

## **India, Myanmar and Thailand Friendship Motor Car Rally, 2016 Flagged-off**

The Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways, Shipping and Chemical Fertilizers Shri Mansukh Lal Mandaviya flagged off a Friendship Motor Car Rally from India Gate lawns in Delhi to Bangkok today. His Excellency Chalit Manityakul, Ambassador of Thailand was also present on the occasion. The objective of the rally is to improve connectivity by road in the South-East Asian region and to sensitize the stakeholders of India Myanmar and Thailand Motor Vehicle Agreement regarding potential benefits of such a regulatory regime.

While addressing the gathering, Shri Mandaviya said that this rally will also play an important role in developing the economic, transport and cultural relations between the three countries. He said that this rally will give a boost to the PM Narendra Modi's 'Act East Policy' and will improve our relationship with our neighbouring countries. A commemorative stamp for IMT Rally, 2016 was also released on the occasion.

The rally caravan will cover a distance of 5,722 KMs along the IMT Trilateral Highway with about 80 participants from all the three countries, in 20 Indian made vehicles on a journey from Delhi to Bangkok over 19 days. Ceremonial flag off will also be held in other cities and state capitals enroute like Sarnath, Bodhgaya, Patna, Siliguri, Guwahati, Shillong, Kohima and Imphal and Bagan and Yangoon in Myanmar and Bangkok in Thailand.

The rally that will conclude at Bangkok on 2nd December, 2016, will further cement cultural and economic ties among the three nations and highlight the potential benefits of connectivity and integration in the region and in keeping with India's focus on its close neighborhood.

The basic purpose of this rally would be to sensitize people about the fact that an all weather road , connecting New Delhi and Bangkok would soon be operational . With the opening of Trilateral highway, it would become a reality to travel from New Delhi to Bangkok by road.

A trial run of passenger vehicles on the IMT Trilateral Highway up to Naypitaw in Myanmar was carried out during 9-14 November, 2015 in which Indian vehicles travelled to Myanmar on Imphal -Mandalay - Bagan- Naypitaw route and back and Myanmar vehicles joined the Indian vehicles on the return journey from Naypitaw to Imphal and returning to Myanmar.

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(Release ID :153580)