



ПОСОЛЬСТВО РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ
В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ ИНДИИ

रशियन फेडरेशन का राजदूतावास

EMBASSY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
IN THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA



Russian Ambassador visits Dr Svyatoslav Roerich's southern estate

On February 11, 2011 the Ambassador of Russia to India, Mr Alexander Kadakin, visited Dr Svyatoslav Roerich's "Tataguni" estate near Bangalore. He was accompanied by a delegation which included Russia's Consul-General in Chennai, Dr Nikolai Listopadov, deputy director general of "Rosoboronexport" Mr Viktor Kamardin and representatives of the state corporation "Rostekhnologii" who arrived here to take part in the international air show "AERO INDIA - 2011".



After examining the territory of the estate, the guests paid tributes to and laid flowers on the grave of Dr Roerich and the *samadhi* of his wife, Devika Rani-Roerich. The Russians were united in their opinion that thanks to the efforts of the state authorities the estate is in a very good condition. Great credit for preserving it goes to Dr M.H.Ahmed Mujib, the chief officer appointed by the state government.

According to Mr Kamardin, "Tataguni is one of the strong threads which spiritually tie our two countries - Russia and India. "Rosoboronexport" will undoubtedly assist in developing the estate as soon as such opportunity arises". Unfortunately, at present the

estate is closed for the general public due to the ongoing litigation related to the ownership rights over the land where the estate is situated. The former housekeeper of the Roerichs, the notorious Mary Punacha, who is still on bail, together with some other “land sharks” are trying to seize by all means the legacy of this unique Russian-Indian family, having produced six forged wills way back in 1994. Besides the estate, the personal belongings and around 60 paintings by Svyatoslav Roerich are kept in police custody.

At present India's Supreme Court is considering the case on returning the “Tataguni” estate under the management of Karnataka's state government. “We have no right to comment upon the court process, – said the Russian Ambassador, – but we can express hope for a favourable outcome and a triumph of justice. The government cannot allow Roerich's land to be grabbed by criminal elements and half-literate and crooked former housemaids”.



The “Tataguni” estate was acquired by Svyatoslav Roerich and his wife Devika Rani-Roerich, a superstar of the early Indian silver screen, in 1948 from a British. The artist was cultivating a plantation of unique oil trees “lanaloe”. The estate occupies the territory of around 135 hectares and, according to the wish of Dr Roerich, should become an ideal place for establishing an international creative, scientific and cultural centre and a recreation site for Bangaloreans.

The government has already allocated a record 15 crore rupees for the restoration and development of the museum complex in order to turn it into one of the major sights of the Indian “Silicon Valley's” capital”, Bangalore, similar to the Indian-Russian International Roerich Memorial Trust (IRMT) in the Himalayan Kullu valley in the northern state of Himachal Pradesh.

