

Home | National | 10th edition of Delhi Dialogue begins in New Delhi

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### **The 10th edition of the Delhi Dialogue gets underway in New Delhi today.**

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj today said that India has been working with ASEAN towards evolving a regional security architecture which is focused on ASEAN's centrality.

Delivering the key-note address of the 10th edition of Delhi Dialogue in New Delhi the External Affairs Minister said that this year's Delhi Dialogue is particularly special, as we celebrate its 10th chapter. It follows the Commemorative Summit of 25th January 2018 in New Delhi, which marked the 25th anniversary of ASEAN-India Partnership.

She said that the Summit recognized India and ASEAN, as maritime partners and neighbors and we must work together to ensure security and sustainability of oceans, seas and waterways.

The theme of this year's Delhi Dialogue is 'Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Co-operation'.

Addressing the special plenary session, Minister of State for External Affairs, Gen V K Singh said the theme has been chosen aptly this time in view of focus that government wants to put on ASEAN India maritime cooperation.

He stressed that it is the idea of this cooperation that will set tone for Indo-Pacific region.

The Minister highlighted that the fact that Delhi Dialogue is being opened with a roundtable with Chief Ministers of North Eastern states shows the focus that government places on the North East.

He said that Act East policy is not just a progression but a leap forward from the Look East policy.

Gen Singh further said that Act East policy is wider in scope geographically and is more action driven and result oriented.

The Minister added that efforts are on to reinforce ancient links of culture and cooperation with the ASEAN region.

He said government envisions North Eastern states to be active partners in developing linkages with the region.

He further stated that as part of Act East policy, North East has an important bearing on how things will evolve.

He asserted that inclusive development of northeast is a priority for the government. Giving the welcome remarks, Secretary (East), Preeti Saran said the Delhi Dialogue has evolved into a useful forum to brainstorm all aspects of ASEAN - India relations.

She said it has contributed significantly towards strengthening strategic partnership. Saying that ASEAN lies in the heart of Indo-Pacific policy, she expressed confidence that today's interactions will help give a boost to India's relationship with ASEAN countries.