

Australian PM Malcolm Turnbull to visit India from April 9

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Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull will begin his four-day visit to India on April 9.

Malcom Turnbull

According to Ministry of External affairs, the Australian PM will be in India from April 9-12.

It will be Turnbull's maiden visit to India after taking over as the Prime Minister of Australia.

"This will be Prime Minister Turnbull's first visit to India. Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott had visited India in September 2014, which was followed by our Prime Minister's visit to Australia in November that year," Jaideep Mazumdar, Joint Secretary (South), said at the weekly media briefing here.

The two Prime Ministers had also met on the sidelines of the G-20 in Antalya (Turkey) in 2015 and in Hangzhou (China) in 2016.

The Australian Premier will also visit Mumbai where he will interact with top business leaders and attend an energy roundtable.

Speaking on the India-Australia relationship, Mazumdar said that the relationship between the two countries was more robust and multi-faceted today than it had ever been before.

A high-level business delegation is also expected to accompany the Australia Prime Minister.

Australia's total investments in India stand at US\$7 billion.

"Australia is a key Indian Ocean littoral state and also part of the Indian-Ocean Rim Association. It is a strong maritime nation. We have lot in common with Australia in terms of our mutual interest in keeping our sea line of communication safe and secure," he said, dwelling on India's maritime relations with Australia.

"We already have a quite robust joint naval exercises... We have good security cooperation on the maritime front," he added.

In September 2014, India and Australia signed a Civil Nuclear Agreement for Australian supply of uranium to India.

In December last year, Australian Parliament passed a law to allow the supply of uranium to India. The commercial deals for the supply of uranium is being further negotiated.

With focus on education, the two countries are expected to work out several tie-ups in this sector. A high-powered delegation from the education sector will also be accompanying the Australian Prime Minister.

There are about 60,000 Indian students in Australia.

During the visit, the two sides are expected to sign a number of memoranda of understanding and agreements, covering security, environment, sports, science and technology and health, among others.

Talks of cooperation in renewable energy, clean coal and bio-fuels are also likely to feature during the visit.

- (With IANS inputs)