

Doorstop at the University of Mumbai

PRIME MINISTER:

Well stronger and deeper cooperation between Australia and India in every area. Fierce rivals on the sporting field of course but you see the cooperation here that we're going to, that's going to result from this new initiative, it's got strong support from the Indian Prime Minister Mr Modi and very strong support from our Government.

India wants to be more successful in elite sport at the Olympic level, to have Olympic performance that matches its cricketing prowess, as the Minister was saying earlier, but also to see that sport is more widely engaged in across the community and of course starting with the young kids.

It's great to see John Gloster is here and the work he's done with his business to provide an application to support sports training and monitoring across 200,000 students in 200 schools. A great example of Australian expertise in sport and sport conditioning and of course using the technology of the 21st century.

So I'm delighted to be here and of course what a thrill to be here with Sachin Tendulkar. We've had a great discussion and just then we were talking about some of the villages that he's supporting in the Kurukshetra where there is enormous problems of drought and water scarcity and we've talked about how we can assist him and support him with some of the technology and techniques that have been so successful in Australia.

This trip has been all about a deeper and more engaged collaboration between Australia and India in economics, in sport, in health, in science, in education and of course in national security. Very productive visit and it's wonderful to be here with all of these bright eyed young children.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, on that, with the deeper engagement, there's been a strong undertone on this trip on regional security and that speech you gave to the Defence College.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes.

JOURNALIST:

How important is India now as a regional player? And how important does it need to become in terms of the international rules-based order in North Korea and all those other challenges?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well India is enormously important. India is the second largest country by population, it will shortly be the largest. It is evolving into an economic super power and one that will have the regional military and strategic clout that comes with that kind of economic strength.

So India is committed to the maintenance of the rules-based international order. We share the same values of democracy and the rule of law.

So we are committed to the same outcomes that as I said are in the region and around the world – rules based order and where there are disputes that they're settled peacefully in accordance with international law.

JOURNALIST:

PM there's a lot of tough talk coming out of North Korea about even using nuclear weapons. Should Australians be concerned about that? Should others be concerned about it? And what's your response to those threats?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well the whole world is concerned about the reckless and dangerous conduct of the North Korean regime.

It is a threat, it threatens regional stability, it threatens global peace and the time has come for all parties, but in particular China which has the closest relationship with North Korea, to bring pressure to bear on North Korea through the sanctions, regime and other means to ensure that they cease this reckless and dangerous conduct.

JOURNALIST:

Just on this partnership Prime Minister, is there any numbers in terms of people we are willing to commit or dollars we might be committing? And was this something that we offered or did the Indians request our assistance in this field?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well it's grown out of quite a long engagement. Obviously Australia and India have a very close sporting relationship not least through cricket, I mean, John Gloster for example has been here for 13 years so that's one of the people-to-people links that have been so important.

But this is a key priority of Prime Minister Modi and when he sought to identify a country that would, who could partner with India he saw Australia as being the best candidate, the partner of choice in this area.

So India will set up, as you heard, an elite sporting university, like the Australian Institute of Sport, they will set up an organisation like that and we're helping them with that. But of course you've got programs at universities here which will cooperate with Australian universities on sports medicine, on sports conditioning, on sports management. This is a big part of the equation too and you've got three, three of our vice-chancellors are here

today, all very keen to work more closely with India in this regard.

You know education is a massive export for Australia and its close to \$2.5 billion worth of education exports to India. 60,000 students, Indian students in Australia at the moment. As you know we are the second most preferred destination for Indian students studying abroad after the US.

So this is a very important relationship at every level, whether you measure it from an economic point of view or from a social or educational point of view.

JOURNALIST:

Deloitte has had a look at what might happen to the Australian economy were there a downturn in China, some scary numbers, I think \$900 billion in lost Australian wealth from home prices slumping and half a million more jobless and the like. What are the risks of that happening in your judgement and is Deloitte right to paint such a grim picture?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, China is our largest trading partner. The relationship is \$150 billion a year, two-way trade, so a serious setback in the Chinese economy would be negative, would have a negative effect on Australia. But frankly it would have a negative effect on almost every economy.

China is a huge part of the global economy now. The impact of a big, really serious turn down in China would be large.

But having said that, there's no reason to forecast that. Chinese growth has remained strong and stronger frankly than many economists predicted a few years ago.

The Chinese economy is transitioning from one that was very heavily dependent, overwhelmingly dependent on investment to one that is more broad based and that is driven more, as economies are in most parts of the world particularly in developed world, by consumer demand.

Now that of course offers enormous opportunities for Australia as well.

The concern has been that as China makes that switch, that rebalance, is there going to be a big slow down? That's always been the concern. So far the transition is going relatively smoothly and China is maintaining strong economic growth.

So economists can paint a scenario but I am not right now, standing here today, I would not be forecasting a big slowdown in the Chinese economy. The transition that the government has been leading is working well and that is why you are seeing so much more demand for Australian exports, whether is education, whether it is tourism, whether it is food, whether it is wine and of course the enormous expansion of online shopping in China, it is the biggest online commerce market in the world. That's given a lot of smaller Australian businesses more access. All of which is made possible by our

China-Australia Free Trade Agreement so we are benefiting from this transition to a more consumer lead economy

JOURNALIST:

Should first home buyers be allowed to dip into their super to buy a house?

PRIME MINSITER:

About super? Look this is a debate that has gone round and round for a long time and I understand, I've read all of the speculation, standing here in Mumbai I won't contribute to it, although I've expressed fairly strong views about it in the past.

JOURNALIST:

You need to, I guess, say one way or another which view –

PRIME MINSITER:

The Budget is in May. Okay? There's a lot of speculation about the Budget, I understand that, but the budget is in May and all will be revealed.

But on that matter I have expressed strong views about it in the past.

JOURNALIST:

Are you looking forward to or reluctant to return to domestic issues? Excited or reluctant to return to domestic issues?

PRIME MINISTER:

It's been a wonderful trip here to India – it's been very productive.

I want to just say, you talk about excitement. Let me tell you about one new development. You would've seen yesterday we visited Tata Consulting Services which is a big technology, global technology company with a large business in Australia as well. They talked about their TCS labs, their innovation labs that they have around the world and I suggested to the Chief Executive Mr Gopinathan that he should have one in Australia. Well they've now confirmed that they are going to establish a TCS innovation lab in Australia. So that's great news because that will involve more research, more innovation, more work and that very creative end being done in Australia with some of our brightest minds and of course bright minds from all over the world including India.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister you got to spend quite a lot of time one-on-one with Prime Minister Modi –

PRIME MINISTER:

I did.

JOURNALIST:

And that seems to have actually got some tangible outcomes but now it's left up to the two countries respective bureaucracies to work on those. Do you think, are you confident that we will see progress at the rate that you want across a gamut of areas? Or do you think that you'll have to come back here or Modi will visit Australia more frequently to actually keep the momentum going?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well let me, let me deal with the free trade issue because I think that's what you're referring to.

Both of us recognised that progress had been slow. I think it's fair to say that there is a long tradition of protectionism in the Indian government system, if you like. Mr Modi recognises that, he is after all a reformer. He's seeking to shake up old practices and get India moving at a fast clip to succeed in the 21st century. So that's why we agreed that we would get our chief negotiators back to the table to set out very clearly what each side is asking for, where they're close, where they're far apart and where they've found agreement and then having done that come back to Prime Minister Modi and me so that we can then see what the progress is.

So we are taking a personal interest in this to ensure that we do get that level of urgency and focus that is needed.

That is the role of leaders to make sure that on both sides we get together and we find out whether we're talking about doing a deal or doing a deal and either way we've got to make some decisions so I think this is a very useful focus.

JOURNALIST:

So you're confident that momentum won't slow down now that you've kicked it along?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well because both sides, both sides have got to report back to their respective Prime Ministers, that's what provides the momentum – it concentrates the mind even in the most stately bureaucratic department.

JOURNALIST:

Mr Turnbull, what's wrong with Mr Shorten saying: "I support the Adani mine but I have doubts and concerns about Adani having \$900 million of taxpayers' money" to fund the rail link?

PRIME MINISTER:

As usual, Bill Shorten is trying to walk both sides of the street. You know, he's been traipsing around Queensland talking about jobs and now he is

casting doubt on a project that will create tens of thousands of jobs. It is vitally important to Queensland's future, to Australia's economic future.

Look let me be very clear about this – I know there are many people in Bill Shorten's Party that on the left, on the Greens, the votes he's seeking from the Greens that don't want to have any more coal mining in Australia.

Well the reality is this – if we stop all of our coal mining today, all of our exports today, India would simply buy its coal, more coal, from Indonesia and South Africa. India has got a growing demand for coal, as you heard yesterday from the Energy Minister, Mr Goyal, yes they are moving on renewables in a very big way too. Very big commitment. And over time the proportion of coal fired energy will decline but in absolute terms their demand for coal is going to grow for many years. So this is a big opportunity and they're committed, they are going to deliver electricity 24x7 to every Indian. That's their commitment.

Now we can either be part of that and provide our cleaner coal to India or we can go down this Green ideological approach Bill Shorten is playing with to close off those opportunities for Australians and the coal will be bought from another market.

So Bill Shorten has got to decide whether he's all talk and no action, or whether he is really committed to jobs. Because what he's done there, he's gone on his bus around Queensland, talked a big game about jobs and then when there is the one big project that we know is going to add tens of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars of investment, he walks away from it.

He lacks commitment, conviction and character on this.

Jobs are important.

He says they're important but what does he do? He's undermining a huge opportunity. What he's doing is undermining a huge opportunity for tens of thousands of jobs in Queensland and to no benefit.

As I said, if we stop exporting coal tomorrow all of the markets we sell coal to would simply buy it from somewhere else so it would not be one tonne less of coal burnt in the world.

So it's completely futile. We've either got to participate in this, create the jobs in the Australia with a cleaner low ash coal that India wants. They want our coal because it's the best coal, they want it and Bill Shorten should be backing our coal industry, backing our exports, backing jobs instead of walking away from them.

You can't walk both sides of the street on this and what he's done is made his whole Queensland trip into a farce. He's exposed it all as being nothing more than a bit of disingenuous show business.

When it came to the crunch he was not prepared to stand up for investment and jobs in Queensland.

Thanks very much.

[ENDS]

Remarks at the launch of the Australia-India Sports Partnership

PRIME MINISTER: Well thank you Tony, and we were just talking with Annabel Mehta and Sachin Tendulkar about Apnalaya, this wonderful foundation which is supporting kids from the slums in Mumbai and giving them the ability to reach for the skies.

This was started by your predecessor, Tony, Tom Holland in 1971. Annabel has been involved in it from the following year and, of course, Sachin is bringing his remarkable prowess, charisma and leadership to support it.

I'm delighted to be here and I want to acknowledge Mr Vijay Goel the Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Kate Palmer, who will be speaking to you shortly who is the Chief Executive of the Australian Sports Commission, and, of course, as I have noted, Sachin Tendulkar.

Wisden, the cricketing bible, describes Sachin as the greatest batsman after Bradman. What an extraordinary career he's had. Took up cricket at the age of 11, played for India at the age of 16 – that is an accelerated career progression if ever there was one.

He's described the Sydney Cricket Ground, which is in my electorate of Wentworth in Sydney, as his favourite cricket ground outside of India. And you can see why, with an average score of 157 while playing at the SCG, including that extraordinary 241 not out in 2004 and playing his last test at the SCG in 2012, which was the 100th test match played at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Sachin Tendulkar's name, his record, his character is such a huge a part of cricketing history but above all beyond the statistics, and cricketers and cricket fans of course love statistics, it is the ultimate statistical game I suppose, but above all the leadership he showed, the character he showed, the discipline, the combination of discipline, technical skill and then extraordinary creative brilliance to get the crowd on their feet with a genius accorded to so few.

Sachin Tendulkar is one of the most remarkable sportsmen of our time as we know, but, and not everybody, everyone can aspire I suppose to be Sachin Tendulkar but not many will achieve that status, we know that. But what he's been able to show through his character and his leadership as a cricketer, as a sportsman, as an Indian leader and statesmen, as a member of the upper

house, he's been able to give a leadership to sport right across the board.

And sport is critically important for both our countries.

We were talking about Prime Minister Modi's determination to ensure that Indians are healthier. Obesity is a growing challenge in India as it is indeed in Australia and so activity is a vitally important part of that and starting young, and these young kids, just like their counterparts in Australia, are getting fit, getting active.

Now the other aspect of sport, and we were talking about this earlier, is the way in which it provides a social, it builds up social capital. In sporting clubs, whether it's a cricket club or a football club or a surf club, a very Australian and very democratically Australian institution, you have people from every profession, every religion, every background mixing together. Sport ties communities together, so it's vitally important at that level too.

Now, a central feature of our sporting heritage is our record of achievement in the Olympic Games.

We've competed in every Summer Olympics since 1896 and won 524 Olympic medals including 155 gold medals. And that's been a long term endeavour.

Our sporting achievements are underpinned by robust sports administration, world class research, talent identification, athlete development, sports management and technology. And those building blocks are what India looks to as it seeks to achieve Olympic success to equal its prowess on the cricket pitch.

Prime Minister Modi is resolute in his ambition to build India's sporting capability, to set more Indian athletes on the medal winning trail. And that's where our two nations' sporting competitiveness becomes collaboration off the field.

We have experience and expertise to share. We're a natural partner for India in the long term.

And so today I'm pleased to launch the sports partnership between Australia and India.

On Monday, Prime Minister Modi and I witnessed the exchange of the Memorandum of Understanding on sports between our governments.

This sets the agenda to advance cooperation in four key areas – athlete and coach training and development, sports science, sports governance and integrity, and grass roots participation. It encourages the exchange of research technology and advice, and of administrators, athletes and coaches.

An Australia-India sports partnership takes a long term view. It establishes India as a partner of choice with Australia in developing sports capability.

This partnership is underpinned by growing links around sport and allied professions through the Australian and Indian systems.

For example, Victoria University and the University of Canberra will both work with India to assist in the establishment of a national sports university.

The Australian Institute of Sport is exploring ways of supporting the Indian Commonwealth Games team in preparation for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games next year.

And it's great to see the KOOH Sports education technology platform here today.

An Indian company lead by a distinguished Australian – a long term associate of Sachin Tendulkar, of the Indian Cricket team and here in India for thirteen years – using technology to support 200,000 students in over 200 schools to undertake the type of sporting programs and fitness and conditioning programs that we have just witnessed.

So these are great examples of what we can achieve together and I look forward to developing and strengthening the sporting bonds between our nations and I'll now ask Kate Palmer to say a few words more about this great initiative.

Thanks.

[Address to the National Defence College](#)

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you very much Lieutenant General Mohan for your very warm welcome and for inviting me here today.

We are honoured to be in your company and I want to acknowledge among my party the High Commissioner, Harinder Sidhu, the Australian High Commissioner and of course many other distinguished members of the government including the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Frances Adamson.

It is an honour also to be here and to recognise the long history of Australia's involvement with this great institution.

Australian students have made the pilgrimage to study at the college almost every year dating back to 1966– among them, as Lieutenant General Mohan and I recollected earlier, Australia's current Governor-General, General Sir Peter Cosgrove.

And today, Australia is represented here by Captain Simon Bateman of the

Royal Australian Navy and we were discussing earlier that the last time we met was in Nowra, which is a long way from New Delhi, at HMAS Albatross.

For more than a century, Indian and Australian soldiers, sailors and airmen have worked alongside each other, fought alongside each other, in peace and in conflict.

On Anzac Day later this month we will remember the thousands of Indian soldiers who fought alongside Australian troops in every theatre, in Gallipoli, across the Middle East and indeed on the Western Front during the First World War.

This year sees the anniversaries of some of the major engagements of World War Two, where in Malaya, Singapore, the Middle East and North Africa, Australian and Indian troops fought together side-by-side.

It also marks 75-years since the war arrived to Australia's shores, starting with the Japanese bombing of Darwin in February 1942.

We remember men like Flying Officer Manmohan Singh, one of the first Sikh aviators of the British Indian Air Force, who became the first Indian war casualty in Australia when his Catalina was downed off Broome in 1942.

Threads like these tie our defence histories together, and create long-lasting bonds that draw our nations even closer together today.

Now Captain Bateman is fortunate to be posted here in India at a time when the strategic interests of our two nations are clearly converging.

At the Indian Ocean Rim Association in Jakarta last month I discussed why a secure, stable, peaceful and connected Indo-Pacific is vital to the security and prosperity of Australia, as indeed it is for India.

Cooperation on regional stability sits squarely in the interests of both our nations. Our top five trading partners, for example, are all located in the Indo-Pacific and—like India—we depend heavily on the oceans for our trade. More than 98 per cent of our international trade by volume arrives in Australia now by sea.

Today more than ever, our economies rely on the maintenance of free and secure trade routes across the Indo-Pacific.

One of the more significant regional challenges we face, of course, is competing maritime claims in the South China Sea. But we also face common challenges in combatting terrorism and transnational crime.

As like-minded liberal democracies we can work closely together to champion international law, and ensure that challenges like these—and any threat to the rules-based order on which our economies so heavily depend—can be peacefully resolved.

Our bilateral Framework for Security Cooperation is a strong platform for collaboration. But Australia and India also need to engage our friends and

partners to form broader habits of cooperation, develop each other's capabilities, and shape the entire region's common strategic outlook.

Our trilateral engagement with Japan is a good example of this, as are our respective bilateral engagements with the United States.

We're both supporters of the ASEAN-backed East Asia Summit, and I know that India engages with a range of Indian Ocean states directly—especially in South East Asia—which we strongly commend.

Prime Minister Modi has described his vision for our Indo-Pacific neighbourhood as Security and Growth for All in the Region—a vision founded on a climate of trust and transparency, respect for rules and norms, sensitivity to each other's interests, and an increase in maritime cooperation.

I share his vision for a stable and prosperous Indian Ocean region and Australia plans to work closely with India and others to make it a reality.

As the Indian Ocean washes at both our shores and our economies are defined by maritime trade, it makes sense that Australia and India's defence links are strongest at sea.

Australia is already a significant Indo-Pacific naval power in its own right. We have one of the largest and most sophisticated naval forces in the region, with nearly 50 commissioned vessels and more than 14,000 personnel.

And we have just embarked on Australia's largest peacetime investment in national security.

Our modernisation of the Australian Defence Force, in particular our nation building shipbuilding plan, will create thousands of new jobs and a sustainable, internationally-competitive sovereign defence industry.

Our defence industry investment is a truly historic national enterprise. It is the most significant modernisation, investment and construction in defence capability since the Second World War.

In particular, it focuses on the importance of our own capabilities right across defence and shipbuilding. Over the next generation we have committed to the construction of 12 future submarines, 9 future frigates, 12 offshore patrol vessels.

Our forces are closely integrated with our allies and our partners. We have much to gain, Australia and India from our navies working together, as we already do.

Our navies have, in recent times, engaged more and more in port visits and short-term passage exercises.

HMAS Perth was in Goa last October, and HMAS Arunta in November. And the INS Sumitra conducted port visits to Sydney and Darwin late last year as well.

In September 2015, our navies conducted their first Bilateral Maritime Exercise in the Bay of Bengal—a great success, which we’re aiming to repeat in our next joint exercise off the West Australian Coast in 2018.

The feedback from that first Exercise AUSINDEX showed how well the two navies cooperated. Many Royal Australian Navy personnel commented that when visiting Indian Navy ships they felt very much at home, with very similar shipboard routines, orders and command organisation.

I look forward to providing an opportunity for our Border Force to work jointly with the Indian Coast Guard.

Yesterday Prime Minister Modi and I witnessed the exchange of an MoU that will enhance our cooperation on a range of security challenges, including counter-terrorism, cyber-security, people smuggling and anti-people trafficking.

We’re also supporting each other in multilateral exercises—the Royal Australian Navy has been a regular participant in India’s Exercise MILAN and Australia encourages India’s participation in security, rescue and arms removal exercises in Australian waters.

I acknowledge India’s leadership in establishing the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, which has become a vital channel for the frank flow of information between Chiefs of Navy across our region.

While our defence interests are undoubtedly most aligned at sea, Australia is highly invested in boosting our army and air force cooperation as well.

A modest but significant program of army bilateral training grew last year on the back of reciprocal visits by the Australian and Indian Chiefs of Army.

A growing area of focus for us is our cooperation on countering improvised explosive devices, and I look forward to seeing this cooperation grow.

The relationship between our air forces should also be built up. We will continue to operate common aircraft in the future, giving us the scope to exchange information and ideas.

There’s also scope for our air forces to develop humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercises and with the right focus, this arm of our joint defence capability will be able to accomplish outcomes equally as impressive as our navies and armies.

So that’s just a snapshot of our shared undertakings but what it makes clear is that our defence partnerships are experiencing a great deal of positive momentum.

What Australia and India need to do now is to capitalise on that momentum, deepen the engagement, and increase the consistency and complexity of our activities.

The second iteration of our Army Special Forces exercise AUSTRAHIND is

scheduled for later this year, and Australia looks forward as I noted, to hosting our next Maritime joint exercise, AUSINDEX, next year.

We are keen to finalise arrangements to better facilitate logistics for combined exercises and training.

And our engagement in materiel, science and technology will continue to progress thanks to the establishment, late last year, of the Joint Working Group on Defence Research and Materiel Cooperation.

Supporting a relationship as active and growing as ours requires the people to keep it moving, which is why we want to increase our defence representation in India over the coming years.

People-to-people links, either through senior-level engagement or education and training opportunities, are absolutely critical to ensure our defence forces develop the familiarity and trust that underpins a close and long-lasting relationship.

Just as our Australian officers have appreciated the opportunity to attend fine Indian training institutions such as this, the National Defence College, Australia has been pleased to host Indian officers at our own institutions.

Australia welcomes students to the Australian Command and Staff College and the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies. I look forward to meeting later today those of you planning to visit Australia on your study tour next month.

Our defence cooperation rests on the commitment and effort of our people and it always has.

Our countries share a history, our democratic heritage and a common love of freedom. We also share an ocean, rapidly converging strategic interests, and a future in this the most dynamic region in the world.

We are natural partners—today more than ever—and the Australian Government will continue to do all in its power to ensure that that partnership continues to flourish.

Thank you very much.

[ENDS]

Doorstop at the India Gate

PRIME MINISTER:

Yesterday we had great discussions with Prime Minister Modi, very productive meetings but also I was thrilled to go on the Delhi Metro. What an

achievement. It started in 2002 and they have over 200 kilometres of lines and 159 stations, 27 million passengers. It is a huge achievement and they are still building it. And it was wonderful to join with him in a very relaxed way, getting the train and as you know, I was very impressed by the enthusiastic welcome he received from fellow commuters. I don't get quite the same reception from the commuters on the Sydney train network but it was phenomenal. He's clearly very, very, very, very beloved of the people here.

And you know, his pride in India's achievements and its history is really inspiring. We went to the Akshardham Temple which is a new temple, a new temple complex and Prime Minister Modi's pride in India's ancient histories and culture was just so, you could feel it, you could feel he was bursting with pride as he explained the history and the cultures and the development of India from the Vedic times right up to the present day.

And so you feel with Prime Minister Modi that whether it is on the Metro or at that temple, he is taking India into the 21st century. Innovation, technology, science – all of which offer great opportunities for Australia of course. He's taking India forward but at the same time so proud of and so connected to the ancient cultures of thousands of years that are the foundation of Indian civilization.

We had a very practical discussion also about the CECA, the free trade agreement.

Now, as you know there hasn't been enough progress on that. There is a long tradition, as I have said, of protectionism in India and the Indian governmental system I would say hasn't been as enthusiastic about it as perhaps we in Australia would've liked, but Prime Minister Modi and I had a very good frank discussion about that and we both agreed that progress hadn't been good enough. We've both directed our chief negotiators to reconvene as soon as possible and we've directed them to set out, to tabulate exactly what the asks are, what the ambitions are in respect of each side so that they can then report back to us and we can see how close, or our far apart the two negotiating teams are and what can be done to bridge those gaps.

This has been a very productive outcome and it came out of the private meeting I had with Prime Minister Modi. We discussed it in the private meeting and we went into the bilateral and we gave those instructions to the relevant ministers and negotiators.

I think that is a very important outcome of this visit.

As you know we have entered into a new MoU to enhance our cooperation on counter-terrorism, on human trafficking, on security generally.

I'll be going to the National Defence College in a little while to talk to the cadets and other officials there. We've got a long tradition of exchanging cadets between our various defence colleges and we are going to increase that. Again that is something that Prime Minister Modi and I have agreed to do – that there will be more Australian cadets coming this way and Australian and Indian cadets and officers going the other way.

The better we understand each other, the better we are able to work together and that is clearly a very valuable initiative.

I might say, our Governor-General trained here in India as one of the exchange students in years past. So it is a long tradition but we'd like to see more of it.

Finally, I'd say we're going to have a very important energy roundtable in Mumbai later on today.

Again, Prime Minister Modi and I have a very similar perspective on India, although with very different contexts. Obviously, India has got, hundreds of millions of Indians don't have access to electricity at all so they have a big need to increase their energy production. They have an all of the above approach – coal, nuclear, solar, wind, everything, hydro. We have an all of the above approach, obviously nuclear is not part of our equation in Australia but the rest of it, again, like Prime Minister Modi, we focus on economics and engineering as being the guides to good energy policy.

So this has been a very successful visit. We've really, I think the Prime Minister and I have achieved a higher level of rapport. We got on very well when we first met but to spend this much time together and to be with him when he is so proud of modern India, ancient India and that thread of continuity of extraordinary progress – it's been quite inspiring.

JOURNALIST:

Mr Turnbull, you also met with Mr Adani and his executives yesterday. Barnaby Joyce said this morning that the issue of a loan for the railway line is a tipping point issue. Did Mr Adani make that case to you last night?

PRIME MINISTER:

Mr Adani in our discussions simply noted that his company expects to make an application to the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund on the basis that we've described several times. That's got an independent board, it will assess the application on its merits and it is obviously going to be dependent on there being other funding as well from the private sector, from external sources to support the railway line. There is no new news on Adani and the railway project. They are entitled to make an application to the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund, they expect to do so and it will be assessed scrupulously and independently.

JOURNALIST:

There is a bit of a storm back home about Native Title because Mr Adani has asked for those Native Title changes to be made. I think that you are trying to get those changes made. But is that trashing Eddie Mabo's legacy to change Native Title law to help Mr Adani?

PRIME MINISTER:

That is not a fair description, David, with respect.

As you know, the Federal Court had made a decision in the McGlade case which gave an interpretation to the Native Title Act that no-one had anticipated, or outside of the litigators perhaps. It's caused us a lot of problems with many, many agreements right around the country, not least of all in Western Australia where the case arose.

So there is a need to deal with the legislation – that is broadly accepted across the Parliament – and I expect that legislative changes will be made when Parliament gets back.

But the recognition that the McGlade decision would make so many Native Title, so many agreements with Aboriginal Land Corporations and so forth and Native Title owners invalid – it's a decision that can't be allowed in practical terms to let stand and there is very strong support for rectifying it.

JOURNALIST:

Did Mr Adani seek assurance from you that that would be done?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, Mr Adani noted that this is an issue for his development but, frankly, it's an issue for just about every development in Australia where Native Title issues are involved.

It's an issue for the Native Title owners as well because plainly you've got to be able to reach agreements to get the development to ensure that Native Title owners, First Australians get the economic returns and the advancement that they deserve and we all aspire for them to have.

JOURNALIST:

You say that this legislation will pass when Parliament comes back. I understand Mr Shorten has written to you saying that Labor supports the changes but only as applied to the agreements –

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah, that's right.

JOURNALIST:

And they're saying that the legislation goes beyond that.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, Labor raised a concern that the some of the amendments that have been proposed went beyond simply rectifying the decision in McGlade. And without getting into an argument about the legal drafting, we will ensure that the amendments that are voted on in the Senate when Parliament gets back deal with the McGlade decision and then any further amendments if, you know, interested parties want to advance them can be considered at a future date

but the important, the priority in terms of both Native Title owners and development generally is to get the McGlade issue dealt with and I believe that will be done as, in line with what Mr Shorten has said.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister notwithstanding the independence of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund, do you agree with your Deputy Prime Minister that the rail, the loan for the rail line is a tipping point for the project?

PRIME MINISTER:

Look I'd simply say – I'm not sure that fairly characterises what the Deputy Prime Minister as Acting Prime Minister has said today in Australia – but all I can say is that I know that Adani is going to make, is making an application. They're entitled to make the application. It's well known that they're going to do that and they have got, this a very big project and the NAIF funding were it to be made for part of the, for the railways only a part, in fact a relatively small part of the total capital that's required for the big, for this coal mine and associated infrastructure.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister Natasha Exelby has apparently been allowed to read on the ABC notwithstanding a quite extraordinary outcry from some very prominent people. Were they right to say that a blooper should not disqualify her from reading or should the ABC simply be allowed to make those decisions unimpeded?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well as you know I've been here in India with you and I haven't been watching bloopers on the ABC or indeed on any other network, not on yours of course, they don't, they'd never occur.

So I'll leave the commentary on that to those that have been better informed on it.

JOURNALIST:

As you've seen though some of the commentary on the Sydney University academic or indeed academics who are apparently pro Bashar al-Assad and have suggested he's been setup over this chemical attack. Is that a concern to you about what's going on in the university?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well as you know we've been travelling for the last few days, I'm not briefed on the circumstances surrounding this academic but my views on Bashar al-Assad's regime, my views and the Government's views on his horrendous, criminal conduct are very well known and well stated. And as you know we've strongly supported the United States swift and just response to prevent further chemical attacks by that regime.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister Turnbull, are you conscious of the fact that a positive outcome for the Adani project would likely have positive effects for future deals involving Indian companies? And trade as a whole?

PRIME MINISTER:

We want to see more trade and more investment between Australia and India and so does Prime Minister Modi so that's why we're taking, that's why we've taken the initiative yesterday to say to the negotiators get back to the table, work out exactly what each side is asking for so PM Modi and I can see where we are apart.

Now look, neither of us is going to do a trade deal that isn't a good trade deal, Okay? So this is not a deal at any price. But what is not acceptable to either Prime Minister Modi or myself is people not getting together and getting down to tin tacks. So that's what's going, so that's the initiative we took yesterday, it arose out of our private discussion and then we dealt with it in the bilateral meeting. That doesn't guarantee that a deal will be concluded, of course, but what it means is we will get on, we've got to get on with it.

There's a difference between talking about doing a deal and doing a deal and we've got to move into the second part of the equation.

JOURNALIST:

Are you conscious of positive outcome for Adani –

PRIME MINISTER:

Well look, Adani, the challenges that Adani faces are, now that all the environmental approvals have been given, the challenges they face are essentially commercial ones. And they are for Mr Adani and his company to deal with. So it is a, it's gone through many environmental hearings and appeals and considerations at both federal and state level so they've got the governmental green light to go ahead. What they now have to do is secure financing. The company is very confident of that, but that's a matter for them. It is a commercial project.

JOURNALIST:

It shouldn't be dependent on this money for the rail?

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm sorry –

JOURNALIST:

It shouldn't be, the mine shouldn't be dependent on this money for the rail link?

PRIME MINISTER:

You're asking me is the mine dependent on the money for the rail link?

JOURNALIST:

Yep.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well only Mr Adani could give you that answer for sure because he knows what his sources of financing are. They are conducting discussions, they will be conducting discussions with both third party financiers and the National Australia Infrastructure Fund with respect to the rail link, they'll be doing that because it has got to be part of the package. You see under the charter, if you like, of the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund it can't lend more than 50 per cent of the finance for any project. It has to be a commercial project. It has to have an economic return. It's being judged by an independent board who have got considerable commercial experience.

So this is all, so, it's a long time since I've financed a project myself but I have no doubt that Mr Adani will have a range of options, financing options and a range of alternatives, you know, if one funder doesn't turn up on the terms that he wants he'll have another one to go to.

Look he's a very experienced businessman and his company has an all of the above approach to energy. They have solar investments in Australia and as I said yesterday they have here in India the second largest solar farm in the world, over 2.5 million panels and its around nearly 500 megawatts of capacity, so it's a very, very big solar investment.

The key thing to understand about India and energy is they have got enormous demand for growing provision of energy and Australia by contrast, demand has been relatively flat so our economic growth has decoupled, not entirely, but in large part from growth in energy demand and you are seeing a lot of very significant changes in the energy market. We've talked about solar, we've talked about renewables, more variable demand, more variable supply. These effect India as well but the big difference here is they've got to ramp up supply and that's why they're ticking all of the boxes – whether its nuclear, coal, gas, renewables of every kind.

JOURNALIST:

Mr Adani is a billionaire PM, so what's in it for Australian tax payers to help him out? Why can't he fund it himself?

PRIME MINISTER:

The project, if it is built will create tens of thousands of jobs. It will generate over the course of its life an enormous amount in taxes and in royalties, revenues for federal and state governments, so plainly there is a huge economic benefit from a big project of this kind, assuming its built and it proceeds.

As to the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund, I just repeat its mission is to support infrastructure which is commercial, it can't be the sole provider, its limited to 50 per cent, no more than 50 per cent of any one project, the projects have to be commercial, they have to be assessed on their merits by an independent board and they will be.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister what's the point of it, if it's supposed to be commercial why have a fund at all? Why not leave it to the market?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I hear the point you're making but the reality is that very often a degree of government support albeit limited to a concessional loan, this is still a loan.

What we're talking about here is an approach analogous to that of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation. The Clean Energy Finance Corporation makes a return; it's been profitable for the government but it does provide that bit of extra support that can sometimes make a project happen as opposed to not happen.

So it is an important part. The Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund is an important part of our commitment to development of Australia's north which is, that is our big economic frontier, a huge opportunity with far too little development and far too little infrastructure and so the NAIF is a way of supporting that.

JOURNALIST:

So coming out of that meeting – can you tell us – are you more confident as a result of your talks with Mr Adani that this will go ahead? Or hasn't he changed your confidence levels?

PRIME MINISTER:

The obstacles or the challenges for Adani in this project are commercial ones. He is very confident, basically because he is building a vertically integrated project so he is going to be producing coal most of which he will be buying himself to fuel his own power stations in India. He is very confident about it commercially but then again time will tell.

It's a long time since I gave commercial appraisals on projects for a living and as Prime Minister, I'm sure you'd like me to, I will leave that to the Mr Adani and as to the NAIF's approach that will be assessed by its independent board. Now I have one more question then I must go.

JOURNALIST:

On North Korea PM, there's a palpable sort of build-up of tensions around that area at the moment. Is that something that is concerning your Government and is it something that came up in discussions with Mr Modi?

PRIME MINISTER:

We discussed the full range of regional security issues. I won't go, naturally into areas of this kind, I won't go into any more detail than we have already provided publicly but can I say to you that the reckless and dangerous conduct of the North Korean regime is threatening peace and stability, not just of the region but of the whole world. We continue to apply, as have other members of the United Nations, sanctions against the North Korea regime and we continue to call on China to exercise the undoubted influence it has over the North Korean regime to pull it back from further reckless conduct.

Thank you all very much.

[ENDS]