



Press Release

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PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

Speaker Farrugia receives Indian Vice-President Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu

Speaker of the House of Representatives Dr Anglu Farrugia received a courtesy call from Vice-President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu.

Speaker Farrugia referred to the cordial bilateral relations, which have existed diplomatically between Malta and India since 1965 and noted that the Indian community has been in Malta since the 19th century. He mentioned his visit to India in February 2007, when he led a delegation from the Standing Committee on Foreign and European Affairs and had meetings with various Indian Ministers. He recalled Mgr Ambrogio Buttigieg, Bishop and Apostolic Nuncio, the first known Maltese who visited India where he died in 1557.

Speaker Farrugia said that bilateral trade has grown considerably in the last years, although there is scope for improvement. In this regard, reference was made to the visit last March by Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion Carmelo Abela, who led a 26-strong business delegation to New Delhi and Mumbai.

Parliamentary cooperation also featured in the meeting, with Speaker Farrugia mentioning the support he received from Indian MPs when he was elected Chairperson of the Small Branches of the Commonwealth.

Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu replied by expressing his congratulations for Malta's Presidency of the Council of the European Union. He continued by elaborating on the parliamentary system existing in India and said that they too, like Malta, believe in parliamentary democracy. He added that India is expected to become the third economic power in the world and that it was moving towards transformation.

Speaker of the House of Representatives Anglu Farrugia, was accompanied by the Dr Edward Zammit Lewis, Chairperson of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee; Dr Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, Opposition Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion; Mr Ray Scicluna, Clerk of the House; Miss Eleanor Scerri, Director International Relations; Mr Ancel Farrugia Migneco, Personal Assistant to the Speaker, and Mr Giovanni Miceli, Adviser International Relations.

Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of India, was accompanied by Mr Shiv Pratap Shukla, Minister of State for Finance; Mr. Prasanna Acharya, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Indian Parliament); Ms. Vijila Sathyananth, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Indian Parliament); Ms. Saroj Pandey, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha (Upper House

Attachments: none

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of Indian Parliament); Mr. Rajeev Satav, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha (Lower House of Indian Parliament); Dr. I.V.S. Rao, Secretary to the Vice President, and Dr. D.M. Mulay, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.

Also present were Mr. Rajesh Vaishnaw, High Commissioner of India to Malta; Dr. (Ms.) Anju Kumar, Joint Secretary (CE), Ministry of External Affairs; Mr. Ashok Dewan, Joint Secretary to the Vice President; Dr. N. Yuvaraj, Private Secretary to the Vice President, and Mr. Vikrant Kanugonda, Sr. Private Secretary.