Beat: Business

PAKISTANI PRIME MINISTER PAID AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE STATE OF QATAR

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USPA NEWS - The Prime Minister of Pakistan paid an official visit to the State of Qatar on 10-11 February 2016, at the invitations of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, and His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al-Thani...

The Prime Minister of Pakistan paid an official visit to the State of Qatar on 10-11 February 2016, at the invitations of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, and Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Interior.

It would be recalled that the Emir of the State of Qatar had paid a landmark visit to Pakistan on 23-24 March 2015. This return visit by the Prime Minister, in a period of less than one year, is a testimony to the flourishing relations between the two brotherly countries.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising Finance Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman and Mr. Tariq Fatemi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Prime Minister and his delegation was warmly welcomed by His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Prime Minister at the airport. A Guard of Honour was presented to the Prime Minister on his arrival at the Diwan-e-Emiri. His Highness the Emir of Qatar who also hosted a state luncheon in honour of the Prime Minister and accompanying delegation.

The high-level delegation-level talks presided by the two leaders, was followed by one on one exchange between the Prime Minister and His Highness the Emir. The two leaders discussed various issues of bilateral interest, with a focus on building a mutually beneficial economic, commercial, trade and investment edifice. They also reaffirmed their resolve to make efforts to further intensify their bilateral cooperation.

During the visit, in addition to signing of MoUs on cooperation in the fields of Health, Radio and Television and in Academic Research, a landmark Agreement on Sale and Purchase of LNG was also inked between the two countries. Under this agreement, Qatar Liquified Gas Company Limited would sell Pakistan State Oil Company Limited, LNG for a period of 2016-2031. The import of LNG from Qatar, besides enhancing Pakistan-Qatar ties, would also help Pakistan meet its energy needs.

During the meeting with the Qatari Business Association, the Prime Minister encouraged Qatari investors to take advantage of the favorable environment for investment created in Pakistan and to consider investment opportunities in the energy, infrastructure, power generation and agriculture sectors. The Prime Minister also stressed that the security situation had improved to a remarkable degree, thanks to the counter-terrorism campaign underway for the past year and a half. The economic indicators have also shown an upward trend, making Pakistan a preferred investment destination for foreign investors.

The Qatari businessmen welcomed and deeply appreciated the Prime Minister's proposal for investing in Pakistan and expressed strong willingness to explore areas of trade and investment cooperation.

His Highness the Emir of Qatar praised the contribution made by the Pakistani expatriates to the development of Qatar. In appreciation of the admirable role being played by the Pakistanis and at the request of the Prime Minister, His Highness the Emir of Qatar conveyed his decision to increase the intake of Pakistani skilled and unskilled workforce by over hundred thousand.

The Prime Minister also congratulated Qatar for winning the bid for FIFA World Cup 2022 and said that hosting of the mega sport event would further raise Qatar's standing and profile in the international community.

While expressing their satisfaction at the level of defence relations between the two countries, both sides underscored the importance

of further enhancing their cooperation. The Pakistan Air force organised a spectacular demonstration of JF-Thunder and Super Mashaaq Trainer aircraft, which was witnessed by the Prime Ministers of both countries.

The Prime Minister also held productive meetings with CEO Qatar Investment Authority, CEO Qatar Airways and Members of the Royal Family. During these exchanges, various avenues were discussed to enhance Qatari investment in Pakistan.

In addition to extensive discussions on bilateral relations, the two sides also exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest. The leaders of the two countries agreed on the importance of peaceful resolution of all issues through a sustained dialogue process.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan, thanked his hosts for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to him and his delegation and extended an invitation to the Emir and the Prime Minister of Qatar to pay early visit to Pakistan. These invitations were graciously welcomed.

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