of Digital Technology” by Mr Sandeep Chhabra, Wipro’s regional delivery head for ASEAN & Japan.

Other key speakers included Mr Sanan Angubolkul, Chairman of Thailand-India Business Council and President of Srithai Superware PCL; Mr Mark Kaufman from Ford ASEAN; Dr Arjit Ranade from Aditya Birla Group; Mr Robin Kwok from Airbnb, and Ms Shanti Shamdasani from DHL E-Commerce Asia-Pacific, among others.

In the opening keynote speech, the Prime Minister said: “The application and implementation of ASEAN’s and India’s potential for the achievement of mutual or shared prosperity need to be developed from the very foundation in five aspects: the development of digital government to facilitate, answer to the needs, and reduce the opportunity cost within the private sector; the development of innovation and technology by injecting R&D funds in the development of ecosystem, agriculture, and MSMEs; the development of human resources to deal with increasing challenges and opportunities in the modern age of the Internet of Things amidst the world’s volatile economic situation.”

ASEAN and India are both the essential parts of the world’s economy. If they can work together in harmony, it will generate a very powerful force of leverage, and it will be a very big market that can drive the world economy forward in an incredible speed. It will surely bring about a change in terms of both economy and society, the Prime Minister said.

Apart from brainstorming and information exchanging between national leaders from both ASEAN and India, the forum also featured a series of networking facilitation activities on the level of strategic partnership in One-on-One Meeting, Business Matching, and Young Entrepreneurs Networking activities. It can be said that the ASEAN-India Expo & Forum is truly the year’s

most important stage where ASEAN and India can connect to one another, join hands, and walk together to the goal of mutual growth and prosperity in every aspect.

The forum – comprising panel discussions, roundtable discussion, and special lectures – takes two days (August 3-4, 2017) at the Ballroom of Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, while the Expo – organised under the theme of “Creative and Digital” – also features a series of cultural performances and box office movies from both Thailand and India daily until August 5, 2017, at Plenary Hall, on the second floor of Hall C, and the Atrium.

ASEAN-India Expo & Forum was organised in celebration of the 25th anniversary of ASEAN-India official relations. It also coincides with the 70th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Thailand and India. Both the forum and the expo are open, free of admission charges, to businesspeople and the general public. For more information, please visit www.ASEAN-INDIAexpo.com.

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