

**10th ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers' Meeting
[4-5 February, Yogyakarta, Indonesia]**

Opening Remarks by Ambassador

Mr. Chairman, Hon'ble Ministers, Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN, Excellencies, Friends and colleagues. Namaskar and Good afternoon to you all.

I am really privileged that my Minister has nominated me to represent him, as India's parliament is now in session and he was required to stay back home. At the same time, I am honoured and deeply appreciate the fact that Hon'ble Chair, the ASEAN Tourism Ministers and the ASEAN Secretariat accepted the proposal of me co-chairing the meeting.

At the outset, let me compliment Mr. Chair on Indonesia assuming chairmanship of ASEAN. Let me reiterate India's full support to Indonesia's chairmanship.

India became ASEAN's dialogue partners in 1992. The relationship between ASEAN and India evolved in stages. In 1997 India became full dialogue partner, in 2002 Summit level partner, in 2012 strategic partner and 2022 Comprehensive Strategic Partner. The Joint Statement issued on the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership identifies tourism as one of the areas for collaboration for deepening the relationship.

Let me also compliment Excellency, for drafting an excellent programme for the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2023. We thoroughly enjoyed visiting Pramanan Temple, address of Hon'ble Vice President and Your Excellency's mantra of work faster, work together and be inclusive. By the way, I with my colleague kept on appreciating theatrical performance of Ramayana which was shown to us yesterday and thanks for the same.

I must also compliment through you Excellency the Government of Republic of Indonesia for beginning the cycle of meetings with the tourism sector, as this is the best way to bring the peoples of the countries closer.

Mr. Chair, let me also thank you for your warm hospitality.

I once again thank all the distinguished Ministers and Heads of the delegation for your keen interest to develop and deepen two-way tourism between ASEAN and India.
