



Prime Minister of Portugal calls on President

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His Excellency Mr. Antonio Costa, the Prime Minister of the Portuguese Republic called on President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee at Rashtrapati Bhavan today (January 7, 2017).

Welcoming the Portuguese Prime Minister to India, the President said India attaches great value to its historical bonds with Portugal spanning over 500 years. India and Portugal share core values of democracy, pluralism, multiculturalism and rule of law. The two countries built on many commonalities and have developed a broad programme of mutually beneficial co-operation.

The President said Prime Minister Antonio's visit takes place at a time when relations between India and Portugal are in an excellent state. In trade and investment, scientific research, education, culture and security, our success is substantial. There is much promise and potential for building on our friendship and strengthening our 21st century partnership. Both the countries seek to strengthen their collaboration in areas where they have synergies including defence, maritime cooperation and oceanography and partnerships in third countries. Trade and investment ties between India and Portugal have much scope for improvement. Bilateral trade is of the order of USD 700 million. It needs to be energised and the trade basket diversified. The President also praised the 70,000 strong Indian Diaspora in Portugal for playing an important role in strengthening India-Portugal relations.

The Portuguese Prime Minister reciprocated the President's sentiments and said he was honoured to pay a state visit to India as the first Portuguese Prime Minister of Indian origin. He said the two countries share history and common values. There is need to strengthen and modernize the United Nations. Therefore, Portugal supports the inclusion of countries like India in the UN Security Council. Only a strong UN can deal with challenges like terrorism, climate change etc. He said there is need to do much more than has been done in the past as far as bilateral relations concerned. Portugal is keen to strengthen relations with India.

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