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India for an export driven Malawi

THE government of India has pledged continued support to Malawi in value addition of agriculture products and gemstones to transform the country into a predominantly exporting nation.

The pledge came on the sidelines of the 70th Republic Day of India celebrations held on Saturday at the Indian High Commissioner's residence in Lilongwe.

Indian High Commissioner to Malawi, Suresh Kumar Menon, said his country is committed to Malawi's economic development through projects such as the \$3 million Business Incubation Centre in Dowa, the Mulanje Water Project and the Salima Sugar Plant.

Last year, India opened up to import of mangoes from

Malawi that are selling in local markets in that country.

"We make sure that development projects that we carry out have a direct impact on Malawi communities. As for the Business Incubation Project, which is our latest support, we want SMEs to be able to add value and produce quality products that compete in international markets especially

in the region.

"Under this project, we provided machines worth over \$1million for gemstone polishing and, in partnership with the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Institute, we are teaching people how to polish and cut gemstones so as to develop the mining industry," Menon said.

He further called upon

Malawians of Indian origin to continue with the spirit of inclusiveness that promotes oneness between Malawi and India.

Malawi and India established diplomatic ties in 1964. However, the diplomatic mission was closed in May 1993 before it was reopened in March 2012.