

Ansari arrives in Kazakhstan

Indian Vice President Mohammad Hamid Ansari arrived here Sunday on the second and concluding leg of his week-long visit to the Central Asian republics of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

Senior officials of the Kazakhstan government received Ansari, who is accompanied by a high-level delegation that includes Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed and members of parliament Viplob Thakur, Vikay Kumar Rupani and N.N. Krishnadas.

This is Ansari's first visit abroad after assuming office last year.

Ansari will spend two days in this Kazakh capital during which he will meet President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Prime Minister Karim K. Massimov and Senate chairman Kasym-Jomar Kemelevich Tokaev.

He will address the Senate, as also the Academy of Public Administration.

Ansari flies to Almaty Tuesday evening where on Wednesday the Al-Farahi University will confer an honorary doctorate on him.

The vice president returns home Thursday afternoon.

Earlier Sunday, Ansari wound up his three-day visit to Kazakhstan with a visit to the ancient city of Merv, where he went around the World Heritage site that is home to monuments dating from the 11th to the 15th century.

'We Turkmen trace our roots from this place and we are very proud of this,' an official told the vice president.

India and Turkmenistan signed a landmark memorandum of understanding Saturday that will enable the two countries engage in the energy sector as part of New Delhi's long-term plans to ensure the country's energy security.

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