



Press Release

AIBC caps off eventful 2016; kicks off 2017 with business delegation to biennial Vibrant Gujarat Summit

First of its kind AIBC Women in Business delegation to travel to India in 2017 and AIBC to host official welcome for H.E. Gondane, new High Commissioner of India to Australia

20 January, 2017

Sydney, Australia – Australia India Business Council Ltd (AIBC), the peak body facilitating bi-lateral trade and investment between Australia and India, has capped off a successful year in enhancing the bilateral relationship, and revealed a packed calendar of events for 2017 beginning with the recently-concluded business delegation to the biennial Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2017, and continuing with an official welcome for H.E. Dr Shri Ajay M Gondane, new High Commissioner of India to Australia as well as the first-of-its-kind AIBC Women in Business delegation to India later this year.

During the Vibrant Gujarat Summit, the 30-strong AIBC delegation met with the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Vijaybhai R. Rupani, who expressed a keen interest in understanding the delegates' interests and assured attendees of the Gujarat Government's full support.

Commenting on the success of the delegation, AIBC National Vice Chair and delegation leader Dr Jim Varghese said, "The Australia India Business Council is proud to once again partner with Vibrant Gujarat for the biennial Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2017 as part of our commitment to providing our AIBC members with the best business opportunities to develop valuable partnerships with business, government, and industry in India. AIBC is honoured and grateful for the strong indication of support from Gujarat Government. This is a platform for businesses and influencers to come together to explore some of the current global opportunities."

Ms Sheba Nandkeolyar, National Chair, AIBC attended the Summit in her capacity as a Board member of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) Australia-India Council. Ms Nandkeolyar said, "Both India and Australia are more openly looking at this corridor of opportunities and I am certain Vibrant Gujarat is a great foundation to start. The Summit is indeed an amazing world platform to interact with key policy-makers, industry leaders, global thought leaders, regulators and renowned academicians from India, Australia and all over the world. This initiative is a valuable means to initiate and foster bilateral relationships between stakeholders through B2B and B2G meetings."



AIBC delegates' diverse business interests included education, skills development, mining, pharmaceuticals, fertilisers, toxicology, financial services, digital products and services, and manufacturing.

The AFR–AIBC National Conference on 'Engaging with India' was a highly successful AIBC event held in 2016, in which collaboration was seen between high-level stakeholders from the government, industry and business councils. The event promoted solutions for better engagement with India, and benefitted Australian and Indian interests. AIBC has a yearlong 2017 program planned with leading and hosting of bi-lateral business delegations and ministerial round tables, conferences and seminars on resources, mining, education, ICT among others, seminars on implications of India Budget, GST and Australian Financial End of Year updates. This is in addition to the Annual Addresses by every AIBC State Chapter planned in conjunction with Indian Independence Day - August 2017.

Ms Nandkeolyar said: "The New Year 2017 presents a number of opportunities for everyone involved. I am optimistic, and AIBC is planning even more events, delegations and chances for Indian and Australian relations to strengthen immensely. One such key event that AIBC will lead is the AIBC Women in Business Chapter delegation of women business leaders to India in 2017. The high-profile delegation of Indian and Australian women in the bilateral business and trade relationship will be the first of its kind."

"AIBC has active chapters in New South Wales, Victoria, Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland with a full range of State programs. AIBC National works closely with the Australian and Indian Governments at the Federal level, DFAT, the High Commissions of India and Australia and Austrade. The State Chapters are fully supportive of their respective State Governments and Consulate General of India offices for promoting bi-lateral business engagement with India," added Sheba Nandkeolyar AIBC National Chair.

New High Commissioner H.E. Dr Shri Ajay M Gondane will be welcomed by AIBC business leaders, at an event in Sydney with a high profile guest list of senior local, state and national government, business and community leaders in the Australia-India business community. Dr Gondane joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1985. He worked in various capacities in the Indian Embassies and Consulates including in Damascus, Baghdad, Vienna, Ankara and New York. He was High Commissioner of India to Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

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About Australia India Business Council:

As the pre-eminent business council in Australia, the AIBC is an innovative business advocacy organisation whose purpose is to promote bilateral trade and expand Australia-India commercial ties. AIBC provides its members with a forum to provide input into the policy and agenda for both countries, exchange business ideas, and provide networking opportunities through interaction across government and business groups. The AIBC maintains close relationships with federal and state government agencies, the diplomatic corps and industry bodies, and showcases opportunities to the Australian business community through an active program of events nationally. For further information, please visit: www.aibc.org.au

About Vibrant Gujarat:

Gujarat, India is recognised for its vibrancy and entrepreneurial spirit and is one of India's leading states in industry and commerce. The Government of Gujarat, India, as part of its journey towards sustainable long-term growth and inclusive development, this year focussed on the theme, 'Sustainable Economic and Social Development'. For further information, please visit: <https://vibrantgujarat.com/>