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PRESS RELEASE

Governments of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Republic of India, Sign MOU

The Governments of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Republic of India have entered into another formal agreement of cooperation between both countries. This development occurred at a brief signing ceremony of a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) that took place this morning, Wednesday 13th, November 2019 at Cabinet room.

Prime Minister Dr Hon Ralph E Gonsalves signed on behalf of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines while High Commissioner to Suriname, His Excellency Mahender Singh Kanyal, signed on behalf of the government of India.

This latest MOU is intended to focus on the implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIP) that are expected to improve the lives of Vincentian residents in local communities.

Speaking after the signing, High Commissioner Kanyal, commented on the relationship between both countries that he described as “warm and building” stating that we share common values including, respect for human rights, representative democracy, the English language and cricket as well as a shared history. His Excellency went on to mention a number of areas of cooperation that currently exists between India and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines that include, health and medicine, culture, Information Communication Technology as well as this country’s recent membership to the International Solar Alliance (ISA). He thanked Prime Minister Gonsalves for his regional leadership in promoting regional integration as well as the leadership provided internationally by this country as he referenced the role played by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the revitalisation of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) while serving as president.

In responding to the High Commissioner’s remarks, Dr Gonsalves thanked the government and people of India for their support to Saint Vincent and Grenadines, not just with the Quick Impact Projects, but throughout the years of diplomatic relations between both countries. The Prime Minister emphasised the very close working relationship that exists between India and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines at the United Nations and that India was one of this country’s biggest

supporter in the bid for a seat on the United Nations Security Council. In endorsing the comments of High Commissioner Kanyal, Dr Gonsalves noted that apart from this MOU that deals with small projects not exceeding EC\$50,000 and intended to have short gestation periods, there are other major areas of cooperation and funding offered by the Indian government. The Prime Minister referenced projects such as the US\$ 1 Million funded revitalisation project for the arrowroot industry, this country's involvement in the ISA and cooperation in the field of traditional medicine. Reference was also made of the credit line of USD 14 Million dollars offered to CARICOM by the Indian government to be used for renewable energy, infrastructural and other projects that align with governments priorities.

The Prime Minister reiterated his gratitude on behalf of the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for the support from the Indian government and especially for the collaborative work done with the local community of Vincentians of Indian descent that has allowed for significant growth in the relationship with that group. The High Commissioner who is accompanied by his wife, Mrs Kanyal, is expected to leave the state on Friday to return to Paramaribo, Suriname, where the High Commission office is based.

SOURCE: Office of the Prime Minister