

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
AT THE BANQUET HOSTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CZECH
REPUBLIC**

Prague, September 7, 2018

1. I thank you, Mr President for your gracious words of welcome and warm hospitality. It gives me immense pleasure to visit your beautiful country and your majestic city - Prague draped in its ancient splendour. I am particularly touched by your friendship and goodwill.
2. Excellency, our relations are warm and friendly. Our two nations have also inherited a rich cultural past. I am grateful to you for giving a place of pride to our national poet Rabindranath Tagore in your city and in your hearts. On our part, we treasure the success of the Centre for Indology at the Charles University. It has done so much to foster our close and cordial ties.
3. Excellency, your visit to India in 2001, in your capacity as Prime Minister, provided much required impetus to our relations. Since then, our ties have grown from strength to strength. Today we have committed ourselves to further deepen our political, economic and cultural relations.
4. Our economic ties hold immense promise. The Indian growth story and Czech technology and manufacturing prowess make us natural partners. Let us work to make this collaboration grow and prosper.
5. Excellency, we have a very special connect with your country. The Bata shoe company was born here. But every Indian has grown up thinking it's their own and every Indian child has worn these shoes to school. As we work to strengthen our people-to people relations, surely we could not have asked for more.
6. On that happy note, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in raising a toast:

- To the health and happiness of the President of the Czech Republic and First Lady;
- And to an enduring and everlasting friendship between our peoples and our countries.

Thank you!