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Issues of terrorism and UN reforms key aspects of discussion in Nigeria & Mali: Vice President

Addresses Onboard Media

The Vice President of India, Shri M. Hamid Ansari has said that issues of terrorism, reforms in United Nations were key aspects of discussions during his visit to Nigeria and Mali. He was addressing the Media Onboard Air India One on his way back from the 5-day visit to Nigeria and Mali, today. The Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal was also present on the occasion.

The Vice President, terming Nigeria as the strongest economy in the region, said that it was not only India's biggest trading partner in the region, but that also India was its largest trading partner overall. He further said that India has an old and intensive training programme in the field of defence which continues and has great importance. A lot of IT professionals are also being trained in India, he added.

The Vice President said that the discussions in Nigeria were very productive and there were some new areas like renewable energy, solar alliance, infrastructure development, agriculture, manufacturing, health, science and technology identified for mutual cooperation. He further said that Nigeria had expressed great interest in India's successful Space Programme. Nigeria also showed interest in some assistance from India in peaceful usage of nuclear energy, he added.

Terming the Mali visit as the first of its kind at a senior level, the Vice President said that India was keen to work in the areas of human resource development and capacity building, a core item of their requirement from us. He further said that some new areas were identified like health sector, solar energy, and agriculture. Both have agreed for a joint commission meeting which is going to take place very soon, he added.

Responding to a question on recent surgical attacks across of LoC, the Vice President said that India could not be a recipient of terrorist attacks all the time and do nothing about it. He pointed out that there were some terrorist launch pads identified, and they were neutralized. Within the context of the visit, he said that terrorism was a key point of discussion with both countries and that both had been victims of very serious kind of terrorist activities, that which crossed international borders.

Responding to a question on the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), the Vice President said that its consensus based approach to decision making had rendered the decision ineffective and unable to solve even the problems within member states. Referring to the OIC as a club that had lost its relevance, he indicated that member nations in bilateral discussions had all condemned terrorism, recognizing that no one could condone it as everyone had become a victim.

KSD/BK