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Rwanda: India Proclaims Rwanda Great Partner

By Peter Mugabo

The Vice president of India, Hamid Ansari who yesterday began three day visit to Rwanda said Rwanda and India are great friends over years.

While addressing the Indian community shortly after landing in Rwanda on February 19th 2017, the Vice-President stressed that both countries have been on friendly footing for many years, adding that his country is set to open a resident mission in the country to boost bilateral ties.

"We are great friends (India and Rwanda), and Rwanda has a good population of Indian community here... And, we have had a valid complaint of not having a resident mission in Kigali. So, I must tell you that the government has already taken up the matter and in coming weeks or months, we will have a physical presence of a resident mission here," Hamid Ansari said.

Rwanda is home to nearly 3000 Indians most importantly engaging in thriving trade and running a wide range of factories.

According to Rwanda Development Board (RDB), the bilateral trade grew to \$526 million between 2011 and 2015.

Between 2011 and 2016, investments from India to Rwanda saw an increase to 66 projects valued at \$317.5 million, which created over 3,800 jobs in telecommunication, hospitality and education areas.

The latest great investment from India to Rwanda was in March 2015 - construction of the \$108 million Nyabarongo hydro power plant which contributed 28 Megawatts to national grid. The power generation plant was built by India-owned Company Angelique International Ltd (AIL), after a bilateral agreement signed on July 8, 2008 between both countries.

The Indian Vice President together with his wife leads a delegation of nearly 30 high-level business and ICT community.

On his schedule, he will pay his respects to more than 250,000 Genocide victims decently buried at Gisozi memorial site on this Monday before attending the business forum and exhibition connecting ICT experts from Rwanda and India today set to take place at Kigali Convention Centre (KCC).

He will also hold closed-door talks with the President of Rwanda at Village Urugwiro today in the afternoon.

This official visit came hotly on heels of the Rwanda's President made to India towards the end of last month where he attended the economic summit "the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit" which bore fruit to numerous bilateral agreements including Rwanda Air trips to India got a seal of approval by Indian Government on February 16.

The national carrier (Rwanda Air) is set to begin direct flights four times a week to India starting April 3rd which will spur trade, investments, tourism and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

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