President Trump's Upcoming Visit to India: Some Thoughts

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1. Indians are welcoming President Trump with all the affection and warmth they accord to certain very special guests. According such spectacular welcome to special guests is ingrained in the Indian culture.

2. Prime Minister Modi has invited President Trump to Ahmedabad in his home state of Gujarat to kickstart or one can say inaugurate his visit to India. The invitation and its acceptance is a strong indication of the personal rapport and chemistry that the two leaders have built over the years.

3. Inaugurating new projects or new venues (the Cricket Stadium in Motera, Ahmedabad in this case) is considered very auspicious in Indian culture and is an honor given to very special guests, The fact that Prime Minister Modi on behalf of the Indian people has accorded this honor to President Trump and the fact that President Trump has accepted this honor augurs very auspicious for the bilateral relationship.

4. While many observers have been lamenting the absence of any substantive outcomes during the Presidential visit and seem to decry the optics behind it, let us not forget the deal for India to purchase six nuclear reactors from the American firm Westinghouse as well as the twin deals for India to purchase US helicopters are very huge deals running into several billion dollars that will be signed during the visit. If these are not tangible outcomes of the visit what else would they be?

5. Both President Trump and Prime Minister Modi espouse the 'national interests' of the US and India respectively. Building on the cooperation in defense and energy alluded to above (in point 4) and the collaboration witnessed in counter terrorism and in safeguarding the economic and military security of the Indo-Pacific, the two leaders have interlocked the interests of their respective nations in a mutually interdependent and symbiotic relationship of convergent interests and a shared bilateral vision.