62 Years of Diplomacy: India and Mongolia Turning a new page in ties

By Srimal Fernando

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Sixty two years ago India was in the forefront among nations in South Asia in establishing diplomatic relations with Mongolia. The relations between the two nations have traditionally been close and cordial. India’s ties with Mongolia go back to thousands of years. India has been consistent in its support to the evolution of the bilateral ties where the current diplomacy is at multiple layers, and in fact the Indian economy shows a very robust and consistent growth. Expanding bilateral cooperation will be of great mutual benefit.

Making history Hon Shri Narendra Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to have travelled to Mongolia. Despite having six decades of diplomatic relations it is a matter of deep satisfaction that there has been a revival of the ties after Indian Prime Minister Modi’s visit to Ulan Bator in May 2015.

Bilateral trade and cooperation between the two nations greatly influenced both societies because the Strategic Partnership pact signed during the Indian premier’s visit granted an opportunity for India to extend a line of Credit worth $1 billion for infrastructure development.

In 2017 there was a strong political shift that influenced the Mongolian Presidential election. In such a situation Khaltmaagiin Battulga the charismatic leader with progressive policies had no problem in winning presidential elections. It was a good litmus test for the new Mongolian government under the leadership of President Battulga to pursue constructive foreign policy engagements with India.

Much headway could be made in this regard if both nations could diversify trade which can throw open a range of possibilities. Recently Indian Prime Minister Shri Modi met with the President of Mongolia, H.E Battulga on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. Striking a balance between these historical linkages can change the strategic partnership map in the coming years. The relations between the two nations are generally described as unique and Mongolia’s geographical position is another important driver of current bilateral destiny.
Nothing is more valuable than deepening people to people ties between Mongolia and India and there have been some really amazing success stories. In building lasting relationships another such story relates to releasing a book titled “President KH Battulga whom I Know” by Shri Rattan Lal Kataria Honorable Member of Parliament of India. The Embassy of Mongolia in India in association with Delhi Study Group President and former Member of the Legislative Assembly Shri Vijay Jolly organised the book launch at the Constitutional club in New Delhi. The book release was graced by Mongolian Ambassador to India H.E Gonchig Ganbold, Secretary of the National Security Council of Mongolia Mr A.Gansukh and Economic and Industrial Policy Advisor to the President Mr. Erdenebat Tseveendorj along with the top Indian dignitaries.

There are no doubts that these events highlight the significance of the strong people-to-people connections built over the years. Two years ago Mongolia and India completed sixty years of diplomatic relations and the future of these ties might very well enter an entirely new symbolic level of strategic partnership.

Srimal Fernando. Global editor of TheDiplomatic Society for South Africa and Research scholar at Jindal School of International Affairs (JSIA), India. He is also Editor for Modern Diplomacy in Europe