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MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Annual Report 2021 | 2022

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Ministry of External Affairs

New Delhi

Annual Report | 2021-22





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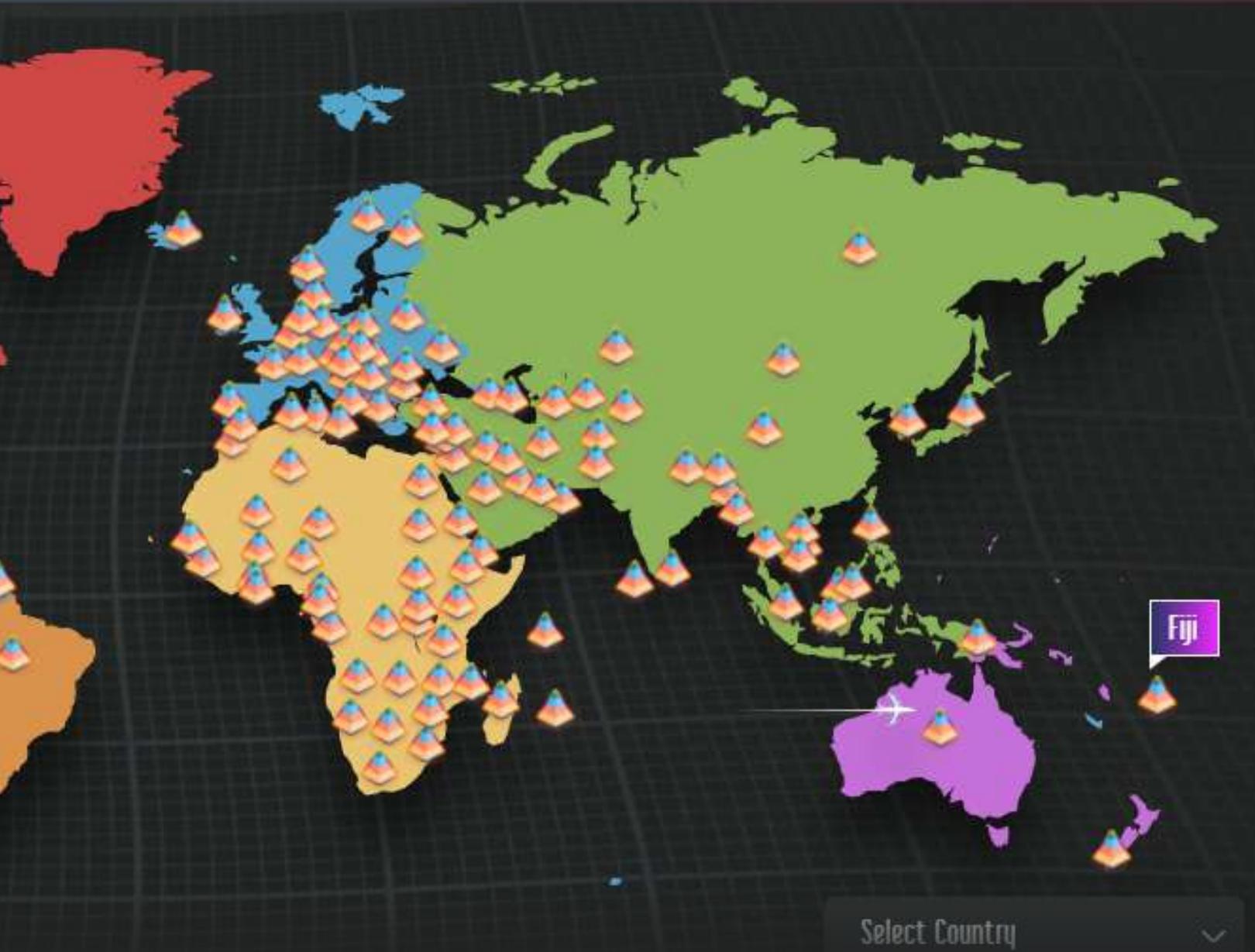
Global Footprint

Mahatma Gandhi Statues

Indian Languages Chair

Indian Cultural Center

Mahatma Gandhi Stamps



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INTRODUCTION AND SYNOPSIS

In 2021-22, the international system continued to grapple with the challenges engendered by the Covid-19 pandemic. The disruptive forces of the pandemic affected livelihoods and economies, besides taking a toll on human health systems. Societies and governments adapted to Covid-19 realities by reinvigorating health protocols, upgrading medical infrastructure and enforcing calibrated restrictions on movements and gatherings. While the initial phase of the pandemic saw containment of the disease as primary focus through lockdowns, the subsequent phases saw the action

shifting to mass vaccinations. As of 31 January 2022, India had administered over 1.5 billion doses, with over 75% of the eligible population receiving full vaccination.

During this period, the Ministry of External Affairs continued its **structured response to Covid-19 challenges**. As the global arm of the government, the Ministry was involved in a wide range of Covid-19 response mechanisms - from procurement operations to sourcing technologies to coordinating vaccines supplies and distribution.



'Vaccine Maitri' initiative - India donated 100,000 doses of Covishield vaccines to Maldives in February 2021

The second wave of the pandemic in April-June 2021 caused enormous stresses on our health care systems. There were shortages of critical medical supplies such as oxygen cylinders and concentrators. Procurement and logistics during the second wave proved to be much more daunting because the number of infections, critically ill patients and deaths were much higher. The Ministry mounted a global effort to speedily source critical supplies to fight the second wave. Indian Missions and Posts abroad were at the forefront of this mammoth exercise.

A Special Control Room functioning 24/7 was set up in the Ministry. Critical supplies that included Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO), oxygen generation plants, concentrators, ECMO machines, vaccines and essential medicines were procured from all over the world. More than 50 countries extended support to India during this difficult time by donating essential medical supplies. Indian Missions and Posts also reached out to non-governmental organizations and individual donors who were keen to assist India at the peak of the pandemic.

The Ministry also worked with global and domestic stakeholders for the introduction of foreign vaccines in India. The supply of critical pharmaceutical items was a major challenge for bulk vaccine production in India. The Ministry coordinated with US and European counterparts for easing imports of pharmaceutical ingredients. The Ministry also coordinated with foreign regulatory agencies for expediting approvals for 'Made in India' vaccines. Covishield was approved by the World Health Organisation in February 2021 and Covaxin in November 2021.

The **Vaccine Maitri initiative** in many ways reinforced India's credentials as "pharmacy of the world". World leaders publicly commended India's efforts to rapidly expand vaccines production and supplies at critical junctures of the pandemic. As on 31 December 2021, India has supplied more than 110 million vaccine doses to 97 countries.

The Ministry also has worked out travel arrangements based on mutual recognition of vaccine certificates with over 100 countries in a bid to expeditiously normalize international travel. In July 2021, the **CoWin Global Conclave** was organized to showcase India's digital capacities in fighting the pandemic.

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly changed the global geopolitical landscape. India accelerated its **diplomatic engagements at the highest levels** in this rapidly evolving international environment. During 2021-22, Prime Minister participated at the Summit Level meetings of G7, G20 and COP-26. Prime Minister also chaired a United Nations Security Council session in August 2021, the BRICS Summit and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Council of Heads of Government, and hosted the first meeting of the India-Central Asia Summit, in virtual format. He also delivered a virtual message at the Eastern Economic Forum; and at the Global Covid-19 Summit. During these events, Prime Minister reiterated India's commitment to reformed multilateralism and reaffirmed India's emerging role as "force for the good" in contributing global solutions to global problems.

On 21 September 2021, Prime Minister attended the first in-person **Quad Leaders' Summit** hosted by US President Joseph Biden. Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia and Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga of Japan also participated. The leaders put forth ambitious initiatives to deepen mutual ties and advance practical cooperation on 21st-century challenges: ending the Covid-19 pandemic, including by increasing production and access to safe and effective vaccines; promoting high-standards for infrastructure construction; combatting the climate crisis; partnering on emerging technologies, space, and cybersecurity; and cultivating next-generation talent.

Prime Minister also hosted the **1st India-Central Asia Summit**, with the participation of the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, in a virtual format on 27 January 2022. This is the first engagement of its kind between India and the Central Asian countries at the level of heads of government. The first India-Central Asia Summit is a reflection of India's growing engagement with the Central Asian countries, which are a part of India's "Extended Neighbourhood".

At the historic UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow (COP26), Prime Minister presented India's '**Five-Point Agenda**' or '**Panchamrita**', for countering climate change. India committed to achieving 'net-zero' carbon emissions by the year 2070. It was announced that by 2030, India would meet 50% of its energy requirements through renewable sources. It was also announced that India would enhance non-fossil energy capacity to 500 gigawatt, and reduce carbon intensity by 45% by 2030.

In 2021-22, Prime Minister conducted more than **30 virtual meetings** with his counterparts from Russia, USA, Japan, Seychelles, France, Bhutan, Australia, Maldives, Nepal, Vietnam, Italy, Germany, UK, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

During the period, the External Affairs Minister **traveled to more than 20 countries** to participate in various bilateral, plurilateral, and multilateral meetings. These include visits to US, UK, Greece, Kenya, Kuwait, Tajikistan, Georgia, Russia, UN Headquarters in New York, Iran, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Armenia, Croatia, Denmark, Israel, Kazakhstan, and Armenia.

Ministers of State, Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi (MoS-ML) and Shri Rajkumar Ranjan Singh (MoS-RRS) joined the Ministry in July 2021. Ministers of State also traveled to various countries to participate in various bilateral and multilateral meetings.

During 2021-22, India continued its policy of deepening **strategic engagement with major powers**. The momentum of high level bilateral exchanges was maintained. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited India on 27-28 July 2021 and held bilateral discussions on enhancing India-US relations. India and Australia held their first 2+2 talks in person in New Delhi during the visit of Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne and Defence Minister Peter Dutton to India on 10-12 September 2021. India and Russia also held talks in the 2+2 format ahead of the India-Russia Annual Summit during the

visit of Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu on 5-6 December 2021. UK Foreign Secretary Elizabeth Truss, visited India from 22-24 October 2021 and held talks with EAM.

High-level incoming visits resumed after the hiatus caused by the pandemic. The Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen was the first Head of Government to visit India on a State visit on 9-11 October 2021. Both the Prime Ministers reviewed progress on the recently signed Green Strategic Partnership, and committed to expand cooperation in agriculture technology, supply chain management and health. Russian President Vladimir Putin visited India for the 21st Annual India-Russia Summit on 6 December 2021. India and Russia reaffirmed their special and privileged strategic partnership and committed to work together on issues of mutual interest.

The government continued to accord primacy to India's neighbours under its "Neighbourhood First" policy. Further progress and consolidation was witnessed in each of the relationships with countries in the region, including high-level visits.

The year 2021 marked the Golden Jubilee of the Liberation War of Bangladesh and 50 years of diplomatic relations between India and **Bangladesh**. At the invitation of the President of Bangladesh Abdul Hamid, President of India paid a State Visit to Bangladesh from 15-17 December 2021 to attend the 50th Vijay Diwas celebrations in Bangladesh, as the Guest of

Honour. India and Bangladesh enjoy robust and multifaceted bilateral cooperation in diverse areas, including trade and connectivity, energy and power, water resources, border management, defence and security, culture and people-to-people links. The visit of the President of India to Bangladesh on the historic occasion of the 50th Vijay Diwas is testimony to the high priority that both countries attach to each other and their desire to further strengthen this relationship based on shared values, mutual trust and understanding.

As part of the Swarnim Vijay Varsh, both countries celebrated Maitri Diwas on 6 December 2021 in India and Bangladesh. Maitri Diwas was also commemorated in 18 countries - Belgium, Canada, Egypt, Indonesia, Russia, Qatar, Singapore, United Kingdom, Australia, France, Japan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America.

Earlier, at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Prime Minister paid a State Visit to Bangladesh on 26-27 March 2021 as Chief Guest for the celebrations of the Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh in which India had played a significant role. This was the first foreign visit of the Prime Minister since the onset of the **Covid-19** pandemic in early 2020. Both the Prime Ministers inaugurated the 'Mitali-Express'- passenger train service on Dhaka-New Jalpaiguri-Dhaka route through the Chilahati-Haldibari rail link.



Prime Minister at the Quad Leaders' Summit in Washington DC in September 2021

In August 2021, **Afghanistan** witnessed a sea change in its political landscape. India's immediate priority was the safe evacuation of stranded Indian and Afghan nationals and to provide humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people. India launched Operation Devi Shakti to evacuate stranded people caught in the crossfire. Under Operation Devi Shakti, India

evacuated 438 Indian nationals; 112 Afghan nationals; and 15 other foreign nationals on 6 IAF and Air India flights. It also succeeded in bringing 2 Swaroops of the holy Guru Granth Sahib to safety. The Ministry also set up a Special Afghanistan Cell to coordinate repatriation and other requests from Afghanistan.

India continued to engage with the International community at various fora to find ways to help and support the people of Afghanistan. Prime Minister participated in the SCO CSTO Outreach Summit on 17 September 2021 and G-20 Extraordinary Summit on Afghanistan on 20 October 2021. EAM attended the Afghanistan conference, co-convened

by the US and Germany on 8 September 2021. India hosted the “Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan” on 10 November 2021, at the level of National Security Advisers / Secretaries of Security Councils and was chaired by National Security Adviser.



Prime Minister addressed the 1st India-Central Asia Virtual Summit hosted by India in January 2022

India had committed financial support of INR 4500 crore for the 12th Five Year Plan (FYP) of Bhutan (2018-23). BHIM UPI was launched in **Bhutan** on 13 July 2021. With this Bhutan became the first foreign country to adopt UPI standards for

its QR deployment and the first country in the immediate neighbourhood to accept mobile-based payments through the BHIM app.



President at the Victory Day and Mujib Borsho celebrations at the National Parliament of Bangladesh in December 2021

'India First' has become the stated policy of the Government of **Maldives**. India is now Maldives' second largest trade partner, with 13% of market share for Indian exports. In July 2021, India extended the agreement on quotas for restriction-free export of 9 essential commodities to the Maldives for next 3 years.

The developments in **Myanmar** since 1 February 2021 have

been a cause of concern for India. Restoration of democracy in Myanmar remains a priority. India has called for the cessation of violence, upholding rule of law and release of political detainees. As a friend of the people of Myanmar, India has continued with humanitarian and development assistance in Myanmar. On 22-23 December 2021, Foreign Secretary visited Myanmar and reviewed the bilateral developments.



Prime Minister held bilateral talks with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during his visit to Bangladesh in March 2021

India continued to progress on its multifaceted relations with **Nepal**. During the year, India and Nepal signed a Letter of Exchange (LoE) to the India-Nepal Rail Services Agreement (RSA), which enabled all authorized cargo train operators including private container train operators to carry Nepal's container and other freight. India also handed over the 34.9 km long cross-border rail link connecting Jayanagar (in Bihar) to Kurtha (in Nepal) to the Government of Nepal.

Despite the disruptions posed by Covid-19 pandemic, India and **Sri Lanka** remained engaged to further strengthen their age-old bilateral ties. High-level exchanges continued with the visit of Foreign Secretary and the Chief of Army Staff of India to Sri Lanka in October 2021. The development partnership between India and Sri Lanka witnessed the ongoing implementation of projects under four Lines of Credit. Twenty passenger railway coaches were supplied to Sri Lanka in September 2021 under LoC assistance. India commissioned a new Line of Credit worth USD 100 million to Sri Lanka for projects in the solar energy sector in June 2021.

India's approach of seeking closer contacts, building stronger connectivity and expanding cooperation saw greater support and acceptance among our partners in the neighbourhood. However, normalisation of our relations with Pakistan was undermined as Pakistan continued to support cross-border infiltration and ceasefire violations. India, as a result of proactive outreach with the international community, successfully thwarted Pakistan's misleading attempts to present an alarmist picture of the situation of the region and interfere in

the internal affairs of India. India seeks normal relations with all its neighbours including Pakistan. Our consistent position is that bilateral issues should be addressed peacefully in an environment free from terror, hostility and violence.

India's engagement with **China** is complex. The two sides have agreed to manage their differences and not allow differences on any issue to become disputes. Further, the two sides agreed that pending the final settlement of the boundary question, maintenance of peace and tranquility in the border areas is an essential basis for the overall development of the bilateral relationship. However, since April-May 2020 the Chinese side undertook several attempts to unilaterally alter the status quo along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Western Sector, which seriously disturbed the peace and tranquility along the LAC in the Western Sector. These attempts were invariably met with an appropriate response from Indian Armed Forces. However, the continued unilateral attempts by China to change the status quo have impacted the bilateral relationship since then.

EAM met State Councillor and Foreign Minister of China Mr. Wang Yi on 16 September 2021 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on the sidelines of the 21st SCO Meeting of the Head of States. The two Ministers exchanged views on the border situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh. The two had also met earlier in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on the sidelines of the SCO Foreign Ministers' meeting in July 2021.

Military and diplomatic officials of the two sides are meeting

regularly to continue their discussions on resolving the remaining issues at the earliest. Both sides agreed that a prolongation of the existing situation was not in the interest of either side as it was impacting the relationship in a negative manner.

In 2021-22, India and **Japan** expanded their bilateral and multilateral engagement, further strengthening the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. The Agreement on Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services between the Self-Defence Forces of Japan and the Indian Armed Forces (or ACSA), which was signed on 9 September 2020, came into force on 11 July 2021. India, Japan and Australia formally launched the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) on 27 April 2021.

The historic and fraternal ties between India and the Gulf and West Asian countries have continued to deepen and strengthen in all areas in consonance with India's '**Think West**' Policy. India keenly collaborated with these countries in tackling the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

EAM visited UAE in April and November 2021, Kuwait in June 2021 and Qatar (on transit) in June 2021. EAM also met the Foreign Ministers of Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Yemen on the sidelines of multilateral meetings and other events. Minister of State - V Muraleedharan (MoS-VM) visited Bahrain in August-September 2021. India also hosted visits from Foreign Ministers of Bahrain in April 2021 and Saudi Arabia in September 2021, as well as the Secretary General of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in November 2021.

At the invitation of the Government of Iran, EAM visited Iran on 5-6 August 2021 to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the President-elect H.E. Ayatollah Sayyid Ebrahim Raisi. EAM held constructive meetings with the top Iranian leadership and discussed several issues, including the development of Shahid Behesti Terminal, Chabahar Port.

The year 2022 marks the 30 Years of diplomatic relations between India and Israel. EAM paid an official visit to Israel from 17-21 October 2021. During the visit, Israel signed the instrument of ratification of the International Solar Alliance.

India seeks to strengthen its historical ties with **Africa** for furthering South-South cooperation. Bilateral and multilateral engagement with African countries intensified during the year. India's diplomatic presence in Africa further increased with the opening of two more Missions during the year - in Mauritania and Liberia. The process for opening Diplomatic Missions in Guinea Bissau and Cabo Verde are in advanced stage and are likely to open later this year.

India continued its development partnership association with Africa by announcing various Lines of Credit. India assisted friendly African countries in overcoming the pandemic by providing 10 million, made in India, Covid-19 vaccines to 18 countries in the region. India also extended a Line of Credit (LoC) of USD 100 million to the Government of Angola in May 2021 to boost defence capabilities and infrastructure. In September 2021, India made the LoC Agreement effective for construction of a new Parliament Building in Eswatini at a cost of USD 108.28 million. MoS-VM visited Ghana in January

2021, Senegal in November 2021 and Gambia in November 2021 and held bilateral meetings with his counterparts.

India's relations with **European countries and the European Union (EU)** witnessed a renewed momentum with a number of high-level meetings and summits taking place in 2021-22 despite the limitations posed by Covid-19 pandemic. These include the virtual summits with the Netherlands in April 2021 and the United Kingdom in May 2021 and the first India-EU Leaders' Meeting in May 2021. Prime Minister also visited Rome (October 2021) and Glasgow (October-November 2021) to attend the G20 and COP26 Summits respectively where he held bilateral meetings with a number of leaders from Western European countries including the UK, France, Germany, Spain, Italy as well as the Presidents of the EU Council and the EU Commission.

High level political exchanges continued in 2021 despite the constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The India-Sweden Virtual Summit meeting took place between Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven on 5 March 2021. Prime Minister and the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte held a Virtual Summit on 9 April 2021. The two leaders agreed on instituting a 'Strategic Partnership on Water' to further deepen the Indo-Dutch cooperation in water related sectors.

India and the UK held a Virtual Summit on 4 May 2021. Prime Minister and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson adopted an ambitious India-UK Roadmap 2030 to steer cooperation for the next 10 years and elevate bilateral ties to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership'. The two Prime Ministers emphasized that enhanced India-UK bilateral cooperation can not only reap mutual benefits but also be a global force for good to revive lives and livelihoods, promote peace and prosperity around the world. The two leaders also launched an 'Enhanced Trade Partnership' (ETP) to tap into the full trade potential between the two countries through negotiating a comprehensive FTA and set a target of more than doubling bilateral trade by 2030.

The India-Finland Virtual Summit meeting between Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Finland Sanna Marin took place on 16 March 2021. During the summit meeting, the two leaders expressed their desire to further expand and diversify the relationship across sectors like emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence, 5G/6G, and quantum computing.

During 2021, EAM visited Greece, Slovenia, Denmark and Croatia. EAM also had virtual and telephonic consultations with his counterparts from Switzerland, Denmark, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Norway and Poland. MoS-ML led the Indian delegation to the High Level Commemorative Meeting to mark the 60th anniversary of the Non-Aligned Movement held at Belgrade on 11-12 October 2021. MoS-ML also paid an official visit to Switzerland from 28-30 September 2021. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia Nikola Selaković paid an official visit to India on 19-20 September 2021, as a special envoy of the President of Serbia.

In 2021, there was a sustained momentum in India's traditionally close ties with Russia and other countries in the **Eurasian region**. EAM visited Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz

Republic, Uzbekistan, Armenia and Georgia for bilateral meetings as well as to attend multilateral events. EAM handed over the holy relic of St. Queen Ketevan to the Georgian side, during his visit to Georgia on 9-10 July 2021. Foreign Minister

of Uzbekistan Vladimir Norov visited New Delhi on 24-25 February 2021. MoS-ML visited Uzbekistan from 23-26 September 2021.



Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Sweden at the India-Sweden Virtual Summit held in March 2021

The **Latin American and Caribbean (LAC)** region remained an important area of focus for Indian foreign policy during the year. India continued its efforts to strengthen and diversify its relationship with the LAC countries despite the restrictions imposed by the global pandemic. On the sidelines of UNGA at New York, EAM held separate bilateral meetings with his counterparts from the Dominican Republic, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, Nicaragua. In June 2021, EAM met the Argentine

Foreign Minister on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting. EAM met Foreign Ministers of Nicaragua and Bolivia in Tehran in August 2021. EAM paid an official visit to Mexico from 26-28 September 2021. MoS-VM paid an official visit to Guatemala from 4-6 July 2021 and MoS-ML paid an official visit to Colombia from 4-6 September 2021. Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia Marta Lucia Ramirez visited India from 1-3 October 2021.



Prime Minister at the 13th BRICS Summit hosted by India held in September 2021

India is committed to reformed **multilateralism** which takes into account human-centric globalization and the current global realities. **India's Presidency in the United Nations Security Council** in August 2021 was notable for a number

of firsts. It was the first time that the Security Council, on which India is currently serving, debated the increasingly important subject of maritime security under the agenda item of international peace and security. India is a maritime

nation with a strong understanding of the challenges of maritime security. It is therefore appropriate that the United Nations Security Council for the first time adopted an outcome document, a Presidential Statement, on the subject of Maritime Security, and did so unanimously, under Indian presidency. Most notably, when Prime Minister presided

over the United Nations Security Council debate “Enhancing Maritime Security”, he became the first Prime Minister of India to chair a debate in the Council. He used this occasion to propose a set of five principles as a framework for international cooperation in maritime security.



Prime Minister chaired the UNSC High-Level Open Debate on “Enhancing Maritime Security - A Case For International Cooperation” in August 2021.

India held the rotating **BRICS Chairship** in 2021 for the third time after 2012 and 2016. India’s Chairship in 2021 coincided with the 15th anniversary of BRICS. India chose the overall theme “BRICS@15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus”.

Grasping the opportunities of the post-pandemic reality meant a reorientation of **economic diplomacy** as a part of the Atmanirbhar Abhiyan. Efforts were made to promote India as a reliable, dependable and open location for industry that requires risk-controlled and resilient supply chains. Despite the pandemic, India attracted record FDI inflows of US \$77 billion in 2020-21. In 2021, Indian missions and posts abroad worked to implement the government’s vision of making India a hub for global supply chains. In line with Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, efforts were made to promote India as a reliable, dependable and open location for industry. India concluded the landmark Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) with Mauritius in February 2021. India also launched the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations in September 2021.

In 2021, the Ministry organized various **flagship conferences** and public diplomacy events such as Raisina Dialogue, Indian Ocean Conference, and Global Technology Summit. Prime Minister inaugurated Raisina Dialogue through a video message on 13 April 2021. President Paul Kagame from Rwanda and PM Mette Frederiksen from Denmark joined the inaugural session as chief guests. UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, delivered a virtual special address at the 6th edition of the Global Technology Summit held from 14-16 December 2021, in a hybrid format.

The welfare of **overseas Indian citizens** and nationals remains a high priority for the Ministry. In July 2021, MoS -VM launched the Pre-Departure Orientation Training (PDOT) portal for migrant workers. PDOT is one of the several

initiatives and mechanisms introduced by the Ministry to ensure a safe, orderly, legal and humane migration process within the framework of our motto ‘*Surakshit Jaaye, Prashikshit Jaaye, Vishwas ke Saath Jaaye*’.

The **MEA Internship Policy 2021** was launched with an aim to make the programme more transparent, structured, objective, inclusive, diverse, focused and rewarding.

There were several significant **cultural diplomatic achievements** during the year. India was elected to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for 2021-25. Durga Puja was added to UNESCO’s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity; Srinagar has been added to UNESCO’s creative Cities Network as a creative city for crafts and folk art; Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple in Telangana and ‘Dholavira: A Harappan City’ in Gujarat were inscribed as UNESCO’s World Heritage Sites.

There were also several significant **achievements in international appointments** during the year. India was re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation Council. The CAG of India was selected as the External Auditor of the International Atomic Energy Agency, (IAEA) for a six-year term (2022-27) following a highly contested election. India was elected to the Council of Administration and the Postal Operations Council of the Universal Postal Union. Indian candidates were elected to the Interpol HQ Executive Committee and the International Law Commission. The International Solar Alliance has been granted observer status by the UN General Assembly.

India has traversed a long journey since its independence in 1947. To mark 75 years of India’s journey, the Ministry and Missions and Posts abroad celebrated “**Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**.” Each of our missions abroad has been showcasing India’s glorious history, culture and achievements.

The following pages comprehensively flesh the trends mentioned above by chronicling the details of our bilateral

and multilateral engagements, as well as the activities of the service and support arms of the Ministry of External Affairs.

India's Neighbours

Afghanistan

India and Afghanistan are connected together by centuries of historical, people to people and cultural relations. As a neighbouring country, India is concerned about the domestic developments in Afghanistan and its external repercussions.

In August 2021, Afghanistan witnessed changes in its political landscape. India's immediate priority was safe evacuation of stranded Indians and Afghans and to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan.

To safely evacuate Indian and Afghan nationals, *Operation Devi Shakti* was started along with the establishment of a 24x7 Special Afghanistan Cell in the Ministry.

India continued to engage with the international community at various fora to find ways to help and support the people of Afghanistan. India has been at the forefront to support a pivotal role of the UN in Afghanistan.

In this regard, Prime Minister participated in the SCO CSTO Outreach Summit on 17 September 2021 and G-20 Extraordinary Summit on Afghanistan on 20 October. EAM attended the Afghanistan conference, co-convened by the US and Germany on 8 September. He also attended a high-level event on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan organized by UNHCR on 13 September. India hosted the "Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan" on 10 November 2021. The Dialogue was held at the level of National Security Advisers / Secretaries of Security Councils and was chaired by National Security Adviser.

During the year, India has sent four consignments of medical aid to Afghanistan that include vaccines to fight the pandemic.

In the last 20 years, India's developmental partnership with Afghanistan has been centered around five pillars, namely, large infrastructure projects; human resource development and capacity building; humanitarian assistance; High impact community development projects; and enhancing trade and investment through air and land connectivity.

Bangladesh

The India-Bangladesh relationship is an important element of India's "Neighbourhood First" policy. The year 2021 was of special significance as both countries celebrated 50 years of diplomatic relations, five decades of Bangladesh's independence and the birth centenary of its Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The year was marked by several high-level exchanges and visits between both countries. Prime Minister visited Bangladesh in March 2021 for his first outgoing visit since the outbreak of Covid-19. President of India paid a State Visit to Bangladesh from 15-17 December 2021, to attend the 50th Vijay Diwas celebrations in Bangladesh, as the Guest of Honour.

India and Bangladesh celebrated 6 December 2021 as "Maitri Diwas" (Friendship Day) in New Delhi, Dhaka and 18 other world capitals, to commemorate the day on which India extended diplomatic recognition to Bangladesh in 1971.

Enhancing connectivity has been a common objective of both sides. The *Haldibari-Chilahati* rail link was operationalised on 1 August 2021. Movement of cargo trains has already started using this link and it will also be utilized to run the third cross-border passenger train service 'Mitali Express' on the *Jalpaiguri* (India) - *Dhaka* (Bangladesh) route. The 'Maitri Sethu' bridge over River Feni in Tripura was completed and inaugurated by both Prime Ministers in 2021, thus providing enhanced road connectivity between India's North Eastern Region and Bangladesh.

Despite Covid-19 related disruptions, bilateral trade grew at an unprecedented rate of 14% from USD 9.46 billion in FY 2019-20 to USD 10.78 billion in FY 2020-21. Other areas including defence, connectivity, and development cooperation also received a boost.

Cooperation between the two countries to combat the pandemic continued throughout 2021. India gifted 3.3 million Covishield vaccines to Bangladesh to assist in its ongoing effort to fight the pandemic. This was the largest tranche of Made-in-India Covid-19 vaccines gifted to any country by India.

Bhutan

The multifaceted relationship between India and Bhutan witnessed further deepening in 2021-22. Traditional as well as new areas of cooperation, including hydropower, ICT, health, culture, agriculture, space, tertiary education, digital and financial connectivity etc. were further reinforced, strengthening the mutually beneficial friendship between the two countries.

Hydropower cooperation forms an important pillar of Indo-Bhutan cooperation and this area saw steady progress in 2021. Bilateral meetings for the Punatsangchhu-II Hydro Project and Mangdechhu Hydro Project were held in September 2021. Both Governments are also working on implementation of the 1200 MW Punatsangchhu-I project.

India had committed financial support of INR 4500 crore for the 12th Five Year Plan (FYP) of Bhutan (2018-23). It comprises INR 2800 crore for Project Tied Assistance, INR 850 crore for High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) and INR 850 crore towards Program Grant. India has also committed a 'Transitional Trade Support Facility' of INR 400 crore, to be provided over the 12th FYP of Bhutan. Over 82 large and intermediate projects and 524 HICDPs in the areas of infrastructure development, industries, agriculture, e-governance, community development, health, education and capacity building, have been identified by the two sides and are at various stages of implementation.

BHIM UPI was launched in Bhutan on 13 July 2021 fulfilling a commitment made in the Joint Statement issued during Prime Minister's visit to Bhutan in August 2019. With this launch, Bhutan became the first foreign country to adopt UPI standards for its QR deployment and the first country in the immediate neighbourhood to accept mobile-based payments through the BHIM app.

India remains Bhutan's largest trading partner. In 2020-21, the bilateral trade reached a target of USD 1083 million, of which, India's exports to Bhutan comprised USD 694 million and India's imports from Bhutan amounted to USD 389 million.

Covid-19 related assistance also continued in 2021, with 400,000 doses of Covishield vaccines sent as grant assistance to Bhutan in March 2021. On 11 May 2021, Prime Minister spoke with the Bhutanese Prime Minister Lotay Tshering, expressing solidarity in the joint efforts to combat the Covid-19 pandemic.

Maldives

For India, the Maldives has always been a close and important maritime neighbour. Multifaceted ties between the two countries have strengthened despite the pandemic related disruptions.

High level engagements continued with EAM visiting Maldives

in February 2021 and two visits by the Foreign Minister of Maldives to India in April and July 2021. Prime Minister and President Solih had telephonic conversation in July 2021.

Bilateral cooperation with Maldives includes the creation of people-friendly infrastructure – housing, water and sanitation, health and education, ports, roads and stadiums. It also includes maritime security; connectivity and people to people exchanges.

India gifted 200,000 doses of Covishield vaccines to the Maldives in January - February 2021 and this set the stage for a rapid and successful vaccination drive in the Maldives. Today, more than 90% of the eligible population in the Maldives is vaccinated. This has enabled the Maldivian economy to get back on a path to recovery.

India has emerged as Maldives' second largest trade partner, with around 13% market share for Indian exports. In July 2021, India extended the agreement on quotas for restriction-free export of 9 essential commodities to the Maldives for the next 3 years.

India's "Neighborhood First" policy and Maldives's "India First" policy work in tandem to tackle shared concerns and advance mutual interests.



EAM visited Maldives in February 2021

Myanmar

India and Myanmar share civilizational, historical and people to people ties. Myanmar is India's land link to ASEAN and a vital component of both India's "Neighbourhood First" and "Act East" policies.

India has expressed deep concern at the developments in Myanmar since 1 February 2021. India has called for the restoration of democracy, upholding the rule of law, release of political detainees and the cessation of violence. As a friend of the people of Myanmar, India has continued to extend humanitarian and development assistance to Myanmar.

Foreign Secretary paid a two-day working visit to Myanmar in December 2021.

India's total bilateral medical assistance to Myanmar for combating Covid-19 amounts to approximately USD 2.3 million. In addition, India has also provided medical assistance worth USD 200,000 to Myanmar through the ASEAN Centre for Humanitarian Assistance. India has also announced a grant of 10,000 tonnes of rice and wheat to Myanmar.

Nepal

India and Nepal share close and friendly relations

characterized by age-old historical and cultural linkages, an open border and deep-rooted people-to-people contacts. In consonance with the 'Neighbourhood First' Policy, there has been a continued momentum in the bilateral ties with Nepal promoting greater connectivity, be it physical, economic, energy, digital or cultural, besides focusing on infrastructure development and capacity building.

During 2021-22, the two Prime Ministers have held two telephonic conversations, apart from meeting at Glasgow, UK on the sidelines of COP26 Summit in November 2021.

The engagement between India and Nepal was further strengthened with high-level visits and virtual meetings of various bilateral mechanisms. EAM and the Foreign Minister of Nepal Narayan Khadka had a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of UNGA in New York on 25 September 2021. Chief of Army Staff of Nepal, Gen. Prabhu Sharma visited India in November 2021 and EAM virtually delivered his remarks at the International Conference on Reconstruction of Nepal (ICRN) on 8 December 2021, as the largest partner of Nepal's recovery in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in 2015.

India remains Nepal's largest trade partner. India provides transit for almost the entire third country trade of Nepal. India's exports to Nepal have grown over 8 times in the past 10 years while exports from Nepal have almost doubled.

Despite the Covid-19 restrictions, various joint dialogue mechanisms were held during this period including Joint Project Monitoring Committee (JPMC) meeting on Earthquake reconstruction in September 2021, talks between Border Guard Forces of the two countries, India-Nepal Working Groups on Defence and Security issues and Railway Cooperation in October 2021 apart from 15th edition of Joint Military Training Exercise *Surya Kiran* in September-October 2021.

To help Nepal cope with the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, a Medical Oxygen Plant based on India's indigenous technology was installed at B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences in Dharan in August 2021. This plant has the capacity to serve 200 patients simultaneously, apart from ensuring uninterrupted supply of Medical Oxygen to Nepal.

India-assisted development projects achieved substantial progress. A 34.9 km-long cross-border rail link connecting Jaynagar (Bihar) to Kurtha (Nepal) was handed over to Nepal Government on 22 October 2021 and all the 50,000 reconstructed housing units in Nuwakot and Gorkhali districts were handed over on 15 November 2021.

Pakistan

India desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan. India's consistent position is that issues, if any, between India and Pakistan should be resolved bilaterally and peacefully, in an atmosphere free of terror and violence. The onus is on Pakistan to create such a conducive environment. Pakistan continues to sponsor cross border terrorism against India; restrict normal trade, connectivity and people-to-people

exchanges; and engage in hostile and fabricated propaganda to vilify India.

The year 2021 saw a positive development in the form of the renewed ceasefire understanding between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan in February. The understanding held quite well for the first few months, but Pakistan again upped the ante in terms of cross-border infiltrations and ceasefire violations from July 2021.

During the year, India, as a result of proactive outreach with the international community, successfully negated Pakistan's attempts to paint an alarmist picture of the situation in the region; interfere in India's internal affairs and internationalise bilateral issues. It has been made clear to Pakistan that India will not compromise on issues relating to national security and will take firm and decisive steps to deal with all attempts to undermine India's security and territorial integrity.

In view of the improved Covid-19 situation, India re-opened the Kartarpur Corridor on 17 November 2021. More than 1500 religious pilgrims have used the Kartarpur Corridor to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan since the re-opening of the Corridor.

Sri Lanka

Despite the disruptions posed by Covid-19 pandemic, India and Sri Lanka remained engaged to further strengthen their age-old bilateral ties.

High-level exchanges continued with the visit of Foreign Secretary and the Chief of Army Staff of India to Sri Lanka in October 2021. The Police Chiefs' Dialogue took place in April 2021; the 5th High Level meeting between Indian and Sri Lankan Coast Guards in June 2021; the JWG on Tourism met in October 2021; the Joint Military exercise- *Mitra Shakti* took place in October 2021 etc. These high-level institutional interactions kept the momentum of the bilateral engagements going.

India and Sri Lanka enjoy a comprehensive economic and trade partnership which continues to develop and grow stronger. The bilateral merchandise trade for the first six months of FY 2021-22 (April to September) stood at USD 2.44 billion. During these six months, merchandise exports from India to Sri Lanka amounted to USD 2.06 billion, while India's merchandise imports from Sri Lanka stood at USD 0.37 billion.

India continued to assist Sri Lanka in its fight against Covid-19 pandemic, and to mitigate its adverse impact and its developmental priorities. India provided more than USD 500mn in foreign currency swaps to strengthen Sri Lanka's foreign reserves, taking the total up to USD 900mn. India also extended the repayment time frame for the USD 500mn debt of Sri Lanka under the Asian Clearance Arbitration.

Enhanced cooperation was also witnessed in the areas of trade and investment, defence and culture.

Sri Lanka occupies a central place in India's "Neighbourhood First" policy and the SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in

the Region) policy. Accordingly, relations between the two countries witnessed positive trends in 2021-22.

Indian Ocean Region

India's engagement with countries in the Indian Ocean Region continued undeterred in 2021-22 despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

Comoros

The India-Comoros bilateral relationship gained further momentum during 2021-22. A 3-member Comorian delegation led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Dhohir Dhoulkamal, participated in Aero India 2021 and IOR Defence Ministers Conclave in Bengaluru from 3-5 February 2021. On the sidelines of the event, the Comorian Foreign Minister also had a bilateral meeting with Raksha Mantriji. As announced during the visit of the Vice President to Comoros in October 2019, a special consignment of 1000 MT of rice was delivered to Comoros on-board INS Jalashwa in March 2021. Twelve diplomats from Comoros participated in the 1st Special Course for Diplomats in the Indian Ocean Region from 19 September – 2 October 2021 organised by the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service.

Madagascar

India-Madagascar relations further intensified in 2021-22. INS Jalashwa visited the port of Antsiranana from 12-13 March 2021 carrying the 5-member Indian Navy Mobile Training Team to train the Malagasy Armed Forces. As a goodwill gesture, and in response to the appeal made by Government of Madagascar to provide humanitarian assistance to deal with its drought situation, 1000 tonnes of rice and 100,000 tablets of hydroxychloroquine were despatched on board by INS Jalashwa in March 2021 as humanitarian assistance.

Minister of National Defence of Madagascar, Lt. General Rakotonirina Leon Jean Richard led a 4-member delegation to participate in Aero India 2021 and IOR Defence Ministers' Conclave in Bengaluru from 3-5 February 2021. During the visit, the Malagasy Defence Minister held a bilateral meeting with Raksha Mantriji and discussed steps for furthering defence cooperation between the two countries. Ten diplomats from Madagascar participated in the 1st Special Course for Diplomats in the Indian Ocean Region from 19 September – 2 October 2021 organised by the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service.

Mauritius

India's relationship with Mauritius gathered further momentum in 2021-22. EAM visited Mauritius on 22-23 February 2021 and reviewed all aspects of bilateral relations, and the implementation of various infrastructure projects

by India in Mauritius. EAM also held discussions on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest including India's assistance to Mauritius. During the visit, several key MoUs were signed. The landmark Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) was signed on 22 February 2021 during the visit. Mauritius commenced its Covid-19 vaccination campaign on 26 January 2021 with the 100,000 doses of vaccines gifted by India.

The next phase of the India-assisted Mauritius Metro Express project, from Quatre Bornes to Rose Hill, was launched on 20 June 2021 by Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth. The handing over ceremony of the Passenger Variant Dornier (PVD) Aircraft on lease from the Indian Navy to the Mauritius Police Force (MPF), on gratis basis and exchange of contracts of the new PVD was held at the SSR International Airport, Mauritius, on 13 September 2021.

Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth joined Prime Minister in launching the 'Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS)' initiative on 2 November 2021 on the sidelines of the COP26 in Glasgow.

Seychelles

India's relations with Seychelles deepened in 2021-22 with the High Level virtual meeting between Prime Minister and President of the Republic of Seychelles Wavel Ramkalawan that took place on 8 April 2021. The event featured the joint e-inauguration of the new Magistrates' Court built with Indian grant assistance of USD 3.45 million; the handing over of 48.9 m Fast Patrol Vessel, PS Zoroaster ; the handing over of a 1 MW Solar Power Plant and the inauguration of 10 High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) under Indian grant assistance and addresses by both the leaders.

Seychelles was the first country in the IOR region to have received 'Made in India' vaccines. India donated 50,000 doses of Covishield to Seychelles on 22 January 2021. On 23 August 2021, equipment for setting up of an e-Vidyabharati and Arogyabharati (e-VBAB) centre to provide tele-education and tele-medicine was handed over to the Government of Seychelles.

Consolidation Cooperation Visa Waiver Agreement for Holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports between India and Seychelles was signed on 24 May 2021.



'Made in India' vaccines delivered by India to Seychelles in January 2021

South East Asia & Oceania

India's engagement with Southeast Asian countries and Oceania takes place under the framework of the Act East Policy. Key elements of Act East Policy continued to gain momentum in 2021-22 with growing economic cooperation, cultural ties and development of strategic relationships with countries in the region through continuous engagement at bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels.

Despite the obstacles posed due to the second wave of Covid-19, relations between India and all the countries in Southeast Asia and Oceania continued on an upward trajectory with high-level meetings happening virtually.

High-level in-person meetings happened on the sidelines of UNGA in September 2021, COP-26 and G20 in October 2021. India and the countries in the region reviewed aspects of bilateral cooperation including political, defence, security and strategic, economic and culture, and exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest while exploring new opportunities for partnership to support economic revival, especially in the context of the pandemic.

While supporting each other's interests at the multilateral fora, India and the countries in the region renewed their commitment for shared security, prosperity and growth for

all in the region. Development cooperation, human resource development, and capacity building activities continued to play a pivotal role in furthering the bilateral relationship with the countries in the region. Indian Missions and Posts in the region organised many special events and activities under 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' in addition to the regular activities.

India received timely support in the form of Liquid Medical Oxygen, oxygen concentrators, and oxygen tanks/cylinders from the Southeast Asian countries during the second wave of Covid-19. India's diaspora in these countries also grouped together to send timely medical supplies to India. India generously reciprocated when the third wave hit some Southeast Asian countries, facilitating the donation and export of Covid-19 related medicine and material.

India operated hundreds of flights under the Vande Bharat Mission (VBM) to various countries in Southeast Asia to bring back a number of stranded Indians. Similarly, India also facilitated smooth return of many nationals from the countries in Southeast Asia. India and the countries in the region discussed possibilities of setting up air bubble arrangements and establishing a mutually agreed protocol on vaccine and quarantine requirements.

Indo-Pacific

During 2021-22, despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, India intensified its engagement with various Indo-Pacific frameworks. These included the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the East Asia Summit (EAS), the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC), the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).

The Indo-Pacific, being one of the most populous and economically active regions of the world remained at the centre of the geopolitical discourse during this period. India strengthened its partnerships in the region, further building upon engagement including historical, cultural, maritime and economic linkages.

The 23rd ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting was held virtually on 28 April 2021. The 11th MGC Foreign Ministers'

Meeting, co-chaired by EAM and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cambodia Prak Sokhonn, was held virtually on 21 July 2021. The meeting marked the 20th anniversary of MGC. On 4 August 2021, EAM co-chaired the ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister of Thailand, Mr. Don Pramudwinai. The meeting reviewed the status of ongoing cooperation between ASEAN and India in all areas including connectivity, education, capacity building and maritime cooperation. It also reviewed the progress in the implementation of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2021-2025) and discussed the commemoration of the upcoming 30th anniversary of ASEAN-India relations in 2022.

On 27 October 2021, Prime Minister participated in the 16th East Asia Summit via videoconference hosted by Brunei. On 28 October 2021, Prime Minister co-chaired the 18th India-ASEAN Summit, held virtually, with Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei, the current Chair of ASEAN. The leaders

announced the Year 2022 as India-ASEAN Friendship Year to commemorate 30 years of ASEAN-India Partnership.

The 21st IORA Annual Council of Ministers' Meeting on 17 November 2021 was held in a hybrid format in Dhaka where Bangladesh took over IORA's Chairmanship from the UAE for the next two years. MoS-RRS represented India during this meeting. The 13th ASEM Summit with the theme "Strengthening Multilateralism for Shared Growth" was held virtually on 25-26 November 2021. Vice President led the Indian Delegation for the Summit.

India's engagement in the region continued to be directed by the Indo-Pacific vision of a free, open, inclusive and rules-based region as articulated by Prime Minister at Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in 2018 based on the policy of SAGAR - "Security and Growth for All in the Region".



MoS (RRS) at the 21st IORA Annual Council of Ministers' Meeting held in November 2021

East Asia

China

Over the past three decades, peace and tranquility in the border areas formed the basis for development of relations in other domains. While the year 2020 marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and China, the year also witnessed heightened tensions in the Western Sector of the India-China border areas.

From April-May 2020, there has been an enhanced deployment of troops and armaments by the Chinese side in the border areas and along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Western Sector. Since mid-May, the Chinese side has attempted to transgress the LAC in several areas of the Western Sector of the India-China border area. These attempts were invariably met with an appropriate response

from Indian Armed Forces.

EAM met State Councilor and Foreign Minister of China Mr. Wang Yi on 16 September 2021 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on the sidelines of the 21st SCO Meeting of the Head of States. The two Ministers exchanged views on the border situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh. The two had also met earlier in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on the sidelines of the SCO Foreign Ministers' meeting in July 2021.

Both sides agree that a prolongation of the existing situation was not in the interest of either side as it was impacting the relationship in a negative manner. Military and diplomatic officials of the two sides are meeting regularly to continue their discussions on resolving the remaining issues at the earliest.

Japan

The year witnessed increasing bilateral and multilateral engagement between India and Japan, and further strengthening of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. The two sides maintained the momentum in ties through virtual meetings and phone calls despite the pandemic. Prime Minister spoke to the then Japanese Prime Minister Suga on 26 April 2021, to exchange views on the management of the pandemic and for strengthening cooperation in the post-Covid-19 world. They also had their first in-person meeting on 23 September 2021 in Washington D.C. on the sidelines of the Quad Leaders' Summit.

EAM met the then Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu several times during the year including on 5 May 2021 on the sidelines of G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in London; on 29 June 2021 on the sidelines of G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting in Rome; and on 23 September 2021 on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The year also witnessed further strengthening of bilateral security and defence cooperation. The Agreement on Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services between the Self-Defence Forces of Japan and the Indian Armed Forces (or ACSA), which was signed on 9 September 2020, came into force on 11 July 2021.

Minister of Commerce and Industry along with the trade ministers of Japan and Australia formally launched the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) on 27 April 2021 in a virtual Trilateral Ministerial Meeting.

The 1st India-Japan Environmental Policy Dialogue was held virtually on 7 September 2021 between the Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment and Mr Koizumi Shinjiro, Minister of the Environment of Japan.

Joint efforts continued under the India-Japan Act East Forum for the development of the North Eastern Region of India through connectivity projects.

The year saw continued focus on expanding people-to-people exchanges. On 27 June 2021, Prime Minister inaugurated a Zen Garden and Kaizen Academy at Ahmedabad Management Association (AMA) via video conference.

Gulf

The historic and fraternal ties between India and the Gulf countries have continued to deepen and strengthen in all areas in consonance with India's 'Think West' Policy. Both sides have collaborated closely to tackle the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the second Covid-19 wave in India, the Gulf countries extended quick and critical support in the form of oxygen and other medical supplies to India. They also continued to take care of the Indian community in their respective countries including through the provision of Covid-19 vaccines. India and the Gulf countries also worked together to ease travel

Republic of Korea (ROK)

India and the Republic of Korea, as Special Strategic Partners, continued to have high level engagements in 2021-22. EAM had a telephonic conversation with his ROK counterpart Chung Eui-yong in March 2021, which was followed by their meeting on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York in September 2021.

Commerce and Industry Minister held a bilateral meeting with ROK Trade Minister Yeo Han-koo on the sidelines of the G20 Trade Ministers Meeting in Italy in October 2021. Environment Minister met with his ROK counterpart Han Jeong-ae at Glasgow on the sidelines of COP26 in November 2021. Raksha Rajya Mantri, through a video message, gave India's pledge to the UN Peacekeeping operations during the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting held in Seoul in December 2021.

ROK Defence Minister Suh Wook visited India in March 2021. During this visit, India-Korea Friendship Park in Delhi was inaugurated.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in December 1973, relations between India and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have been cordial. India has been consistently supportive of efforts to bring about peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula through dialogue and diplomacy.

Mongolia

The year 2021 marked the 66th anniversary of diplomatic ties between India and Mongolia, during which both sides maintained frequent exchanges and resumed physical interactions at high-levels. EAM held a bilateral meeting with Mongolian Foreign Minister Battsetseg Batmunkh on 12 October 2021 on the margins of the 6th CICA Foreign Ministers meeting in Kazakhstan. Both Foreign Ministers briefly met again on 03 November 2021 on the sidelines of the COP26 Summit in Glasgow. MoS-RRS paid an official visit to Mongolia from 23-26 November 2021, which was the first official visit from India to Mongolia since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

restrictions on account of Covid-19 so that people could travel back and forth for business, employment, family or tourism purposes.

The close interaction of India with the leadership of the Gulf countries also continued, both through virtual meetings and physical visits. Prime Minister spoke to and exchanged letters with several Gulf leaders during 2021. EAM visited UAE in April, November, and December 2021, Kuwait in June 2021 and Qatar (on transit) in June 2021, to hold talks with his counterparts and other ministers. EAM also met the Foreign Ministers of Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Yemen on the sidelines of various multilateral meetings.

MoS-VM visited Bahrain in August-September 2021, called on the King and Crown Prince/Prime Minister, and met several Ministers. India also hosted visits from Foreign Ministers of Bahrain in April 2021 and Saudi Arabia in September 2021, as well as the Secretary General of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in November 2021.

Though the Covid-19 pandemic affected trade between India and the Gulf countries, there is mutual confidence that trade will be back to normal levels and resume their upward trajectory post Covid-19. India continued to be an attractive investment destination for the Gulf countries. Both sides also looked for new vistas to further strengthen their energy relationship.

A key highlight on the trade and investment side was the launch of India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations in September 2021. Also, during the visit of GCC Secretary General to India, both sides decided to set up a Joint Working Group to examine all aspects of their economic relationship leading to the start of

negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement.

Iran

India's relations with Iran are unique and historic. Iran is an important partner and a close neighbour. During 2021-22, there was an intensification in bilateral engagement. EAM visited Tehran twice and held constructive meetings with the Iranian leadership.

The two countries continued their engagement in the field of healthcare, and a meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Health was held in April 2021. India gifted Covid-19 vaccines to Iran, for Afghan refugees sheltered there.

Cooperation in the field of regional connectivity continued, including development of Shahid Beheshti Terminal, Chabahar Port, along the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC). The Joint Working Group on Ports and Maritime Cooperation met in July 2021.

West Asia and North Africa (WANA)

Despite the constraints of Covid-19, India's relations with the countries in the West Asia & North Africa (WANA) region did not lack momentum. High-level interactions at various

levels continued to keep the momentum of engagement with these countries – through phone calls, virtual meetings, and exchange of visits.



1st Arab-India Energy Forum held under the Co-Chairship of India and the Kingdom of Morocco in June 2021

Prime Minister met Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh on the sidelines of COP26 Climate Summit in Glasgow on 2 November 2021. EAM paid a bilateral visit to Israel on 17-21 October 2021. He met with Foreign Ministers of Syria, Egypt and Algeria on the margins of the 76th UN General Assembly in New York in September 2021. EAM also met Foreign Minister of Jordan twice and spoke to the Foreign Ministers of Morocco and Sudan by phone during the year.

India and Israel celebrate 30 years of the upgradation of diplomatic relations from 29 January 2022, the date when the

announcement was officially made in 1992.

Since the onset of Covid-19 pandemic last year, the cooperation between India and the WANA region has been steered at the highest level. India provided vaccines, medicine and equipment to countries in the WANA region. During the second wave of Covid-19 in India this year, countries such as Israel and Egypt stood by India and sent oxygen generators, cylinders, ventilators and other medical items.

The first edition of the Arab-India Energy Forum, under the co-chairship of India and Morocco, was held in a virtual format

on 8-9 June 2021. The inaugural session of the Forum was addressed by MoS (Independent Charge) for Power, New & Renewable Energy of India and Minister of Energy, Mines and Environment of Morocco.

Africa

Central and West Africa

The region covers 25 countries of west, northwest, central and southwest Africa. The region is home to Africa's largest population and fastest growing economies with huge reserves of energy, resources and minerals. India sources about 18% of its crude oil requirement from this region. All 25 West African countries continuously extended support to India's candidature in various elections at the United Nations and related international bodies.

During the year, despite travel restrictions due to Covid-19, the spirit of development and progress dominated India's relations with countries in Central and West Africa.. The region is an important source of energy supplies for India and the bilateral trade with the region gradually increased by 13% since 2014. The total bilateral trade during the year 2020-21 was USD 23.89 billion.

India is currently implementing a flagship project in tele-education and tele-medicine for Africa called e-Vidya Bharati Arogya Bharati Network Project (e-VBAB). So far, 19 African countries have signed MoUs and are participating in the project. The enrolments for online graduate and post-graduate programmes have commenced since February 2020, and so far, 3570 scholarships have been offered in 3 academic sessions.

Eurasia

In 2021-22, there was a sustained momentum in India's traditionally close ties with Russia and other countries in the Eurasian region despite the negative impacts of the pandemic. Bilateral cooperation was reinforced by intensive engagements under the multilateral umbrella through fora like the UN, BRICS, SCO, G-20, CICA and initiatives like the India-Central Asia Dialogue.

The special role of Russia in India's foreign policy was highlighted by the successful visit of the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, to India for the 21st India-Russia Annual Summit and the holding of the first India-Russia 2+2 Dialogue of Foreign and Defence Ministers, as well as the 20th meeting of India- Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation in New Delhi on 6 December 2021. Earlier, Prime Minister held two telephone conversations with the Russian President in 2021.

During the year, there were regular high-level exchanges between India and Russia at the Ministerial and senior official levels, including a number of virtual meetings. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov paid an official visit to India from 5-6 April 2021 while EAM visited Russia from 6-7 July 2021. The Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation

During the period, defence and security cooperation with WANA countries was further strengthened by way of formal mechanisms, visits, informal dialogues, joint exercises, etc.

The travel restrictions did not dampen India's Africa Outreach Policy, as India actively engaged with the countries in the region in a virtual format to conduct its scheduled engagements. EAM held telephonic conversations with his counterparts from several countries. MoS-VM visited Ghana in January 2021, Senegal in November 2021 and the Gambia in November 2021 and held bilateral meetings with his counterparts, and called on higher leadership.

India's diplomatic footprint in Africa expanded further with the opening of two more Missions during the year - in Mauritania and Liberia. Diplomatic Missions in Guinea Bissau and Cabo Verde are likely to be opened soon, for which requisite approvals have already been obtained.

India continued its development partnership association with Africa by announcing various lines of credit. India assisted friendly African countries in overcoming the pandemic by providing 10 million made in India Covid-19 vaccines to 18 countries in the region.

East and Southern Africa

India maintained its multifaceted and vibrant relations with all the countries in East and Southern Africa throughout 2021-22.. The engagements and bilateral cooperation with all the countries in the region deepened ties and imparted new energy to the relationships.

visited India for the High Level Inter-Governmental consultations on Afghanistan with the National Security Adviser from 7-8 September 2021, and then again for the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan on 10 November 2021. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas visited Russia from 1-5 September 2021 to participate in the 6th Eastern Economic Forum. Minister of Steel visited Moscow to attend the 'Russian Energy Week' from 14-15 October 2021.

There was an active engagement with the countries in the Eurasian region. EAM visited Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, Armenia and Georgia for bilateral meetings as well as to attend multilateral events. EAM handed over the holy relic of St. Queen Ketevan to the Georgian side, during his visit to Georgia on 9-10 July 2021. Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Vladimir Norov visited New Delhi on 24-25 February 2021. MoS-ML visited Uzbekistan from 23-26 September 2021. Secretaries of Security Councils of all the Central Asian countries took part in the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan in New Delhi on 10 November 2021. The 3rd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 19 December 2021 under the chairmanship of EAM. Ministers of Foreign Affairs

of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan took part in the meeting.

During the year, MoUs for implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) were signed with the Kyrgyz Republic and Turkmenistan. Prime Minister met the President of Ukraine on the sidelines of CoP-26 in Glasgow, UK on 2 November 2021. The two leaders discussed issues of bilateral cooperation. Ukrainian Defence Minister

led a delegation to the Aero-India Expo held in Bengaluru in February 2021.

Prime Minister hosted the first ever India-Central Asia Summit virtually on 27 January 2022, which was attended by Presidents of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Republic of Uzbekistan. The summit coincided with the 30th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Central Asian countries.



EAM and Raksha Mantri with their Russian counterparts at the India-Russia 2+2 Dialogue in December 2021

Europe & the European Union

India's relations with countries in Central Europe (CE) remained on a steady upward track characterised by warmth and progress in 2021-22. Rooted in cultural ties, relations with Central European countries have been free from any major irritants. India has received support from these countries at various multilateral fora. Within the EU, countries of CE play an important role. Regional groups within CE like the Visegrád Group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) and the Nordic group (Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland) also provide platforms for plurilateral exchanges with India. New opportunities for economic cooperation, especially in the areas of renewable energy, water management, circular economy, health & pharmaceuticals, artificial intelligence and digitalization have provided momentum to this traditionally close relationship.

High level political exchanges continued in 2021-22 despite the constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. India-Sweden Virtual Summit meeting took place between Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven on 5 March 2021, where bilateral and other regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest were discussed. The India-Sweden joint initiative Leadership Group on Industry Transition (LeadIT) continued to expand during the year. With USA joining the LeadIT in April 2021, it currently has 35 members including 16 countries and 19 companies.

The India-Finland Virtual Summit meeting between Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Finland Sanna Marin took place on 16 March 2021. During the summit meeting, the two leaders expressed their desire to further expand and diversify the relationship across areas like emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence, 5G/6G, and quantum computing.

In the first visit to India by a Head of Government post the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, Prime Minister of Denmark Mette Frederiksen was in India for a State Visit from 9-11 October 2021. During this visit both sides reviewed the progress in Green Strategic Partnership and agreed to further expand collaboration in the areas of agriculture technology, including food safety, cold chain, food processing, fertilizers, fisheries, aquaculture, etc. New areas of cooperation like Smart Water Resource Management, Waste to Best- creation of best resources from waste, and efficient supply chain management were also identified.

In a historic development, after a gap of 21 years, Prime Minister met His Holiness Pope Francis in a private audience at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican on 30 October 2021. During the meeting, the two leaders discussed the challenges posed by Covid-19 and climate change. The Pope appreciated India's assistance to countries in need during the pandemic.

During 2021, EAM visited Greece, Slovenia, Denmark and Croatia and held wide-ranging consultations with his counterparts on issues of mutual interest. EAM also had virtual and telephonic consultations with his counterparts from Switzerland, Denmark, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Norway and Poland.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia Nikola Selaković paid an official visit to India on 19-20 September 2021, as a special envoy of the President of Serbia. MoS-ML led the Indian delegation to the High Level Commemorative Meeting to mark the 60th anniversary of the Non-Aligned Movement held at Belgrade on 11-12 October 2021. MoS-ML also paid an official visit to Switzerland from 28-30 September 2021.

On 2 July 2021, MoS-VM held virtual consultations with the State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia, Ingrid Brockova. On 1 July 2021, MoS-VM had a virtual interaction with the Indian community in Romania, Moldova and Albania.

Several countries in Central Europe expressed solidarity with India during the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic. Exchanges also took place at the official level with respect to post-pandemic global economic recovery and vaccination efforts.

India's relations with West European countries and the European Union (EU) witnessed a renewed momentum with a number of high-level meetings and summits taking place in 2021-22 despite the limitations posed by Covid-19. These include the virtual summits with the Netherlands in April

2021 and the United Kingdom in May 2021 and the first India-EU Leaders' Meeting in May 2021. Prime Minister also visited Rome (October 2021) and Glasgow (October-November 2021) to attend the G20 and COP26 Summit respectively where he held bilateral meetings with a number of leaders from Western European countries including UK, France, Germany, Spain, Italy as well as the Presidents of the EU Council and EU Commission.

There was close cooperation on Covid-19 including on mutual recognition of vaccines and vaccine certificates. EU member states and the UK were among the first to respond to India's second Covid-19 wave crisis, promptly supplying critical medical equipment including oxygen concentrators and ventilators.

Economic relations were also put on a new growth trajectory with the formal launch of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with the UK in January 2022 and the resumption of negotiations on Trade and Investment Agreements with the EU. Sector specific strategic cooperation was actively pursued with the launch of the Strategic Partnership on Water with the Netherlands, Strategic Partnership on Energy Transition with Italy and the Connectivity Partnership with the EU.

New and emerging areas of cooperation include renewables, green hydrogen, digital, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing. India also successfully concluded Migration Mobility Partnerships (MMP) with the signing of the MoU on MMP with the UK, the agreement on labour mobility with Portugal, and the ratification of MMP agreement with France.

The Americas

United States of America

The India-US strategic partnership was further consolidated and strengthened in 2021 through regular and wide-ranging dialogues, interactions and collaboration across diverse sectors. Both sides exchanged visits and maintained the momentum of the bilateral agenda throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

Following the election of Joseph Biden as President, there was excellent early engagement with the new US Administration through phone calls and exchange of visits. US Deputy National Security Advisor, Secretary of Defence, Secretary of State, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate and Deputy Secretary of State visited India in 2021-22. From the Indian side, EAM and Minister of Finance, Foreign Secretary and Defence Secretary visited the US.

Prime Minister visited the US from 22-25 September 2021 for his first in-person bilateral meeting with President Biden. He also participated in the Quad Leaders Summits convened by President Biden.

The India-US defence and security partnership was cemented further with several bilateral mechanisms being convened to review progress and chart course for the future. The economic and commercial relationship registered a rebound in 2021. Despite the pandemic related travel restrictions, bilateral functional cooperation in diverse sectors forged ahead.

People-to-people ties maintained their vibrancy with the US continuing to be a favoured destination for Indian students and professionals.

During the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in India in 2021, the US stood shoulder to shoulder with India and deployed timely and substantial healthcare assistance to bolster efforts to combat the Covid-19 surge.

Canada

The India and Canada strategic partnership is underpinned by a shared commitment to democratic values, pluralism and rule of law. The bilateral agenda is anchored in expanding economic engagement, regular dialogue and long-standing people-to-people ties. Although Ministerial or official visits were not exchanged due to the Covid-19 pandemic, virtual interactions enabled the continuity of bilateral engagement.

In February 2021, the Prime Minister spoke to Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau on phone in the context of Canada's requirement of Covid-19 vaccines from India.

EAM spoke on the phone with the Foreign Minister of Canada Marc Garneau on 27 April 2021 and 1 September 2021. They had a virtual meeting on 5 May 2021 and met on 29 June 2021 in Matera, Italy, on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting.

Commerce and Industry Minister met Canada's Minister for International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development Mary Ng on 11 October 2021 in Sorrento, Italy on the margins of the G20 Ministerial meeting.

Bilateral trade was worth USD 2.968 billion from 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021. India's exports to Canada during this period were USD 1.982 billion and imports from Canada were USD 0.985 billion. Portfolio investments from Canada into India increased during this period. Both countries continued negotiations for the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA).

Flow of knowledge and talent is robust between both countries, with India poised to become the top source of foreign students, with 230,000 Indian students studying in Canada. The Covid-19 pandemic saw both sides assisting each other. India supplied Covishield vaccines, Paracetamol and Hydroxychloroquine medicines to Canada. During April-May 2021, Canada reciprocated with the supplies of critical medicines and oxygen related equipment.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region remained an important area of focus for Indian foreign policy during the year. India continued its efforts to strengthen and diversify its relationship with the LAC countries despite the restrictions imposed by the global pandemic. EAM undertook an official visit to Mexico from 26-28 September 2021. He participated in the commemorative events of the 200th anniversary of the consolidation of Mexican Independence, along with other world leaders. During the visit, EAM held bilateral talks with Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard and also called on the President of Mexico Manuel López Obrador, and interacted with the leading CEOs and the business community in the country. Mexico is India's 2nd largest trade partner in Latin America and is a member of UNSC alongside India for the period 2021-22.

On the sidelines of UNGA at New York, EAM held separate bilateral meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Dominican Republic Roberto Alvarez on 21 September 2021, with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile Andres Allamand on 22 September 2021, with the Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia Marta Lucía Ramírez, Foreign Minister of Venezuela Félix Plasencia, and Minister of

Foreign Affairs of Nicaragua Denis Moncada Colindres on 25 September 2021. Earlier on 30 June 2021, EAM met Argentine Foreign Minister Felipe Solá on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting at Matera, Italy, the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Denis Moncada Colindres, and Bolivian Foreign Minister Rogelio Mayta in Tehran in August 2021. The entire gamut of bilateral ties including trade, investment, health, energy, space, S&T and cooperation at multilateral and international fora were discussed during the meetings.

MoS-VM paid an official visit to Guatemala from 4-6 July 2021, during which he called on the President of Guatemala, Alejandro Giammattei and also met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, Pedro Brolo and reviewed progress in the bilateral relations and discussed regional and multilateral cooperation. MoS-ML paid an official visit to Colombia from 4-6 September 2021 during which she held discussions with Vice President and Foreign Minister of Colombia Marta Lucia Ramirez and exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia Marta Lucia Ramirez visited India from 1-3 October 2021 and held fruitful meetings with the Vice President of India, and MoS-ML. Secretary (East) led the Indian delegation to the second Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) with Guatemala on 5 May 2021 and ninth FOCs with Colombia on 7 May 2021, both in virtual format. She also visited Chile to hold the 7th round of FOCs on 14 September 2021, to Costa Rica and El Salvador to hold 3rd round of FOCs on 16 and 17 September 2021. These consultations provided an opportunity to comprehensively review the whole gamut of bilateral cooperation, including political, trade and economic cooperation, agriculture, space, energy, health and pharmaceuticals, tourism, information technology, education, development partnership, sports and culture, and to exchange views on issues of regional and international significance.

As part of India@75 Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, the Indian Missions in the LAC region, in association with the local art and culture centres, universities and academic institutes, organized a series of cultural, commercial and literary events to mark 75 years of India's independence. The activities also included seminars and demonstration of Yoga and programmes related to celebration of the 152nd birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

BIMSTEC & SAARC

India is a founding member of both SAARC and BIMSTEC. Activities under SAARC and BIMSTEC complement India's 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' policies. Notably, this year saw the visit of 14th SAARC Secretary General Esala Ruwan Weerakoon to India. The 16th informal meeting of the SAARC Finance Ministers was also held on 5 May 2021 on the

theme "Economic Recovery from Covid-19: Towards Inclusive and Resilient Growth", in virtual mode. The 17th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting was held virtually with the participation of all BIMSTEC member states on 1 April 2021. The Indian Cabinet in June 2021 approved the signing of the Charter at the next BIMSTEC Summit.

Nalanda University

Nalanda University was established by an Act of Parliament in November 2010 with an objective to emerge as an international

institution for pursuit of intellectual, philosophical, historical and spiritual studies. Nalanda University is declared as an

institute of national importance with a preeminent focus on international character.

During the year, Nalanda University made steady progress both in terms of physical infrastructure as well as academic programmes. The University at present has 736 students including 173 students from 31 countries, and 45 faculty

members including 18 foreign faculty.

During the year, the University also made its Campus effectively a NET-ZERO sustainable green campus. The key sustainability features for developing this Net Zero Campus include, net zero energy, net zero water, net zero waste and net zero emission.

Counter Terrorism

In view of the increasing terrorist activities worldwide, the issue of countering terrorism found prominent mentions in various bilateral and multilateral meetings at all levels during 2021. During all such interactions, India strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterated its commitment to combating the menace of terrorism at global and regional level. During the year, despite limitations imposed by Covid-19 pandemic, India continued

to hold structured consultations through the mechanism of Joint Working Groups on Counter Terrorism (JWG-CT) with partner countries such as the Maldives, USA and France. India also chaired the BRICS Counter Terrorism Working Group and Sub Groups meetings. India also participated in the meetings of the FATF, the GCTF, the UN and various other regional and multilateral organisations on the issues pertaining to countering terrorism.

Policy Planning and Research (PP&R)

The Policy Planning and Research (PP&R) Division is the nodal division of the Ministry for medium-term policy planning, and organizing public diplomacy initiatives with the strategic and academic community. It conducts in-house policy analysis for the Ministry on a regular basis on key foreign policy issues. It holds policy planning dialogues with policy planning bureaus of foreign counterparts to develop a commonality of understanding on regional and global issues.

During the year, virtual policy planning dialogues were held with Australia, EU, Poland and the BRICS countries. In-person dialogue was held with Russia. A number of Track 1.5/ 2 Dialogues with Japan, US, EU, South Korea and Bangladesh were facilitated.

Regular and structured interactions were held with think tanks and academic institutions. Flagship conferences - the

Raisina Dialogue, the Global Technology Summit (GTS) and the Asian Economic Dialogue were held in hybrid/virtual formats, embracing niche digital technologies in the backdrop of Covid-19 pandemic.

The 6th edition of the Raisina Dialogue was organised from 13-16 April 2021, in a fully virtual format. Prime Minister inaugurated the Dialogue through a video message on April 13. President Paul Kagame from Rwanda and PM Mette Frederiksen from Denmark joined the inaugural session as chief guests.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson addressed the GTS-2021 in December 2021 virtually. The Indian Ocean Conference was held physically in Abu Dhabi in December 2021. It witnessed several high-level participation, including ministerial-level, from Indian Ocean Region countries.

Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA)

The ICWA continued to accord high priority to research and study of political, economic and security developments in Asia, Africa, Europe, the United States, the Indo-Pacific Region, and

the wider global geostrategic environment. The conclusions were disseminated in the form of Issue Briefs, Viewpoints, and Special Reports, which were published on the ICWA website.

Research And Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

The Research and Information System for Developing Countries is an autonomous policy research institute that specializes in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and technology. It fosters effective policy dialogue and capacity building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues.

The primary focus is on promoting South-South Cooperation and collaborating with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. Through its intensive network of think tanks, RIS seeks to strengthen policy coherence on international economic issues and the development partnership canvas.

New, Emerging and Strategic Technologies (NEST)

Set up in January 2020, the New Emerging and Strategic Technologies (NEST) Division engages in new technology diplomacy and also deals with the foreign policy and

international legal aspects of such discussions in global forums. NEST Division is the coordinating point for positions taken by India in negotiations regarding technology governance rules,

standards, and architecture in the multilateral or plurilateral context, including at the UN and relevant international organizations. In March 2021, India joined as a founding

partner of the International Research Centre on Artificial Intelligence which has been established under the auspices of UNESCO.

Cyber Diplomacy, E-Governance & IT

Cyber Diplomacy Division of the Ministry is a specialised division which deals with international cyber governance policy formulation and developments around ICTs at bilateral, regional and multilateral fora including the United Nations. The Cyber Diplomacy Division is the nodal point for discussions on cyber security issues, data protection, cybercrime and internet governance in consultation with other Government of India stakeholders viz. National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Department of Telecommunication (DoT).

India has been actively participating in and contributing to cyber dialogues, conferences and conventions to voice its views, shape global cyber policies and strengthen its cyber security. In keeping with its commitment to a multi-stakeholder model of cyber governance, India has been engaged in activities with the private sector, civil society and academia

to strategise and shape cyber policy. The Cyber Diplomacy division is instrumental in proposing and initiating bilateral cyber consultations with the strategic countries and to that effect the division has cyber dialogues with 16 countries, Joint Working Groups with the US, the UK, Australia, Japan, and Russia, and engagement with regional blocs such as SCO, BRICS, ARF, EU, IBSA and others.

The E-Governance and IT (eG&IT) Division among other tasks has been involved in design, development, implementation and maintenance of various e-Governance applications for the Ministry. The eG&IT Division is also providing all Information Technology (IT) related support to the Ministry and Missions/ Posts abroad for procurement, maintenance, and upkeep of all IT infrastructure. During the year, eG&IT division has taken several steps to implement various components of the Digital India Programme in the Ministry and all Missions/ Posts abroad. Automation and networking are being harnessed as tools to achieve synergy at all levels of functioning in the Ministry, and render efficient IT services to the government officials.

United Nations and International Organisations

India continued its high-level engagement with the United Nations in line with the central role that the institution plays in the world order. India was persistent in its efforts to move the process of UN Security Council reforms forward.

On 25 September 2021, Prime Minister addressed the High-level meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate the 76th session of the United Nations. Addressing the General Assembly in the General Debate on 25 September 2021, Prime Minister affirmed that democracy could deliver, and democracy had delivered, while emphasising that the impact of India's development on global progress was evident.

On 1 January 2021, India took its place as an elected member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for the term 2021-22. During its UNSC tenure of 2021-2022, India was nominated to Chair the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee, 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee and to chair the Counter-Terrorism Committee in 2022. On 9 August 2021, Prime Minister chaired a high level Virtual Open Debate of the Security Council on International Maritime Security. This was the first time that an Indian Prime Minister chaired a UN Security Council Meeting.

EAM chaired an Open Debate on 18 August 2021 on the

theme "UN Peacekeeping Operations - Protecting the Protectors: Technology and Peacekeeping". A Presidential Statement was adopted during this meeting – the first ever standalone product of the Council focused on technology and peacekeeping. Foreign Secretary also presided over the adoption of Resolution 2593 (2021) on 30 August 2021, the first since the fall of Kabul to Taliban. The Resolution demanded that Afghan territory not be used to threaten or attack any country or to shelter or train terrorists, or to plan or to finance terrorist acts.

India completed its fifth term at the Human Rights Council in 2021. India submitted its fourth Periodic Report on International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in September 2021. India has been re-elected to the HRC for the term 2022-2024 at the elections held in UNGA in New York, for the sixth term, on 14 October 2021.

India continued to be the largest cumulative contributor of UN Peacekeeping troops, having provided around 2,53,000 troops since 1950s. As on 31 October 2021, India was the third largest contributor with 5,538 personnel (military, police and civilian) deployed in 9 UN missions.

Multilateral Economic Relations

At multilateral fora India reaffirmed its focus on ensuring that the global response to the Covid-19 pandemic is human

centered, inclusive, and sustainable.

India held the rotating BRICS Chairship in 2021 for the third time after 2012 and 2016. India's Chairship in 2021 coincided with the 15th anniversary of BRICS. India chose the overall theme "BRICS@15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus". Prime Minister virtually hosted and chaired the XIII BRICS Summit on 09 September 2021, wherein President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, President Vladimir Putin of Russia, President Xi Jinping of China, and President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa led their respective delegations.

Prime Minister led India's delegation to the G20 Rome Summit which took place on 30 & 31 October 2021 in Rome under the theme "People, Planet, Prosperity". Prime Minister participated in all three Summit Sessions: Global Economy and Global Health; Climate Change and Environment; and

Sustainable Development. Earlier, Prime Minister participated in the Extraordinary G20 Leaders' Meeting on Afghanistan on 12 October 2021 where he emphasized the need for the international community to ensure that Afghanistan has immediate and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance and also underlined the need to ensure that Afghan territory does not become a source of radicalization and terrorism, regionally or globally.

Prime Minister participated in the Guest Sessions of the G7 Summit held on 12-13 June 2021 in virtual format. Prime Minister highlighted the need for genuine global solidarity and leadership and spoke of "One Earth, One Health".

India, as the IBSA Chair, focused this year on revival of IBSA mechanisms.

Economic Diplomacy

The Economic Diplomacy Division, as part of its efforts to give a focused direction to the economic diplomacy dimension of the country's foreign policy, undertook a number of initiatives during 2021-22. The Economic Diplomacy (ED) division is an economic arm of the Ministry, to facilitate foreign investment flows and to promote bilateral trade, tourism, education and traditional Indian medicine, in coordination with Indian Missions/Posts abroad, territorial divisions of the Ministry, other Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India, State Governments and foreign Missions/Posts in India.

India currently holds the presidency of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) General Assembly up to the year 2022. The Fourth General Assembly of the ISA was held in virtual format on 20 October 2021. The ISA Assembly endorsed a Political Declaration on 'One Sun One World One Grid' initiative and deliberated on various other key initiatives of the ISA such as the Solar Investment Roadmap for 2030. Prime Minister has announced the One Sun One World One Grid initiative, with a vision of connecting solar energy across borders. During COP26 in Glasgow, at the World Leaders Summit on 02 November 2021, Prime Minister, along with other global leaders, presented the Green Grids Initiative-One Sun One World One Grid to the world.

In association with Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), India is focusing on promoting disaster resilience of infrastructure globally. India also participated in the Commission Session of UNCITRAL and delivered a statement, and is participating and coordinating actively on the various working groups of UNCITRAL.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) has been conducting the PCA-India Conferences and workshops under the ambit of the Host Country agreement. India is working closely with the International Energy Agency (IEA) to frame a Strategic Partnership, for strengthening of institutional ties including potential paths to IEA Membership for India.

India has signed and ratified social security agreements with a total of 20 countries till date and more than 30 are in pipeline.

India actively participates in investment treaty negotiations and has been involved in coordinating negotiations and providing requisite inputs from a policy, political and an international law perspective. India is in the process of reviewing its old generation investment treaties and is actively engaged with over 30 countries in negotiating investment treaties based on the new model Bilateral Investment Treaty of 2015.

States Division

The States Division is primarily mandated with the facilitation of external economic engagement of States through the network of Indian Missions and Posts abroad and Branch Secretariats/Regional Passport Offices in India. In a year marked by the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic followed by a gradual return to normalcy, the States Division has worked to make up for the lost time and opportunities, by exploring all avenues that will facilitate fulfillment of all aspects of its mandate. The States Division has also pursued its mandate proactively in the North East Region by organising the North

East Resident Commissioners' Interactive Session with MoS-RRS, and the North East Round Table Conference scheduled to be held in Imphal in 2022. The States Division also facilitated the launch of Series-I of Haryana Africa Conclave.

Liaising with States and UT governments through regular interactions with their Resident Commissioners continued. Several MoUs between State governments and cities with their foreign counterparts to establish sister-state and city partnerships were facilitated by the States Division.

Disarmament and International Security Affairs (D&ISA)

India participated actively in multilateral fora relating to disarmament, non-proliferation and international security, taking into account its national security interests and priorities in the international security arena. India also engaged with countries bilaterally and presented its perspectives in regional fora on these matters. India's contributions underlined its longstanding commitment to the goal of universal and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament, support to global peace

and security in areas such as space, maritime and weapons of mass destruction, while responding to the evolving international security environment and initiatives by various countries. India's hosting of a high-level deliberation on maritime security at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) chaired by the Prime Minister on 9 August 2021 highlighted the evolving maritime issues and received wide appreciation among the international community.

Summits & Conference Division

Conference Division provides all logistical arrangements to various divisions of the Ministry in organising meetings, events, seminars, conferences including international & multilateral involvement of Foreign Ministers, delegates in India and abroad. During the year, the Summits & Conference division provided all logistical support to organise 44 other

meetings at various levels of participation. At the same time, a total number of 151 events were held. The division also provided all logistical support to organize 106 BRICS/G7/IBSA/G20 related virtual meetings and 44 other meetings at various levels of participation.

Development Cooperation

Development Cooperation is an integral part of India's foreign policy. In recent years, India has substantially expanded its development programmes in various countries which includes grant assistance, Lines of Credit (LoC), technical consultancy, disaster relief, humanitarian aid, educational scholarships and a range of capacity-building programmes including short-term civilian and military training courses encompassing the geographical reach and sectoral coverage.

Major developmental projects identified by the neighbouring governments as priority areas are under implementation in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Maldives in areas of infrastructure, hydroelectricity, power transmission, agriculture, industry, education, health, archeological conservation and strengthening of cross-border connectivity with these countries are progressing satisfactorily. Beyond the neighbourhood, bilateral projects in sectors like energy, power plants, electricity transmission & distribution, roads, railways, ports, agriculture & irrigation, industrial units, information and computer technology (ICT) and small & medium enterprises have been undertaken in South East Asia, Oceania, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America.

A key aspect of India's development assistance in the past few years has been the extension of LoCs or concessional loans to other developing countries. Over the years, 309 LoCs aggregating more than USD 31.17 billion have been extended to different countries in various sectors, of which USD 12.35 billion has been extended for African countries, USD 16.15 billion has been extended for Asian countries and USD 2.67 billion for countries in Latin America, Oceania and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

During Financial Year (FY) 2021-22, in-person courses of the flagship programme, Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Day (ITEC) remained largely suspended due to the global outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent

lockdown. However, given the importance of these courses and demand from partner countries, a total of 83 ITEC courses were conducted in virtual mode successfully through e-ITEC modality. The Division is planning to resume in-person ITEC courses as and when the Covid-19 situation normalises.

Inspired by the spirit of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*', India's international development cooperation has expanded significantly in recent years in its geographical reach as well as in the areas of cooperation. It is natural that most of India's significant development partnerships include the neighbouring countries given the focus of India's external engagement on its immediate and extended neighbourhood supported by the 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' policies. Another noteworthy feature of India's development partnerships has been its demand-based nature and the close alignment of priorities with those of the partner countries.

As the DPA arm of the Ministry has gained experience over the last nine years, the sustainability of projects besides the project delivery and implementation have received increased attention. India's development partnership model has received a high degree of acceptance from its partners because of the focus on keeping the requirements and priorities of the partner country at the center of the projects.

India's approach towards developmental partnerships has been a comprehensive one offering assistance and sharing of India's own developmental experience in the full spectrum of activities, ranging from creation of infrastructure to building capacities to education, healthcare, agriculture and community development.

India's development assistance has been a major catalyst for creation of much needed infrastructure in the partner countries such as railway links, roads & bridges, waterways, border-related infrastructure, transmission lines, power generation, hydropower etc.

Cultural Diplomacy has been a longstanding integral part of India's Soft Power Diplomacy across the world. India has been involved in cultural and heritage conservation projects in various partner countries. Despite the impact of the pandemic, the newly established dedicated Division for heritage

conservation (DPA-IV Division) continued the implementation of international heritage conservation projects in countries like Cambodia and Vietnam. New projects aimed at the excavation, restoration and conservation of Buddhist sites located in Central Asia are under consideration.

Legal and Treaties Division

The Legal and Treaties division is responsible for handling all legal and treaty-related matters in respect of the Ministry. During 2021-22, India signed 55 agreements with 28 countries and organizations; ratified 9 agreements, and processed full powers for 6 undertakings. India participated at the Sixth Committee (Legal) of the United Nations General

Assembly, Working Groups constituted under the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, International Investment Arbitration Cases Involving India, Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), and various treaty negotiations.

Consular, Passport and Visa services

CPV Division in the Ministry coordinates Consular matters & grievances, issuance of Indian visas policies and attestation/apostille of documents, issuance of Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) Cards, diplomatic and official passports.

As part of good governance initiatives to resolve consular grievances of Indians abroad, MEA launched a web portal MADAD. All Indian Missions and Posts abroad as well as the MEA Branch Secretariats and State/UT governments have been integrated with this portal for redressal of consular grievances. The MADAD online portal has led to qualitative improvement in handling of consular grievances, through online registration, forwarding, tracking and escalation until their eventual resolution.

During the year, the division has conducted various Consular dialogues, visa waiver agreements, extradition treaties, recommended OCI and e-Visas schemes etc.

India has signed Visa Exemption Agreements in respect of diplomatic and official/service passport holders with 120 countries. From 1 April - 31 October 2021, Visa Exemption Agreements for holders of diplomatic and official passports were signed with People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and Republic of The Gambia, the Union of Comoros, the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Republic of Ghana and the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Over 39.5 lakhs OCI cards have been issued since August 2005. The number of OCI cards issued during the period 1 April to 31 October 2021 is 1,26,463.

India, since 2005, is a member of the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 that abolished the requirement of legalization of foreign public documents. Apostille is acceptable in all member-countries of the Convention. 42658 documents have been attested and 57014 documents have been apostilled in online mode from April 2021 to October 2021. 198038 attestations and 222556 apostille services have been rendered in offline mode from April 2021 to October 2021.

Passport Seva Programme

The Passport Seva Programme (PSP) Division of the Ministry provides passport services in India and abroad. The issuance of passports has emerged as one of the most noticeable statutory and citizen-centric services rendered by the Ministry. The Ministry has been making quantitative and qualitative changes so that passports can be delivered to the citizens in a timely, transparent, more accessible, reliable manner and in a comfortable environment through streamlined processes and by a committed, trained and motivated workforce.

Indian passports (together with other travel documents such as Certificate of Identity to Stateless persons, Emergency Certificates for returnees to India, Police Clearance Certificates, Surrender Certificates) are issued by the Ministry of External Affairs through the Central Passport Organization (CPO) and its all-India network of 36 Passport Offices, the CPV Division (Diplomatic and Official passports only) and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Administration.

The Passport Seva Programme (PSP), a Mission Mode Project, is being implemented in the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode with M/s Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) as the Service Provider. It has completed more than 9 years of its successful operation since it went live on 12 June 2012.

As on 30 November 2021, the total number of Passport Seva Kendras functioning in the country was 521, including PSKs and POPSKs. For Indians living abroad, passport related services are rendered through Indian Missions/Posts abroad. As of date, 176 Indian Missions/Posts have been integrated into the Passport Seva Programme.

From April - November 2021, the Government of India received over 60.54 lakh passport and passport related applications in India and through its Missions/Posts abroad. The Ministry processed approximately 50.10 lakh passport and passport related applications in India and processed more than 48.00 lakh of these during the year 2021. The Indian Missions/Posts abroad received 10.44 lakh passport

and passport-related applications and issued 9.94 lakh of these during the period April – November 2021 while the Government of India issued more than 57.94 lakh passports and passport related documents during the same period.

The Passport Seva Divas was celebrated on 24 June 2021

Overseas Indian Affairs

The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF), set up in 2009, is aimed at assisting Overseas Indian nationals in times of distress by providing emergency medical assistance, air passage to stranded Indians, legal assistance, boarding & lodging, assistance to Indian women facing marital issues and transfer of mortal remains to India. As of 31 December 2021, around INR 44.19 crores were utilized to extend assistance to more than 1,76,000 Indians.

On 18 January 2021, a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) was signed with Japan to facilitate mobility of Indian skilled workers, under the scheme of the “Specialized Skilled Worker” (SSW) visa category of Japan.

India and Portugal have signed a bilateral agreement on 13 September 2021 on the recruitment of Indian workers. With the conclusion of this agreement, Portugal and India will have a formal arrangement for the recruitment of Indian workers through a G2G mechanism.

India and the UK have signed Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement on 4 May 2021 and have agreed on enhanced mobility provisions for young professionals. The First India-UK Joint Working Group Meeting under MoU on

to commemorate the enactment of the Passports Act on 24 June 1967. A special event was organized by the Ministry to mark this occasion at which EAM and MoS-VM addressed the Passport Officers through video conferencing.

Migration & Mobility Partnership was held in August 2021.

The Overseas Indian Affairs Division-II deals with issues relating to engagement with Indian Diaspora. Among the major Programmes / Schemes handled by the Division are Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conferences (PBDC), Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, Know India Programme (KIP), Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana (PTDY), Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC), Bharat Ko Janiye (BKJ) Quiz, Non-resident Indians (NRI) marital disputes and Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD), Students issues, grievances pertaining to diaspora, any other issues pertaining to diaspora and new initiatives taken from time to time by the Government.

The first ever Girmitya Conference 2021 was organised virtually on 16-17 September 2021 by India Foundation and the Ministry. Minister of State, Shri V.Muraleedharan (MoS-VM). inaugurated the Conference. The conference's theme was 'Changing identities, shifting trends, and roles'. The Pravasiya Bharatiya Divas (PBD) conferences were organised on the themes of “Leveraging the Soft Power of India” on 16 October 2021 and “Future of Natural Resources” on 29 October 2021.

External Publicity

The External Publicity and Public Diplomacy Division (XPD) continued with its efforts to effectively articulate India's position on key foreign policy issues in accordance with its mandate. Simultaneously, pro-active efforts to project the 'India Story' and other notable achievements of the country to an international audience continued apace. While the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic presented their own sets of challenges, with the creative use of virtual platforms, the division was able to maintain the momentum of its activities during the year.

Among the physical visits, Foreign Ministers of Russian Federation, Bahrain, Eritrea, France and Maldives visited India in April 2021. President-elect of 76th UNGA and Foreign Minister of Maldives and US Secretary of State visited India in July 2021. September 2021 saw the visits of Foreign Ministers of Australia (India- Australia 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue), Saudi Arabia and Colombia. The first Prime Ministerial visit post Covid-19 was that of Prime Minister of Denmark in October 2021. The President, Foreign and Defense Ministers of Russia visited India in December 2021 for India-Russia 2+2 and to

attend the bilateral summit. President of India visited Dhaka in December 2021. Foreign Ministers of five Central Asian countries visited India in December 2021 for the 3rd meeting of India-Central Asian Dialogue. Widespread publicity was given to these events.

MEA has over 3.74 million followers on Twitter with @MEAIIndia having 2.2 million followers and @IndianDiplomacy having 1.5 million followers, adding approximately 140,000 followers since last year. Missions and Posts have also continued to increase engagement with the diaspora and the local population in the host country through social media platforms. Today around 192 Indian Missions/Posts have a presence on Twitter; 186 Missions/Posts have presence on Facebook; and around 105 Missions have a presence on Instagram, with more being encouraged to join the platform.

This all-round digital outreach by the Ministry has enabled faster, direct and accurate dissemination of information on Ministry and Mission/Posts' activities to an audience not just in India but all across the world.

Protocol

Protocol division comprises a total of seven sections viz. Protocol-I, Protocol-II, Protocol-III, Protocol (Hyderabad House), Protocol Special, Protocol (Hospitality & Accounts) and Government Hospitality Organization (GHO). During Covid-19 period from April 2021-November 2021, 09 Virtual Summits at the level of Prime Minister were organized. In

addition, 16 incoming visits at the level of Vice President and Foreign Minister/ Deputy Foreign Minister, and 146 entertainment functions were handled during the period. Over 1230 requests for airport passes, lounges (ceremonial and reserved) and exemption from frisking were facilitated.

Administration and Right to Information

Administration

The main responsibility of the Administration Division in the Ministry is to provide manpower resources both at Headquarters and in 199 Indian Missions/Posts and 3 Representative Offices. In this regard, the Division oversees cadre management exercises which involve recruitment, training, postings/transfers, deputations and career progression among others. In addition, the Division also deals with formulation, amendments, and reforms of all the relevant rules and regulations relating to Indian personnel posted abroad and local employees serving in Indian Missions and Posts.

MEA Internship Policy 2021 was launched with an aim to make the programme more transparent, structured, objective, inclusive, diverse, focused and rewarding.

The Division is also responsible for new developments and functional priorities such as creation of Rapid Response Cell (RRC) by combining the Covid-19 Cell and Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR). Currently there are 56 Divisions in the Ministry.

In pursuance of the Cabinet approval in March 2018 for the opening of 18 new Missions in Africa during 2018-21, Missions in Monrovia (Liberia) and Nouakchott (Mauritania) have started functioning in May 2021 and June 2021 respectively. Preparatory administrative and establishment related measures were initiated towards setting up of new Missions in Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau and Somalia.

Following Cabinet approval to open 3 new Missions in Estonia, Paraguay and Dominican Republic in December 2020, Ambassadors have been designated and MEA personnel have been deployed, who would be soon assuming charge.

The Cabinet has also approved the opening of the Consulate in Addu, Maldives in May 2021 and efforts are underway to operationalize it.

Right To Information (RTI)

During 1 January 2021 to 20 December 2021, a total of 1666 RTI applications and 114 First Appeals seeking information under the RTI Act 2005 have been received in the Ministry and have been disposed off satisfactorily. Applications, in general, covered subjects such as foreign relations, administrative issues, bilateral visits, Covid-19 pandemic, Vande Bharat Flights and expenditure incurred on the same.

Establishment Division

In 2021, in continuation of its activities under Swachh Bharat Mission, the Establishment Division joined the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic during the second phase in April-May 2021. The Division organised oxygen cylinders, medical beds, and essential medicines at the Ministry's residential complexes. To create a space of approximately 3000 sq. feet in JNB, special emphasis was on weeding out and disposal of old obsolete/unserviceable items. A short video clip was recorded by Prasar Bharati on the cleanliness of JNB as Ministry headquarters on 8 November 2021.

Global Estate Management (GEM)

The Global Estate Management Division actively pursued acquisition, construction, redevelopment, and renovation of properties for Indian Missions/Posts abroad and RPOs/ICCR/POEs/Branch Secretariats in India. An initiative to augment the available residential accommodation in New Delhi for officers of MEA was taken, with a view to effectively address the existing shortfall in availability of such accommodation and to meet enhanced future housing requirements of MEA.

Implementation of Official Language Policy and Propagation of Hindi Abroad

The Ministry has a comprehensive scheme for the promotion and propagation of Hindi abroad for the implementation of the Official Language Policy of the Government of India. World Hindi Conference and Regional Hindi conference take place regularly. World Hindi Day on 10 January and Hindi Divas on

14 September, together with Hindi Pakhwada, are celebrated every year. The Ministry has instituted Atal Bhashantar Yojna (ABY) for training language experts towards creating a pool of specialised interpreters.

Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS)

The Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) was established in 1986 by the Government of India, primarily to cater to the professional training needs of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers inducted directly via the UPSC every year.

During the period under review, SSIFS met the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic by adjusting its training mode as the year progressed both for its Indian and foreign trainees. The final phase of the six-month Induction Training Programme (ITP) of the 2020 Batch IFS OTs (Officer Trainees) was conducted in a hybrid mode. With the onset of the second wave, the week-long Mission Orientation Attachment had to be canceled. The OTs returned to the campus from May 2021 onwards and appeared for their assessments at the conclusion of the ITP in a physical mode. EAM graced the valedictory function in June 2021.

SSIFS also conducted, for the first time, training programmes for officers of the CAG's (Comptroller & Auditor General)

Office, HIPA (Haryana Institute of Public Administration) and NSCS (National Security Council Secretariat) along with Defence Attachés, in response to their requests for tailor-made programmes.

In the case of training of foreign diplomats, several familiarization programmes for diplomats of resident diplomatic missions were conducted including one for the resident Heads of Missions in August 2021. Special training programmes for foreign diplomats (traveling from abroad) resumed in the physical format from July 2021 onwards with the 8th special course for Afghan diplomats.

Promotion-related and posting-related training programmes for Ministry personnel took place virtually during the first few months, and then resumed in a physical format from August 2021 onwards. Induction training programmes for personal assistants and stenographers and assistant section officers were conducted in November-December 2021.

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)

The ICCR in its endeavour towards augmenting cultural relations and promoting soft power of India across the world organised many activities and programmes. With the pandemic, which brought the world to a standstill, ICCR kept its spirit high and was able to establish a rapport with the foreign students across the world through its online as well as offline activities. The ICCR actively conducted several major events for the celebrations of the 75th year of Independence of India, under the flagship programme of "Azadi Ka Amrit

Mahotsav".

The Council works in collaboration with its 37 Indian Cultural Centers (ICCs) abroad and 18 Regional centers. Additionally, ICCR extends support to the Casa de la India in Valladolid, Spain established on 'PPP' model (Public-Private Partnership). The activities of the ICCR are a continuation of both on-going and regular activities as well as many new initiatives and special activities.

Parliament and Coordination Division

The responsibility of the Parliament & Coordination division broadly consists of Parliamentary work; coordination within and outside the Ministry; admission of certain category of foreign students in Indian educational institutions, coordination of Ministry's activities carried out under Azadi

ka Amrit Mahotsav, , and monitoring as well as review of MoUs signed by India with foreign countries. The work of the division continued unabated during the year in spite of restrictions posed by the pandemic.

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INDIA'S NEIGHBOURS

Afghanistan

India and Afghanistan are connected together by centuries of historical, people to people and cultural relations. In the last 20 years, developmental partnership with Afghanistan has been centered around five pillars: (a) large infrastructure projects; (b) human resource development and capacity building; (c) humanitarian assistance; (d) High impact community development projects; and (e) enhancing trade and investment through air and land connectivity.

In August 2021, Afghanistan witnessed a sea-change in its political landscape. India's immediate priority was safe evacuation of stranded Indian and Afghan nationals and to provide humanitarian assistance to Afghan people in need. Pursuant to this, India committed to provide 50,000 MT of wheat and lifesaving drugs to the people of Afghanistan. Furthermore, to assist Afghan refugees in Iran, India gifted one million doses of Covaxin to the Government of Iran.

With the deteriorating security situation, India started its efforts to evacuate Indian nationals stranded in Afghanistan. As an immediate measure, a 24x7 Special Afghanistan Cell was established in the Ministry on 16 August 2021. Nearly 5,000 telephone calls, more than 8000 emails and 13,000 WhatsApp messages have been answered by the Cell till date.

Under **Operation 'Devi Shakti'**, a total of 565 people have been evacuated including Indians, Afghans and foreigners. Excluding the Embassy personnel, 263 Indian nationals and 112 Afghan nationals (including Sikhs and Hindus) and 15 nationals of third countries were evacuated in six flights under the Operation Devi Shakti in August 2021.

India has been at the forefront to support a pivotal role of the UN in Afghanistan. India held the rotating Presidency of the UN Security Council in the month of August 2021. Under Indian Presidency, the UN Security Council met thrice to discuss the evolving situation in Afghanistan, resulting in four outcome documents. These included three press statements and a resolution. During the last meeting on Afghanistan under India's Presidency, on 30 August, the Council adopted UNSC Resolution (UNSCR) 2593, which comprehensively addressed the main pending issues relating to Afghanistan. The resolution demands that the Afghan territory should not be used to threaten or attack any country or to shelter or train terrorists or to plan and finance terrorist acts pursuant to UNSCR 1267 (1999).

Various scholarship programmes including Special Scholarship scheme for Afghan Nationals and online short-term capacity building courses continued during the year. Currently around

2000 Afghan students are enrolled in various courses. Physical conduct of some of these courses was disrupted due to COVID pandemic and the developments in Afghanistan.

India continued to engage with the International community at various fora to find ways to help and support the people of Afghanistan. In this regard, Prime Minister participated in the SCO CSTO Outreach Summit (17 September) and G-20 Extraordinary Summit (12 October) on Afghanistan. EAM attended Afghanistan conference (co-convened by the US and Germany, 08 September) and the High Level event on

humanitarian situation in Afghanistan organized by UNHCR (13 September).

A special flight from Kabul to New Delhi, chartered by the Government of India, arrived in New Delhi on 10 December. The flight brought 10 Indians and 94 Afghans, including members of Afghan minority community. The minority community members carried with them 2 Swaroops of Guru Granth Sahib and some ancient Hindu manuscripts.



Under Operation Devi Shakti, Indian citizens and foreign nationals were evacuated from Afghanistan in August 2021

In view of the challenging humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the Government of India has dispatched humanitarian assistance consisting of medical supplies consisting of one million doses COVID vaccine and essential lifesaving drugs. These medicines were handed over to the representatives of the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Kabul and will be administered at the Indira Gandhi Children Hospital, Kabul. In early 2022, India also supplied wheat

assistance for the Afghan people to fight the prevailing hunger situation.

India has a civilisational relationship with the Afghan people and those long-standing links guided and will continue to guide Indian approach. India's special relationship with the Afghan people and UNSC Resolution 2593 would continue to guide the future approach on Afghanistan.

Bangladesh

India-Bangladesh relationship is an important element in India's "Neighbourhood First" policy. The year 2021 is of special significance as both countries celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations, and as Bangladesh commemorates 50 years of its independence and the birth centenary of its Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The year witnessed several high-level exchanges and visits between both countries. At the invitation of the President of Bangladesh Mr. Abdul Hamid, President of India paid a State Visit to Bangladesh from 15-17 December 2021, to attend the 50th Vijay Diwas celebrations in Bangladesh, as the Guest of Honour. The President held delegation level talks with the President of Bangladesh Abdul Hamid. Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen called on the President. On 16 December,

the President attended the Victory Day parade in Dhaka as the Guest of Honour. A 122-member tri-service contingent of the Indian Armed Forces also participated on this historic occasion.

Earlier, at the invitation of Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister paid a State Visit to Bangladesh on 26-27 March 2021 as Chief Guest for the celebrations of the Golden Jubilee of the Independence of Bangladesh in which India had played a significant role. This was the first foreign visit of Prime Minister since the onset of the COVID pandemic in early 2020. During the visit, in all, 5 agreements were signed in areas of disaster management, trade and capacity building. Both the Prime Ministers inaugurated the 'Mitali-Express'-passenger train service on Dhaka-New Jalpaiguri-Dhaka route through the Chilahati-Haldibari rail link.

EAM visited Dhaka on 4 March 2021. In preparation to the December 2021 visit of the Hon'ble President, Foreign

Secretary also visited Dhaka from 7-8 December 2021.



In a special gesture, the President of India was received by President of Bangladesh Abdul Hamid upon arrival in Dhaka in December 2021

Information Minister of Bangladesh Dr. Hasan Mahmud met EAM, his counterpart, Information and Broadcasting Minister and Foreign Secretary in New Delhi in September 2021.

In addition to the above high-level engagements between the two countries, there were several interactions at senior official-level, under various bilateral institutional mechanisms. Commerce Secretary Level Talks and Water Secretary Level Talks were held in March 2021, the Shipping Secretary Level Talks and the Virtual meeting of Director General Level Talks between Narcotics Control Bureau, India and Department of Narcotics Control, Bangladesh were held in October 2021.

As per the joint decision during March 2021 Prime Minister-level Summit, India and Bangladesh celebrated 6 December 2021 as "Maitri Diwas" (Friendship Day) in Delhi, Dhaka and 18 other world capitals, to commemorate the day on which India extended diplomatic recognition to Bangladesh in 1971. Minister of State for Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh KM Khalid also visited Delhi to take part in the celebrations.

Defence Cooperation

Defence cooperation between India and Bangladesh has grown in recent years. Significant bilateral exchanges took place during this period, including the visits to Bangladesh of Chief of Army Staff in April and Air Chief Marshal, Chief of Air Staff in June, as well as the visits to India of Gen SM Shafuiddin Ahmed, Chief of Army Staff, Bangladesh Army in September, Admiral M Shaheen Iqbal, Chief of Naval Staff, Bangladesh Navy in October and Air Chief Marshal Shaikh Abdul Hannan in December. As part of ceremonial port calls in this important commemorative year, INS Kulish and INS

Sumedha paid a visit to Mongla Port in March 2021, becoming the first Indian naval warships to dock at Mongla Port since Bangladesh's independence. Similarly, BNS Somudra Avijan paid a visit to Vishakhapatnam in October 2021. Both sides also collaborated in defence training.

Connectivity Partnership

Enhancing comprehensive connectivity has been a common objective being pursued by both sides. In recent years, not only pre-1965 modes of connectivity has been restored, new channels like waterways, passenger and cruise shipping, energy and power lines were added to the connectivity mix. The Haldibari-Chilahati rail link got operationalised on 1 August 2021. Movement of cargo trains have already started using this link and it will also be utilized to run the third cross-border passenger train service 'Mitali Express' on the Jalpaiguri (India) - Dhaka (Bangladesh) route. With this, five out of the six pre-1965 India-Bangladesh rail linkages stand restored. Another important railway connectivity project between Akhaura, Bangladesh and Agartala, Tripura is currently underway and will enhance railway connectivity between North-Eastern Region and Bangladesh. 'Maitri Sethu' bridge over River Feni in Tripura was completed and inaugurated by both Prime Ministers in 2021, thus providing enhanced road connectivity between North Eastern Region and Bangladesh. India and Bangladesh stepped up their rail cooperation, as trade via land border faced disruption. Rail emerged as the preferred, cost-effective and environment-friendly mode for cross-border transportation of essential commodities. This year witnessed the highest-ever exchange of freight trains, facilitating parcel and container services. Bilateral trade via rail recorded an unprecedented growth of 45% between April

- October 2021 as compared to the same period in 2020. For greater modernization of border infrastructure and strengthening of cross-border connectivity, a new Passenger Terminal Building was inaugurated at Integrated Check Post (ICP) Petrapole on 17 September 2021. The ninth-largest

international immigration port for India, ICP Petrapole is also the most important land port between the two countries catering to 23 lakh passengers annually and its upgradation will facilitate trade and people-to-connectivity.



EAM welcomed by Foreign Minister of Bangladesh Abdul Momen during his visit to Bangladesh in March 2021

Development Cooperation

India extends close to 30% of its total global developmental assistance to Bangladesh. India has extended total concessional credit of close to USD 10 billion, including three Lines of Credit (LoC) to Bangladesh, the biggest with any country. The sectors supported by these LoCs include power generation and transmission, rail and road transport, multipurpose terminals and ports, infrastructure development such as streetlights, Economic Zones etc. among others. In addition to LoCs, the Government of India has also been providing grant assistance to Bangladesh for various infrastructure projects and for High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs).

Economic and Commercial

Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia and India is the second largest trade partner of Bangladesh in Asia. Bangladesh has become the 4th largest export destination for India. Despite COVID related disruptions, bilateral trade grew at an unprecedented rate of 14% from USD 9.46 bn in FY 2019-20 to USD 10.78 billion in FY 2020-21. This is a testament to the trust reposed by the private industry and consumers for cross-border products in both countries. In support of the RMG and Textile business in Bangladesh, for the first time, 468 tonnes of cotton yarn was transported to

Benapole (Bangladesh) by rail. ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) has drilled its first well in an offshore block in Bangladesh in September 2021.

Cooperation to tackle the challenge of COVID pandemic

In 2021, Government of India gifted 3.3 million Covishield vaccines to Bangladesh to assist in its ongoing effort to fight against the pandemic. This is the largest tranche of Made-in-India COVID vaccines gifted to any country by India. Two 'Mobile Oxygen Plants' gifted by India to Bangladesh were delivered through a visit of INS Savitri in September 2021. In yet another first, India operated 'Oxygen Express' trains to transport Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) in railway containers. The first Oxygen express reached Bangladesh from Tatanagar on 24 July 2021. India also handed over 109 Life Support Ambulances to Bangladesh in line with Prime Minister's commitment during his March 2021 visit. As another friendly gesture, about 20 tonnes of necessary medical supplies including Oxygen Nasal Cannula, Oxygen Face Mask, Oxygen Flow Meter, Non-rebreather Mask, Pulse Oxymeter, High Flow Nasal Canula, Medical Oxygen Cylinder and Infrared Thermometer were gifted to Bangladesh in August 2021.

Bhutan

The bedrock of mutual understanding and respect, shared cultural heritage, and strong people to people links is the hallmark of the special and unique partnership between

India and Bhutan. The multifaceted and mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries continued to flourish over the course of the year, with traditional areas of growth

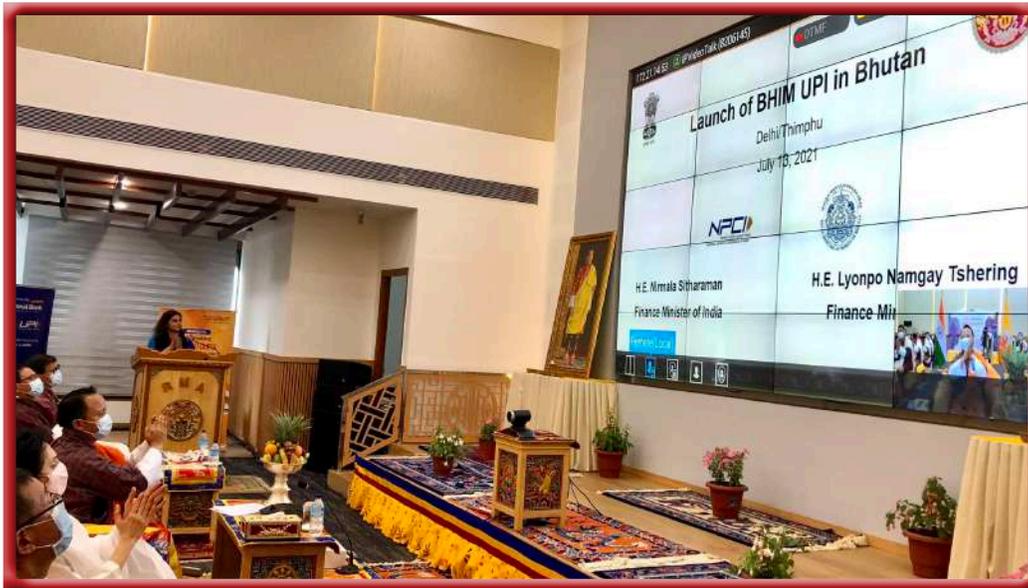
being strengthened as new areas of cooperation developed.

High-Level Exchanges

The tradition of high-level exchanges continued even though cross-border travel was impacted by the COVID pandemic. Prime Minister had a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister of Bhutan, Lyonchhen Dr. Lotay Tshering on 11 May 2021. The two leaders expressed solidarity in each other's efforts to combat the COVID pandemic and noted that the present crisis had further strengthened the special friendship between India and Bhutan.

India's Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Bhutan's Foreign Minister Dr. Tandi Dorji were signatories to the bilateral Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Areas of Environment, concluded in a virtual signing ceremony held on 18 June 2021, which

renewed cooperation and collaboration while also expanding it to new areas in this important field. Collaborative activities envisaged under the MoU include technical assistance, capacity building, exchange of knowledge, best practices and technology transfer, exchange visits by experts, scholars and delegations, projects and seminars, with a Joint Working Group constituted to identify the specific areas of cooperation. BHIM UPI was launched in Bhutan on 13 July 2021 jointly by Finance Minister of India and Finance Minister of Bhutan Lyonpo Namgay Tshering, fulfilling a commitment made in the Joint Statement issued during Prime Minister's visit to Bhutan in August 2019. With the launch Bhutan became the first foreign country to adopt UPI standards for its QR deployment and the first country in the immediate neighbourhood to accept mobile-based payments through the BHIM app. The launch of BHIM UPI in Bhutan builds on the success of the RuPay project and further deepens the economic and financial linkages between India and Bhutan.



Launching of BHIM UPI in Bhutan in July 2021

Development Partnership

The 3rd Bhutan-India Development Cooperation Talks under the 12th Five Year Plan of Bhutan were held in June 2021 to oversee the implementation and allocation of India's commitment of Rs. 4500 crore Plan Assistance and Rs. 400 crore of Transitional Trade Support Facility (TSF). During the talks, India agreed to provide support to 9 new priority projects of Bhutan, including the Water Flagship Project and Waste Management Project. From 1 April 2021 to 31 October 2021, Government of India has released an amount of INR 496.53 crore towards Project Tied Assistance (PTA), High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP), Program Grant and TSF.

Key highlights of Government of India's Plan Assistance to

Bhutan during the period include the INR 110 crore Health Flagship Program of Bhutan, a Government of India funded PTA (Project Tied Assistance) Project launched in March 2021 to reduce the incidence of mortality on account of Gastric, Cervical and Breast cancers through provision of screening facilities and capacity building for health care officials in Bhutan, and the state of the art Mother and Child Hospital in Mongar, being constructed at a cost of INR 68.1 crore through Government of India's PTA for the 12th Five Year Plan of Bhutan.

Hydropower Cooperation

Hydropower cooperation is an important area of bilateral cooperation, allowing Bhutan's vast hydropower potential to

be tapped for mutual benefit. Jointly developed hydropower capacity now stands at 2136 MW. Some of the projects have also been recognized for their positive contributions to the local economy and communities, with a ceremony for the handing over of the prestigious Brunel Medal for excellence in civil engineering, research and innovation awarded by Institution of Civil Engineers, London to the jointly constructed Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project Authority (MHPA) held in Thimphu on 5 August 2021 and attended by Lyonpo Loknath Sharma, Minister of Economic Affairs of Bhutan. Both governments continued to coordinate on the ongoing projects, including holding of the Authority Meetings for Punatsangchhu-II Hydro Project and Mangdechhu Hydro Project on 21 and 22 September 2021, last held in September 2019. Kholongchhu HEP is also making progress with the award of contracts for its civil works.

Education and Capacity Building

Bilateral cooperation in the area of education with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), in line with Bhutan's priorities, continued through the year 2021-22. Over 950 scholarships are provided annually by Government of India for Bhutanese students to study in India in a wide range of disciplines. This includes the prestigious Nehru-Wangchuck Scholarship providing 8 slots annually, 20 annual slots under the ICCR Scholarship, the Ambassador's Scholarship and the Nalanda University Scholarship. Three Bhutanese students secured admission to M. Tech programmes at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur and received the India-Bhutan Friendship Scholarship for 2021-2022. Another was awarded a Global Fellowship by IIT, Gandhinagar. A group of 30 Tour Guides and officials from the Tourism Council of Bhutan underwent a month-long online introductory-level Hindi language training programme conducted by the Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi University, Wardha.

India continued to partner Bhutan in the capacity building of its government officials, with over 200 slots utilized by Bhutanese nationals for training opportunities through the Ministry's e-ITEC training programmes. A customized 14-week intensive e-ITEC Training Programme on Contemporary Legal Issues was also conducted by the National Law University, Jodhpur for Bhutanese Judges and judicial officers during the year.

Cooperation in New and Emerging Areas

New areas of cooperation are being identified, constantly diversifying and giving fresh impetus to the multifaceted ties between the two countries. Space technology is one such area where bilateral ties have progressed in accordance with the vision of Prime Minister and His Majesty the King of Bhutan. On 24 September 2021, a virtual signing ceremony for the Implementing Arrangement between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Department of Information Technology and Telecom on the Joint Development of a Small Satellite for Bhutan was held at the Ministry of Information

and Communication, Royal Government of Bhutan. Pursuant to the Agreement, a team of Bhutanese space engineers from the Department of Information Technology and Telecom, under the Ministry of Information and Communications of Bhutan, underwent training in UR Rao Satellite Centre (URSC) in Bengaluru from November 2021. A suitable date for the launch of the satellite is being explored in the first quarter of 2022.

The inaugural capacity building program conducted by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was held for officials of the Bhutan InfoComm and Media Authority (BICMA), in July 2021, covering emerging technologies such as 5G, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

India remains Bhutan's largest trading partner. In 2020-21, the bilateral trade reached around USD 1083 million, of which, India's exports to Bhutan comprised USD 694 million and India's imports from Bhutan amounted to USD 389 million. Both governments continued to engage in taking measures to facilitate trade and mutual investments. Government of India permitted the import of seven fresh vegetables – viz. chilli, beans, cabbage, cauliflower, carrot, peas, and soyabean – from Bhutan into India through the plant quarantine station at Jaigaon on the India-Bhutan border with effect from 14 July 2021. Further, to help Bhutan deal with INR shortages, Government of India extended the RGoB also availed two Standby Credit Facilities (SCFs) of Rs. 300 crore and Rs. 400 crore respectively at 5% per annum provided by the Government of India, which were due to expire in December 2021 and June 2022 respectively. The same have now been extended at a revised interest rate of 2.5% per annum. The Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan also enjoys Currency Swap Facility of upto USD 200 million with the Reserve Bank of India under the Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Countries.

The Commerce Secretary Level meeting between India and Bhutan on trade and transit issues was held in New Delhi on 03 November 2021. The Indian delegation was led by Commerce Secretary and the Bhutanese delegation was led by Dasho Karma Tshering, Economic Affairs Secretary. The two co-chairs exchanged letters to formalize seven additional entry/exit points for trade between India and Bhutan, viz. (i) Nagarkata Land Customs Station; (ii) Agartala Land Customs Station; (iii) Pandu port; (iv) Jogighopa port; (v) Asian Highway 48 connecting Torsha Tea Garden in India and Ahllay in Bhutan; (vi) Kamardwisa; and (vii) Birpara.

A virtual startup mentorship program for Bhutanese entrepreneurs titled 'Ignite', was organised in collaboration with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade of India, Invest India, Startup India, and TiE Delhi-NCR. The virtual sessions were held from October 2021 to January 2022, providing over 150 Bhutanese entrepreneurs the opportunity to be mentored by Indian startups.

Cooperation during COVID pandemic

In line with the exemplary relations between India and Bhutan and in keeping with assurances made by Prime Minister to Bhutan as a close friend and neighbour, Government of India ensured continuous supply of essential items to Bhutan despite the disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic. Following the first tranche of 150,000 Covishield vaccines delivered to Bhutan in January 2021, another 400,000 vaccines were sent as grant assistance to Bhutan in March 2021. The thirteenth medical consignment containing six (06) units of portable digital X-ray machines was handed over to the Royal Government of Bhutan on 3 May 2021.

Cultural and People-to-People Linkages

India and Bhutan share the glorious cultural tradition of Buddhism. These linkages have been kept alive and further

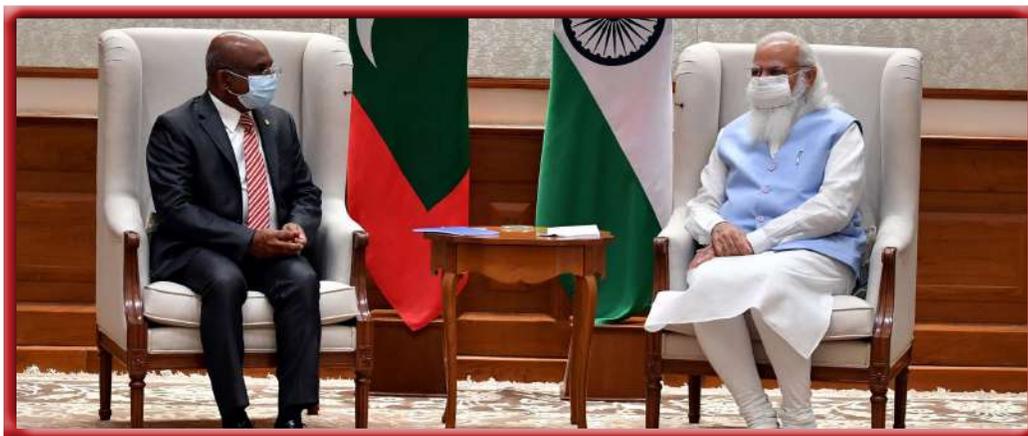
deepened through bilateral cooperation in this field. A bronze statue of Lord Buddha, commissioned by ICCR, was gifted to Government and people of Bhutan, which was enshrined at the prestigious Tashichho Dzong monastery on 20 June 2021, coinciding with the birth anniversary of Guru Rinpoche.

Vibrant people-to-people ties are a hallmark of the warm and friendly relations between India and Bhutan. A slew of India@75 Amrit Mahotsav cultural events were organized by Embassy of India, Thimphu in partnership with Bhutanese organizations, including nationwide quiz and art competitions, panel discussions and sporting events that saw active participation from all sections of society in Bhutan. Four Bhutanese youth leaders participated in the Gen-Next Democratic Network Programme organized by ICCR from 25 November to 2 December 2021.

Maldives

India and Maldives share ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and commercial links. Both the nations enjoy close, cordial and multidimensional relations based on shared values of democratic virtues, peaceful coexistence and rule of law. Both the countries are key players in maintaining safety and security of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Prime Minister and

Prime Minister of Maldives met on 4 occasions in the past 3 years and also had a telephonic call on 20 April 2020 and 14 July 2021. India's "Neighborhood First" policy and Maldives's "India First" policy works in tandem to tackle our shared concerns and advance our mutual interests.



Prime Minister met with President of the 76th UNGA Abdulla Shahid in July 2021

COVID Cooperation

India's whole-hearted and rapid support to Maldives COVID relief measures has received appreciation from all quarters of Maldivian society for time and again being the first responder. India gifted 200,000 doses of Covishield vaccines to the Maldives in January and February 2021 and this set the stage for a rapid and successful vaccination drive in the Maldives. Today, more than 90% of the eligible population in the Maldives is vaccinated. This has enabled the Maldivian economy to get back on a path to recovery.

People to people connectivity

The Air travel bubble set up in 2020 continued apace with a brief break in May-June 2021. The Air Bubble, with more than 60 flights per week, has resulted in becoming the top source for tourists to Maldives in 2021. On 15 October 2021 India reinstated the visa-free agreement of March 2019 for tourism, medical and business purposes. This decision earned much goodwill in the Maldives.

A 14-member Maldivian Youth delegation visited India in November 2021. In December 2021, a 4-member team from CUSAT Kochi visited Maldives for Mangrove Die-Off

Field Investigation in North of Maldives in collaboration with Maldives Min of Environment, Climate Change and Technology.

Trade and Commerce

India has emerged as Maldives' 2nd largest trade partner. To further ease of export and import, in July 2021, India's Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) and Maldives Customs Service (MCS) signed a MoU on Pre-arrival exchange of Cargo Data. In July 2021, India extended the agreement on quotas for restriction-free export of 9 essential commodities to the Maldives for next 3 years. The direct Cargo Vessel service between India and Maldives started in September 2020 continued its voyages and assisted in keeping the prices low for Maldivian consumers at a time of disruption in supply lines. There is growing trade and commercial ties between India and Maldives. In 2020 and 2021, India has emerged as Maldives' 2nd largest trade partner from 4th position in 2019 with around 13% market share for Indian exports. Keeping this in view, a special country session on Maldives was part of this year's CII Partnership Virtual Summit held in December 2021.

Infrastructure Development

India development cooperation in Maldives is more than USD 2.2 Billion. In this field, 9 large infrastructure projects under Lines of Credit (LoC) - including the Greater Male Connectivity Project, Addu Roads, and, Water and Sewerage facilities on 34 islands commenced. Work on the tendering of the Hanimaadhoo and Gan airport redevelopment projects, fisheries processing facilities project and the Cricket Stadium in Hulhumale continue apace. Nearly 40 grant and High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) are under various stages of implementation across islands. In September 2021, LoC of USD 40 million for Sports Infrastructure Development and EXIM Bank's Buyers Credit of USD 227 million for construction of 4000 Social Housing Units in Hulhumale were signed. In the July visit, a revised MoU for HICDPs was signed which increased the outlay from USD 5.5 million to USD 10 million. As on date, 20 HICDPs through local bodies are under various stages of implementation.

Multilateral Cooperation

In June 2021, Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid was elected the 76th UN President of General Assembly (PGA) in a landslide election with India's support. Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid visited India in April 2021 and in July 2021 as UNGA President.

Defence Cooperation

Defence Cooperation is one of the important pillars of bilateral engagements. On defence cooperation, 4th edition

of joint exercise "Ekatha" was held in July 2021. A new anti-narcotics and SAR trilateral exercise "Operation Shield" also held in July 2021. 1st JWG on Counter Terrorism was held in April 2021 and an Action Plan on Implementation was agreed. The 5th edition of Annual Joint Staff talks were held in August 2021. The 1st International Liaison Officer from Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) joined the Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region, Gurugram in September 2021. India-Maldives MoU on 'Cooperation in the long-range identification and tracking of ships (LRIT) System" to augment Marine Safety, Security and Environment Protection was signed in September 2021. Work on the Coastal radar System (CRS) and the second stage of the Composite Training Centre (CTC) for the Maldives National Defence Forces (MNDF) approached completion. The National College of Policing and Law Enforcement (NCPLES) - training academy for the Maldives Police Services (MPS) - in Addu is nearing completion and would be ready for inauguration. Major General Abdulla Shamaal, Chief of Defence Force, MNDF visited India in November 2021 to attend the Goa Maritime Conclave 2021.

In November 2021, 15th edition of Trilateral Exercise 'Dosti' was held. Also, Minister of Defence Mariya Didi visited India as first Foreign Defence Minister to review Passing out Parade at the Indian Naval Academy. Commandant Maldivian Coast Guard participated in 3rd edition of Goa Maritime Conclave. On capacity building front, 06 officers of Maldives Police Service (MPS) successfully passed out from National Police Academy, Hyderabad. In December 2021, 11th edition of Joint Military Exercise 'Ekuberin' was held in Maldives. The National College of Policing and Law Enforcement (NCPLES), training academy for the Maldives Police, in Addu approached completion and awaits inauguration in early 2022.

Capacity Development

On capacity building of human resource, various virtual training programmes were conducted under e-ITEC including in the field of online education, policing, health, etc. With the return of normalcy in air connectivity, on location training resumed from August 2021. Six young diplomats from Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended the '1st Special Course for Diplomats of the IOR region' conducted by Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS); 30 Maldivian Civil Servants - 6th batch - attended the "6th Capacity Building Program in Administration" conducted by National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) in Delhi and Mussoorie; 10 Maldives Customs Service officers attended a training program in 'Chemical Analysis and Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance (NDPS) testing' in Delhi. Another significant development was the signing of an MoU between India and Maldives to commence Capacity Building in emerging audit areas, on 25 October 2021, during the visit of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), an MoU was signed between of India and the Maldives.

Myanmar

India and Myanmar share civilizational, historical and people to people ties. Myanmar is India's land link to ASEAN and a vital component of both India's "Neighbourhood First"

and "Act East" policies. India has expressed deep concern at the developments in Myanmar since 01 February 2021. India has called for restoration of democracy, upholding

the rule of law, release of political detainees and cessation of violence. As a friend of people of Myanmar, India has continued with the humanitarian and development assistance in Myanmar. Foreign Secretary paid a two-day working visit to Myanmar from 22-23 December 2021.

COVID Cooperation

India supported Myanmar's fight against COVID during the outbreak of the third wave in the country. Medicines and medical equipment worth USD 1 million were donated to Myanmar in three tranches during August and September 2021, taking the total bilateral medical assistance for combating COVID to approximately USD 2.3 million. In addition, India has also provided medical assistance worth USD 200,000 for Myanmar through the ASEAN Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre). India has announced a grant of 10,000 tonnes of rice and wheat to Myanmar. India has also supplied more than 5.7 million doses to Myanmar in 2021, with 3.7 million doses as grant.

Development Cooperation

Development cooperation is an important part of India's engagement with Myanmar. India's assistance and involvement ranges from building major connectivity and infrastructure projects such as the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Project, as well as establishing institutions for capacity building and human resource development for long-term impact. India's development assistance to Myanmar exceeds USD 2 billion, with grants-in-aid projects being the largest component.

Despite the COVID pandemic, India has continued its development assistance including India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway, India-Myanmar Border Area Development Programme, Rakhine State Development Programme, establishment of India-Myanmar Industrial Training Centres

in Monywa and Thaton, establishment of a Women Police Training Centre at Yamethin, structural conservation and preservation of earthquake damaged pagodas in Bagan.

Commerce

India was the 4th largest trading partner of Myanmar in 2020-21. Bilateral trade between India and Myanmar stood at USD 1.46 billion in 2020-21. India's export was USD 873.43 million and import from Myanmar valued at USD 586.54 million. During the current financial year (April-August), India's export to Myanmar stands at USD 315.73 million and import from Myanmar is USD 294.05 million.

India and Myanmar signed an MoU in June 2021 under which India provides an annual import quota of 2.5 lakh metric tonnes of Black Matpe (Urad) and 1 lakh metric tonnes of Pigeon Peas (Tur) to Myanmar to be imported through private traders for five years i.e. from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

Training and Capacity Building

Six candidates from Myanmar are studying in India under scholarship offered by Indian Council for Cultural Relations in the financial year 2020-21 in higher educational and professional courses. Since 1 April till 31 October 2021, 61 e-ITEC online courses were conducted in a variety of areas in which students from Myanmar participated enthusiastically. Four students from Myanmar are studying in India under IIT scholarships offered to Myanmar students in various Indian Institutes of Technology under the "1000 Integrated PhD Fellowships for ASEAN students". India is also contributing to capacity building by providing degree courses to Myanmar nationals in IT and agriculture sector institutes that have been set up with assistance from India like Myanmar Institute of Information Technology (MIIT) and Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research and Education (ACARE).



Foreign Secretary interacted with select Ambassadors during his visit to Myanmar in December 2021

Nepal

A continuously expanding partnership with Nepal along with an abiding interest in its development and overall progress is in line with India's "Neighbourhood First Policy". Our age-old civilisational linkages have been reinforced by multifaceted economic and development cooperation. Closer economic integration, enhanced connectivity, strong development partnership and closer people to people contacts are our key objectives with respect to Nepal. Regular high-level political exchanges and regular meetings of bilateral mechanisms have given a new impetus to our partnership.

High-level exchanges

Prime Minister has visited Nepal four times since 2014 and similarly Nepalese Prime Ministers have paid regular visits to India. In 2021, Prime Minister held two telephonic conversation with the Prime Minister of Nepal, including the congratulatory telephonic call made to incoming Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba on 19 July 2021, post his assumption of charge. This is the fifth time Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba has assumed charge as the Prime Minister of Nepal. Both the leaders also met at Glasgow, UK on 02 November 2021, on the sidelines of the COP26 Climate Summit and discussed ways to further strengthen the various aspects of the bilateral cooperation, including in the context of ongoing efforts against the COVID pandemic. Prime Minister Deuba participated in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit from 10-12 January 2021. This is his fifth official visit to India as Prime

Minister and has paid an official visit to India once during each of his previous terms as the Prime Minister of Nepal.

The engagement between India and Nepal was further strengthened with high-level visits and virtual meetings of various bilateral mechanisms. EAM and the Foreign Minister of Nepal Dr. Narayan Khadka had a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of UNGA in New York on 25 September 2021. The Chief of Army Staff of Nepal, Gen. Prabhu Ram Sharma visited India from 9-12 November 2021 on the invitation of his counterpart and was conferred with the rank of Honorary General of Indian Army by the President of India, in continuation of age-old unique tradition between the two countries. EAM virtually delivered his remarks at the International Conference on Reconstruction of Nepal (ICRN) on 8 December 2021, as the largest partner of Nepal's recovery in the aftermath of devastating Earthquake in 2015.

Joint Project Monitoring Committee (JPMC) meeting on Earthquake reconstruction was held in (September 2021). Talks between the Border Guarding Forces of the two countries (October 2021), India-Nepal Working Groups on Defence and Security issues (October 2021), Railway Cooperation (October 2021) are some of the recent bilateral engagements. The 15th edition of India-Nepal Joint Military Training, Exercise Surya Kiran between Indian Army and Nepali Army was conducted in Uttarakhand during September-October 2021.



Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Nepal Sher Bahadur Deuba on the sidelines of COP26 Climate Change Summit in Glasgow in November 2021

Defence and security cooperation

India and Nepal have long standing and extensive mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of defence and security. Historically, both armies have shared excellent and harmonious relationship, and since 1950, India and Nepal have been awarding honorary rank of General to each other's Army Chief. Security agencies of both sides also share close cooperation including exchange of information. Law enforcement agencies hold regular bilateral meetings at various levels to discuss security issues of mutual concern including border management in institutionalized bilateral mechanisms. The 14th round of Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues (BCGSI) was held on 28 October 2021 at Bengaluru wherein mutual security concerns, training and capacity building requirements of defence forces of Nepal, exchange of experts/instructors, exchange of high level and functional level visits etc., were discussed.

India-Nepal Working Groups on Defence and Security issues (October 2021), Railway Cooperation (October 2021), Talks between the Border Guarding Forces of the two countries (October 2021) and Joint Project Monitoring Committee (JPMC) meeting on Earthquake reconstruction (September 2021) were some of the recent bilateral engagements. The 15th edition of India-Nepal Joint Military Training, Exercise Surya Kiran between Indian Army and Nepali Army was conducted in Uttarakhand during September-October 2021.

Operation Maitri and post-earthquake reconstruction assistance

In the wake of the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, Government of India was the first responder and carried out its largest disaster relief operation abroad (Operation Maitri). India extended USD 1 billion Nepal as part of its long-term assistance for post-earthquake reconstruction in housing, education, health and culture heritage sectors. The reconstruction projects in education, health, culture heritage and housing sectors were reviewed by Joint Project Monitoring Committee on 30 September 2021 in Kathmandu. Government of India has successfully handed over all the 50,000 reconstructed houses in Nepal's Gorkha and Nuwakot districts on 15 November 2021, assistance of USD 150 million. 14 higher secondary schools have also been completed and inaugurated in last one year. The work on reconstruction of more than 130 hospital/health centres and 28 cultural heritages sites in Nepal is under various stages of implementation.

Development Partnership

India provides substantial financial and technical assistance to Nepal for implementation of large development and infrastructure and connectivity projects, as well as small development projects/ high impact community development projects in key areas of education, health, irrigation, rural infrastructure, livelihood development, etc. all across the country. A series of cross-border connectivity project like rail links, roads, Integrated Check Posts are under implementation with Government of India's grant assistance.

Some of the major flagship projects completed in recent

years are the first-ever cross-border petroleum products pipeline in South Asia from Motihari in India to Amlekhgunj in Nepal jointly inaugurated by the two Prime Ministers on 10 September 2019; Integrated Check Posts at Birgunj and Biratnagar to facilitate cross-border movement of about 2 million passengers and cargo traffic annually; three cross-border power transmission lines supplying 600 MW of electricity to Nepal.

Despite COVID restrictions, work on the ongoing connectivity and developmental projects continued and showed considerable progress. In February 2021, 13 Terai road packages were completed under Government of India assistance of INR 400 crores and handed over to Government of Nepal. Some of the High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) inaugurated in COVID period include Fateh Bal Eye Hospital in Nepalgunj, Rapti Cold Storage Building in Lamahi Bazar and Rehabilitated Small Hydro Power Plant in Jumla District. India and Nepal have also expanded bilateral cooperation to include new initiatives in the areas of agriculture, railways and inland waterways connectivity. The 'New Partnership in Agriculture' was announced in April 2018, which focuses on collaborative projects in agriculture education and R&D.

India and Nepal signed a Letter of Exchange (LoE) to the India-Nepal Rail Services Agreement (RSA), which enabled all authorized cargo train operators including private container trains operators to carry Nepal's container and other freight. In addition to that, Government of India handed over 34.9 km long cross-border rail link connecting Jayanagar (in Bihar) to Kurtha (in Nepal) to Nepalese government and both countries signed an MoU for conducting Final Location Survey of the proposed broad gauge line between Raxaul and Kathmandu, apart from signing of the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for starting passenger train services on the Jayanagar-Kurtha section. Government of India has successfully handed over all the 50,000 reconstructed houses in Nepal's Gorkha and Nuwakot districts on 15 November 2021, as part of post-earthquake reconstruction efforts.

Cooperation in water resources

Cooperation in water resources, primarily concerning the common rivers, is an important area of cooperation. Three-tier bilateral mechanism has been established in 2008 to discuss issues relating to cooperation in water resources, flood management, and inundation. In the area of river training and embankment construction, Government of India has been providing assistance to Nepal for strengthening and extension of embankments along rivers in Nepal. Discussions on flood management and inundation related matters are underway in existing bilateral mechanisms like JCIFM.

Power cooperation

India and Nepal have robust cooperation in the power sector. Three cross-border transmission lines were completed recently with Government of India assistance: 400 kV Muzaffarpur-Dhalkebar line (2016); 132 kV Kataiya-Kusaha and Raxaul-Parwanipur lines (2017). A total of about 600 MW of power is currently being supplied by India to Nepal through

different transmission lines, assisting Nepal to overcome power shortage in the country. The cooperation in power and energy sectors got another fillip with the notification of the procedure for facilitation of cross border trade of electricity by Government of India, which enables export/ import of electricity with Nepal. The cross-border transmission lines have been augmented and the 106 kms long Koshi corridor double circuit transmission line 220 kV completed under Government of India Lines of Credit to Nepal was handed over to Government of Nepal on 06 October 2021.

Government of India has granted permission to Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) in November 2021 to sell its surplus energy under Cross Border Trade of Electricity (CBTE) guidelines issued in February 2021 and in the first phase, 39MW power including, 24MW produced by NEA-owned Trishuli hydropower and 15MW Devighat power house, have been permitted for trading in Indian Energy Exchange (IEX). Both these projects were developed with India's assistance.

Trade and Economic Ties

India remains Nepal's largest trade partner, with bilateral trade crossing USD 7 billion in FY 2019-20. India provides transit for almost the entire third country trade of Nepal. India's exports to Nepal has grown over 8 times in the past 10 years while exports from Nepal have almost doubled. Despite the difficulties due to the pandemic, India ensured uninterrupted flow of trade and supplies to Nepal. There are over 150 Indian ventures operating in Nepal, primarily engaged in tourism, power, banking, insurance, education, pharmaceuticals, agro products and manufacturing sectors. Indian firms are also active in investing in Nepal, with more than 30% of Nepal's FDI coming from Indian firms. India's top exports to Nepal are petroleum, vehicles, machinery, rice. India's top imports from Nepal are edible oils, polyester, jute, juice, cardamom.

Pakistan

India desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan. India's consistent position is that issues, if any, between India and Pakistan should be resolved bilaterally and peacefully, in an atmosphere free of terror and violence.

Cease Fire Understanding between the DGMOs of India and Pakistan

In a positive step, the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan issued a joint statement on 25 February 2021 agreeing to "the strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease firing along the Line of Control (LoC) and all others sectors with effect from the midnight of 24/25 February 2021". The DGMOs joint statement generated a predominantly positive response in the two countries. The Ceasefire Understanding largely held for the first few months since its announcement in February 2021. However, since July 2021 there has been an uptick in cross-border infiltrations, terrorist violence and ceasefire violations by Pakistan along the International Boundary (IB) and the LoC.

Education, cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges

India and Nepal extend visa-free entry in their respective territories to each other's nationals. Nearly eight (8) million Nepalese citizens live and work in India and around 6,00,000 Indians reside in Nepal. Indians account for about 30% of foreign tourists in Nepal. With a view to strengthen P2P exchanges, sister city agreements have been signed (Kathmandu-Varanasi, Lumbini-Bodhgaya, Janakpur-Ayodhya) and India-Nepal Ramayana Circuit have been launched. Over the years, India's contribution to human resource development in Nepal has been an important aspect of our relationship. Government of India provides around 3000 scholarships annually to Nepali nationals studying in India and in Nepal at all levels of education in a wide range of disciplines. Under ITEC programme, professional training is offered annually to about 250 officials from Nepal at various technical institutes in India.

COVID Assistance

As part of its COVID assistance, Government of India has supplied more than 3.1 million doses of COVID vaccines to Nepal. Government of India has also gifted 150 ICU beds to Nepal's COVID assistance and a State of the Art indigenously developed, Medical Oxygen plant has been installed at B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences which has a capacity to serve 200 patients simultaneously. The Oxygen Plant has been developed by DRDO and it utilizes Pressure Swing Adsorption technology. India has also ensured uninterrupted supply of Medical Oxygen to Nepal, apart from providing 23 Tonnes of medicines and Medical Equipment India as part of its COVID assistance.

In 2021, 666 incidents of Cease Fire violations have been reported till 31 October 2021. 37 civilians and 34 members of the security forces have been killed and 70 civilians and 78 members of the security forces injured in incidents of terrorist violence. India registered strong protests with Pakistan regarding these incidents, including through diplomatic channels and established channels of hotline talks between the DGMOs.

Meeting of the Indus Water Commission

The 117th Meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission established under the Indus Waters Treaty signed between India and Pakistan took place from 18-20 January 2021 in Islamabad.

High Level Interactions in multilateral fora

High Level interactions have been limited to participation at multilateral fora including SAARC, SCO, NAM, CICA among others.

Pakistan is yet to respond like a normal neighbour as it continues to sponsor cross border terrorism against India; restrict normal trade, connectivity and people to people exchanges; engage in hostile and fabricated propaganda to vilify India as also to present an alarming picture of bilateral ties to the world. Pakistan's leadership have shown no respite in their hate-speech, rhetorical and incendiary statements against India, including on its domestic matters, in order to divert attention from their domestic political and economic failures. India has completely and unequivocally rejected all actions and statements by Pakistan on matters which are completely internal to India. As a result, of our diplomatic outreach, both in India and abroad, there is a greater understanding of India's position that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the India and that the matters related to it are internal to India. Countries have also called on Pakistan to end its support and safe haven for terrorist groups operating on its soil, including those targeting India, and to resolve issues, if any, with India bilaterally and peacefully.

Cross border Terrorism

India has consistently stressed the need for Pakistan to take credible, irreversible and verifiable action to end cross border terrorism. India's attempts to build normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan continued to be undermined by Pakistan's continued support to cross-border terrorism and violence against India. Pakistan is yet to show sincerity in delivering justice to the families of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks as it continued to engage in obfuscation and dilatory tactics.

Despite our persistent urging that Pakistan respect its January 2004 commitment of not allowing its soil or territory under its control to be used for terrorism against India, there was no let up in cross-border terrorism, infiltration and illegal smuggling of arms into India across the LoC and International Boundary. India is firmly and resolutely committed to taking all necessary measures to safeguard its national security in the fight against terrorism. India consistently raises the issue of Pakistan's continued support to cross-border terrorism and terrorist infiltration in bilateral, regional and multilateral fora; and brief our partners and the international community at large on the continued concerns of cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. In our outreach, credible inputs regarding the Pakistani-origins of the captured terrorists are also shared.

People to people relations

Religious Pilgrimages: Under the 1974 Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines, the Government facilitated the pilgrimage of a Sikh Jatha of 818 members to Gurudwaras in Pakistan in April 2021 on the occasion of Baisakhi. The visit

of a group of Zaireens from Pakistan to New Delhi for the Urs of Nizamuddin Auliya was also facilitated in November 2021. These visits were facilitated mindful of COVID restrictions.

The Kartarpur Corridor between India and Pakistan was inaugurated in November 2019. However, as a precautionary measure to contain and control the spread of COVID pandemic, the travel and registration to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur was temporarily suspended on 16 March 2020. Following an improvement in the COVID situation, Prime Minister announced the re-opening of the Kartarpur corridor on 17 November 2021. More than 1500 religious pilgrims have used the Kartarpur Corridor to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan since the re-opening of the Corridor on 17 November 2021. Overall, approximately 64,000 pilgrims have successfully used the Kartarpur Corridor to visit the holy Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan, since its inauguration. Humanitarian issues of prisoners and fishermen: Government attaches high importance to the issue of prisoners held in Pakistan custody and consistently takes up the matter of their early release and repatriation to India. India and Pakistan exchanged, through diplomatic channels simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad, the lists of civilian fishermen and prisoners and fishermen in their custody. This is in keeping with the provisions of the 2008 Agreement under which such lists are exchanged every year on 1 January and 1 July. As per the lists exchanged on 1 July 2021, there are 271 Pakistan civilian prisoners and 74 fishermen in India's custody. Pakistan acknowledged custody of 51 civilian prisoners and 558 fishermen who are Indians or believed-to-be Indians. As a result of persistent efforts, India has been successful in securing the release and repatriation of more than 2600 Indian prisoners including fishermen, from Pakistan's custody since 2014. This includes 20 Indian fishermen and 7 Indian civilian prisoners who were released and repatriated to India in 2021. India has sought early consular access and release and repatriation of the remaining Indian nationals in Pakistan's custody. In addition, India has raised the issue of 83 missing Indian defence personnel, including Prisoners of War, who are believed to be in Pakistan's custody. However, Pakistan has not acknowledged their custody so far. India also continues to take up the issue of visit of a medical team in order to address the issue of mentally unsound prisoners in each others' custody. Government also facilitated the return of Pakistan and Indian nationals stranded on either side of the border due to COVID induced border restrictions. So far, over 1700 Pakistan nationals and over 1500 Indian nationals and Long Term Visa holders (NORI Visa) of Pakistan have been repatriated.

India and Pakistan also exchanged, the list of nuclear installations and facilities, covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities between India and Pakistan on 1 January 2022.

Sri Lanka

Despite the disruptions posed by COVID pandemic, India and Sri Lanka remained engaged to further strengthen their age-

old bilateral ties. High-level exchanges continued with the visit of Foreign Secretary and the Chief of Army Staff of India

to Sri Lanka in October 2021. The Police Chiefs' Dialogue (April 2021); 5th High Level meeting between Indian and Sri Lankan Coast Guards (June 2021), JWG on Tourism (October 2021), Joint Military exercise- Mitra Shakti (October 2021) kept the momentum of the bilateral engagements rolling during the period. India continued to assist Sri Lanka in its fight with COVID pandemic and to mitigate its adverse impact and its developmental priorities. Enhanced cooperation was also witnessed in the areas of trade and investment, defence and culture. Sri Lanka occupies a central place in India's "Neighborhood First" policy and the SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) doctrine. Accordingly, relations between the two countries witnessed positive trends in the year.

Bilateral Engagements

High level bilateral engagements included Prime Minister's telephonic conversation with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in March 2021 and a meeting of both the leaders on the sidelines of COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021. EAM had a telephonic conversation with his former Sri Lankan counterpart Dinesh Gunawardena in June 2021. In September 2021, EAM also met incumbent Sri Lankan Foreign Minister G.L. Peiris on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session in New York.

In October 2021, Foreign Secretary paid an official visit to Sri Lanka. During the visit, Foreign Secretary called on the President of Sri Lanka Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapaksa, Minister of Finance Basil Rajapaksa and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Prof. G.L. Peiris. He held cordial and productive meetings and discussions with the State Minister for Estate Housing and Community Infrastructure Jeevan Thondaman, Foreign Secretary Admiral (Retd) Prof. Jayanath Colombage and Defence Secretary General (Retd) G.D.H. Kamal Gunaratne. Apart from these engagements, Foreign Secretary also jointly inaugurated/handed over, in virtual mode, four (4) development cooperation projects completed through Indian grant assistance. These included- Vadamardchy Central Ladies College in Northern Province and Saraswathi Central College in Pussellwa, Kandy district; handing over of 1235 houses under Indian Housing Project (IHP) Phase III and handing over houses under the Model Village Housing Project in Vavuniya District.

In continuation with the ongoing bilateral engagements this year, Minister of Finance of Sri Lanka Basil Rajapaksa paid an official visit to New Delhi from 30 November - 3 December 2021. This was the first overseas visit of the Minister since he assumed office in July 2021. During the two-day official visit, had discussions with his counterpart, Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister and EAM. Separately, he met the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and the National Security Advisor of India

COVID Cooperation

India provided Sri Lanka with 5,00,000 doses of Covishield vaccines in January 2021 as a grant. In addition, another 5,00,000 doses of Covishield were provided in February 2021 on a commercial basis. Sri Lanka also received 264,000 doses

of Covishield vaccine manufactured in India through the Covax facility. India continued to assist Sri Lanka in its fight against challenges posed by the COVID pandemic. Upon receipt of request for assistance by President of Sri Lanka Gotabaya Rajapaksa for urgent supply of LMO, in August 2021, Indian Naval Ship Shakti set sail to Colombo with 100 tons of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) on board from Visakhapatnam under 'Operation Samudra Setu-II'.

Development Cooperation

Execution of people-centric and need based projects continued during the period under India's Development Cooperation partnership with Sri Lanka which is one of the most important pillar of this bilateral relationship. Phase-III of the flagship IHP progressed despite the challenges posed by COVID. Close to 3639 houses have been completed till now and the remaining houses are expected to be complete soon. As on date, the total number of houses completed under IHP stands at around 49,500. Underlining its abiding commitment to development cooperation partnership with Sri Lanka, Government of India decided to undertake maintenance support of the iconic Jaffna Cultural Center for a five-year period. High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) spread across multiple spheres such as health, education, livelihood etc in all districts of Sri Lanka also moved forward well during the period.

The development partnership between India and Sri Lanka witnessed the ongoing implementation of projects under four Lines of Credit. A further 20 passenger railway coaches were supplied to Sri Lanka in September 2021 under LoC assistance. Both sides also concluded a new Line of Credit worth USD 100 million provided by India for projects in the solar energy sector in Sri Lanka, in June 2021.

On 4 November 2021, Indian Air Force aircraft transported 100,000 Kg of Nano Nitrogen fertilizer from India to Sri Lanka. The consignment was essentially to support the Government of Sri Lanka's initiative towards Organic farming.

Jeevan Thondaman, State Minister of Estate Housing and Community Infrastructure, Dr. Kavinda Heshan Jayawardhana, M.P, Gayathri Wickramasinghe, Colombo Municipal Council Member and Mr. Rehan Jayawickrama, former Chairman of Weligama Urban Council participated in the Gen Next Democracy Network Programme organized by ICCR from 26 November - 2 December 2021.

Development Cooperation partnership with Sri Lanka is expected to receive further impetus through signing of several bilateral documents towards initiation of new projects as well as continuation and scaling up of ongoing projects in the near future.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

India and Sri Lanka enjoy a comprehensive economic and trade partnership which continues to develop and grow stronger. India was Sri Lanka's 2nd largest trade partner in the year 2020 and bilateral merchandise trade for the first six months of FY 2021-22 (April to September) stood at USD 2.44

billion. During these six months, merchandise exports from India to Sri Lanka amounted to USD 2.06 billion, while India's merchandise imports from Sri Lanka stood at USD 0.37 billion.

India and Sri Lanka also have strong ties in the area of investments which continue to flourish during the first six months of FY 2021-22. A Build Own Transfer (BOT) agreement was executed between the Colombo West International Container Terminal (Private) Limited (CWIT) and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) on 30 September 2021 for the development of the West Container Terminal - I (WCT-I) at the Port of Colombo. The development of WCT-I will be one of the largest investments in Sri Lanka and a private entity from India is the majority shareholder of the CWIT which is the Project Company for WCT-I.

Sri Lanka also undertook procurement of nano-nitrogen (a type of nano-fertilizer) manufactured by Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) from India on commercial basis during October-November 2021. Upon GoSL's request, Indian Air Force also facilitated the airlift of nearly 100 MT of nano-nitrogen in November 2021.

Defence Cooperation

Defence cooperation continued apace. In October 2021, the Chief of Army Staff of India General Manoj Mukund Naravane visited Colombo. The Eighth Edition of the joint Military exercise between the Indian and Sri Lankan Army- Exercise Mitra Shakti - was conducted in Sri Lanka in October 2021. It is the largest bilateral exercise undertaken by Sri Lankan army to date.

In October 2021, six ships of the Indian Navy's First Training Squadron arrived at Ports of Colombo and Trincomalee for the largest ever training interaction with their counterparts in Sri Lanka Navy. This was the first time in the history of bilateral relations that such a large number of Indian Navy ships have visited Sri Lanka.

Under operation Sagar Araksha-II, Indian Navy and the Coast Guard rushed to assist their Sri Lankan counterparts to douse fire onboard M/s Xpress Pearl in May 2021 averted major environmental damage and loss of lives. In June 2021, INS Sarvekshak was deployed upon a formal request from the Government of Sri Lanka for Survey Assistance following the MV Xpress Pearl disaster.

Vice Admiral DNS Ulugetenne, Commander of Sri Lankan Navy visited India in November 2021 to attend the Goa Maritime Conclave 2021.

From 27-28 November 2021, Tri-Lateral Focused Operations under the aegis of Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) between India- Sri Lanka- Maldives commenced at Sea.

Cultural Cooperation

In the sphere of culture, despite the restrictions imposed due to the COVID pandemic, the bilateral relations soared even higher. A milestone event was the inaugural flight from Sri Lanka to the sacred city of Kushinagar on the auspicious vap poya day (full moon) on 20 October 2021. Prime Minister had extended an invitation to the Sri Lankan side to send an inaugural flight to the new International airport of Kushinagar during the Virtual Bilateral Summit in September 2020.

A large high-profile delegation, led by Cabinet Minister Namal Rajapaksa and comprising of over 85 senior Buddhist monks, 4 State Ministers and other senior officials, traveled to Kushinagar on the inaugural flight. The sacred Kapilvastu Buddha relics from the Rajaguru Sri Subhuthi Maha Vihara of Waskaduwa were also brought to India on the flight for an exposition and were taken to different cities in India. The Sri Lankan delegation participated in the Abhidhamma Day event held at the Mahaparinirvana temple, Kushinagar at which our Prime Minister was the Chief Guest.

Two prominent Sri Lankan Nationals namely Dr. Vajira Chitrasesa, a legendary dancer and linguist Indra Dassanayake, a well-known professor of Hindi who passed away last year, received Padma Shri Award, one of the highest civilian honours in India for the year 2020 in a ceremony held in November 2021.

Several events, commemorating 75 years of India's Independence- *Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav*, were organized throughout the year by the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC), Colombo. The 160th Birth Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore was commemorated with the release of a special edition of 'Sri Lanka Hindi Samachar', dedicated to Gurudev Tagore by the High Commissioner in May 2021.

The 152nd Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was commemorated with the garlanding of the Mahatma's bust at Temple Trees- the residence of the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and the Foreign Secretary of India.

Robust people to people exchanges between India and Sri Lanka resumed following lifting of travel restrictions imposed by Covid-19. Almost two-third of the foreign arrivals in September 2021 were from India.

On 8 November 2021, two eminent personalities from Sri Lanka, Dr. Vajira Chitrasesa and Late Prof. Indra Dassanayake were conferred with the 'Padma Shri' by the President of India for the year 2020 for their seminal contributions in the field of dance, and literature and Education respectively.

On 11 November 2021, Sri Lanka-India Parliamentary Friendship Association for the 9th Parliament of Sri Lanka was established.

2

INDIAN OCEAN REGION

Comoros

India established diplomatic relations with Comoros in 1976 and the relations between India and Comoros have been cordial and friendly. India does not have a resident Mission in Moroni and Mission in Madagascar is concurrently accredited to Comoros. The bilateral relations between the two countries have gained a fresh momentum after the successful visit of the Vice-President of India to Moroni from 10-12 October 2019 when six new MoUs for cooperation between the two countries were signed and announcements for grants and an LoC of USD 20 million was made by the Indian side.

Bilateral Engagements

A 3-member Comorian delegation led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Comoros Dhoihir Dhoulkamal, participated in Aero India 2021 and IOR Defence Ministers Conclave at Yelahanka, Bengaluru from 3-5 February 2021. On the sidelines of the event, the Comorian Foreign Minister also had a bilateral meeting with Raksha Mantriji. Cdr Moudjib-rahmane Adaine, Chief of Comorian Coast Guard visited India in November 2021 to attend the Goa Maritime Conclave 2021.

HADR and Capacity Building

As announced during the visit of the Vice President to Comoros in October 2019, a special consignment of 1000 MT of rice was delivered to Comoros on-board INS Jalashwa in March 2021. Twelve diplomats from Comoros participated in the 1st Special Course for Diplomats in Indian Ocean Region from 19 September – 2 October 2021 organised by the Sushma Swaraj Foreign Service Institute.

Cultural Cooperation

A 15-member Comorian group participated in Surajkund Mela from 1-16 February 2020. All seven editions of International Day of Yoga have been celebrated in Moroni, Comoros to coincide with the worldwide celebrations of IDY. Persons from a cross section of Comorian society, which included local senior government dignitaries, members of diplomatic corps and Indian diaspora, participated in the event. This year, the International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Moroni on 21 June 2021.

Madagascar

India and Madagascar enjoy cordial bilateral relations. The bilateral relations received a strong impetus by the visit of Rashtrapati to Madagascar in March 2018. Madagascar is an important and valued country in the India's vision of SAGAR- 'Security and Growth for all in the region'.

Bilateral Engagements

EAM had a telephonic conversation with the Foreign Minister of Madagascar, Dr. Tehindrazanarivelo Djacoba A.S. Oliva on 1 March 2021.

Defence Cooperation

INS Jalashwa visited the port of Antsiranana from 12-13 March 2021 carrying the 5-member Indian Navy Mobile Training Team to train the Malagasy Armed Forces. The team imparted 14-days training to 50 trainees from the Malagasy side before returning onboard INS Jalashwa on 30 March 2021. INS Shardul visited the port of Antsiranana from 21-24 March 2021 and participated in the first ever joint-patrolling of the Malagasy Exclusive Economic Zone and the PASSEX with the Malagasy Naval Ship Trozona on 24 March 2021. Minister of National Defence of Madagascar, Lt. General Rakotonirina Leon Jean Richard led a 4-member delegation to participate in Aero India 2021 and IOR Defence Ministers Conclave at Yelahanka, Bengaluru from 3-5 February 2021. During the visit, the Malagasy Defence Minister held a bilateral meeting with Raksha Mantri and discussed steps for furthering defence cooperation between the two countries. Two senior Malagasy Naval officers participated in the online video conference of Goa Maritime Symposium from 11-13 May 2021. Rear Admiral GA Jacquy Honor, Navy chief of Madagascar, visited India in November 2021 to attend the Goa Maritime Conclave 2021.

Mauritius

The special and time-tested relationship between India and Mauritius is underpinned by shared history, ancestry, culture, tradition and rich people-to-people ties. Based on shared values such as democracy and pluralism, this privileged relationship has evolved over the years to encompass newer areas such as economic cooperation and maritime security in the strategically important Indian Ocean Region. The high level of trust and mutual understanding between the two sides is reflected in regular high-level political exchanges. The two countries have also been cooperating on the execution of several large infrastructure development projects in Mauritius.

EAM visited Mauritius on 22-23 February 2021 and reviewed all aspects of bilateral relations, ongoing implementation of various infrastructure projects being carried out by India in Mauritius, and held discussions on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest including India's assistance to Mauritius. During the visit, several key MoU/Agreements were signed including the landmark Comprehensive Economic

HADR and Capacity Building

As a gesture of India-Madagascar relations and in response to the appeal made by Government of Madagascar to provide humanitarian assistance to deal with its drought situation, 1000 tonnes of rice and 100,000 tablets of hydroxychloroquine were sent on board by INS Jalashwa in March 2021 for the people of drought affected southern Madagascar as humanitarian assistance.

Ten diplomats from Madagascar participated in the 1st Special Course for Diplomats in Indian Ocean Region from 19 September - 2 October 2021 organised by Sushma Swaraj Foreign Service Institute.

Cultural Cooperation

The seventh edition of International Day of Yoga was celebrated by the Mission on 21 June 2021. There was appreciable increase in the participation by the Malagasy community in addition to international community present in Antananarivo. A number of events as a part of the celebrations of the 75 years of Independence of India, under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav from April to October 2021 were organised. Mayor of the Urban Municipality of Antananarivo, Mr. Naina Andriantsitohaina visited India under the ICCR Distinguished Visitor Programme from 7-15 November 2021.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

A Webinar and Virtual Business to Business meetings on Opportunities in Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals were organized in collaboration with the Pharmaceuticals Exports Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil) on 14 December 2021.

Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA); Line of Credit Agreement for USD 100 mn Defence LoC; Letters of Exchange on deployment of one in-service Passenger Variant Dornier and an inservice ALH Dhruv, an MoU on Consumer Protection and Legal Metrology among others.

Former President and Prime Minister of Mauritius, Sir Anerood Jugnauth (SAJ) passed away on 3 June 2021 at the age of 91. Prime Minister called Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth to convey his condolences on 4 June 2021. As a mark of respect to Sir Anerood Jugnauth, the Government of India decided to observe one day's State Mourning on 5 June 2021 throughout India. An obituary reference was also made in the Parliament of India during the Monsoon Session in July 2021, as a mark of respect to the departed dignitary. On 08 November 2021, Lady Sarojini Jugnauth, spouse of Sir Anerood Jugnauth accepted the Padma Vibushan conferred on Sir Anerood Jugnauth from Rashtrapati.

Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth intends to visit India to

participate in the 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2022 from 10-12 January 2022 and to hold bilateral meeting with Prime Minister.

COVID Cooperation

Mauritius commenced its COVID vaccination campaign on 26 January 2021 with the 100,000 doses of vaccines gifted by India. India also supplied another 300,000 doses of vaccines on commercial basis to Mauritius in February-March 2021. The Government of Mauritius donated 200 Oxygen Concentrators to India during the second wave of the COVID pandemic in India. These were delivered to India on a special flight on 28 April 2021 and were deployed to various hospitals across India.

Development Cooperation

The next phase of the India-assisted Mauritius Metro Express project, from Quatre Bornes to Rose Hill, was launched on 20 June 2021 by Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth. The Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA), Mauritius signed a Letter of Intent with the Telecom

Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on 7 July 2021 for bilateral cooperation in the regulation of telecommunication and broadcasting sectors.

The supply and handover of 16 human incinerators, 13 trailer mounted water pumps and first batch of fire fighting vehicles to the Government of Mauritius was successfully completed on 21 December 2021.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

The bilateral engagement in this area is extensive. The landmark Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) was signed on 22 February 2021 during the visit of EAM to Mauritius. The Agreement entered into force on 01 April 2021 following the completion of internal legal procedures by both sides. The CECPA is the first trade Agreement signed by India with a country in Africa.

An Air Bubble Agreement between India and Mauritius became operational with effect from 15 November 2021, providing for two weekly flights between Mumbai and Mauritius.



EAM surveyed the Metro Express in Mauritius during his visit in February 2021

Defence Cooperation

The handing over ceremony of the Passenger Variant Dornier (PVD) Aircraft on lease from the Indian Navy to the Mauritius Police Force (MPF) (on gratis basis) and exchange of contracts of the new PVD was held at the SSR International Airport, Mauritius, on 13 September 2021. On successful completion of Short Refit, Mauritius Coast Guard Ship (CGS) Barracuda was returned to Mauritius on 27 October 2021. The refit of CGS Barracuda was carried out at M/s. Garden Reach Ship Builders and Engineers Ltd. (GRSE), Kolkata by the Government of India, on gratis basis, within a short span of 8 months. Mr. Anil Kumarsing Dip, Acting Commissioner of Police, visited India in November 2021 to attend the Goa Maritime Conclave 2021.

On 26 November 2021, Cabinet of the Government of Mauritius agreed to the signing of the revised 'Protocol on Sale of Navigational Products', to cater for the sale of Electronic Navigational Charts of Mauritian waters.

Cultural Cooperation

The 7th International Day of Yoga 2021 was celebrated in Mauritius with a mix of physical events (with participation limited to 10 persons owing to COVID related restrictions) and online events. On 19 June 2021, an event named 'Yoga with Ambassadors' was held at Chancery premises. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Government of Mauritius, another event was hosted at the

Chancery premises on 21 June 2021. The Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms also hosted an event on 21 June 2021 for civil servants in collaboration with the Mission. Minister Teeruthraj Hurdoyal spoke on the occasion. Further, Foreign Minister Alan Ganoo recorded a video message on the occasion of IDY 2021, which was widely disseminated using the Mission's social media handles.

On 15 October 2021, Cabinet of the Government of Mauritius agreed to the signing of a Joint Declaration for extension of the existing MoU on the Establishment of a Chair in Ayurveda, between the University of Mauritius and the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences under the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, for a period of three years.

Seychelles

India and Seychelles have traditionally enjoyed close and friendly relations. Seychelles is a key partner for India in the Indian Ocean Region. Seychelles views India as a partner of preference in meeting its developmental and national priority goals. The main areas of cooperation include developmental partnership, defence cooperation, capacity building including scholarships and ITEC programmes, cultural cooperation, etc.

Bilateral Engagements

India's ties with the Republic of Seychelles received further momentum during 2021. A High-level Virtual meet between Prime Minister and President of the Republic of Seychelles Wavel Ramkalawan took place on 08 April 2021. The event featured joint e-inauguration of the new Magistrates' Court built under Indian grant assistance of USD 3.45 Million, handing over of 48.9 m Fast Patrol Vessel PS Zoroaster, handing over of a 1 MW Solar Power Plant, inauguration of 10 High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) under Indian grant assistance and addresses by both the leaders.

COVID Cooperation

Seychelles was the first African Country to have received India made vaccines. India donated 50,000 doses of Covishield to Seychelles on 22 January 2021.

Development Cooperation

Developmental assistance continues to be the bedrock of India's bilateral relations with Seychelles. On 23 August 2021, equipment for setting up of an e-VidyaBharati and ArogyaBharati (e-VBAB) centre to provide tele-education and tele-medicine was handed over to the Government of Seychelles.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

The third edition of India-Seychelles Trade and Investment Seminar is planned to be organised on 13 January 2021.

Launch of IRIS initiative

Prime Minister of Mauritius, Pravind Kumar Jugnauth joined Prime Minister in launching the 'Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS)' initiative on 2 November 2021 alongside Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr. Boris Johnson; Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Scott Morrison; Prime Minister of Fiji, Mr. Frank Bainimarama; and Prime Minister of Jamaica, Mr. Andrew Holness. IRIS, a dedicated initiative, has been co-created by the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) with support from Member Countries and organizations and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) representatives. IRIS aims to support SIDS in achieving sustainable development through a systematic approach to resilient, sustainable, and inclusive infrastructure

Defence Cooperation

A High Level Joint Defence Coordination Committee Meeting was held on 11 November 2021 wherein various defence related issues were discussed. A report of the details of fishing vessels and ships drifting in the EEZ of Seychelles is shared on a monthly basis with the Seychelles side. Chief of Defence Force (CDF), Brigadier Michael Rosette of Seychelles People's Defence Forces (SPDF) participated virtually in the Goa Maritime Conclave held in November 2021. A Webinar for Promotion of Defence Exports and an ITEC Defence Alumni Meet were conducted on 12 November 2021

Cultural Cooperation

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav was celebrated in Seychelles through several events and activities. On 29 April 2021, an Indian classical Bharatanatyam dance performance was organised and broadcasted live on social media. The 7th International Day of Yoga was celebrated with a video message from Vice-President of the Republic of Seychelles Ahmed Aff. A six part video series on Yoga was shot and broadcasted on Seychelles Broadcasting Corporations' national TV channel. A reception was held to mark the 75th Independence Day of India and witnessed high level attendance including that of the President, the Vice President, the Foreign Minister and many members of the cabinet of Ministers. The High Commission, in partnership with the Seychelles National Parks Authority, planted 75 endemic trees to mark 75 years of India's independence on the World Nature Conservation Day on 28 July 2021. 152nd birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was celebrated with free screening of a Bollywood movie based on Mahatma's ideals and a seminar attended by high level dignitaries.

Cooperation in Consular and Media Affairs

Consolidation Cooperation Visa Waiver Agreement for Holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports between India and Seychelles was signed on 24 May 2021. An MoU on Cooperation and Collaboration on Broadcasting was signed between Prasar Bharati and Seychelles Broadcasting Cooperation on 17 August 2021.

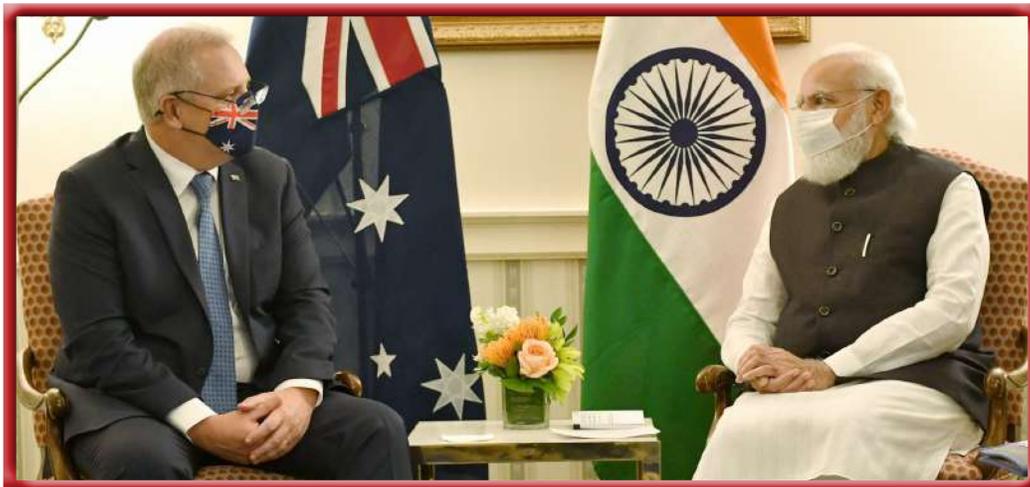
3

SOUTH EAST ASIA AND OCEANIA

Australia

Building on the elevation of relations with Australia from a Strategic Partnership to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) in June 2020, the year 2021-22 saw increasing depth and breadth of engagements in the

bilateral, trilateral and plurilateral formats, with progress made on various initiatives agreed under the CSP, including establishment of new mechanisms for cooperation.



Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Australia Scott Morrison in Washington DC in September 2021

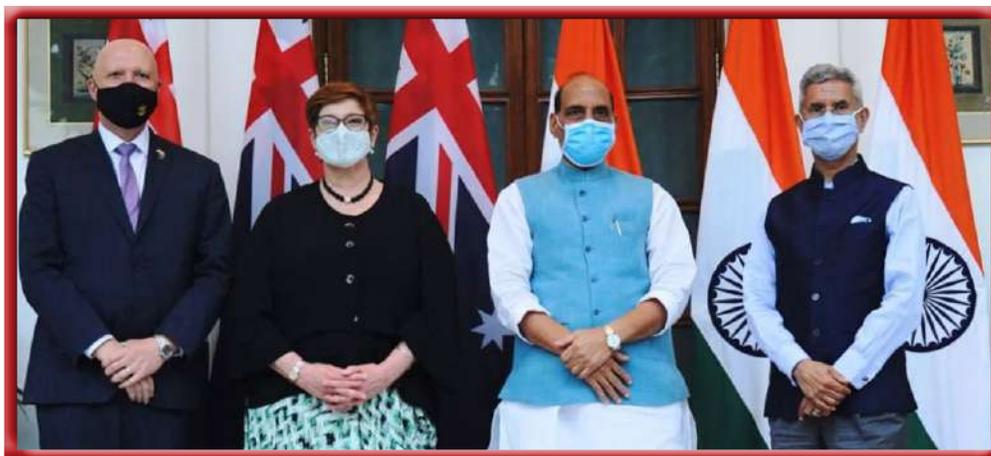
High-Level Bilateral Interaction

The momentum of the bilateral relationship intensified with regular high level exchanges, despite the pandemic induced disruption. Prime Minister held the first in-person bilateral meeting in the post-pandemic period with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on 23 September 2021, on the sidelines of the Quad Leaders' Summit in Washington DC. They reviewed the progress achieved on all aspects of bilateral cooperation including trade, defence, people to people links and science and technology and welcomed a new Low Emissions Technology Partnership focussing on critical minerals and ultra low cost solar. Prime Minister also met Prime Minister Morrison in Glasgow on the sidelines of CoP26 Climate Summit on 1 Nov 2021. Together with other leaders, they jointly launched the 'Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS)' at the World Leaders Summit at COP26, Glasgow on 2 November 2021. The two Prime Ministers also spoke several times over the telephone.

Prime Minister Morrison and Minister for Foreign Affairs Marise Payne participated (virtually) in the Raisina Dialogue in April 2021. Prime Minister delivered the keynote address

at the Sydney Dialogue, on India's technology evolution and revolution on 18 November 2021. EAM participated in the Sydney Dialogue session on "Democracies and Global Technology Governance" with Minister for Foreign Affairs Marise Payne and Nick Clegg, VP, Facebook on 19 November 2021. EAM virtually delivered the prestigious annual JG Crawford Oration at the Australian National University. Prime Minister Morrison addressed the Bengaluru Tech Summit on 17 November 2021, where he announced the new Australia-India Centre of Excellence for Critical and Emerging Technology Policy and the intention to establish a new Consulate General in Bengaluru.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Marise Payne and Minister for Defence Peter Dutton visited Delhi and co-chaired the First India-Australia 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue with EAM and Raksha Mantri on 11 September 2021. The Dialogue reflected the growing convergence between India and Australia on security issues and a shared commitment for a free, open, prosperous and rules-based Indo-Pacific region. Ministers Payne and Dutton called on Prime Minister.



EAM and Raksha Mantri along with their Australian counterparts at the 2+2 Meeting in September 2021

EAM and his counterpart Minister Marise Payne met several times during the year, including on the sidelines of the G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting in London and the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York. On 4 May 2021, they met with French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian for the first India-France-Australia Trilateral Ministerial Dialogue in London.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Marise Payne has invited EAM for Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting in Australia on 10-12 February 2021 as well as for EAM's maiden bilateral visit to Australia. Bilateral Virtual Leaders' Summit at the level of Prime Ministers is likely to take place in early 2022.

Defence Cooperation

India - Australia defence cooperation continued to expand during the year. Raksha Mantri met Minister for Defence Peter

Dutton in New Delhi. Australia participated in Exercise Malabar along with India, US and Japan. India was invited for the first time to observe the bi-annual Australia-USA bilateral Exercise Talisman Sabre 2021. The fourth edition of bilateral maritime Exercise AUSINDEX between the Indian Navy and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) was held on 6 - 10 September 2021 off Australia's Northern Territory coast. For the first time, Indian Navy participated along with the navies of France, Japan, United States and Australia in the multilateral maritime exercise La Pérouse in the Eastern Indian Ocean from 5 - 7 April 2021.

A 'Joint Guidance for the Australia - India Navy to Navy Relationship' was signed between the Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy on 18 August 2021. Consequent to this, the 'Terms of Reference for the Conduct of Navy-to-Navy Talks' was signed on 29 September 2021. The Australian Industry and Defence Network (AIDN) and the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) signed a Memorandum

of Understanding on 23 September 2021 establishing a framework of cooperation between the two defence industry associations.

Economic Relationship

The year witnessed new initiatives to deepen the bilateral economic relationship. Former Prime Minister of Australia Tony Abbott visited India on 2-5 August 2021 as Special Trade Envoy of Prime Minister Scott Morrison and met Prime Minister, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Finance Minister and other dignitaries and discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral trade. Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Dan Tehan visited India on 30 September - 02 October 2021 and along with Minister of

Commerce and Industry, co-chaired the 17th India-Australia Joint Ministerial Commission meeting in New Delhi. The Ministers formally launched the resumption of negotiations to conclude an India-Australia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) with ambitious timelines, including an interim agreement by December 2021 to liberalise and deepen bilateral trade in goods and services, and a full CECA by the end of 2022. On 27 April 2021, the two Ministers along with Japan's Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry Kajiyama Hiroshi launched the trilateral India-Australia-Japan Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI). Australia committed AUD 1 million to the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and AUD 10 million to the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).



Australia's Defense Minister Peter Dutton and Foreign Minister Marise Payne called on the Prime Minister during their visit to New Delhi in September 2021

Education, Energy and Technology Ties

Cooperation in diverse areas such as cyber, critical minerals, mining, renewable energy and education, among others continued.

Western Sydney University and All India Institute of Ayurveda, Ministry of AYUSH signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 2 September 2021 to appoint an AYUSH Academic Chair for research in Ayurvedic Medicine.

A new India Young Water Professionals (YWP) Program was launched by the Australian Water Partnership (AWP), Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Australia-India Water Centre (AIWC)—a consortium of Australian and Indian universities on 29 November 2021.

People-to-People Ties

People-to-people linkages and travel between India and Australia were disrupted due to the pandemic. Between April and October 2021, the Ministry facilitated successful repatriation of 909 Indian nationals through Vande Bharat Mission and Charter flights. Government of Australia donated non-invasive ventilators and Oxygen concentrators to India. The Ministry facilitated airlifting of five cryogenic tankers from Australia to India. With the opening of Australia's international borders progressively from 1 November 2021, Australia recognised India's Co-WIN vaccination certificate for COVID as evidence of vaccination and India's Covishield and Covaxin for international travellers. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (Regulatory authority of Australia) recognised Covaxin for the purpose of establishing a traveller's vaccination status on 1 November 2021. Australia was included in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's "Category A" list of countries. Mutual recognition of vaccination certificates between India and Australia was also concluded.

Brunei Darussalam

Bilateral relations between India and Brunei Darussalam (or Brunei) continue to be warm and friendly. Brunei is an important part of India's energy security architecture with export of crude oil to India; its membership of ASEAN; partnership in India's Act East Policy and the Indo-Pacific Concept and the presence of around 8,000 Indian nationals in Brunei. Brunei has generally been supportive of India's candidature to various international bodies. Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) established a Telemetry Tracking and Telecommand (TTC) Station in Brunei in 1998 to support the tracking of its Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicles (GSLV). Efforts for its up-gradation and relocation to an alternate site are currently ongoing. Brunei has extended support to India's candidature for many important international positions/offices, including in UNESCO and IMO.

The relations between India and Brunei received a momentum during the "Bilateral Relations Review Meeting (BRRM)" between EAM and Brunei's Foreign Minister-II on virtual platform on 18 February 2021. The Ministers reviewed the progress on various ongoing bilateral issues/bilateral mechanisms; regional and global issues of mutual interest; and the possibility of enhancing bilateral cooperation and trade and investments. EAM and Brunei's Foreign Minister-II have spoken twice this year over telecon on the developments in Myanmar, in latter's capacity as the Special Envoy of the ASEAN Chair on Myanmar.

Defence cooperation between India and Brunei was further strengthened with the renewal of the MoU on Defence Cooperation. This year also saw the visit of INS Shivalik and INS Kadmat in August 2021 for port call and passing exercise (PASSEX) with Royal Brunei Navy.

The Indian diaspora in Brunei contributed 1050 cylinders

filled with medical oxygen as COVID relief to India. Owing to suspension of scheduled international flights by the Government of India, 987 stranded Indian nationals have been repatriated through seven chartered flights operated by Royal Bruneian Airlines from Brunei to Coimbatore.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID pandemic and restrictions on travel, the bilateral relations between India and Brunei received a new momentum and many virtual meetings were held during the period, including First Joint Working Group on health cooperation; and virtual meetings with EEPC, FIEO, APEDA and CII.

Under the ASEAN chairmanship of Brunei for 2021, India participated in various online ASEAN-India related mechanisms namely, ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting; ASEAN-India Foreign Minister's Meeting; ADMM+ and ASEAN-India Leaders' Summit and EAS etc., which saw closer cooperation between India and Brunei.

In order to leverage the strength and professional expertise of Indian diaspora in Brunei, the Indian Overseas Professional Network (IOPN) was launched on 3 December 2021 to help its members develop effective relationships and foster collaboration with other professionals in Brunei and India as well as globally. The activities will focus initially on the key areas including pharma & health, energy, education, information technology, primary resources, tourism, and entrepreneurship to showcase India's expertise.

The Second Joint Trade Committee meeting between Ministry of Commerce, India and Ministry of Finance & Economy is likely to be scheduled during January 2022. In addition, meetings on MSME sector between India and Brunei is also slated to be held during the first quarter of 2022.

Cambodia

India shares strong ties of friendship, based on shared history and vibrant cultural and people to people linkages with Cambodia. In line with its 'Act East Policy,' India has enhanced its engagement with Cambodia to boost close and friendly relations. The bilateral relationship strengthened through exchange of high-level visits at political and official levels, implementation of development partnership programme, and extending support to Cambodia in its capacity building initiatives under Government of India's scholarships.

Keeping in view Government of India's initiatives for promoting 3 Ts, i.e., Trade, Tourism and Technology, both countries held the Third Joint Working Group Meeting on Tourism Promotion on 22 September 2021 for promoting tourism between the two countries, with special focus on religious and medical tourism to India. At the invitation of Minister of Tourism, Royal Government of Cambodia, the Ninth ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers Meeting would be taking place in the hybrid format in Siem Reap on 22 January 2022. Gauging the commercial potential for Indian traditional medicines such as Ayurveda, etc., in Cambodia, which also has its own traditional

medicines similar to Indian traditional medicine, the Mission celebrated the Sixth Ayurveda Day on 3 November 2021. As part of the celebrations, the Mission organised a webinar on "Ayurveda - Its Concept of Food and Nutrition" on 3 November 2021 with impressive participation from Cambodia and India.

Experts in the field of Ayurveda made information-filled presentations on the topics of interest to Cambodians. Development cooperation, human resource development, capacity building activities continued to play pivotal role in furthering the bilateral relationship in 2021-22. The Project for Supply and Installation of 1,500 Afridev Hand Pumps for Augmentation of Rural Water Supply in Cambodia, which started in 2017 and executed by WAPCOS with the objective to provide safe drinking water in the target communities in Tbong Khmum and the bordering Banteay Meanchey Provinces, was officially handed over by Minister of State for External Affairs (MoS-RRS) on 27 September 2021 to Uk Rabun, Minister for Rural Development, Royal Government of Cambodia.

Quick Impact Project (QIP) Scheme, which was launched under Mekong Ganga Cooperation Initiative in 2015, progressed well in Cambodia. On 28 October 2021, Inaugural Ceremony of two school buildings for children studying from Grade 1-6, at Wat Porthisat Primary school, under Quick Impact Project (QIP) scheme of the Government of India, was held. Dr. Ing Kantha Phavi, Minister of Women's Affairs, Royal Government of Cambodia attended the inaugural ceremony and thanked the Government of India for helping Cambodia in the social sector.

In 2021-22, the Mission organised 9 customised e-ITEC Courses - 2 courses for Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, 2 courses for Police Academy of Cambodia, Ministry of Interior and 5 courses for Cambodian Senate, benefitting 242 officers as against the utilisation of 154 slots in 2020-21 out of a total of 200 slots allocated. Besides, 25 scholarships for Under-graduate, Post-graduate and higher studies in India are available to Cambodian students under the MGC (10), GCSS (13) and CEP (2) every year. During 2021-22, 19 slots have been accepted by the Cambodian students so far. For the first time, 2 students are going to India for pursuing Ph.D. in prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology under 1,000 Fellowships announced by the Prime Minister for students from ASEAN countries.

During the year, both sides finalised the Terms of Reference

Indonesia

The momentum of high-level interactions with Indonesia continued in the year 2021. On 31 October 2021, Prime Minister met the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo on the sidelines of G20 Summit in Rome, Italy. Prime Minister congratulated Indonesia for its G20 Presidency next year, and assured him of India's readiness to work closely with the country as part of Troika. Both leaders held discussions on the recent course of India-Indonesia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. The two leaders appreciated each other's steadfast support during the COVID pandemic, and agreed to cooperate towards post-pandemic recovery. They also emphasized the importance of Indo-Pacific cooperation. Both leaders committed to strengthen bilateral trade and investment between the two countries, and pave way for greater people-to-people interaction. Discussions also took place on combating climate change, particularly on the need for implementation of climate finance commitments.

EAM and Foreign Minister of Indonesia Retno Marsudi interacted with each other on three occasions. On 20 April 2021, EAM held a telephonic conversation with Indonesian Foreign Minister; they discussed common concerns and shared interests in the region. On 21 September, EAM met Foreign Minister Marsudi on the sidelines of 76th UNGA in New York. The Ministers discussed COVID, economic recovery, regional and multilateral issues. They also discussed possibilities of exploring an air bubble arrangement, and establishing a mutually agreed protocol on vaccine and quarantine requirements between the two countries. On 29 October, EAM met with Indonesian's Foreign Minister on the sidelines of G20 Summit in Rome. The leaders also discussed bilateral and regional issues.

of India-Cambodia Joint Working Group on Trade and Investment (JWG-TI) and the first meeting of the JWG-TI is expected to be held during the course of the current financial year. Similarly, both sides have also finalised the text of the MoU on Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine. Discussions are also ongoing to sort out some minor issues in the text of the India-Cambodia Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT). In this connection, a virtual meeting was held on 24 November, 2021. While Economic Adviser (IITF), Investment Division, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance led the Indian delegation, the Cambodian side was led by Mr. Sar Senera, Director, Legal Affairs and Investment Law Department, Council for the Development of Cambodia. Both sides had an in-depth discussion on the concept of "Local Government" in India and Cambodia.

On 23 June 2021, in collaboration with Ministry of AYUSH, National Centre for Traditional Medicine (NCTM), Cambodian Ministry of Health and Cambodia Chamber of Commerce, the Mission organised a webinar on "Yoga and Ayurveda : Holistic Wellbeing" with participation from field experts from India on 23 June 2021. In coordination with ICCR, the Regional Buddhist Conference (RBC) themed "Buddhism in Literature in South East Asia" was organised by the Embassy of India in collaboration with Sihanoukrajia Buddhist University (SBU) in the virtual format on 25 October 2021.

In a virtual interaction on 10 June 2021, MoS-VM met Indonesian Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mahendra Siregar and discussed issues of common interest and reaffirmed India's commitment to further strengthen Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

On 25 June 2021, the sixth round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) was held between India and Indonesia through video conference. Secretary (East) led the Indian delegation while the Indonesian side was led by Director

General for Asia Pacific and Africa, Abdul Kadir Jailani. Both sides reviewed all aspects of bilateral cooperation including political, defence, security and strategic, economic and culture, and exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest.

India and Indonesia supported each other in fighting the COVID pandemic. India supplied 100 MT of Liquid Medical Oxygen and 300 Oxygen Concentrators to Indonesia in July 2021. In August 2021, India supplied additional support of 10 (empty) ISO tanks on gratis lease to Indonesia. The shipment was carried by INS Airavat from Vishakhapatnam to Tanjung Priok Port in Indonesia. Made-in-India COVID vaccine, Covovax, manufactured by Serum Institute of India (SII) was supplied to Indonesia as part of a contract between SII and PT Indofarma.

During the second wave of COVID pandemic in India, Government of Indonesia supplied 3400 Oxygen Cylinders and 200 Oxygen Concentrators to the Indian Red Cross Society, New Delhi as grant assistance to support India's

COVID efforts. Apart from that, 10 Cryogenic Oxygen ISO Containers were airlifted from Jakarta by Indian Air Force IL-76 in May 2021, as part of assistance offered through commercial contracts.

Indonesia is India's second largest trade partner in ASEAN region. In the period, April to August 2021, bilateral trade between the two countries registered USD 9.7 billion. On 5 August 2021, the Joint Working Group Meeting on Trade and Investment took place virtually, and various issues including promotion of balanced trade cooperation and solving market access issues were discussed in great detail.

A delegation led by Advisor, International Economic Relations (IER), Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance visited Indonesia to attend the G20 Finance and Central Bank Deputies and International Seminar at Bali in December 2021.

Defence and maritime security continued to remain one of the important areas of cooperation. On 22 April 2021, Raksha Mantri spoke to Indonesian Defence Minister Gen. Prabowo Subianto over phone to express condolence over the missing Indonesian submarine Nanggala with its crew members. On 8 May, Indian Navy ship INS Sharda and Indonesian Navy corvette KRI Sultan Hasanuddin undertook Passage Exercise in the Arabian Sea to enhance interoperability and strengthen maritime cooperation between the two countries. The 36th

edition of India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Indonesian Navy was conducted from 30 and 31 July 2021. Indian Naval Ship (INS) Saryu, an indigenous built Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) undertook coordinated patrol with Indonesian Naval Ship KRI Bung Tomo and a MPA of the Indonesian Navy.

Embassy of India, Jakarta organized a number of events to foster greater cultural interaction and people-to-people connect between the two countries. Various events were also organized to celebrate "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav". The 160th Birth Anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore was celebrated by organizing a video exhibition, a movie screening on the life of Gurudev and online performance of Rabindra Sangeet. Embassy also celebrated the International Day of Yoga in hybrid mode with viewership of more than 2000 yoga enthusiasts from over 100 locations across Indonesia. A webinar on "Study in India and Scholarship Opportunity" was organized by the Embassy of India in collaboration with Directorate of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of Indonesia.

As Indonesia has taken over the G20 Presidency for the year 2022, and will be followed by India in 2023, several high-level interactions between the two countries are set to take place.



Prime Minister and President of Indonesia Joko Widodo on the sidelines of G20 in Rome in October 2021

Lao PDR

Bilateral relations with Lao PDR continued to be cordial and strong. This year, India and Lao PDR marked the 65 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between both the countries.

India is providing grant assistance to Lao PDR for the implementation of small projects of socio-economic development under the Mekong Ganga Cooperation. This year, three MoUs were signed on 11 August 2021 for the

implementation of three Quick Impact Projects. Associate Professor Dr. Phout Simmalavong, Minister of Education and Sports, Lao PDR presided over the signing ceremony. The Quick Impact Project related to the Establishment of the Fertilizer Analysis Laboratory was completed and handed over to the Government of Lao PDR on 12 April 2021. Mr. Phet Phomphiphak, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR presided over the handover ceremony. MoUs for six new Quick Impact Projects are likely to be signed shortly.

As a part of activities for leveraging Buddhist linkages between India and Lao PDR, screening of two documentaries titled “The Way of the Buddha” and “The Land of Buddha”, dubbed into Lao, was organized on 6 April 2021 at the premises of Kayson Phomvihane Academy of National Defence (KAND), Lao PDR. Major General Onesy Saensouk, Deputy Minister of National Defence presided over the occasion. Major General Khamla Phanhsaiyasouk, Commissar, and Brigadier General Keosouvanh Inthavongsa, Commandant of KAND also graced the occasion.

The Centre for Excellence in Software Development and Training (CESDT) which was inaugurated in Vientiane in November 2018 with grant assistance from India, organized online IT courses on Data Communication and Networking and Java Programming. These courses were conducted by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune. A total of 13 participants completed the course on Data Communication and Networking and 15 participants completed the Java Programming course.

With a view to support trade and cooperation in Information and Communications Technology (ICT), a webinar was

organized on 12 May 2021. Lao Deputy Minister of Technology and Communications Dr. Santisouk Simmalavong delivered his remarks during the event. A virtual Buyer Seller Meet was organized on 11 August 2021 to explore opportunities in the agriculture sector between India and Lao PDR. Mr. Phet Phomphiphak, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR delivered his remarks during the event.

A groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of an accommodation facility at Lao-India Entrepreneurship Development Center, supported through Government of India’s Quick Impact Project (QIP) scheme under Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, was held on 25 November 2021. Mrs. Khanthaly Siriphongphanh, Vice Minister of Education and Sports, Lao PDR graced the ceremony.

As a part of the celebrations of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, a cultural event was organized on the evening of 15 August 2021 in the Embassy premises. On 29 October 2021, a virtual event to celebrate the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas was organized with the participation of the Indian diaspora and friends from Lao PDR.

On 2 July 2021, virtual interaction with the Indian diaspora in Lao PDR was organized to brief them about travel-related guidelines as well as about the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF), Global Pravasi Rishta Portal, Passport Sewa Diwas, mPassportSeva Mobile app and the Umang App.

On 31 July 2021, a special IndiGo charter flight was arranged to facilitate the movement of Indian nationals stranded in Lao PDR.

Malaysia

India and Malaysia share close relations anchored in vibrant people-to-people linkages, shared history and well-established trade relations. While bilateral cooperation continued on various fronts, high-level engagement between the two countries has been limited to virtual interactions in the year amid the pandemic situation in India and Malaysia.

India and Malaysia enjoy robust trade relations with bilateral trade at USD 14.45 billion for the year 2020-21. For the first half of the year (April-September 2021), bilateral trade stood at USD 3.3 billion despite the pandemic related restrictions severely affecting international trade. Malaysia remained India’s 13th largest trading partner in 2020-21. Trade deficit (for India) between the two countries has gone down from USD 3.42 billion in 2019-20 to USD 2.3 billion in 2020-21. Export of rice to Malaysia increased from USD 56.80 million in 2019 to USD 165.46 million in 2020 and has already reached USD 121 million for the period April-October 2021. India’s export of sugar to the country increased from USD 38 million in 2019 to USD 148 million in 2020. Malaysia relies on India for 70% of buffalo meat imports and accounted for USD 418 million in 2020 and USD 235 million during April-October 2021.

High Commission of India Kuala Lumpur celebrated Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav through various events and celebrations

across a range of themes. Some of the important ones in this series are 101st Birth Anniversary celebrations of INA veteran Madam Anjalai Ponnusamy, International Day of Non-violence and 152nd Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Talk on India’s Influence on Malay Language, Remembering the Rani of Jhansi Regiment of INA, series of events on Yoga including the International Day of Yoga, INA Raising Day celebrations and several events related to Ayurveda including the 6th Ayurveda Day.

Following the travel restrictions caused by COVID, Vande Bharat Mission flights between India and Malaysia have been in operation since May 2020. Given that no other scheduled flights have been operating between the two countries, this proved to be a major relief for the several workers and other Indian nationals in Malaysia. Under the Vande Bharat Mission, over 85,329 Indians have been repatriated from Malaysia to India until 5 December 2021. Mission assisted over 900 Indian nationals detained in Malaysia to be repatriated to India during this period.

Cooperation in defence and security has become an important pillar of India-Malaysia bilateral cooperation. There have regular exchanges between the armed forces of the two countries including virtual staff talks, webinars, port calls by two Indian Naval vessels at Malaysian port in August

2021, PASSEX between two Indian Naval vessels and the Royal Malaysian Navy in September 2021 near the Straits of Malacca. Virtual interaction between the two Chiefs of Armies took place in October 2021. The two countries also enjoy exchange of slots for training and courses in institutes of both countries for armed forces.

High Commission of India, Kuala Lumpur has been celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, India Ayurveda Day, Tourism Promotion Event, Ekta Diwas, Constitution Day, and

Mahaparinirvan Divas, India-Bangladesh Maitree Diwas (celebrated jointly with the High Commission of Bangladesh) and Shraddhanjali-Tribute to the Victims of Terror commemorating the 13th anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks (together with 14 other countries which had their citizens as victims in Mumbai attacks).

Foreign Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, is scheduled to visit India on 24-25 December 2021 for a bilateral meeting with the EAM.

New Zealand

India and New Zealand have a longstanding and friendly relationship. Despite COVID impediments, the engagement between the two countries continued to grow during the year. EAM held virtual talks with the New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nanaia Mahuta on 5 November 2021. Earlier, two Ministers had telephonic conversations on 1 March 2021.

The 3rd round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and New Zealand was held virtually on 25 May 2021 in which both sides discussed steps to be taken to enhance cooperation in defence and security, trade and investment, space, counter-terrorism, cyber security, disarmament and climate change and people-to-people ties. Response to COVID and access to vaccines and medicines for containing the pandemic were also discussed. A virtual meeting between India's Defence Secretary and New Zealand Secretary of Defence, was held on 12 August 2021.

The second edition of the India-New Zealand Bilateral Cyber Dialogue was held on 16-17 November 2021 in virtual mode to discuss various aspects of existing bilateral cooperation in cyberspace, to exchange views on the latest developments on

cyber issues at bilateral, regional, and multilateral fora and to explore initiatives to further deepen cyber cooperation.

India-New Zealand Business Council, in association with the High Commission of India, organised the 7th India-New Zealand Business Summit in Auckland on 23-24 June in a hybrid format. The Summit was jointly inaugurated by New Zealand's Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta and Minister of State for External Affairs (MoS)(VM).

Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award 2021 was given to Ms. Priyanca Radhakrishnan, the first Indian-born Minister in New Zealand government. In January 2021, Ms. Priyanca Radhakrishnan was the chief guest at Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conference on "Bringing together Young Achievers from India and Indian Diaspora."

A curtain raiser event was organized on the 7th International Day of Yoga 2021 in the foregrounds of New Zealand Parliament. For the first time, the New Zealand Post commemorated the Indian festival of lights with a set of four postal stamps illustrating the story of Diwali.



EAM conducted a virtual meeting with New Zealand's Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta in November 2021

Philippines

Momentum in bilateral relations was maintained despite the limitations of the pandemic, with intensive efforts cutting across various sectors by both countries to deepen and expand the partnership. EAM and Secretary Department of Foreign

Affairs Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. held a telephonic conversation on 28 April 2021. Discussions covered the COVID situation and recent developments in the Indo-Pacific.

Meetings of the institutional level mechanisms continued to be held in virtual format. The first-ever Joint Committee Meeting (JCM) under Bilateral Programme of Cooperation (POC) in Science and Technology between the respective Departments of Science and Technology was held on 08 July 2021. The meeting identified key research areas:

- Virology;
- Applications of Artificial Intelligence in diverse areas such as agriculture, health and smart cities;
- Blockchain technologies on Government services/processes; and
- Additive manufacturing of new materials (metal and ceramics) for joint research projects (JRP)

On 27 September 2021, the new Air Services Agreement (ASA) was signed by Secretary Department of Transportation Arthur Tugade and Ambassador Shambhu Kumaran. The new generation ASA is likely to support direct civil aviation linkages and spur growth of bilateral trade, investment, tourism and cultural exchanges between India and Philippines.

Defence and security engagement resumed with the visits of two Indian Navy Ships INS Ranvijay and INS Kora to Manila from 24-26 August 2021. The ships also carried out the first-ever bilateral Navy-to-Navy Passage Exercise in the West Philippine Sea. Training exchanges continue with an officer from the Philippine Navy currently undergoing training at the Defence Services Staff College in India and an Indian Army Officer joining the Masters in National Security Administration course at the Philippine National Defense College in Manila.

Health sector cooperation was a key focus area through the year, with the Philippines becoming the first ASEAN country to issue Emergency Use Authorization for Covaxin. Indian companies maintained their position as the largest source of pharmaceuticals to the Philippines. Philippines 'National Vaccine Czar' Gen. Carlito Galvez along with a high-level official delegation visited Serum Institute of India in March 2021 to discuss procurement of Covovax vaccines for the Philippines.

In terms of capacity building, 74 professionals from Philippine government agencies as well as public educational institutes participated in the e-ITEC courses held since 01 April 2021 for courses on Disaster Management (Floods and Drought), Digital Documentation of Cultural Heritage and Environmental Impact Assessment of Development Projects being the most popular. Strengthening educational collaboration between the two countries, an MoU was signed between Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and Ateneo De Manila University, Manila to promote exchanges in the field of Disaster Studies on 5 May 2021.

Economic and commercial ties were expanded significantly with a range of Business to Business and Business to Government conferences through the year in key sectors such as Renewable Energy (July 2021), Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture (May 2021) and Engineering products (August 2021) among others. The conferences were hosted in cooperation with leading national and sectoral business chambers in both countries and were well attended by business representatives and addressed by Ministers and senior government representatives on both sides.



Two ships of the Indian Navy - INS Ranvijay and INS Kora, on deployment to the Western Pacific, carried out a Maritime Partnership Exercise with BRP Antonio Luna of the Philippine Navy in August 2021

In institutional level mechanisms, the 13th Foreign Office Consultations(FOC) and 4th Strategic Dialogue(SD); 4th Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC); 3rd Joint Defence Industry and Logistics Committee (JDILC) and 8th

INTELEX are proposed to be held in the 1st quarter of 2022. MoU between Indian Coast Guard and Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) on Enhanced Maritime Cooperation is also likely to be signed during 4th JDCC meeting.

62nd National Security Strategy Studies (NSSS) course has been offered for the first time to Philippines to be conducted at NDC New Delhi. Philippines Navy has also nominated personnel for the Basic Helo Control and Training Design and Management course (offered by Indian Navy) to be conducted in January and February 2022 respectively. Two vacancies (One each for Indian Navy and Indian Army) have been offered for TY 2022 (by AFP) for the Armed Forces of the Philippines Command and General Staff Course (AFPCGSC).

Singapore

With severe restrictions on travel and in person interaction, engagements at the highest levels took place through virtual methods, and through a resumption of face-to-face meetings on the sidelines of multilateral events. On 14 April 2021, Singapore's Foreign Minister Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan virtually participated in the Sixth Raisina Dialogue and emphasized that India had a crucial role to play in helping shape the post COVID world. He praised India's strong support to global vaccine cooperation at a time when the pandemic had turbocharged protectionism and nationalism all over the world.

On 29 April 2021, Singapore's Minister for Defence Dr. Ng Eng Hen called Raksha Mantri to express support to India's efforts to deal with the COVID second wave. On 1 May 2021, EAM and Singapore's Foreign Minister Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan spoke telephonically and reaffirmed the strong relations between the two countries and the mutual commitment to support each other. The two leaders also met on the sidelines of the 76th UNGA session on 27 September 2021, and discussed developments in the Indo-Pacific, and overcoming COVID challenges.

On 17 June 2021, MoS (VM) had a virtual meeting with Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Ms. Sim Ann. On 11 August 2021, the 15th India-Singapore Foreign Office Consultations (FoC) were held virtually. Secretary (East) and Permanent Secretary Mr. Chee Wee Kiong, MFA, Singapore led their respective delegations. They reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral issues and exchanged views on regional and international developments of mutual interest, with the overall objective of strengthening the Strategic Partnership.

On 28 October 2021, Prime Minister Lee, speaking at the virtual 18th ASEAN-India summit, identified digital transformation and public health cooperation as priority areas for India-ASEAN relations during Singapore's country coordinatorship. Other areas of cooperation flagged by Prime Minister Lee were smart cities, sustainable development, cyber security, climate change and environment issues.

On 30 October 2021, Prime Minister and Prime Minister Lee held their first in-person bilateral meeting in the post-pandemic period, on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rome, Italy. They discussed global efforts to combat climate change, the forthcoming COP26, and the ongoing efforts to contain the COVID pandemic. Prime Minister appreciated Singapore's outreach to provide COVID assistance to India during the second wave. Prime Minister Lee congratulated

Under the Cultural Exchange Programme (2019-2023) between the Ministry of Culture and the National Commission for Culture and Arts of the Philippines, a musical collaboration wherein leading musical groups from both the countries will render folk songs from the other country in their own distinctive musical traditions, has been envisaged. The first part of the project, the Philippine musical group's rendition of Indian folk songs, is likely to be implemented in the first quarter of 2022.

the Prime Minister for the rapid vaccination drive in India. They also discussed ways to enhance people to people ties, including early normalization of movement between the two countries.

EAM visited Singapore from 16-20 November 2021. During the visit, he called on Prime Minister Lee and discussed the shared interests and convergent views between India and Singapore and the continuing efforts towards building an even stronger partnership. EAM also met Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, Senior Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Foreign Minister Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Transport S. Iswaran, Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen, Minister for Home Affairs K. Shanmugam, Minister for Health Ong Ye Kung and Minister for Finance Lawrence Wong and discussed cooperation between the two countries across the different facets of the bilateral Strategic Partnership. Easing of travel restrictions featured prominently in the discussions. EAM also spoke at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum in a session on "Great Power Competition: The Emerging World Order".

Singapore is India's 6th largest trade partner (2020-21) with a share of 3.2 % of India's overall trade. In 2021-22 (April-September 2021) bilateral trade stood at USD 14.2 billion. In 2020-21, bilateral trade stood at USD 21.98 billion. The cumulative FDI inflows from Singapore to India stood at USD 118.39 billion (April 2000 - June 2021) which is 22% of total FDI inflows in India. Singapore was the largest source of FDI in India in 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21. In 2020-21, FDI inflows from Singapore to India amounted to USD 17.42 billion, and for the period April 2021-June 2021, it stood at USD 3.31 billion. The cumulative outward Indian FDI to Singapore was USD 76.061 billion (January 2008 - September 2021). For FY 2020-21, it stood at USD 3.49 billion.

During the second wave of the pandemic, Singapore's position as a logistic hub enabled both the public and private sector to source emergency relief supplies such as oxygen- tanks, cylinders, concentrators, ventilators etc. from Singapore to India. Till the end of June 2021, 26 Indian Air Force sorties and 4 Indian Navy Ships transported substantial quantities of these items from Singapore to India.

The 5th India-Singapore Defence Minister's Dialogue was held via VC on January 20, 2021. Raksha Mantri discussed furthering cooperation and engagement with Singapore Defence Minister Dr. Ng Eng Hen. The Implementing Agreement on Submarine Rescue Support and Cooperation between the two navies was signed to extend rescue facilities

to each other's submarines. Issues of regional security developments and progress made in cooperation between the Services on defence technology and in multilateral engagements were also reviewed.

On 4 February 2021, Singapore Minister of Defense Dr Ng Eng Hen participated in the inaugural India Ocean Region Defence Ministers' Conclave (DMC). He conveyed Singapore's support to India's leadership to foster a rule based maritime order in the Indian Ocean region. On 2-4 September 2021, Singapore Navy and Indian Navy conducted the annual Singapore-India

Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX). SIMBEX 2021 involved a virtual planning phase followed by a 'contactless' sea phase in the southern reaches of the South China Sea within international waters.

The first repatriation flight of Air India under the Vande Bharat Mission left Singapore for Delhi with 234 passengers on 8 May 2020. Till November 28, 2021, a total of 125,296 passengers have been repatriated from Singapore to India in 856 flights.



Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Hsien Loong on the sidelines of G20 summit in Rome in October 2021

Thailand

Bilateral relations between India and Thailand continued to strengthen during the year, marked by cooperation at regional and sub-regional levels within the framework of ASEAN, Mekong Ganga Cooperation and BIMSTEC as well as at other multilateral fora. Thailand successfully completed country coordinator-ship for ASEAN- India Strategic Partnership for three years from 2018-2021 and handed over the coordinator-ship to Singapore in August 2021. Despite the ongoing COVID pandemic and travel restrictions, the two sides maintained regular high level political interactions along with commercial, defence, educational, and cultural collaboration on virtual platform.

The two sides extended assistance to each other in the fight against COVID. The Thai Government and the King of Thailand donated 25 oxygen concentrators and 200 oxygen cylinders to India. India also donated 300 oxygen concentrators to Thailand which arrived by INS Airavat on 03 September 2021. Thai authorities extended active support in transportation of

34 cryogenic ISO tanks, 750 Oxygen cylinders and 105 Oxygen concentrators donated by Indian community associations in Thailand by Indian Air Force aircraft during the second wave of the pandemic in India.

Thailand approved the COVID Vaccination Certificate for individuals who have been fully vaccinated with Covaxin to enter into Thailand under the Thailand Pass System from 17 November 2021

EAM had bilateral meeting with Don Pramudwinai, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Thailand on the sidelines of 76th UNGA on 25 September 2021. The two Ministers held telephonic conversation twice, on 1 May 2021 and 23 July 2021 and discussed cooperation in tackling COVID pandemic, and vaccine and medicine procurement. EAM and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand co-chaired the 19th ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting via video conference on 4 August 2021.

Prime Minister mentioned Dr. Chirapat Prapandavidya and Dr. Kusuma Ruksamani, Sanskrit scholars from Thailand for their contribution in promoting Sanskrit language in Thailand during 'Mann Ki Baat' radio programme broadcasted on 29 August 2021.

23rd ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting was held on 28 April 2021 through video conference. The meeting was co-Chaired Secretary (East) on the Indian side and Thani Thongphakdi, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, as Country Coordinator for India-ASEAN Strategic Partnership.

The 31st edition of Indo-Thai CORPAT exercise was held from 9-11 June. The Indian tri-service contingent virtually participated in the Cobra Gold multilateral exercise from 27-31 July. The 12th Air Staff Talks between the Royal Thai Air Force and the Indian Air Force were held on 20 September 2021 in virtual mode.

During the year, Embassy organized several commercial outreach events to promote trade, investment and tourism between India and Thailand through video conference as well as physical events in partnership with different business chambers/export promotion agencies including 'India-Thailand Business Meet on Marine and Aquaculture products' on 21 July 2021 followed by a virtual Buyer Seller Meet (BSM) on 4 August 2021 in collaboration with Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA); seminar on 'Opportunities in spices sector in India' in partnership with Spices Board on 18 August 2021; a webinar on "Strengthening India-Thailand Bilateral Engineering Ties" during 'India ASEAN Engineering Partnership Summit' on 26 August 2021 followed by a virtual BSM on 21 September 2021; flagging off Royal Enfield bike rally 'One Ride' on 26 September 2021 by Ambassador to promote the Indian bikes in Thailand; seminar on 'Ease of Doing Business in India' on 18 October 2021 in Chiang Mai with special focus on India's strength in 3Ts - trade, technology and tourism including Ambassador's interaction with the leading chambers and businesses; Business Networking Meet on Gems and Jewellery sector in collaboration with Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India (GJEPC) on 28 October 2021. Thailand's Global Power Synergy Public Company made the largest investment by any Thai company of Thb 14,825 million (USD 453.29 million) buying 41.6% stake in Avaada Energy of India in July 2021. Embassy has planned to organize a Tourism Road Show; a Make in India exhibition and Investment meet with Thai companies, and North East India Festival during this period.

The Embassy organized digital tourism promotion campaign focusing on Incredible India and different states of India at Phuket International Airport from 1-31 October 2021 and at Sukhumvit Metro Station in Bangkok from 18 October- 17 November 2021.

During the year, various events and activities were organised to commemorate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM)/ India @75 starting with the release of Thai translation of the Constitution of India by Chuan Leekpai, Speaker of Thai Parliament on 12 March 2021. Other events include celebration of ICCR Foundation Day on 9 April 2021; 7th International Day of Yoga on 19 June 2021 in hybrid format including live streaming of

the event on Facebook and YouTube connecting about 16 groups participating from different locations; celebration of 75th Independence Day and illumination of two landmark buildings in Bangkok in the colours of Indian flag; inauguration of first Atmanirbhar Bharat Corner outside India showcasing handicrafts produced by Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED); celebration of Hindi Diwas on 14 September 2021; ITEC Day on 15 September 2021; Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award ceremony on 24 September 2021; commemoration of International Day of Non-violence jointly with UNESCAP on 4 October 2021 with Mr. Itthiphol Kunplome, Minister of Culture of the Kingdom of Thailand as the Chief Guest; photo exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi on 4 and 5 October 2021; photo exhibition on Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to celebrate Rashtriya Ekta Diwas from 25-31 October 2021 inaugurated by Senator Pikulkeaw Krairiksh, Chairperson Senate Foreign Affairs Committee and talk, videos on unsung heroes of Indian independence movement and cultural programme on 29 October 2021. Embassy produced six video series in collaboration with local media house as part of AKAM on the themes of yoga, ayurveda, freedom of movement, IT, development partnership, etc. Ambassador visited Ubon Ratchathani University from 24-25 November 2021 to attend the opening ceremony of the India Corner. She called on Governor of Ubon Ratchathani province presided over a seminar on ease of doing business in India and Incredible India. India Cup Golf Tournament was co-hosted by the Embassy on 17 December 2021. Meetings with Indian community and Embassy representatives as well as consular camps in different provinces would be planned during this period subject to COVID restrictions.

Embassy marked the Janjatiya Gaurav Week from 15-22 November 2021, Constitution Day and 13th anniversary of Mumbai Terror Attack on 26 November 2021, and Mahaparinirvan Diwas on 3 December 2021. The Embassy will organise events to celebrate Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, World Hindi Day and Republic Day in January 2022.

Indian Studies centers in various Universities and societies in Thailand have organized about 40 events aligned with the overall themes to commemorate AKAM. During the financial year 2021-22, 94 Thai officials attended e-ITEC courses, 10 students from Thailand have been awarded scholarships under ICCR's scholarship programme, 2 students were accepted for study in Hindi certificate course and 2 scholars have been awarded Ph.D. fellowship under IIT Fellowships for ASEAN Students Programme. Grants-in-Aid from the Ministry of Culture have been disbursed as in the previous years to seven major Indian Studies Centres in Prestigious Universities of Thailand and Friendship Societies including the oldest society, Thai Bharat Cultural Lodge.

Several virtual events including talk by eminent speakers were organized to promote yoga, ayurveda, Sanskrit and Hindi language, Indian dance, textile and art and architecture by the Embassy and Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre during this period. Ambassador held several outreach (virtual) meetings with the Indian diaspora including on ICWF Day and wrote articles in print media, online media and Radio channels as part of AKAM celebrations. Five virtual prison visits and one consular camp at Pattaya were conducted.

The Embassy, jointly with the Embassy of Bangladesh in Bangkok, co-hosted a reception to commemorate 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Bangladesh under the theme of 'Maitri Diwas' on 07 December 2021 in Bangkok. A photo exhibition highlighting 50 years of diplomatic relations between India and Bangladesh, shared cultural links, development projects, infrastructure and connectivity, as well as the Bangladesh liberation war. As part of Maitri Diwas celebration, a panel discussion on the theme of "The Perpetual Bond between India and Bangladesh and its Implications on the Integration of BIMSTEC" was organised at Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok, on 3 December 2021.

As part of joint activities to be organised by Embassy in association with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand to commemorate 75th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Thailand in 2022, logo designing competition and logo unveiling ceremony are planned in January- February 2022.

During April-October 2021, a total of 4781 Indian nationals stranded in Thailand returned to India by 27 Vande Bharat Mission flights.

Ambassador and Permanent Representative (PR) of India to United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) led the Indian delegation at the 77th Commission Session held in virtual mode from 26-29 April 2021 and delivered the country statement on the theme topic 'Building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific'.

Ambassador chaired the 6th session of the Committee on Environment of UNESCAP and also delivered the keynote remarks during the Commemoration of the Second International Day of Clean Air for blue skies organized by UNESCAP and Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) on 7 September 2021.

Second Ministerial conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific was convened by UNESCAP from 16-19 November 2021. UNESCAP fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport was held from 14-17 December 2021 and 9th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development will be held from 28- 31 March 2022.

Timor leste

India was one of the early countries to establish diplomatic relations with Timor Leste and was represented at its Independence Day celebrations in May 2002 by a high level delegation led by the then MoS. An MoU formally establishing diplomatic relations was signed on 24 January 2003.

India and Timor-Leste share a warm and friendly relationship.

They cooperate closely in international bodies including the UN. The bilateral trade between the two countries during 2020-21 was USD 25.36 million in which major items of exports from India included agro products, pharmaceuticals, rubber, salt etc. The travel related restrictions which are in place due to the pandemic have impeded face-to-face interactions.

Vietnam

The historic "Joint Vision for Peace, Prosperity and People" jointly adopted by the Prime Minister and the then Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc at the India-Vietnam Virtual Summit on 21 December 2020 continued to guide the broader contours of bilateral engagements in the pandemic hit year of 2021. India and Vietnam remained actively engaged in implementing Plan of Action for the implementation of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership: 2021-23 signed during the virtual Summit.

Prime Minister held telephonic talks with Prime Minister Mr. Pham Minh Chinh on 10 July 2021 to congratulate him on being elected as the new Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. During the talks, the two Prime Ministers discussed global health and economic challenges emerging out of COVID pandemic, and agreed to strengthen cooperation to further foster the bilateral Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. They appreciated the closer coordination between the two countries as non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council at the UN and other multilateral organizations. They also acknowledged the support and facilitation provided during this ongoing pandemic situation to each other's citizens.

EAM met Foreign Minister Bui Thanh Son on 21 September 2021 on the sidelines of the UNGA, during which both ministers reviewed the recent developments in bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and international issues of common interest. A virtual meeting between National Security Advisor and Minister of Public Security of Vietnam, Mr. To Lam was held on 12 July 2021. Raksha Mantri held telephonic conference with Defence Minister of Vietnam, Senior Lieutenant General Phan Van Giang on 1 July 2021. They agreed to enhance bilateral defence cooperation amidst the ongoing pandemic.

Lok Sabha Speaker met Chairman of the National Assembly of Vietnam, Mr. Vuong Dinh Hue on the sidelines of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament on 7 September 2021. The two speakers agreed to strengthening bilateral parliamentary cooperation. National Assembly Chairperson Vuong Dinh Hue undertook an official visit to India from 15-19 December 2021 to bolster the parliamentary cooperation between India and Vietnam. He held bilateral discussions with Speaker of the Lok Sabha, and the Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha. He also visited Bengaluru to explore cooperation in the fields of IT and pharmaceuticals.

MoS (RRS) delivered a keynote address at the “3rd India-ASEAN Cultural Connect links”, jointly organized by ASEAN-India Centre at India’s Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) and the Institute for Indian and Southwest Asian Studies (VIISAS) of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) on 7 October 2021. MoS (RRS) highlighted the millennia old cultural connect between the two and stressed on the need to revitalize these ancient linkages to give a further boost to people-to-people contacts.

Throughout the year, India and Vietnam stayed focused on implementing the existing bilateral mechanisms in various fields. They jointly organized the Second Maritime Security Dialogue, the Director General-level consultations on UN coordination, and three separate Joint Working Groups on Space, Health and IT cooperation.

India and Vietnam continued with their close coordination at multilateral domains, especially at the United Nations Security Council as non-permanent members in 2021. Leaders of both countries attended the signature events organized during their respective residencies. On 1 June, India co-hosted with Australia, Canada, and the EU the 3rd Asian Regional Framework workshop on The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in a hybrid format, organized by the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

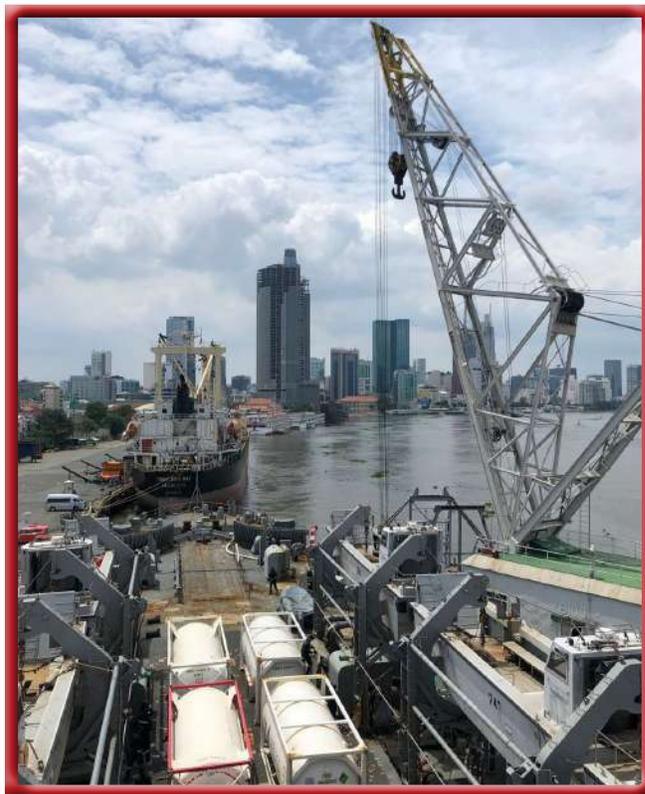
Cooperation in Defence and maritime security remained one of the main priorities. INS Ranvijay and INS Kora made port call at Cam Ranh port in Vietnam from 15-18 August 2021; they also held bilateral maritime exercise with Vietnam People’s Navy frigate VPNS Ly Thai To (HQ-012). INS Airavat came to Ho Chi Minh City on 30 August 2021 bringing 100 Metric Tons of Liquid Medical Oxygen and 300 Oxygen Concentrators to support Vietnam’s ongoing fight against the COVID pandemic. The first tranche of the USD 1 million of Indian grant assistance out of the total USD 5 million, was provided to Vietnam’s Ministry of National Defence for establishment of the Army Software Park at Telecommunication University in Nha Trang.

The bilateral economic engagement continued amidst the pandemic. As per Government of India statistics, total bilateral trade for the first 8 months of 2021 was USD 8,878.12 million. Exports from India were USD 4,382.22 million registering a growth of 49.76%. Imports by India registered a growth of 34.86% to reach USD 4,495.90 million. Balance of trade was in favour of Vietnam during these first eight months of 2021 (by USD 113.68 million).

Under the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) framework, 24 Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) dedicated to developing local community infrastructure in different provinces of Vietnam were completed. So far, since 2017, 37 QIPs (including 10 QIPs being taken up in FY 2021-22) have been undertaken in 33 provinces of Vietnam. In the field of capacity building, various scholarship programmes, including the 1000 scholarships for ASEAN countries at Indian Institute of Technology were being utilized by the Vietnamese students.

The restoration and conservation of the archaeological sites in Vietnam is an important collaboration as part of India’s

development cooperation with Vietnam. In this regard, the Archaeological Survey of India continued its 5-year project of conservation and restoration of the UNESCO World Heritage Site at My Son in central Vietnam in 2021.



INS Airavat visited Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam and delivered 100 Metric Tons of Liquid Medical Oxygen and 300 Oxygen Concentrators in August 2021

Embassy of India in Hanoi continued enhanced engagement with the Indian community living across the country to provide all possible help to them during the pandemic. Special flights were facilitated to provide connectivity to the Indian nationals stranded in Vietnam.

Raksha Mantri paid an official visit to Vietnam from 9-12 January 2022. Joint Vision Statement on India-Vietnam Defence Cooperation for the period till 2030 and MoU on Mutual Logistics Support were signed during the visit. Raksha Mantri also handed over the High-Speed Guard Boats being built under 100 million Government of India’s Defence Line of Credit. Staff talks were conducted between Armies, Navies and Air Forces in February/March 2022. A Vietnam People’s Navy Frigate will participate in the multilateral naval exercise MILAN from 25 February to 4 March 2022.

India and Vietnam reviewed the bilateral cooperation in the fields of trade, investment, and economic cooperation at the 5th Joint Trade Sub-Commission Meeting (virtual) held in January 2022.

Prime Minister of Vietnam Pham Minh Chinh will visit India in March 2022. He will hold bilateral consultation with Prime Minister on wide-ranging bilateral, regional, and global interests. The two Prime Ministers are set to reaffirm their commitment to strengthen bilateral cooperation to address the challenges of the COVID pandemic. The visit will witness

signing a host of Agreements and MoUs in the fields of sustainable development, renewable energy, climate change adaptations, space, S & T, and new technology. Vietnam's decisions to accede to the International Solar Alliance and CDRI will also be announced.

Pacific Island Countries

Pacific Island Countries (PICs) are part of India's engagement with the East. Under Act East Policy, Government of India has stepped up its efforts to engage with countries in this region. The landmark initiative, the Forum for India-Pacific Cooperation (FIPIC), was launched under the rubric of the Act East Policy, by Prime Minister at the first FIPIC summit that was held in Suva, Fiji in November 2014. The second edition was held in Jaipur in August 2015.

As an outcome of FIPIC Summits, several IT projects and Centers of Excellence in IT have been set up in 7 countries in the PICs (Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Niue, Cook Islands, Samoa, Fiji and Nauru) and a project for solar electrification of 2,800 houses in 14 Pacific Island countries under which 70 women solar engineers have been trained.

There is substantial cooperation between India and the PICs in the form of capacity building (civil and defence training under ITEC), ICCR scholarships, grants-in-aid and Lines of Credit (LOCs).

Assistance to Solomon Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu and Palau for procurement of medical equipment and supplies, as well as for strengthening health systems in response to COVID, was provided by India through the India - UNDP Fund.

Initiatives like International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) compliment India's relationship with PICs which are vulnerable to the impact of climate change. Under the CDRI framework, India, along with Australia, the UK and small island developing states (SIDS) launched the 'Infrastructure for Resilient Island States' (IRIS) on the sidelines of the COP26 at Glasgow on 2 November 2021 to assist the SIDS from disasters and to mobilize technology, finance, and necessary information for Pacific islands and CARICOM nations in the Indo-Pacific region.

India has been providing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) to the PICs from time to time. A consignment of relief materials was sent from India to Fiji in January 2021 in the aftermath of the Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Yasa on 17-18 December 2020. Despite the COVID pandemic, a consignment of nearly 7 tonnes of 14 varieties of fruit and vegetable seeds worth USD 0.8 million, was delivered as grant, for restoration of livelihood of communities affected by Tropical Cyclone Yasa. Early response to Fiji's post-disaster need highlighted India's commitment to provide HADR support to Friendly Foreign Countries under the Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI).

Under the initiative of 'Vaccine Maitri', India was the first donor of 100,000 doses of COVID vaccines to Fiji. India's gift of 10,000 doses of COVID vaccines helped Nauru to vaccinate all its adult population. In addition, 132,000 doses and 24,000 doses have been sent through the Covax facility to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands respectively.

Fiji: An MoU in Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and allied sectors between India and Fiji was signed on 22 June 2021 during a virtual event by Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Dr. Mahendra Reddy, Minister of Agriculture, Waterways and Environment, Fiji.

Ms. Rosy Akbar, Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, was the Guest of Honour at the international conference "Leveraging the Soft Power of India - Goodwill through Craft, Cuisine and Creativity" organised by ICCR virtually in October 2021.

Papua New Guinea: under a grant-in-aid of USD 1 million approved for Papua New Guinea under India-UN cooperation development fund for purchase of 10 fully-fitted ambulances, the first batch of these 4 ambulances was handed over on 11 October 2021. Prime Minister James Marape, in his UNGA address on 24 September 2021, thanked India, inter alia, for supporting his Government's development priorities.

Samoa: India established an Honorary Consulate in Apia. Mr. Leonidas Apete Meredith, a business leader, was appointed as the first Honorary Consul General of India in Samoa in July 2021.

Ms. Fiamē Naomi Mataʻafa of the Faatuatua ile Atua Samoa ua Tasi Party who became the first woman Prime Minister of Samoa in July 2021, attended India's 75th Independence Day celebrations in Apia on 16 August 2021.

The India-Samoa Centre of Excellence for Information Technology (CEIT) was formally transferred to the National University of Samoa at a ceremony held in the presence of Samoan Prime Minister Fiamē Naomi Mataʻafa on 27 August 2021. The Centre had started functioning in March 2020.

Solomon Islands: India and Solomon Islands are working closely supporting each other in international fora including at Commonwealth, Non Aligned Movement and United Nations. An MoU for establishment of Centre of Excellence in IT(CEIT) in Honiara was signed in 2020.

Under a grant-in-aid of USD 1 million under India-UN Development Partnership Fund to Solomon Islands to support Solomon Islands in its fight against COVID, a consignment

containing Indian medicines and medical equipment was sent in October 2021.

Palau: MoS (VM) held a virtual interaction with J Uduch Sengebau Senior, Vice President and Minister of State (Foreign Minister) of the Republic of Palau on 28 June 2021. The Ministers reviewed the progress made in the bilateral relations and the ongoing development cooperation between India and Palau.

Republic of Marshall Islands: India's Honorary Consul General in the Republic of Marshall Islands, Ms. Ramona Levy Strauss, was appointed in May 2021.

Water and Sanitation Project of Aur Atoll Local Government, implemented with India's assistance of USD 300,000, was completed in 2021. Under the project, more than 70 sanitation units for households were constructed, making a positive impact at the community level.

An assistance of USD 200,000 was disbursed in August 2020, to the ongoing "Coral and Calm Project"- Phase II. India also assisted the Phase I of the same project in 2016. The project made significant positive impact on local community by making contributions towards women's employment and sustainable aqua culture farming.

4

EAST ASIA

China

Starting from April-May 2020, the Chinese side undertook several attempts to unilaterally alter the status quo along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Western Sector, which seriously disturbed the peace and tranquility along the LAC in the Western Sector and impacted the development of the relationship. Both sides have agreed to resolve the issues along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh through peaceful dialogue. Consequently, discussions have continued with the Chinese side to achieve complete disengagement from all friction points and full restoration of peace and tranquility in the India-China Border Areas at an early date.

The two sides have made some progress in the resolution of the issues along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh. In February 2021, the two sides disengaged from the Pangong Tso area. In August 2021, disengagement was completed in the Gogra area. However, there are still some outstanding issues that need to be resolved. India has maintained its engagement both through diplomatic and military channels with the Chinese side to resolve the remaining issues at the earliest so as to restore peace and tranquility in the border areas.

EAM met State Councillor and Foreign Minister of China, Wang Yi, on 16 September 2021 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on the sidelines of the 21st SCO Meeting of the Head of States. The two Ministers exchanged views on the border situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh.

The two had also met earlier in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on the sidelines of the SCO Foreign Ministers' meeting in July 2021. Both sides agree that a prolongation of the existing situation was not in the interest of either side as it was impacting the relationship in a negative manner. The two sides should work towards early resolution of the remaining issues while fully abiding by bilateral agreements and protocols.

From May 2020 onwards, there have been 9 meetings of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) so far, with the latest being on 18 November 2021. Thirteen rounds of meetings between the Senior Commanders (headed by Commander of 14th Corps on Indian side) were also held, with the last round on 10 October 2021. During these diplomatic and military level meetings, the two sides have had candid and in-depth exchange of views on the situation along the LAC in the India-China border areas. They have reaffirmed that the two sides will continue to sincerely work towards complete disengagement of the troops at all friction points along the LAC in the Western Sector. Both sides agree that a prolongation of the existing situation was not in the interest of either side as it was impacting the relationship in a negative manner. Military and diplomatic officials of the two sides are meeting regularly to continue their discussions on resolving the remaining issues at the earliest.

Bilateral Trade

From January to October, 2021, India-China bilateral trade totaled USD 102.29 billion, up 47.8 % year on year. India's exports to China reached 23.96 USD billion, up 38.20 % year

on year and India's imports from China amounted to USD 78.33 billion, up 51.00 % year on year. Trade deficit for the first ten-month period stood at USD 54.37 billion, up 56.95 % year on year.



EAM and State Councillor and Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi on the sidelines of Dushanbe SCO Foreign Ministers Meeting in September 2021

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in December 1973, relations between India and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have been cordial. India has been consistently supportive of efforts to bring about peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula through dialogue and diplomacy. On account of the strict restrictions imposed by

the Government of DPRK to combat COVID-19 and their decision to completely close their borders, several foreign missions had temporarily closed their operations. On account of these stringent restrictions, the Government of India decided to temporarily close operations of India's Embassy in DPRK with effect from 29 June 2021.

Japan

The year witnessed increasing bilateral and multilateral engagement between India and Japan and further strengthening of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. The two sides maintained the momentum of their ties through virtual meetings and phone calls despite COVID. Prime Minister spoke to the then Japanese Prime Minister Suga on 26 April 2021 to exchange views on the response of each country for managing COVID and for strengthening cooperation in the post-COVID world. They also had their first in-person meeting on 23 September 2021 in Washington D.C. on the sidelines of the Quad Leaders' Summit. On 8 October 2021, Prime Minister held a telephone conversation with the newly elected Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Kishida Fumio. They agreed to further enhance bilateral cooperation in a variety of areas, including in high-technology. They

also exchanged views on the Indo-Pacific region and in this regard, reviewed the progress of cooperation under the Quad framework.

EAM met the then Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu several times during the year including on 5 May 2021 on the sidelines of G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in London, on 29 June 2021 on the sidelines of G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting in Rome and on 23 September 2021 on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. EAM held a telephone conversation on 22 November 2021 with the newly appointed Foreign Minister of Japan Mr. Hayashi Yoshimasa. They reviewed the progress made in the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership and discussed various regional issues.



Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Japan Yoshihide Suga in Washington DC in September 2021

The year also witnessed further strengthening of bilateral security and defence cooperation. The Agreement on Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services between the Self-Defense Forces of Japan and the Indian Armed Forces (or ACSA), which was signed on 9 September 2020, came into force on 11 July 2021. Naval cooperation continued with the completion of the 5th edition of the maritime bilateral exercise JIMEX between Indian Navy (IN) and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) from 6-8 October 2021 in Arabian Sea. Multifaceted tactical exercises involving weapon firings,

cross-deck helicopter operations and complex surface, anti-submarine and air warfare drills were held. India and Japan along with the U.S. and Australia also participated in Malabar 2021 which was conducted in two phases. Phase-1 was conducted in the Philippine Sea from 26-29 August and Phase-2 was conducted in Bay of Bengal from 12-15 October 2021. National Security Advisor and his Japanese counterpart Mr. Akiba Takeo held a telephone conversation to discuss bilateral defence and security ties on 3 August 2021.



Prime Minister inaugurated the Zen Garden in Ahmedabad in June 2021

Economic cooperation between India and Japan continued to be a key pillar of bilateral relations. In 2020-21, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Japan was USD 1.95 billion. Cumulative investment since 2000 has been USD 35.45 billion, ranking Japan fifth among investors. Japan continued to be India's largest donor of bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA), with an ODA commitment of approximately USD 3.5 billion in 2020-21. In response to the surge of COVID infections during the 2nd wave of the pandemic in India, the Government of Japan donated 1800 ventilators and 2800 oxygen concentrators as a part of Japan's emergency assistance.

Minister of Commerce and Industry along with the trade ministers of Japan and Australia formally launched the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) on 27 April 2021 in a virtual Trilateral Ministerial Meeting. The SCRI aims to enhance supply chain resilience in order to eventually attain strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth in the region. The implementation of the flagship Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail (MAHSR) project made further progress. The 12th and 13th Joint Committee Meetings on MAHSR, co-chaired by Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog and Dr. Hiroto Izumi, Special Advisor to Prime Minister of Japan, were held in the virtual format on 21 April 2021 and 29 September 2021 respectively.

The 1st India-Japan Environmental Policy Dialogue was held virtually on 7 September 2021 between Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment and Mr. Koizumi Shinjiro, Minister of the Environment of Japan. They discussed issues such as air pollution, sustainable technologies and transports, climate change, marine litter, fluorocarbons and COP26. Some of the other important interactions that were held virtually were the 6th Maritime Affairs Dialogue, the 1st India-Japan Intergovernmental Consultation and Public-Private Workshop in the field of 5G and the 2nd Space Dialogue. Bilateral agreements concluded include the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between Competition Commission of India (CCI) and Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC) and an MoC to establish the India-Japan Industrial Competitiveness Partnership (IJICP).

Bilateral cooperation in Skill Development saw further

progress with the establishment of four new Japan-India Institutes for Manufacturing (JIM) and 2 additional Japanese Endowed Courses (JEC), bringing the total number of JIMs and JECs across India to 19 and 7 respectively. The Specified Skilled Workers (SSW) agreement was signed in January 2021. The two sides continued to work on its early operationalization, including undertaking skill and language tests in India from early 2022.

Joint efforts continued under the India-Japan Act East Forum for the development of the North Eastern Region of India through coordination of connectivity and other projects. In February 2021, together with the Japanese Ambassador, EAM visited the Guwahati water supply project site along the Brahmaputra river to review its progress.

The year saw continued focus on expanding people-to-people exchanges. On 27 June 2021, Prime Minister inaugurated a Zen Garden and Kaizen Academy at Ahmedabad Management Association (AMA), Ahmedabad via video conference. On 15 July 2021, Prime Minister inaugurated the International Cooperation and Convention Centre called *Rudraksh* in Varanasi which was constructed with Japanese grant assistance in order to promote cultural exchanges between two countries and the rest of the world. The then-Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Suga delivered a video message on the occasion. On 20 July 2021, the Ministry and Ananta Centre launched the India-Japan Forum as a platform for exchanging ideas, bringing together people from government, industries, think-tanks and media in order to promote and strengthen the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. The Forum was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary and Chairman of the 15th Finance Commission and Trustee, Ananta Aspen Centre.

While the COVID pandemic continued to disrupt regular travel between the two countries, movement of people was facilitated through the Air Bubble arrangement. In addition, the two countries entered into a Mutual Recognition Arrangement for vaccination certificates, thus establishing reduced and simpler quarantine measures for incoming travelers from each other's countries (TBC).

Mongolia

India and Mongolia share warm and cordial bilateral relations. Mongolia regards India as its "third" and a "spiritual neighbour". The bilateral relationship was upgraded to a Strategic Partnership in 2015 during the historic visit of Prime Minister which has proven to be a watershed event in India's bilateral relations with Mongolia. Since then, bilateral cooperation with Mongolia has expanded and has seen significant growth. Despite the COVID pandemic, India and Mongolia have maintained regular high-level interactions and engagements throughout the year, further strengthening the strategic partnership. Several development projects in Mongolia, which are being built in partnership with India, witnessed significant progress despite challenges posed by the pandemic. Both countries supported each other in the fight against the pandemic. Overall, India-Mongolia bilateral relations witnessed positive momentum throughout the year.

The year 2021 marked the 66th anniversary of diplomatic ties between India and Mongolia, during which both sides maintained frequent exchanges and resumed physical interactions at high-level. Rashtrapati ji sent a congratulatory message to the new President of Mongolia, Mr. Ukhnaagiin Khursukh after his win in the elections in June 2021. Prime Minister sent a congratulatory message to Mongolian Prime Minister Mr. Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene after his elevation as Prime Minister in February 2021. Lok Sabha Speaker met Speaker of Great Khural (Mongolia Parliament) Mr. Zandanshatar Gombojav in Vienna on 8 September 2021 on the margins of 5th World Conference of Speakers. The latter led a parliamentary delegation to India from 30 November to 05 December 2021 on a joint invitation from Lok Sabha Speaker and Rajya Sabha Chairman. During the visit, Speaker Zandanshatar witnessed the Winter Session of the Parliament,

called on the President and Vice President and held meetings with Lok Sabha Speaker, EAM and Minister of Steel.

EAM held a bilateral meeting with Mongolian Foreign Minister Ms. Battsetseg Batmunkh on 12 October 2021 on the margins of the 6th CICA Foreign Ministers meeting in Kazakhstan. Both Foreign Ministers briefly met again on 03 November 2021 on the sidelines of the COP26 Summit in Glasgow. Minister of State for External Affairs (MoS) (RRS) paid an official visit to Mongolia from 23-26 November, which was the first official visit from India to Mongolia since the outbreak of the COVID pandemic. The first Joint Working Group (JWG) Meeting between the Indian Ministry of Steel and Ministry of Coal with Mongolia Ministry of Mining and Heavy Industry on Procurement of Coking Coal from Mongolia was held on 25 March 2021. The 10th JWG between Ministries of Defence of India and Mongolia was held virtually on 16 April 2021.

India has been partnering with Mongolia on several developmental projects in Mongolia. The work on construction of Oil Refinery Project (ORP) in Dornogobi Province of Mongolia commenced in January 2021. The ORP project of USD 1.236 billion, funded by EXIM Bank, is the largest Line

of Credit (LoC) project undertaken by India outside of its immediate neighbourhood. The construction of another LoC project funded by India in Mongolia – the Atal Bihari Centre of Excellence in IT, CT and Outsourcing, started on 12 August 2021. An upgraded Control and Command Centre (C&CC), installed with two servers provided by Border Security Force of India, was launched at GABP Headquarters, Mongolia on 23 September 2021.

Both countries supported each other in fighting the global challenge of COVID pandemic. India was the first country to send COVID vaccines to Mongolia through gifting of 150,000 doses of Made in India Covishield Vaccines on 22 February 2021. Prime Minister of Mongolia Mr. L. Oyun Erdene received the first dose of Covishield vaccine, which kick-started the vaccination drive in Mongolia. India facilitated export of over 200,000 vials of Remdesivir to Mongolia under a grant of special export permit. The Government of Mongolia donated an amount of USD 1 million to Red Cross India during the second wave of the pandemic in India on 17 May 2021. In November 2021, both countries agreed to mutually recognize vaccine certificates in order to ease travel between the two countries.



MoS (RRS) with Foreign Minister of Mongolia, Battsetseg Batmunkh, during his visit to Mongolia in November 2021

Republic of Korea

India and the Republic of Korea, as Special Strategic Partners, continued to have high level engagements this year.

EAM had a telephonic conversation with his ROK counterpart Chung Eui-yong in March 2021, which was followed by their meeting on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York in September 2021. Commerce and Industry Minister held a bilateral meeting with ROK Trade Minister Yeo Han-koo

on the sidelines of the G20 Trade Ministers Meeting in Italy in October 2021. Environment Minister met with his ROK counterpart Han Jeung-ae at Glasgow on the sidelines of COP26 in November 2021. Raksha Rajya Mantri, through a video message, gave India's pledge to the UN Peacekeeping operations during the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial held in Seoul in December 2021.

Lok Sabha Speaker had a bilateral meeting with his ROK counterpart Park Byeong-seug in Vienna on the sidelines of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in September 2021.

National Security Advisor held a telephonic conversation with his ROK counterpart Suh Hoon in April 2021. Deputy National Security Advisor held a telephonic conversation with his counterpart Kim Hyung-jin in March 2021. It was followed by the 3rd India-ROK Strategic Dialogue between the two Deputy National Security Advisors in Delhi in December 2021. ROK Deputy NSA Kim Hyung-jin called on National Security Advisor and MoS (RRS) during his visit.

Secretary (East), DG ICCR and Secretary (Defense Production, MoD) also paid official visits to the ROK in 2021.

ROK Defense Minister Suh Wook visited India in March 2021. During this visit, India-Korea Friendship Park in Delhi was inaugurated.

The Buddhist connection between the two countries intensified with ICCR gifting a bronze Buddha Statue to the

holy Tongdosa Temple, one of the 3 jewel temples in the ROK. The enshrining ceremony was held in May 2021 with congratulatory remarks by Secretary (East) and DG ICCR.

Think-tanks from both sides had several engagements. Embassy of India, Seoul held an International Symposium on "Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh: Developmental Dynamics and Future Trajectories" in partnership with Yonsei University, ICCR, India Foundation and Jammu-Kashmir Study Centre in August 2021. The second edition of the 2-week long online workshop "Facets of India-ROK Strategic Partnership" organised in partnership with numerous think-tanks of both India and the ROK was held in September 2021. The 20th Korea-India Strategic Dialogue, co-hosted by the Seoul Forum for International Affairs and Ananta Aspen Centre, was held in hybrid format under the theme, "Exploring New Opportunities for Strategic Partnership post COVID" in October 2021. The first India-ROK 2+2 think-tank dialogue under the title of "Reimagining India-Korea Relations in the Emerging Regional Order" was held between Korea National Diplomatic Academy, Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP), ICWA and RIS in October 2021.



EAM with Foreign Minister of Republic of Korea Chung Eui-yong on the sidelines of the UNGA in September 2021

5

EURASIA

Russian Federation

Despite COVID related challenges in 2021, there was a sustained momentum in India's relations with Russia, which was reflected in all areas of cooperation including political, security, defence, economic, science and technology and culture. Cooperation in the fight against COVID pandemic was evident in the field of vaccines, supply of medicines and repatriation of citizens of both countries.

President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin paid a working visit to New Delhi on 6 December 2021 for the 21st India-Russia Annual Summit with Prime Minister. The leaders discussed issues of bilateral cooperation and also exchanged views on regional and global developments. Following the visit, a Joint Statement titled "*India-Russia: Partnership for Peace, Progress and Prosperity*" covering the state and prospects of India-Russia ties was issued. Coinciding with the visit, 28 Agreements/MoUs (G-to-G and others) were signed in sectors like trade, energy, shipping, science and technology, intellectual property, outer space, geological exploration, cultural exchange, education, etc.

The first 2+2 Dialogue of Foreign and Defence Ministers of India and Russia was held in New Delhi on 6 December 2021. Raksha Mantri and EAM represented the Indian side in the Dialogue while the Russian Side was represented by Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey

Lavrov. The agenda for the Dialogue included regional and international political and defence issues of mutual interest.

Prime Minister and the Russian President held two telephonic conversations in 2021. During the telephone call on 28 April 2021, the leaders agreed to establish a 2+2 Dialogue of the Foreign and Defence Ministers of the two countries. On 24 August 2021, the leaders agreed to establish High Level Inter-Governmental Consultations on Afghanistan. On 9 August 2021, the Russian President participated in the UNSC High Level Open Debate on maritime security under the chairmanship of Prime Minister as part of India's UNSC presidency. Prime Minister also delivered a video-address at the 6th Eastern Economic Forum-2021 held in Vladivostok from 02-04 September 2021.

On 12 October 2021, EAM met the Russian Foreign Minister on the sidelines of the CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia) Ministerial meeting in Nur-Sultan (Kazakhstan). From 07-09 July 2021, EAM visited Moscow and held bilateral meetings with his Russian counterpart, Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Yuri Borisov and Chairman of the State Duma's International Affairs Committee Mr. Leonid Slutsky. EAM also delivered a speech at the Primakov Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) in Moscow on "*India-Russia ties in a changing*

world". On 5-6 April 2021, the Russian Foreign Minister paid an official visit to India and had a meeting with EAM.

The traditionally strong cooperation in the field of space was further strengthened with 4 India astronauts identified for "Gaganyaan" (the first Indian human spaceflight program) successfully completing their training in Russia and returning to India in February 2021.

From 01-05 September 2021, Petroleum and Natural Gas/Housing and Urban Minister visited Russia to represent India in the 6th Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) in Vladivostok. Prime Minister delivered a video-address during the plenary session of the 6th EEF.

On 07-08 September 2021, the Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Nikolay Patrushev visited India for High Level India-Russia Inter-Governmental Consultations on Afghanistan with National Security Adviser. He also called on EAM and Prime Minister. Mr. Patrushev visited India again on 10 November 2021 to take part in the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan. An Indian delegation led by Joint Secretary (PAI) participated in the Moscow Format consultations on Afghanistan held in Moscow from 19-21 October 2021.

Steel Minister led a delegation for the 'Russian Energy Week' held on 14-15 October 2021 in Moscow. An MoU on supply of coking coal from Russia to India and collaboration in steel sector was signed during the visit.

From 21-24 June 2021, Defence Secretary led a delegation to the 9th Moscow Conference on International Security (MCIS). Chief of Naval Staff visited St. Petersburg (Russia) on 25 July 2021 for the Naval Parade on the occasion of the 325th anniversary of the Russian Navy. Secretary (Defence Production) led a delegation to Moscow from 21-25 August 2021 for the International Military Technical Forum "Army-21".

From 04-12 August 2021, India-Russia joint training exercise INDRA-2021 was held in Volgograd (Russia) with the participation of 250 soldiers from each side. An Indian Army contingent participated in "Zapad-2021" military exercise from 10-16 September 2021 in Nizhniy Novogorod (Russia). On 28 October 2021, the 7th ship of P1135.6 class "Tushil" was launched at Yantar Shipyard in Kaliningrad. From 22-24 September 2021, Chief of Defence Staff visited Orenburg (Russia) to attend the conference of the Chiefs of General Staff of the SCO Member States and to witness the final validation exercise of SCO "Peace Mission- 2021".

Trade and economic cooperation remained a key pillar of India-Russia strategic partnership. Bilateral trade increased by about 38% in the first half of 2021 compared to the same period in 2020, despite the pandemic-related restrictions. A video conference between the Chief Minister of Gujarat and Head of Sakha Republic (Yakutia) was held in September 2021. An Indian delegation led by Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) attended the International Customs Forum in Moscow on 21 and 22 October 2021.



Prime Minister and Russian President Vladimir Putin during the India-Russia Summit in December 2021

Armenia

EAM paid an official visit to Armenia on 12-13 October 2021. This was the first official visit from India to Armenia. During the visit, EAM met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan and discussed bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. EAM also called on President of National Assembly of Armenia Alen Simonyan as well as Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

President of ICCR visited Yerevan from 14-17 August 2021. During the visit, he met Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Armen Grigoryan and Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Armenia, Dr. Vahram Dumanyan. He inaugurated a film screening event titled "Frunzik Mkrtychyan: India remembers me", a statue of Mahatma Gandhi and "Veda Centre for Indology" at the Russian-Armenian University in Yerevan.

Azerbaijan

The Union Cabinet approved the proposal for signing of MoU between the Institute of Chartered Accountants of

India (ICAI) and the Chamber of Auditors of the Republic of Azerbaijan (CAAR) in September 2021.

Georgia

EAM paid an official visit to Tbilisi on 09-10 July 2021, which was the first ever visit from India to Georgia. Georgian Foreign Minister Mr. David Zalkaliani welcomed EAM at the Tbilisi International Airport, where EAM handed over one part of the holy relic of St. Queen Ketevan to the Georgian Government.

EAM met the Economy Minister of Georgia, Ms. Natela Turnava and called on the Georgian President Ms. Salome Zourabichvili and the Georgian Prime Minister Mr. Irakli Garibashvili. He also inaugurated the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Tbilisi.

Kazakhstan

EAM met the Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan on the sidelines of International Conference "Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities" held in Tashkent (Uzbekistan) on 15-16 July 2021. EAM visited Kazakhstan on 11-12 October 2021 to participate in the 6th meeting of Foreign Ministers of CICA and also called on the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

India and Kazakhstan conducted a joint military exercise "KAZIND-21" from 30 August-11 September 2021 in Kazakhstan, with a focus on counter-terror operations in the mountainous terrain.

The 6th rotation (2 officers and 4 other ranks) of Kazakh troops was deployed as part of the Indian Battalion in United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in October 2021. Two instructors from Indian Armed Forces were deputed at Kazakh National Defence University with effect from August 2021 for imparting training in English language.

Chairman of National Security Committee of Kazakhstan, Mr. Karim Massimov, visited New Delhi from 09-11 November to participate in the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan. He also had a bilateral meeting with the NSA.

Kyrgyz Republic

EAM paid an official visit to Bishkek on 10-11 October 2021. EAM held a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan and called on the President of Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Sadyr Japarov. An MoU on Indian Grant Assistance for implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) in the Kyrgyz Republic was signed during the visit.

India-Kyrgyz Republic joint military exercise "Khanjar- VIII" was conducted from 16-28 April 2021 in Bishkek, in which 20-member contingents each from 4 PARA (Special Forces)

and Kyrgyz Panther Special Forces Brigade took part. 18-member delegation from National Defence College (New Delhi) visited the Kyrgyz Republic from 10-17 October 2021.

Secretary of the National Security Council of the Kyrgyz Republic Marat Imankulov visited India for the 1st India-Kyrgyz Republic Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi on 26 October 2021. Mr. Imankulov visited New Delhi again on 10 November 2021 for the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan.

Tajikistan

India-Tajikistan relations saw an intense and sustained interaction during the year with a number of high-level visits. EAM visited Tajikistan thrice during the year: (a) on 16-17 September 2021 to participate in the meetings of Council of Heads of States of SCO Member States and SCO-CSTO Summit on Afghanistan (*Prime Minister addressed these two Summits virtually*) (b) from 13-15 July 2021 to participate in meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers of SCO and the SCO-Afghan Contact Group; and (c) from 29 March-01 April 2021 for an official visit to Tajikistan and also to participate in the 9th Ministerial Conference "Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process". During these visits, EAM called on President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon and met his Tajik counterpart. He also met the Defense Minister of Tajikistan and Speaker of

Lower House of Tajik Parliament.

Raksha Mantri visited Dushanbe from 27-29 July 2021 for the meeting of SCO Defense Ministers. On the sidelines, he also met the Defense Minister of Tajikistan.

National Security Adviser visited Dushanbe from 22-24 June 2021 to attend the 16th SCO Meeting of Secretaries of Security Councils. On the sidelines, he also had a meeting with his Tajik counterpart Mr. Nasrullo Mahmudzoda. Tajik NSA visited New Delhi from 9-11 November for the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan. He had a bilateral meeting with NSA on 9 November 2021 and called on EAM on 11 November 2021.

On 5 November 2021, Commerce and Industry Minister held a video-conference with the Minister of Industry and New

Technologies of Tajikistan Mr. Sherali Kabir.

Turkmenistan

India and Turkmenistan signed the MoU on Indian Grant Assistance for implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) in July 2021.

NSA held a telephonic call with the Secretary of State Security

Council of Turkmenistan Mr. Charymurat Amanov on 26 October 2021. Mr. Charymurat Amanov also participated in the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan hosted in New Delhi on 10 November 2021.

Ukraine

Prime Minister met the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the sidelines of the Conference of Parties (COP-26) summit in Glasgow (UK) on 02 November 2021. The two leaders discussed bilateral relations and exchanged views on developments in the region.

Ukraine lifted the temporary ban on travel of Indians to Ukraine in June 2021. India and Ukraine agreed for mutual

recognition of COVID vaccine certificates issued by each other.

Ukrainian Defense Minister Andriy Taran led a delegation to the Aero-India Expo held in Bengaluru in February 2021. On the sidelines, he had meetings with Raksha Mantri and the Chiefs of Indian Army and Indian Navy.

Uzbekistan

Increasing political consultations and exchange of visits at ministerial levels provided a strong impulse to India-Uzbekistan relations during the year. EAM and Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov held 4 meetings so far during the year [on 25 February 2021 when the Uzbek FM visited India, 14 July 2021 and on 16 September 2021 in Dushanbe on the sidelines of the SCO Meetings, and on 11 October 2021 in Nur-Sultan on the sidelines of the CICA meeting]. These meetings provided opportunities for regular follow up on bilateral issues, pandemic related measures, developments in Afghanistan and cooperation in multilateral fora.

EAM participated in the International Conference “*Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity- Challenges & Opportunities*” on 15-16 July 2021 in Tashkent (Uzbekistan). During the visit, EAM called on President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

MoS (ML) paid an official visit to Uzbekistan from 23-26 September 2021. She called on Uzbek Foreign Minister, Culture Minister and the Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Aziz Abdulkhakov. During the visit, India-Uzbekistan Cultural Exchange Programme 2021-2025 was signed.

Chief Election Commissioner of India paid a visit to Uzbekistan from 22-26 October 2021 to observe the presidential elections in Uzbekistan.

Secretary of the National Security Council of Uzbekistan Mr. Viktor Makhmudov, participated in the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan hosted in New Delhi on 10 November 2021.

Commerce and Industry Minister held an online meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister/ Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan Mr. Sardor Umurzakov on 12 April 2021 to follow up on the decisions taken during the last meeting of the India-Uzbekistan Inter-Governmental Commission in October 2020.

A delegation of Indian film personalities participated in the 13th Tashkent International Film Festival held in Tashkent from 28 September – 03 October 2021. The festival featured 10 Indian movies representing different periods and genres of film making.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

Meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM)

EAM attended the meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers in Dushanbe on 14 July 2021. There he also took part in the meeting of SCO Contact Group on Afghanistan, which was being organized for the first time at the level of Foreign Ministers, keeping in mind the evolving situation in the country. The Member States adopted the SCO Joint Statement on Afghanistan.

Meetings at the level of Ministers

Over 25 Ministerial level meetings were organized during the course of Tajikistan’s Chairmanship of SCO CHS. Some of the important meetings are: National Security Advisor led the Indian delegation in the 16th Meeting of Secretaries of Security Councils of SCO held on 23 June 2021 in Dushanbe. Key regional security issues including the evolving situation in Afghanistan were discussed at the meeting. Raksha Mantri took part in the meeting of SCO Defence Ministers on 28 July 2021 in Dushanbe.

The Plan of Cooperation between the SCO Defense Ministries for the period 2022-2023 was adopted at the end of the meeting. Health Minister participated in the 4th Meeting of Health Ministers of SCO Member States held on 30 June 2021 (in Video Conference format), Law and Justice Minister and State for Law and Justice Minister took part in the online meeting of SCO Justice Ministers held on 30 July 2021 while Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister led the Indian delegation at the meeting of Ministers of Agriculture of SCO Member States held online on 12 August 2021.

The 'Action Plan to implement the Concept of Environmental Protection for the period 2022-2024' was approved at the meeting of SCO Ministers of Environment held on 29 July 2021, where-in the Indian delegation was led by Secretary, Environment Minister. Two new mechanisms of cooperation were initiated this year - namely, the meeting of SCO Ministers of Industry and the meeting of SCO Ministers of Energy. Secretaries of the respective ministries represented India at the meetings.

Indian Initiatives

Following the resounding success of Startup Forum held in 2020, DPIIT organized the 2nd edition of the SCO Startup Forum on 27-28 October 2021 in virtual format. The forum witnessed active participation from all the Member States. India organized the first ever webinar on the topic "Role of Women in Armed Forces on 14 October 2021. The Forum was inaugurated by Raksha Mantri. India also hosted the 19th meeting of SCO Prosecutors General on 29 October 2021 in virtual format.

Summit of SCO Council of Heads of State (CHS)

The Summit of SCO CHS was held in Dushanbe (Tajikistan) in a hybrid format on 17 September 2021. Prime Minister addressed the Heads of State through video link. EAM represented the Prime Minister at the Summit in Dushanbe. The meeting was chaired by Emomali Rahmon, the President of Tajikistan. The meeting discussed the achievements of

the organization as it celebrated the 20th Anniversary of its formation in 2021. The SCO Summit was followed by an Outreach session on Afghanistan between SCO and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Prime Minister participated in the Outreach Session through a video-message.

The leaders signed the Dushanbe Declaration which outlined the agreed positions of SCO Member states on the prospects of development of SCO as well as topical issues of international and regional importance. The Heads of State adopted 21 other Decisions. These included, among others, the decision to induct Iran as the new Member State of SCO, to grant Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Qatar the status of Dialogue Partners to SCO and MoU with the secretariat of UNIDO.

Three different agreements on cooperation in the field of youth affairs and culture (namely Agreement on cooperation in the field of youth work among the authorized bodies of SCO Member States, Memorandum of Cooperation between Higher and Secondary vocational institutions in the field of culture and art and Agreement between the governments of the SCO Member States on cooperation in the field of protection of objects of cultural heritage) were also signed.

Meeting of Council of Heads of Government (CHG)

The 20th Meeting of SCO CHG was held on 25 November 2021 in Nur-Sultan in virtual format under the Chairmanship of Kazakhstan. EAM represented India in the meeting. The SCO CHG meeting was attended by the leaders of the SCO Member States, Observer States, Secretary General of the SCO Secretariat, Executive Director of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) and other invited guests. India actively took part in all the initiatives introduced by the Kazakh Chair. At the Summit, the Member States adopted the Joint Communiqué as well as 10 decisions related to organizational issues of SCO as well as cooperation in the field of trade and science and technology.



EAM at the meeting of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers in July 2021

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GULF, WEST ASIA AND NORTH AFRICA

Bahrain

India continues to enjoy close and multifaceted ties with Bahrain. This year marks 50 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Bahrain. High level political interactions continued in physical as well as virtual format even during COVID.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani visited India from 6-8 April 2021 to co-chair the 3rd High Joint Commission (HJC) meeting with EAM in New Delhi. During the HJC, both Ministers reviewed all areas of bilateral cooperation including oil and gas, trade and investment, health, food security, defence and culture. On the side-lines of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building (CICA) conference in Kazakhstan on 12 October 2021, EAM met and exchanged greetings with Foreign Minister Zayani on the occasion of golden jubilee of India-Bahrain diplomatic relations.

Minister of State, Shri V.Muraleedharan (MoS [VM]) visited Bahrain from 30 August - 1 September 2021, during which he called on the King and Crown Prince and Prime Minister and met Foreign Minister, Labour Minister and other high ranking officials. An Indian community event was organised to mark the Azad Ka Amrit Mahotsava (AKAM) celebrations on 01 September.

Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports of India held a virtual meeting with his Bahraini counterpart on 16 September 2021. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas of India and Minister of Oil, Bahrain held a virtual meeting on 28 September 2021 to discuss bilateral and multilateral cooperation in hydrocarbon sector. On 7 October 2021, 2nd Joint Steering Committee between India and Bahrain was held virtually to discuss matters pertaining to security cooperation between the two countries.

INS Kochi led by Western Fleet Commander of the Indian Navy made a port call on 15-18 August 2021 to mark the 75th Independence Day of India and Golden Jubilee of Diplomatic Relations between India and Bahrain.

On 14 October 2021, His Majesty the King approved the Kingdom's accession to the Framework Agreement on the establishment of the International Solar Alliance (ISA Framework) by issuing a royal decree. Bahrain had signed a statement of Intent on collaboration with the ISA in August 2019 during Prime Minister's visit to Bahrain.

Bahrain's National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA) approved emergency use of Covaxin by Bharat Biotech in November 2021.

The 17th IISS Manama Dialogue was held in Bahrain from 19-21 November 2021 in the physical format, where in a three-member delegation from India participated.

A virtual meeting between Minister of Youth and Sports Affairs of Bahrain and the Minister of Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship of India was held on 23 December 2021.

Both countries had excellent cooperation in dealing with COVID related matters. Bahrain took special care of the Indian community residing there, including providing free

COVID vaccination to Indian community in Bahrain. Bahrain also provided 40 MTs of LMO and all required facilitations for the needed COVID related supplies to India during second wave of COVID. The flights between India and Bahrain were never stopped during the pandemic as both sides had agreed for an Air Bubble Arrangement in September 2020.

Bilateral trade maintained a healthy trend in 2021-22 growing at a rate of over 30% from the previous financial year when it stood at USD 1 billion.

Iraq

Iraq shares historical and civilizational ties with India and is an important partner for India's energy security. It continues to be the largest supplier of crude oil to India. Iraq is also the 7th largest trading partner of India. The bilateral trade amounted to USD 16.39 billion during the period April-October 2021, of which a large part consisted of oil imports.

India and Iraq have continued their close engagement. EAM met Foreign Minister of Iraq, Mr. Fuad Hussein, on the sidelines of United Nations General Assembly on 21 September 2021 in New York and held discussions on historical ties, economic, energy and development cooperation.

India continued to assist Iraq in capacity building. For the year 2021-22, a total of 200 slots were allotted under the ITEC programme. Iraqi officials participated in the online e-ITEC programmes especially on cyber technologies, AI and emergent technologies. India has also been offering

opportunity to Iraqi students for higher studies in India under the 'General Scholarship Scheme' organised by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations.

A large number of Iraqis visit India for medical treatment, tourism, higher education, business among other. Approximately 7867 medical visas (April-November 2021) were issued after relaxation of visa norms. Iraqi businessmen also participated in the Indus Food-2021 Exhibition from 20-21 March 2021 in Gautam Budha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh organised by Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI).

The Indian Embassy in Baghdad organized various activities to mark AKAM during the year and the 7th International Day of Yoga on 21 June 2021. It also organized a panel discussion and photo exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi in collaboration with University of Baghdad and a seminar on National Unity Day.

Kuwait

India and Kuwait traditionally enjoy friendly relations, which are rooted in history and have stood the test of time. This year India and Kuwait are celebrating 60th anniversary

of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Both countries have maintained regular high-level contacts.



INS Kochi carrying medical supplies from Kuwait arrived in India in May 2021



EAM in a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah, during his visit to Kuwait in June 2021

Kuwait stood with India during the second COVID and provided quick support in the form of oxygen and other relief material to India. An air/sea bridge was established between both countries in this regard. Kuwait sent a special aircraft with 282 oxygen cylinders, 60 oxygen concentrators, ventilators and other medical supplies on 04 May 2021. Indian Naval Ships, INS Kolkata, INS Kochi, INS Tarkash, INS Tabar & INS Shardul carried liquid medical oxygen in ISO tanks, oxygen cylinders, concentrators and other medical supplies to India. Over 425 metric tonnes of liquid medical oxygen, 12,500 oxygen cylinders, oxygen concentrators, ventilators and other medical equipment was sent from Kuwait to India during the month and half long operation. Indian community in Kuwait also contributed to the efforts.

EAM paid an official visit to Kuwait from 9-11 June 2021 at the invitation of Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs of State of Kuwait. He also called on the Prime Minister of Kuwait and delivered a letter from Prime Minister addressed to the Amir of Kuwait. He met Foreign Minister of Kuwait on 10 June along with Minister of Commerce and Industry of Kuwait. The meeting focussed on health, food, education, energy, digital and business cooperation, international issues and matters related to Indian community. The logo for 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kuwait was jointly unveiled by EAM and Foreign Minister of Kuwait during the visit.

EAM interacted virtually with the community and unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi at India House in the presence of a select group of community representatives. On 10 June 2021, during his visit to Kuwait, EAM chaired the regional HOMS Conference.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs of State of Kuwait had a telephonic conversation with

EAM on 28 April, 12 May and 28 May 2021 to discuss steps to meet the challenges in the face of COVID pandemic. The two Ministers also met in Tehran, Iran on 5 August 2021 on the sidelines of swearing-in ceremony of the new President of Iran.

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas had a telephonic conversation with Minister of Oil of Kuwait on 22 July 2021 and met him physically on 15 November 2021 at Abu Dhabi during ADIPEC-2021. Both Ministers discussed expanding bilateral cooperation in hydrocarbons sector. The 5th Meeting of India-Kuwait Joint Working Group on Hydrocarbons took place virtually on 16 June 2021. Both sides discussed cooperation in the oil sector.

India has consistently been among the top ten trading partners of Kuwait. Bilateral trade for FY 2020-21 stood at USD 6.27 billion but has shown sharp recovery this year.

2nd meeting of India-Kuwait Joint Working Group on Medical Cooperation was held on 31 August virtually to discuss matters related to cooperation in digital health, pandemic management and other areas of medicine. 7th Meeting of India-Kuwait Joint Working Group on Manpower was held virtually on 07 September 2021 to review all issues of cooperation in labour and manpower areas.

Indian Embassy in Kuwait organized various activities to celebrate AKAM promoting cultural heritage of India and its rich tradition. To commemorate 60 Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kuwait, the Kuwait Towers were illuminated with the Indian and Kuwaiti flags on 31 October 2021. NEET (UG) examination was successfully conducted by Embassy in its premises on 12 September 2021. Kuwait was allotted as a NEET centre, first ever such centre outside India. Secretary (CPV & OIA) visited Kuwait in the first week of November 2021 to review consular and community issues

Oman

India and Oman share deep bonds of friendship rooted in thousands of years of historical contacts. The relationship has now evolved into a vibrant and multifaceted strategic partnership. High-level exchanges in recent years have helped to move forward and strengthen cooperation in key areas, including trade & commerce, defence & security, technology, health, education and people-to-people ties.

In August 2021, EAM met Oman's Foreign Minister, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi, in Tehran on the side-lines of oath taking ceremony of newly elected Iranian President. The Foreign Ministers again spoke on phone in September 2021. EAM thanked Oman's Foreign Minister for support extended by Oman to India's repatriation flights from Afghanistan.

Oman supported India's fight against COVID during the peak of second wave. Indian community also pitched in with their donation of oxygen cylinders and concentrators. Highlighting the warm and friendly relations between the two countries was the fact that Oman's Ministry of Health was the first one in the region to grant approval for emergency use of Covaxin in October 2021. The then Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare participated virtually in COVID meeting organized by Oman's Ministry of Health in cooperation with World Health Organization (WHO) in May 2021.

Defence cooperation continued to remain strong and dynamic. Both sides renewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) on military cooperation along with its annexure as

well as on maritime issues on 20 May 2021. Oman continued to extended excellent logistics support to Indian Navy ships and military aircrafts. Initial Planning Conference for the planned Eastern Bridge VI exercise was held on 13 April 2021.

An MoU on cooperation in mining sector was signed in Muscat on 12 August 2021. In August 2021, India's Acme Group signed agreement with Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, Oman for establishment of a major Green Hydrogen & Ammonia Project in Special Economic Zone at Duqm at proposed investment of USD 2.5 billion.

A group of 25 Omani diplomats attended the first ever special course at Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Studies from 05-18 December 2021.

EAM met with the Foreign Minister of Oman on the side-lines of the Indian Ocean Conference held in Abu Dhabi in December 2021.

Several cultural engagements were organized by the Indian Embassy under AKAM. Sanskrit learning app "Little Guru" was launched in April 2021. Mission organised a special virtual event to commemorate 7th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2021. 36 virtual events were organized in the run up to IDY including a month-long Yoga Utsav in association with Indian Social Club. A special book celebrating India-Oman relations, "Oman-India Ties Across Sea and Space" was formally released on 26 September 2021.

Qatar

The traditionally strong bilateral relations enjoyed by India and Qatar continued to grow stronger with regular exchange of bilateral visits and substantive engagements between the two sides. Qatar once again emerged as a reliable friend of India and provided timely medical and humanitarian support to India during the second wave of COVID. On 27 April 2021, Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani held a telephone call with Prime Minister and expressed Qatar's solidarity with India and offered support in its fight against COVID. On 02 May 2021, EAM received a call of support from Qatari Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, to discuss the COVID challenge in both countries and bilateral COVID cooperation.

During the transit visits of EAM through Doha on 09 and 15 June 2021, EAM met Qatar's National Security Advisor; Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister; Deputy Prime Minister/Minister of State for Defence Affairs and U.S. Special Representative for Peace in Afghanistan. On 20 August 2021, EAM met Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister in Doha during his transit to discuss bilateral issues. 283 Indians who were evacuated from Afghanistan and brought to Doha were repatriated to India.

EAM participated in virtual mode in Qatar Economic Forum (QEF) on 22 June 2021. On 13 April 2021, Qatari Deputy

Prime Minister and Foreign Minister virtually participated in Raisina Dialogue. On 10 July 2021, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister and Minister of State for Energy Affairs of Qatar held telephonic conversation and discussed ways of strengthening mutual cooperation in hydrocarbon sector.

Qatar's Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Counterterrorism and Mediation in Conflict Resolution, visited New Delhi on 06-07 August 2021. He held talks with EAM, Foreign Secretary and other senior officials. A virtual meeting of Joint Committee on Security and Law Enforcement was held on 26 October 2021 between Ministry of Home Affairs and Qatari Ministry of Interior.

Indian Naval Ship Brahmaputra visited Doha for operational turnaround (OTR) from 29 November-02 December 2021. The Vice Chief of Army Staff visited Doha on 07 & 08 December 2021. These visits were important in the context of strengthening of India-Qatar defence relations.

First meeting of the Joint Working Group on Health Cooperation was held virtually on 16 December 2021.

The total trade between India and Qatar (April - October 2021) was USD 7.4 billion which was an increase of 59.60% percent compared to the corresponding period of last year. In

April 2021, Qatar Investment Authority, the sovereign wealth fund of Qatar along with other investors invested USD 800 million in Indian food delivery company Swiggy. In October 2021, Qatar Investment Authority along with other investors invested USD 175 million in Rebel Foods Pvt. Ltd.

In India's fight against second wave of COVID, Qatar emerged as a logistics hub for transportation of medical supplies from across the globe to India. During May 2021, Qatar Airways, ferried 800 MT of essential humanitarian medical cargo free of charge from around the world to India. Indian Naval Ships Trikanth, Tarkash, Kolkata, and Shardul visited Hamad Port to carry the relief supplies and 200 MT LMO re-filled by Gasal from Qatar to India. Four C-17 Aircrafts visited Al Udeid airbase to unload 08 cryogenic containers for re-filling. Qatar Fund for Development also supplied medicines, oxygen concentrators and ventilators through special Amiri Air force

plane to India. Indian community in Qatar too contributed in a big way to the 'Heal India Initiative' of Indian Community Benevolent Forum.

The Indian community numbers about 700,000 in Qatar and forms the single largest community. To facilitate and streamline the consular services during COVID period, Embassy introduced online appointment system to render consular services without compromising the COVID protocol norms. From 01 April – 30 November 2021 Embassy provided 72695 passport/consular services/visa/OCI services. The Embassy also assisted in repatriation of 36 Indian fishermen who had allegedly crossed the territorial waters. The Embassy is also organizing an array of activities to celebrate AKAM in Qatar with active support and participation of Indian community.

Saudi Arabia

The strategic relations between India and Saudi Arabia institutionalised through the signing of Strategic Partnership Council Agreement between Prime Minister and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in October 2019, were further strengthened following the visit of Saudi Foreign Minister to India in September 2021. Bilateral cooperation remained robust even during the pandemic as supply chains were maintained between India and the Kingdom for shipments of food, medicines, vaccines and crude oil.

Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, paid an official visit to New Delhi from 18-20 September 2021. During the visit, he met with EAM and called on Prime Minister. The leaders discussed bilateral relations, and ways to enhance them in the fields of trade, investment, energy, defence, security, culture, consular issues, health care and human resources. They also reviewed the progress of the Strategic Partnership Council Agreement, as well as exchanged views on the recent developments in Afghanistan. Earlier, EAM and his Saudi counterpart spoke over a phone call on 12 May 2021 and met on 29 June 2021 on the side-lines of the G20 Foreign Ministerial Meeting in Italy. On 25 August 2021, EAM spoke over phone with the Saudi MoS for Foreign Affairs, Adel Al-Jubeir.

Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change visited Riyadh and participated in the Middle East Green Initiative Summit 25 on October as a representative of Prime Minister.

In August, INS KOCHI arrived at Al Jubail Port for participating in the first ever Indo-Saudi Bilateral Naval Exercise 'Al Mohed Al Hindi 2021', which was held on 12 August 2021. In April, an Indian Navy Ship INS Talwar arrived at the Jubail Port in Saudi Arabia and carried out Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with the Royal Saudi Naval Ship HMS Khalid, as part of Operation SANKALP.

During the period, the Kingdom remained one of the largest trade partners of India and played an important role in securing India's energy demands. The second Senior Officials' Meeting, under the framework of the Economic & Investments Committee of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership

Council, was held on 08 April 2021. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas held a telephonic conversation with his Saudi counterpart, Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman on 15 July 2021.

A Programme of Collaboration in the housing sector was signed on 30 September 2021 in Riyadh between Ambassador and the Deputy Minister of the Saudi Ministry of Municipal, Rural Affairs and Housing, Prince Saud bin Talal bin Badar, in the fields of urban planning, construction, sustainable development and investment opportunities in affordable housing.

The inaugural meeting of the Joint Working Group on Social and Cultural Cooperation was held on 02 November 2021, under the framework of the Committee on Political, Security, Social and Cultural Cooperation of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council.

EAM spoke over a phone call with his Saudi counterpart on 17 November 2021 to discuss bilateral relations, resumption of the flights and recent developments in Afghanistan.

The Senior Officials Meeting of the Committee on Political, Security, Social and Cultural (PSSC) Cooperation is expected to be held in January-February 2022. The Ministerial meeting in Q1 of 2022 and the Ministerial meeting on Economy and Investments is expected to be held in Q1 of 2022.

The Commander of the Royal Saudi Land Forces is expected to pay an official visit to India in February 2022. The fifth meeting of the Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation is expected to be held in Q1 of 2022.

During the second wave of COVID in India in April-May, the Kingdom supplied significant amount of COVID-relief material to India. 580 MTs of LMO, 4700 filled Oxygen Cylinder (40 Ltr), 1660 empty oxygen cylinders (10 ltr), 600 Oxygen Concentrator were sent from the Kingdom to India. Earlier, India supplied the Kingdom with 4.5 million Covishield vaccines. Saudi Arabia resumed direct flights from India on 01 December 2021 and also approved Covaxin for travel with effect from 01 December 2021.

On 21 June 2021, as part of the IDY 2021 celebration, an MoU on Yoga cooperation was signed between the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, Ministry of AYUSH, and the Leaders Development Institute, Ministry of Sports, Saudi

Arabia. The MoU has paved the way for the establishment of formal Yoga standards and courses in the Kingdom, and will facilitate collaboration in research, education and training in the field of Yoga.

United Arab Emirates

India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) enjoy close and friendly relations that are centuries old. Since 2014 onwards this relationship has received special impetus under the leadership of Prime Minister. The bilateral ties which were elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2017 have continuously strengthened and deepened. There have been regular contacts at the highest levels including the telephone conversation between the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan and Prime

Minister on 03 September 2021.

The highlight of the year on the bilateral front was the launch of the negotiations for an India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), by Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and UAE's Minister of State (Foreign Trade) Mr. Thani bin Ahmed al Zeyoudi in New Delhi on 23 September 2021.



Launch of negotiations for the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in September 2021

Ministerial visits have continued during the pandemic. EAM visited Abu Dhabi on 18 April 2021 and met with UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al Nahyan where they reviewed bilateral relations, especially the COVID cooperation. EAM visited UAE on 13 & 14 November 2021 to attend Sir Bani Yas Forum and on 04 December 2021 to attend the 5th Indian Ocean Dialogue. In both these visits, he paid courtesy calls on the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and met UAE Foreign Minister. He also visited the Indian pavilion at the Dubai Expo.

Other ministerial visits from India to UAE since April 2021 included the visits of:

Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution on 1st October 2021 to inaugurate the India Pavilion at the Dubai EXPO2020 and to co-chair the 9th meeting of the India-UAE High Level Joint Task Force on Investments (HLTFI) in Dubai

Minister of State (MoS) for External Affairs & Parliamentary Affairs on 25-26 October 2021 to attend the Sixth Ministerial Consultation of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD);

Commerce Secretary's visit to Dubai on 22-23 August 2021; and

Chief of Air Staff's visit to Abu Dhabi from 01-03 August 2021;

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Housing and Urban Affairs on 15-17 November 2021 to take part in the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition Conference (ADIPEC).

There were also a number of high-level visits from UAE to India during the period, including the visit of UAE President's Diplomatic Advisor on 30 August 2021 in the aftermath of the fall of the Ghani Government in Kabul to discuss the evolving situation in Afghanistan. On 22-23 September 2021, UAE



EAM at the Indian Ocean Conference in Abu Dhabi in December 2021

Minister of State for Foreign Trade visited India to formally launch the negotiations for India-UAE CEPA.

Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas visited UAE on 15-17 November 2021 to attend the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC).

Important developments likely to take place during the period up to March 31, 2022.

Prime Minister is scheduled to visit the UAE on 05 & 06 January 2022 [Deferred - New Dates?]

The Dubai EXPO2020 started on 01 October 2021 and will continue till 31 March 2022. India has built one of the largest pavilions in the Dubai EXPO2020, which will also remain as a legacy in the 'District 2020' post-EXPO. EXPO2020 is

showcasing India's science and technology achievements, culture, diversity and India-UAE friendship.

During the second wave of COVID in India, UAE gifted India with 1 million tablets of Favipiravir. ADNOC provided 03 ISO tankers each of 20 MT LMO capacity to reinforce oxygen availability in the country. Emirates Airlines also set up a humanitarian air-bridge to fly COVID relief supplies to 09 Indian cities free of cost.

The people-to-people ties between India and the UAE have also witnessed steady progress in the last one year and the people and the Government of the UAE stood by the Indians during the tough times of the pandemic. India and the UAE signed a visiting Professorship Agreement between NYU Abu Dhabi and Indian Council for Cultural Relations.



EAM visited the India Pavilion at the Dubai Expo 2021 in November 2021

Yemen

India enjoys historical ties with Yemen with strong people to people connect. India remains committed to Yemen's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity and supports a peacefully negotiated, Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political settlement that is inclusive, fair and prioritises the well-being of all Yemenis. EAM met Yemen's Foreign Minister Dr. Ahmed Awad Bin Mubarak on the side-lines of UN General Assembly in New York on 25 September 2021 and conveyed India's support for a peaceful resolution of the ongoing conflict in Yemen. India also articulated this view consistently in the UN

Security Council during its sessions on Yemen.

Due to ongoing conflict and fragile political and security situation in Yemen, the Embassy of India to Yemen was relocated to Djibouti on 14 April 2015 and has since been functioning from a Camp office in Djibouti. The Embassy continues to provide visa services to Yemeni nationals as well consular services and assistance to Indian nationals living in Yemen. In July 2021, Embassy facilitated repatriation of 10 Indian workers.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

EAM met GCC Secretary General, Dr. Nayef Falah Mubarak Al-Hajraf, during his first official visit to New Delhi on 10-11 November 2021. Both leaders recalled the historic and friendly India-GCC relations which have seen robust progress in recent years. GCC Secretary General lauded the contribution of the Indian community to the Gulf countries and said that GCC wants to be a partner of India in its economic growth. Both sides decided to convene the next India-GCC Troika Political

Dialogue at an early date and agreed to further institutionalise their annual meetings by pursuing an MoU. GCC Secretary General also met CIM during his visit. Both leaders decided to set up a Joint Working Group with representatives from both sides to examine all aspects of their economic and commercial relationship by January 2022 leading to the commencement of negotiations on an FTA.

Iran

India and Iran relations are unique and historic. Iran is an important partner and a close neighbour. During the period, bilateral engagement has significantly intensified. EAM visited Tehran twice and held constructive meetings with the Iranian leadership during the year.

The two countries continued their engagement in the field of health and a meeting of the Joint Working Group on Health was held in April 2021. India gifted COVID Vaccine to the Government of Iran to be administered to Afghan Refugees in Iran. Cooperation in the field of regional connectivity continued and the Joint Working Group on Ports and Maritime Cooperation met in July 2021.

During the period April-October 2021, there had been

regular high-level exchanges between the two countries. At the invitation of the Government of Iran, EAM visited Iran on 05 & 06 August 2021 to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the President-elect His Excellency. Ayatollah Sayyid Ebrahim Raisi. During his visit, EAM called-on the President and held meetings with other Iranian leaders. Even before the official swearing-in ceremony, EAM had visited Tehran on 07 July 2021 and met the President-designate to deliver the personal message from Prime Minister to the Iranian leadership. On 11 November 2021, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran visited India to attend the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue. On the sidelines of the Dialogue, the Secretary held bilateral talks with the National Security Advisor.



EAM with the President of Iran, Ayatollah Sayyid Ebrahim Raisi, during his visit to Tehran in August 2021

The Governments of India and Iran cooperated effectively in the field of health and held a virtual meeting of the Joint Working Group on Health on 06 April 2021. During the meeting, discussions were held on various aspects of bilateral cooperation in the field of health. Continuing with our partnership in the field of health, on 16 June 2021, Bharat Biotech (BBIL) and Pasteur Institute of Iran (PII) signed a partnership agreement on Rotavirus vaccine for technology transfer of ROTAVAC. The collaboration is intended to save the lives of young children and infants from deadly Rotavirus disease. Furthermore, to assist Afghan refugees in Iran, India gifted one million doses of India-made Bharat Biotech Covaxin to Iran in October 2021.

India-Iran cooperation on regional connectivity projects including development of Shahid Beheshti Terminal, Chabahar Port and International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) continued. The 10th meeting of the Joint Working Group on Ports and Maritime Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Iran was held virtually on 12 July 2021 in New Delhi. The two sides discussed

issues related to regional connectivity, including Chabahar Port project and INSTC.

The Shahid Beheshti terminal at Chabahar port, operated by the Indian company, India Ports Global Limited, has seen a steady increase in bulk and general cargo traffic and since December 2018 it has handled 152 vessels, 14,420 TEUs of containers and more than 3.11 million metric ton of bulk and general cargo. Besides, shipment from India, the port has also handled several shipments and trans-shipments from Russia, Brazil, Thailand, Germany, France, Ukraine, Bangladesh and the UAE.

Continuing the tradition of ship visits, Indian Navy ship INS Sudarshini, a Sail Training Ship (STS) paid a flag visit to Bandar Abbas from 21-24 December 2021.

In continuation of India's ongoing humanitarian assistance, India supplied anti-Tuberculosis (TB) medicines to Iran in early 2022.

WEST ASIA & NORTH AFRICA

Algeria

Bilateral relations between India and Algeria remained warm and cordial during the year despite the constraints of the pandemic. EAM met the then Algerian Foreign Minister Sabri Boukadoum on the side-lines of G-20 Foreign Ministers' meeting in Matera, Italy on 30 June 2021. EAM subsequently met the new Foreign Minister Ramtane Lamamra on 25 September 2021 on the side-lines of the 76th session of UNGA in New York and discussed bilateral relations and regional and international issues of mutual interest.

MoS (VM) paid a bilateral visit to Algeria on 15-17 September 2021 during which he called on the Algerian Prime Minister Aïmene Benabderrahmane. MoS (VM) also held meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Commerce &

Export Promotion, Kamel Rezig, Minister of Energy & Mines, Mohamed Arkab, and Secretary General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Rachid Chakib Kaid. He reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relationship with Algeria.

An Indian Navy frontline frigate INS TABAR, a Talwar-class stealth frigate, undertook a bilateral Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with Algerian Naval Force Ship EZZADJER on 29 August 2021.

The Agreement between India and Algeria on Visa Exemption for the holders of Diplomatic and Official/Service Passports, signed between the two countries in early 2019, entered into force on 01 October 2021.

Djibouti

India remained proactively engaged with Djibouti through development assistance during the year. An artificial limb camp under the theme 'India for Humanity' with the grant from Government of India was organized in Djibouti in December 2021 for 300 needy persons. A Quick Impact Project (QIP) worth USD 50,826 for vocational training of underprivileged girls and women was launched in May 2021 at the Centre for Social Actions and Women Empowerment of the Government of Djibouti.

A consignment of medicines worth USD 1.18 Lakh was gifted to the Government of Djibouti on 12 April 2021 in their fight against COVID pandemic. A consignment of 24,000 doses of Made in India vaccine was supplied to Djibouti through Covax facility in March 2021.

A total of 08 Indian Naval Ships made calls at the Port of Djibouti for Operational Turn Around (OTR) and anti-piracy patrol in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Two Indian naval aircrafts also visited Djibouti on OTR in April and July 2021.

Egypt

Despite the pandemic situation, high-level engagement between India and Egypt continued. Egypt's Foreign Minister, Mr. Sameh Shoukry, spoke with EAM over phone on 30 June 2021, to seek India's support for Egypt's position on Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) in the UNSC. On 21

September 2021, EAM met with the Egyptian Foreign Minister in New York on the side-lines of the 76th UNGA Session. Both discussed the strengthening of bilateral cooperation, the GERD issue and the situation in Afghanistan.



EAM and Foreign Minister of Egypt Sameh Shoukry on the side-lines of the 76th UNGA Session in September 2021

On 09 May 2021, Egypt dispatched three planes with medical supplies to India that included 300 oxygen cylinders, 50 oxygen concentrators, 20 ventilators, 8000 vials of Remdesivir & other medical equipment.

Bilateral defence relations between India and Egypt got a new impetus during the year. Chief of Air Staff visited Egypt from 28 November-02 December 2021. He visited Egyptian

Defence Exposition (EDEX-2021) and was a keynote speaker at the Egyptian Air Power Symposium.

The first-ever Air exercise between fighter aircrafts of the Air Forces of India and Egypt was held in Egypt from 28-31 October 2021. IAF IL-78 FRA conducted in-flight refuelling operations for EAF fighter aircraft by both day and night.



Medical Supplies from Egypt arrived in India in May 2021

INS Tabar (a Talwar class guided missile frigate) made a port call in Alexandria port on 27 & 28 June 2021 and held PASSEX with Egyptian Navy Ship (ENS) Tushka. INS Tabar participated in another PASSEX with ENS Alexandria on 05 & 06 September 2021.

India-Egypt Joint Committee Meeting on Science and Technology, focusing on agriculture, nanotechnology, biotechnology and renewable energy was held on 05 October

2021. The first meeting of India-Egypt Joint Working Group on Health and Medicine is scheduled to be held in virtual mode in the first quarter of 2021.

Several business delegations from India visited Egypt during the year, including from Federation of Indian Exports Organization (FIEO), Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI), Wool & Woollen Export Council, PHARMEXCIL, etc.



Indian Air Force and Egyptian Air Force participated in Ex Desert Warrior conducted at El Berigat Air Base in Egypt in October 2021

Eritrea

Eritrea's Foreign Minister, Mr Osman Saleh, and Presidential Advisor, Mr. Yemane Ghebreab, visited India from 7-12 April 2021 and met with EAM and NSA to discuss multifaceted bilateral cooperation and regional, global matters of mutual

concern. They also met with Indian business community under the auspices of FICCI and PHARMEXCIL.

Indian Naval Ship (INS) Trikand made a port call to Massawa Port from 25-27 September 2021.

Israel

Israel's new government was sworn-in on June 2021. The momentum of the bilateral strategic relations was maintained with continued high-level engagement. Rashtrapatiji, Prime Minister, EAM, Rakshamantri and Lok Sabha Speaker formally congratulated their counterparts in Israel's new government while Prime Minister, EAM and Rakshamantri also held telecons with their counterparts. EAM paid an official visit to Israel from 17-21 October 2021, at the invitation of the alternate Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Israel, Mr. Yair Lapid. A bilateral meeting between Prime Minister and Israeli Prime Minister was held on the sidelines of 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow on 02 November 2021. The dignitaries wished each other on important occasions such as India's Independence Day, Jewish New Year and Diwali. On consular front, MoS (VM) received mortal remains of Ms. Soumya Santhosh, an Indian caregiver working in Israel, who was killed during rockets attacks from Gaza Strip in May 2021.

EAM's visit to Israel involved substantial engagements on the political, cultural, security & defense, commercial, innovation & education and community fronts. EAM held a bilateral meeting with his counterpart and called on the Israeli President, the Prime Minister and the Knesset Speaker. He interacted with the Indian-origin Jewish community in Israel, Indologists, heads of prominent Israeli Universities, Indian students who are currently pursuing their education there and business people, including from the hi-tech industries and select think tanks. The visit was also an occasion to pay tribute to the valiant Indian soldiers who laid their lives in the region, especially during the First World War. EAM inaugurated a plaque at Rana'ana, which is part of the India trail memorials in Israel signifying the contribution of Indian soldiers during the First World War in shaping the history of the region. He also interacted with the Indian Air Force contingent participating in multilateral Exercise Blue Flag at Ovda airbase in Israel.

During the visit, Israel signed the instrument of ratification of the International Solar Alliance. The two countries announced resumption of Free Trade Agreement negotiations. There was an in-principle agreement on the mutual recognition of

COVID certificates of the two countries. The two countries agreed to jointly issue commemorative stamps to mark the 30th anniversary of the up-gradation of diplomatic relations in 2022.



Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Israel Naftali Bennett on the sidelines of 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Glasgow in November 2021

Chief of Air Staff visited Israel from 03-06 August 2021. A contingent of 84 Indian Air Force personnel, along with five Mirage 2000 fighter aircrafts, participated in Israel's biennial multilateral Exercise Blue Flag from 13-28 October 2021. The annual India-Israel Joint Working Group (JWG) on Defence was held in Israel on 26 & 27 October 2021. The JWG was led by Defence Secretary from the Indian side. Chief of Army Staff visited Israel on 15-18 November 2021 during which he met Israel's senior military and civilian leadership and discussed avenues for further enhancing bilateral defence relations.

Israel donated 03 oxygen generators, 2133 oxygen concentrators, and 420 respirators to India during the second wave of pandemic that were airlifted by the Indian Air Force

on 07 and 09 May 2021.

On 24 May 2021, India and Israel signed a three-year joint work program in Agriculture until 2023 in New Delhi, in the presence of the Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. The annual India-Israel Management Committee was held on 08 November 2021 in New Delhi.

A total of 29 Vande Bharat Mission (VBM) flights operated in which around 1780 passengers travelled from Tel Aviv to Delhi. From 06 November 2021, VBM flights doubled their frequency, to two flights per week, on Delhi-Tel Aviv sector. More than 50 VBM flights have connected India and Israel since the start of the pandemic.



EAM met the Foreign Minister of Israel Yair Lapid, during his visit to Israel in October 2021

Jordan

On 13 April 2021, Prime Minister extended a special video message congratulating His Majesty King Abdullah-II and people of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the State of Jordan.

EAM had an interaction with Foreign Minister of Jordan, Ayman Safadi, in Doha on 15 June 2021 and discussed regional and international developments. Both ministers met again on the margins of Sir Bani Yas Forum in Dubai on 06 December

2021.

Indian-Jordan Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (a state-of-the-art next Generation IT facility) at Al-Hussein Technical University, Amman was inaugurated on 02 October 2021. The Center, which is fully funded by the Government of India, has been setup in pursuant to an MoU signed during the visit of King Abdullah-II to India in 2018.

Lebanon

The new Lebanese government under Prime Minister Najib Mikati took office in September 2021, more than a year after the resignation of Hassan Diab's cabinet following Beirut Port blasts of August 2020. He was congratulated by Prime Minister in November 2021.

India continues to contribute towards United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Around 1000 peace keepers of 19 Madras INF Battalion Group under UNIFIL (INDBATT)

deployed in southern Lebanon, are doing commendable work by helping out the local population.

A Quick Impact Projects (QIP) on construction and furnishing of Reception Cabin at the Mrusti al Shouf entrance of the Shouf Biosphere Reserve (SBR), undertaken by the Mission is nearing completion. Another QIP of reforestation of one hectare area with planting of 800 cedar trees at the Reserve will be completed by the end of current financial year.

Libya

To maintain contacts with the Libyan Government and to look after the welfare of Indians residing in Libya, diplomatic relations were revived with Libya by concurrent accreditation of Ambassador of India to Tunisia to Libya. He presented his credentials to the President of the Interim Government of National Unity of Libya on 20 December 2021.

There has been a rising trend in the number of Libyans visiting India during the year, particularly for business, which is indicative of interest from the Libyan side for continued interactions and trade with India. Three delegations from the Libyan health and pharmaceutical sector visited India during the year.

Morocco

The 3rd India - Morocco Joint Working Group meeting on Water Resources under the framework of MoU on Cooperation in the field of Water resources was held virtually on 13 July 2021.

A virtual meeting between the Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Chemical and Fertilizers of India and Minister of Energy, Mines and Environment of Morocco was held on 19 July 2021 to discuss cooperation in the fertilizer sector.

Defence Cooperation continued to grow as INS Tabar visited Casablanca Port on 25 & 26 August 2021 as part of its ongoing goodwill visit. During the port call, INS Tabar also undertook a Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with the Royal Moroccan Navy. A 04-member Defence delegation from Morocco visited India

from 13-21 August 2021. The delegation held meetings with the Ministry of Defence, visited Bharat Dynamics Limited facility and had interactions with industries in the Defence sector.

Despite restrictions due to the COVID pandemic, efforts to boost bilateral trade were undertaken through Virtual Buyer-Seller meetings with participation of agricultural exporters from India and webinars focused on sectors such as gems & jewellery.

Specialized e-ITEC training programmes on Big Data Technologies and Machine Learning with Python Programming were organized exclusively for Moroccan participants during the year.

Palestine

Momentum of high-level interaction between India and Palestine continued during the year. On 02 November 2021, Prime Minister met with the Palestinian Prime Minister on the sidelines of COP-26 in Glasgow. EAM met with Palestinian Foreign Minister, Dr. Riad Malki, in Doha on 16 June 2021.

A Quick Impact Project (QIP) of "Rehabilitation of Yasser Arafat Square" in Ramallah at a cost of USD 50,000 was inaugurated on 25 October 2021. Another QIP for "Integrating Technology into Education" signed with Young Scientists Club (Al-Muntada) for setting up smart boards in 8 Schools at a cost of USD 46,960 was completed in June 2021.

Foundation Stone of the India-Palestine Centre for Empowering Women - 'TURATHI', was laid on 07 September 2021 in Ramallah in the presence of the Palestinian Prime Minister. The project will lead to establishment of a centre in Ramallah and one in Gaza with a total grant outlay of USD 500,000. The project was announced by Prime Minister during

his visit to Palestine in February 2018.

A Palestinian Dabkeh Dance Troupe participated in the National Tribal Dance Festival in Raipur, Chhattisgarh from 28-30 October 2021.

Somalia

India contributed USD 1 million to the United Nations Trust Fund in support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in April 2021.

Foreign Secretary presided over adoption of mandate extension of United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) on 30 August 2021 during India's month of presidency at UNSC.

Somali Government thanked India for the delivery of 27 mini-buses as a gift from India for use by its Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation. Training of Somali mechanics for maintenance of these buses will be conducted in India in January 2022.

25 Somali students participated in e-ITEC programme and 13 were sent to India on ICCR's Africa Scholarship Scheme during the year.



Foreign Secretary presided over mandate extension of UNSC resolution on UNSOM in August 2021

South Sudan

India-South Sudan bilateral relations got a fillip with the landmark visit of MoS (VM) to Juba on 20-22 October 2021. During his meetings with the President, First Vice President, Foreign Minister and Parliamentary Affairs Minister of South Sudan, all aspects of existing relations were reviewed and new

avenues of cooperation were explored.

As part of COVID pandemic assistance, the Government of India gifted 06 Metric Tons of life-saving essential medicines to South Sudan in April 2021.



MoS (VM) called on the President of South Sudan during his official visit to the country in October 2021

Sudan

MoS (VM) visited Sudan on 18 & 19 October, 2021. During the visit, he held discussions with the Foreign Minister of Sudan, Dr. Mariam Al-Sadig Al-Mahdi, and reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations. He also called on the Prime Minister of Sudan Dr. Abdallah Hamdok and the Head of Transitional Sovereignty Council, General Abdel Fatah

Al Burhan Abdel Rahman. MoS (VM) interacted with Sudan Business Community on strengthening bilateral trade and commerce ties and called upon them to participate in India's growth story. He also interacted with a large section of the Indian community during the visit.



MoS (VM) met Foreign Minister of Sudan Dr. Mariam Al-Sadig Al-Mahdi, during his visit in October 2021

EAM and the Sudanese Foreign Minister held a telecon on 27 August 2021 to discuss bilateral relations.

INS Tabar participated in a Maritime Exercise (PASSEX) with Sudanese Navy ships in the Sudanese territorial waters off the Red Sea coast of Sudan on 10 September 2021.

A consignment of 13 life-saving essential medicines (5903 kg) was donated by the Government of India to Sudan on 19 April 2021.

A Letter of Intent on cooperation in exchange of ideas, information, personnel, skills, capacity building and regulatory experience was signed between Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and Telecommunication and Post Regulatory Authority (TPRA) of Sudan during a virtual meeting on 06 April 2021. TRAI organized a virtual Capacity Building Programme from 20-24 September 2021 for TPRA officers.

On the request of National Information Center (NIC) of Sudan, a virtual meeting between it and Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) was held on 23 August 2021 to understand the Unique Identification Number, Aadhaar project of India.

Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances, Government of India and the National Information Centre of Sudan organized a webinar on sharing 'India's experiences in e-Governance' on 02 September 2021. The webinar was inaugurated by Minister of Communication & Digital Transformation of Sudan.

A 10-member Folklore troupe and 05 artisans from Sudan will participate in 35th edition of Annual Surajkund International Crafts Mela scheduled to be held from 04-20 February 2022

Syria

The two countries maintained regular bilateral contacts and consultations, despite the ongoing crisis and outbreak of the COVID pandemic. EAM met with the Foreign Minister of Syria,

Mr. Fayssal Mekdad on the margins of UN General Assembly in September 2021 and discussed the entire gamut of bilateral relations.

India has been extending technical assistance, grants, humanitarian aid, scholarships to Syria under flagship programmes of Government of India including ITEC, Study in India Programme, Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), AYUSH, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations

(ICCR) and projects under grants and Developmental Cooperation. During 2021-22, as a special gesture of friendship, slots under ICCR scholarships were increased from 25 to 76 and all the slots were utilised by the Syrian students.



EAM with the Foreign Minister of Syria, Fayssal Mekdad, on the margins of UNGA, September 2021

In response to a request from the Government of Syria for emergency humanitarian assistance, Government of India sent 2000 MT of rice to strengthen food security in Syria during February & March 2021.

The NextGen Centre of Excellence in Information Technology set up by India under grant was virtually inaugurated and handed over on behalf of people and Government of India by MoS (VM) to Minister of Communications and Technology, Government of Syrian Arab Republic on 20 October 2021.

Tunisia

On bilateral front, our engagement was marked by the holding of the 4th round of Foreign Office Consultations, held virtually on 30 April 2021, led by Secretary (CPV&OIA) on the Indian side and the Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Migration, and Tunisians Abroad from the Tunisian side.

On 14 October 2021, Tunisia signed the International Solar Alliance amended Framework Agreement.

As part of our development assistance to Tunisia, 03 Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) were sanctioned in June 2021 for i) Landscaping and beautification of the park in Jandouba University in Jandouba Governorate ii) Creation of a play area in Mrghema School in Jandouba; and (iii) Developing project of mini synthetic football ground for Raoued municipality in Ariana Governorate.

7

AFRICA

CENTRAL & WEST AFRICA

Angola

Relations with Angola gained further impetus during the year. Angola supported India's election to the UNSC's non-permanent seat for the period 2021-22. The Government of India extended a LoC of USD 100 million to the Government of Angola in May 2021 to boost defence capabilities and infrastructure. The 16th CII-Exim Bank India Africa Partnership saw participation of Mr. Helder Marcelino, Secretary of State for Tourism, Republic of Angola and Dr Mário Augusto Caetano João, Secretary of State of Economy of Angola. H.E. João Lourenço, President of Angola inaugurated Sourimo Diamond hub housing Indian diamond polishing factories. Buyer- Seller Meet in cooperation with Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) was organised on 14 June to promote cooperation in the agriculture sector. The shipment of the first batch of Made in India COVID vaccines (Covishield), arrived in Luanda in March 2021 under Covax initiative. Mission successfully

organised the 7th International Day of Yoga in Luanda on 19 June 2021 which was inaugurated by H.E Jomo Fortunato, Culture & Environment Minister of Angola. Various events including social donation camp, blood donation camp, beach cleaning drive, National Ayurveda Day were organized to celebrate the ongoing Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM). India's bilateral trade with Angola is on an upward trajectory with our exports reaching USD 177 million and imports at USD 750 million during the period April-September 2021. The Mission organised the 6th Ayurveda Day on 05 November 2021, an interactive virtual conference on 09 November on 'India-Angola: Resetting trade partnership in the Post pandemic era' in hybrid mode in cooperation with Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) and a Webinar & B2B Session on 17 November on "Opportunities in Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals" in partnership with Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil).

Benin

India-Benin bilateral engagement gained in substance with the landmark State visit of the President of India to Benin in July 2019. Under MoU on Tele-medicine and Tele-education signed during the Presidential visit, Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) has delivered the equipment

in the Learning Center located in University of Abomey-Calavi (UAC) on May 2021. Bilateral trade during the period January to August 2021 rose by 30% to touch USD 521 million while Indian exports during the period rose impressively by 60% to touch USD 262 million. On July 2021, a Salt Farming Project

under the India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) framework in the Republic of Benin was announced. During the year, the Beninese defence forces were provided with various training programmes in India under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) as well as other platforms. Beninese officials continued to benefit from the ITEC programme,

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarships, as well as scholarships under the e-VBAB Network project. In March 2021, India sent a consignment of 1,44,000 doses of Covishield vaccine from the Serum Institute of India (SII), under the Covax scheme of GAVI. It is the first consignment of COVID vaccines to reach the Republic of Benin.

Burkina Faso

India and Burkina Faso have warm and cordial bilateral relations. India contributed USD 1 million towards UNDP supported "Programme of Improving Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas in the Mouhoun and Center-West Regions of Burkina Faso in August, 2021. Ambassador visited Niangda,

Pao on 03 August, 2021 to attend the inaugural ceremony of Niangda Dam of the above UNDP project. Mission organised several activities to mark 75 years of India's independence (India @ 75) 'Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav' including a Photo Gallery displaying photographs of Freedom Fighters.

Cabo Verde

India-Cabo Verde bilateral trade increased slightly to USD 5.35 million. To improve the trade interaction between the business communities of India and Cabo Verde, and to explore new avenues of bilateral trade, Mission regularly organized online seminars to promote bilateral trade on various sectors, such as Food Processing, Electrical Machinery, Auto Components, Defence sector, etc. which were well attended.

ICCR has allocated and approved 2 slots for the Africa Scholarship to Cabo Verde. ITEC Day was celebrated on 11 September 2020. A series of events were organized, both online and onsite as part of ongoing celebrations commemorating 75 years of India's Independence.

Cameroon

With establishment of the Indian Resident Mission in Yaounde in September, 2019, our relations with Cameroon have increased multi-fold. Cameroon supported India's candidature for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for the term 2021-2022, India's candidature for International Law Commission (ILC) and ACABQ and to the Post of President of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) for the period 2020-22. The two-way trade, which stood at USD 481.54 million during 2020-21, decreased by 46% as compared to 2019-20 due to COVID pandemic.

Construction of 225 kV Nkongsamba-Bafoussam and Yaounde-AbongMbang Transmission Line along with associated sub-station in Cameroon (USD 93.50 million), extended to the Government of the Republic of Cameroon under Buyer's Credit National Export Insurance Account in February 2017, is expected to be completed on schedule in February 2022. The agreement with regard to the Cassava Plantation project under Government of India's LoC of USD 42 million was signed by the Cameroonian side with Indian parties (Tata Motors, BEML and TAFE) in February 2021.

Defence cooperation forms an important facet of our bilateral engagement. Till 31 October, the Cameroonian side has availed 25 Defence training slots out of 48 slots.

The Cameroonian Government has issued 3 Mahatma Gandhi stamps during the celebration of the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Mission celebrated International Yoga Day on 20 June 2021 which was attended by Mr. Felix Mbayu, Minister Delegate to the Minister of External Relations & in charge of cooperation with the Commonwealth. Several activities under India @ 75-Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav have been organised by the Mission which include Webinar on India's tourism potential, photo exhibition of Freedom Fighters of India, online essay competition on Freedom Fighters of India, Indian Food Festival, Illumination of Chancery premises, quiz on India's history and developments, photo exhibition depicting India's developments etc. The Cameroonian Government has also agreed, in principle, to issue a Joint Commemorative Stamp to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

Central African Republic

Bilateral relations between India and the Central African Republic continued to remain upbeat. The Central African Republic continued its support to India's candidature at various international forums. Process is underway to revive two stalled projects under the Government of India LoC, namely, setting up a cement plant of 400 TPD capacity (USD 29.95 million) and Development of Mining Project (USD 20 million). Despite challenges posed by the pandemic,

substantial economic partnership continues to drive bilateral trade. During the period between April-August 2021, bilateral trade amounted to USD 7.08 million. India continued to provide capacity building support to the country, notably under India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) and ITEC capacity building programmes including e-ITEC programs.

Chad

India's bilateral relations with Chad has gained momentum following the visit of the Prime Minister of Chad, Pahimi Padacke Albert, to India in March 2018 and opening of its resident Mission in New Delhi in early 2020. India is likely to open its Resident Mission in Chad shortly. Though Bilateral trade during the period January to August 2021 decreased

due to COVID pandemic, Indian exports grew by 6% to touch USD 19 million. India continued to offer slots to Chadian officials under ITEC programme, including ICCR scholarships to pursue various courses in India. Chadian nationals are regularly attending Hindi language courses in Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra.

Cote d'Ivoire

India's engagement with the Cote d'Ivoire government intensified with focus on strengthening business linkages for trade and investment. India and Cote d'Ivoire held the First Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) on 29 March 2021 in Abidjan. Secretary (ER) in the Ministry and Mr. Daouda Diabate, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, co-chaired the FOC.

India and Cote d'Ivoire continued to work in close collaboration at the United Nations and various multilateral fora, including supporting each other's candidatures to various UN and international bodies.

Bilateral trade between India and Cote d'Ivoire for the period April to September 2021 was USD 547 million. 100 ITEC Training slots and 7 ICCR scholarships are offered to Cote d'Ivoire which are being utilized satisfactorily each year.

To mark 75 years of India's independence and as part of AKAM, the Mission has been organising various events under COVID restrictions. These events include, a series of free medical camps and donation of lifesaving drugs to the public hospitals in Bonoua (on 14 August 2021), Adzope (on 11 September 2021) and Dabou (on 02 October 2021). Medical camps in other parts of the country (Anayama and Yopougou) are also scheduled to be held in November and December 2021.

MoS (VM) interacted with the Indian Community in Cote d'Ivoire on 08 December 2021 virtually. To mark 75 years of India's independence and as part of AKAM, the Mission will celebrate a special AKAM week during 21-26 January 2021 which would inter alia include an India@75 Car Rally of Indian Tata cars from Abidjan to Yamoussoukro, 4th India Cote d'Ivoire Business Forum, a gala Cultural event and a Reception.

Democratic Republic Of Congo

Relations with Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) remained cordial during the year. MoS (VM) had a telephonic conversation with Mr. Christophe Lutundula, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs on 13 September 2021.

Jean-Lucien Bussa Tongba, Minister of External Trade, participated in the India Africa Conclave on 14 July 2021.

DRC continued its support to India's candidature at various international forums.

Work on the Power Distribution Project worth USD 34.50 million for evacuating power from the Kakobola Hydropower project in the Bandundu Province is underway and is projected to be completed in 2022.

India continues to provide capacity building support to the country, notably ICCR scholarships and ITEC capacity building

programmes. e-Vidya Bharti and e-Arogya Bharti (e-VBAB) acted as digital bridges between two countries.

India contributed 1858 military personnel and 139 police personnel for peacekeeping purposes to MONUSCO (UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC) during 2021-22.

Despite challenges posed by the pandemic, substantial economic partnership continues to drive bilateral trade. During the period between April-August 2021, bilateral trade amounted to USD 240.72 million with India's exports amounting to USD 236.02 million and India importing goods worth USD 4.7 million. India continues to be a major health tourism destination for Congolese, while DR Congo has over 10000 Indian nationals in managerial and expert-level positions.

Mission is celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahatosav wherein various events were celebrated year long.

Equatorial Guinea

India's bilateral relations with Equatorial Guinea maintained momentum and continuity despite the ongoing challenges posed by the COVID pandemic. During Equatorial Guinea's Vice-President Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue's visit to India to attend Aero India 2021, a memorandum of understanding for cooperation in the defence sector was signed with the Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL). The BEL

Team comprising of four members visited Equatorial Guinea for the site survey, and held technical discussions with the EG team led by Mr. Candido Ncogo Engono Nchama, Vice-Minister of Defence of Equatorial Guinea.

EG's Health Minister Mr. Diosdado Vicente Nsue Milang and Vice-Minister of Industry and Energy, Mr. César Augusto

Hinestrosa Gómez participated in the 16th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on the India-Africa Project Association as panelists in the special ministerial sessions. Equatorial Guinea's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and Ministry of AYUSH, held a virtual meeting to discuss the way forward for the MoU on cooperation on Traditional Medicine earlier signed by both the countries.

The EAM wrote a letter to Equatorial Guinea's Foreign Minister Mr. Simeón Oyono Esono Angue, conveying his sincere and heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of Bata explosions. India dispatched 6 tonnes-consignment of relief material to the victims of the explosions. Mission also provided humanitarian aid of 2000 kg of Indian rice and other food materials to the victims. The proposal for the setting-up of the Artificial Limb Fitment Camp in Equatorial Guinea has been approved by the Government of India. It would be a valuable humanitarian assistance to Equatorial Guinea, especially for the victims of explosions.

The bilateral trade and other commercial activities picked-up during 2021-22, in comparison to last year's decline due to COVID pandemic. Bilateral trade has already surpassed last year's trade volume in the first six months of the year 2021-22 itself. Under development partnership, India offered 33 slots to Equatoguineans under ITEC and ICCR scholarship programmes. Participants from Equatorial Guinea's Defense Ministry and Commerce Ministry attended online courses under e-ITEC programme.

The Mission organised the 7th International Yoga Day in Malabo on 21 June 2020 and continues to organize various other events in the run up to 75 years of India's Independence, on the theme of "Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav". (Picture: International Day of Yoga 2021 celebrations at Embassy of India, Malabo).

Equatorial Guinea's delegation led by EG Vice-President Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue will attend the 12th edition of Def-Expo 2022 at Gandhinagar, Gujarat in March 2022.

Gabon

Bilateral relations, both political and economic, remained cordial with Gabon during the year. Gabon continued its support to India's candidature at various international forums.

In the last few years, more than twenty-five Indian companies have been granted licenses to set up units in Gabon's Special Economic Zones (SEZ). A majority of the Indian companies are working in the area of veneer manufacturing.

Despite challenges posed by the pandemic, substantial economic partnership continues to drive bilateral trade.

During the period between April-August 2021, bilateral trade amounted to USD 590.36 million with India's exports amounting to USD 19.95 million and India importing goods worth USD 570.41 million.

India continues to provide capacity building support to the country, notably ICCR scholarships and ITEC capacity building programmes including e-ITEC programs.

Mission is celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav wherein various events were celebrated year long.

Ghana

India's relationship with Ghana continued to prosper despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID pandemic.

The 2nd FOC held on 02 July 2021 in Accra co-chaired by Secretary (ER) and Ghanaian Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Kwaku Ampratwum-Sarpong which gave further impetus to the existing relations and an important opportunity to revisit many areas of cooperation and discuss new areas to strengthen the relations further. During FOC, an MoU between India's Global Center for Nuclear Energy Partnership & Ghana Atomic Energy Commission was also signed.

The Agreement on Exemption of Visas for diplomatic and official passport holders entered into force on 01 June 2021. An Inter-Governmental Agreement on the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy was signed by the two countries in September 2021.

India supported Ghana in the fight against COVID by giving 50,000 Covishield vaccines as a grant and also supplied 6,00,000 'Made in India' vaccines under Covax initiative. Ghana supported India's candidacy for various elections in international organisations.

Bilateral trade continued to grow despite pandemic disruption and recorded USD 1,377.26 million for the period April-September 2021. Ghanaian Ministers participated in many virtual business events held in India. In July, the 16th edition of CII-EXIM Bank Conclave 2021 was attended by the Minister of Trade and Industry, Deputy Minister of Energy, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration and Deputy Minister of Railways. In August, the Ghanaian Minister of Energy participated in the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Regional Ministerial Meeting for the Africa Region. In September, the Minister of Agriculture participated in the CII India Africa Agriculture & Food Processing Summit. In October, the Minister of Education was represented in the CII India-Africa Higher Education & Skill Development Summit. The Ghanaian Minister of Communication and Digitisation participated in the India-Africa ICT Expo & Conference held virtually in October 2021. Ghanaian Women Entrepreneurs participated in the India-Ghana Business & Trade Conclave for Women Entrepreneurs organised by FICCI and UN Ghana. During this year, the High Commission also organized India-Ghana Business Conferences in Ashanti, Northern, Savannah, Upper East and Upper West Regions of Ghana.

India's developmental partnership with Ghana continued. Three LoCs, viz., USD 150 million for Strengthening of Agriculture Mechanisation Service Centres in Ghana, USD 30 million for Rehabilitation & Upgradation of Portable Water System in Yendi and USD 7 million for construction of Foreign Service Institute are currently under implementation.

India continued to offer educational, training and capacity building opportunities in various fields through ITEC and ICCR Scholarships. For 2021-22, Ghana Armed Forces were allocated 86 slots under ITEC for various training programmes in India which Ghana continued to avail. Similarly, for 2021-22, 35 ICCR scholarships were allocated to Ghanaian students for pursuing undergraduate, post-graduate and PhD courses in various Indian universities which have been fully utilized. Under the e-VBAB Network Project, more than 600 students from Ghana have already enrolled for the tele-education post graduate/under graduate courses. The High Commission celebrated India-Ghana Partnership Day on 21 May 2021 in which Defence/ ITEC/ ICCR alumni participated.

During the year, High Commission donated books to various Ghanaian universities like Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, Bolgatanga Technical University, SD Dombo University of Business & Integrated Development Studies, Hilla Liman Technical University, University of

Development Studies and 'India Corner' was established in all these universities.

The 7th International Day of Yoga was organised by the Mission on 19 June with live streamed on social media. Ghanaian Minister of Health addressed the UBUNTU International Yoga Conference being organised by ICCR and the Ministry of Ayush from 21-22 June.

On 02 October 2021, the High Commission celebrated Gandhi Jayanti with Non-Violence Walk and floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi Statue at India-Ghana Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT in which Ghanaians in general, authorities, media, diplomatic corps members and Indian community participated enthusiastically.

Under AKAM (India @ 75), the Mission organised several events including India-Ghana Defence Partnership Day, Ayurveda Day, Inaugural Lecture of India Ghana Dialogue on "Being Democracies". The Mission is planning to organise World Hindi Diwas, Pravasi Bhartiya Divas, India Business Forum: Strengthening Indian Business, Study in India Fair, Joint Trade Commission's meeting in February 2022 and India Ghana Dialogue on "Gender Bias" during the period January-March, 2022.

Guinea Bissau

Secretary (ER) visited Guinea Bissau on 05-06 July 2021, when he called on the President Umaro Sissoco Embaló, Deputy Prime Minister Soares Sambú, and held delegation level discussions with Ms UdéFati, Secretary of State for international cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

India-Guinea-Bissau bilateral trade remained steady at USD 145 million, marginally increasing over the previous year. Mission regularly organized online seminars to promote bilateral trade in various sectors, such as Food Processing, Electrical Machinery, Auto Components, Defence sector, etc, which were well attended and helped explore new avenues of

cooperation.

ITEC Day was celebrated on 11 September 2020. India also continued to offer a large number of slots to the Bissau-Guinean officials under ITEC programme including ICCR scholarships to pursue various courses in India.

The 7th International Day of Yoga 2021 was celebrated in June 2021. A series of events were organized, both online and onsite as part of ongoing celebrations commemorating 75 years of India's Independence.

Liberia

India and Liberia continued to enjoy warm and friendly relations although no high-level visits took place during the year. With establishment of Indian Resident Mission in Monrovia in May 2021, the bilateral relations between both the countries have been further strengthened. Liberia has been supportive of India's position at the international fora and India's candidacies for various elections including India's candidature for the non-permanent membership at the United Nations Security Council for the term 2021-22.

India gifted 4.2 tons of life saving drugs to Liberia to aid in its fight against the COVID pandemic. A significant bilateral cooperation project has been the completion of the 14-military

hospital which is being used as the only COVID hospital. The Government of India had contributed USD 2 million as grant for the construction of the 14-military hospital, the only COVID hospital in the country. India gifted 45 TATA passenger buses and 5 Ashok Leyland fire trucks.

India offers 70 ITEC slots and 10 ICCR scholarship to Liberia annually which are being utilized satisfactorily.

The First Resident Ambassador of India to Liberia presented his credentials to President of Republic of Liberia on 26 November 2021.

Mali

India's relationship with Mali continued to strengthen in spite of the challenges posed by COVID pandemic.

The President and EAM greeted their Malian counterparts, President of the Transition and Head of State Colonel Assimi Goïta and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Mr. Abdoulaye Diop respectively, on Mali's Independence Day on 22 September 2021. They reiterated India's commitment to further strengthen bilateral relations.

An important infrastructure project in Mali under India's LoC of USD 100 million, the construction of 393 km of 225 Kilowatt Double Circuit Power Transmission Line connecting Sikasso to Mali's capital Bamako, is under full swing despite difficulties caused by COVID pandemic. This project is expected to be completed by the middle of 2022.

India continued to offer educational, training and capacity building opportunities in various fields through its e-ITEC programme and ICCR scholarships in India. For the year 2021-22, 9 slots of ICCR's Africa Scholarship Scheme for higher studies in India have been utilized by Malian students. Work is underway for the operationalization of tele-education courses in various disciplines for Malian students under e-Vidya Bharati and e-Aarogya Bharati (e-VBAB) Network Project which is fully funded by the Government of India.

The bilateral trade continued to grow during 2020-21 and stood at USD 200.94 million.

India's Deputy Permanent Representative at the United Nations in New York, was a part of UNSC delegation that visited Mali from 23-24 October 2021 in connection with Mali's political transition and preparations for forthcoming legislative and presidential elections.

Lamine Seydou Traoré, Mali's Minister of Mine, Energy and Water co-chaired the online Regional Ministerial Meeting of

International Solar Alliance (ISA) on 26 August 2021.

As part of AKAM, multiple events were held across Mali. Indian music and dance featured at Le Festival International de DÔ from 02-04 April 2021 at Garana. A day-long event that included seminars and cultural performances was held in the city of Ségou on 29 May 2021. An India-Mali Cultural Evening in Bamako, held on 10 July 2021, was shown live on Malian TV Channel Tele Frequence Santé. In association with "Association des Elèves Resortissants de l'école Doumanani et Sympatisants (AEREDS)", the Mission organized a marathon for the youth in the southern Sikasso region of Mali on 22 September 2021.

On the occasion of 75th Independence Day of India on 15 August 2021, the Tour d'Afrique, one of the iconic monuments of Bamako along with the Chancery building, was illuminated in Indian Tricolour. As part of the ongoing AKAM in Mali, India participated in multiple events in different cities of Mali, including at "Le Carnaval de Sikasso" (01-05 December 2021) in the southern Malian city of Sikasso where India was the sole guest country. India also partnered with local sports associations to promote India-Mali friendship, fitness and the spirit of sportsmanship among the youth, including through Cricket matches between Indians and Malians (07 December 2021) and basketball training camp for school children (10-12 December 2021).

'Cheickne Sissoko 5Tamans', a 10-member versatile music and dance troupe of Mali, participated at the National Tribal Dance Festival at Raipur from 28-30 October 2021 at the invitation of the Government of Chhattisgarh, India.

India and Mali continued to work closely at the United Nations and various multilateral fora, including supporting each other's candidatures to various UN and international bodies.

Mauritania

India and Mauritania continued to work closely despite the challenges posed by COVID pandemic.

In a major boost to bilateral relationship, India opened its resident Mission in Nouakchott in June 2021.

Covishield, the made-in-India COVID vaccines, reached Mauritania on 14 April 2021 through the Covax arrangement.

The total bilateral trade in 2020-21 stood at USD 94.41 million.

India and Mauritania continued to work closely at the multilateral fora and supported each others candidatures to various UN and international bodies.

Niger

India and Niger continued to engage with each other despite the challenges presented by the COVID pandemic.

The President, Prime Minister and EAM sent congratulatory letters to their new counterparts in Niger on assumption of their offices in April 2021, reiterating the desire to work together and explore avenues of enhancing the existing

bilateral cooperation further.

India and Niger maintained close cooperation at the United Nations and other international fora. India and Niger worked together as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council in the year 2021. Both countries have supported each other's initiatives in the Security Council and their

candidatures in other UN and International bodies.

Niger participated in the 16th CII-Exim Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership during 13-15 July 2021, the second edition of the India-Africa Higher Education and Skill Development Summit on 21 & 22 October 2021, the Regional Committee and Assembly meetings of the ISA in August and October 2021 respectively and in several other events conducted online in India.

The bilateral trade between India and Niger in 2020-21 was USD 91.15 million, registering an increase of 22.35% over the previous year.

The development assistance projects in Niger made good progress. The solar electrification of 40 villages under the unutilized USD 7.69 million available from an earlier LoC of USD 34.54 million has been nearly completed. The capacity addition of 1Mw to the 7Mw Malbaza solar power plant commissioned earlier under the same LoC is ongoing. A Solar Rural Electrification Project covering 50 villages in the regions of Dosso, Tillabery and Tahoua in Niger at a cost of USD 10 million and funded through an LoC extended to ECOWAS Bank for Investment & Development (EBID) is under implementation. A new LoC of USD 56.70 million for upgradation and extension of potable water supply networks in the capital cities of Maradi, Dosso and Diffa region, funded through an LoC extended to EBID, has been approved. A grant assistance of USD 50,000 from International Solar Alliance (ISA) for solar electrification of 10 maternity hospitals in Niger has also been approved for implementation.

Two additional projects viz. electrification of resettlement

sites and upgrading of Power Distribution Network of the areas affected by the construction of the Kandadji Dam, worth USD 10.5 million, and an Agriculture Irrigation Project for the Resettlement sites of the Kandadji Dam amounting to USD 14.6 million have been allocated to Niger out of the USD 500 million LoC extended to EBID. These project proposals are being assessed for formal approval.

India donated 25,000 doses of Covishield vaccines to support the management of COVID pandemic in Niger. India has offered technical assistance in implementing the Co-Win platform in managing Niger's vaccination programme. Niger is participating in the online India-Africa Hackathon proposed by India for developing innovative digital solutions to various developmental challenges.

India continued its support to Niger in providing educational and capacity building opportunities in diverse disciplines through the ITEC programme which was conducted entirely online during the pandemic period in 2021-22. Three Defence training slots under ITEC have been utilised by Niger in 2021-22. Five Nigerien students received ICCR scholarships for pursuance of higher studies in India in the year 2021-22.

Mission celebrated the 7th International Day of Yoga at three prominent locations in Niamey in June 2021. Mission organised a cultural event featuring Nigerien artist's rendering Hindi songs on 21 August 2021 as part of the 75th Independence Day celebrations.

The Defence Minister of Niger, Mr. Alkassoum Indatou, is expected to attend Defence Expo-2022, in March 2022.

Nigeria

India and Nigeria enjoy warm, friendly, and deep-rooted bilateral relations. Both countries were in the forefront of international anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggle and closely collaborated in various international fora. High-Level engagements continued to impart momentum to the bilateral relations. EAM held a telephone conversation twice in April 2021 with his Nigerian counterpart Geoffrey Onyeama. They discussed a range of current issues in world politics, and cooperation in multilateral fora including WTO. In October 2021, during her visit to India, Dr. Ngozi, DG, WTO called on Prime Minister. She also met EAM and the Commerce & Industry Minister. Nigerian delegation led by National Security Adviser of Nigeria Major General (Retd.) Babagana Monguno visited New Delhi for the First Strategic and Counter-Terrorism Dialogue between India and Nigeria at the level of NSA in March 2021. In October 2021, a 25 member delegation from National Institute for Security Studies (NISS) visited India as a part of their study tour, during this visit they have called on Deputy NSA and also had interaction with SIDM and CII. Our partnership with Nigeria has expanded in all aspects including new avenues such as cooperation in ship design and construction, defence research & development, maritime training etc. India also continued to offer a large number of slots to Nigerian officials under ITEC programme, including ICCR scholarships to pursue various courses in India.

As the adverse effects of the pandemic continued to wane, bilateral trade for the period April-August 2021 witnessed a steep recovery of 96% to touch USD 5.5 billion with Indian exports growing by 117% to reach nearly USD 2 billion. Supplies of Indian mineral oils, pharmaceuticals (including Vaccines), vehicles and textiles continued to rise while more than 16 online business interactions/ B2B meetings were held till October 2021 between major Indian Chambers such as Engineering Export Promotion Control of India (EEPC), Electronics & Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC), Federation of Indian Exports Organisations (FIEO), International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Progress Harmony Development Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) etc. and Nigeria Stakeholders, which helped to propel the momentum in economic and commercial relations. On 15 July 2021, Nigeria's Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Mr. Richard Adebayo, participated virtually in the Ministerial Session of the 16th CII-EXIM bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership. On 07 October 2021, Nigerian Minister for Communication and Digital Economy, Dr Isa Ali Pantami, participated virtually in the Startup India Week organized by ICC Kolkata. More than 135 Indian companies are currently operating in Nigeria in diverse fields including in Telecom, Mining, Oil and Gas, Automotive, Pharmaceuticals, Financial Services and retail.

India's defence engagement has also seen furthering and diversifying cooperation during the year. A nine members high level Defence Scoping delegation led by the Military Adviser, National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) visited Nigeria from 13-17 September 2021. Defence Scoping delegation comprised of the three wings of military, NSCS, Ministry of Defence, the Ministry and representatives of Defence industries of India. In March 2021, Chief of Army Staff of India (COAS) and Chief of Army Staff of Nigeria held a first ever telephonic conversation. In September 2021, Commandant Army War College Nigeria (AWCN) led a delegation to visit Army War College, Mhow. In August 2021, Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) conducted a 2 week capsule on Ship Design and Architecture for Nigerian Navy personnel at GSL, Goa. The Chief of Naval Engineering (CONE), Nigerian Navy also visited GSL during the period. In August 2021, DG Defence Research and Development Bureau (DRDB) led a delegation to visit DRDO and IRDE in connection with ongoing joint development of an IED detector. In June 2021, High Commissioner attended the commissioning event of Nigeria's special Maritime Security Infrastructure project (known as the Deep Blue Project) at Lagos. MoU between Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Nigerian Army for conduct of the flying training of 1st batch of 06x Nigerian Army Aviation pilots was signed virtually in April 2021 and the training commenced in July 2021. In April 2021, the Indian Army Mobile Training Team (IAMTT) completed its three months deployment in Nigeria and returned back after having trained approx. 200 Nigerian Army personnel in CI/CT operations. A Nigerian Defense delegation comprising military, R&D & industry representatives led by AVM Charles Oghomwen, Chief of Defense Policy & Plans, Defense HQ, participated in the Aero India show in Bangalore in February 2021. During 2021-22 total 143 Defence ITEC slots were offered for Nigeria, out of which 28 were utilised (October 2021).

On 26 October 2021, a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) on 'Cyber Security' was signed between Computer Emergency Response Team of India (CERT-In) and Nigerian Computer Emergency Response Team (Ng-CERT). COAS, Indian Army had a telephonic call with his Nigerian counterpart. Minister of Defence of Nigeria has confirmed his participation in DefExpo 2022. The other proposed visits during the period January-March 2021 include visit of the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency. The MoU on Hydrography between the two MoDs and MoU between NDC, New Delhi and NDC, Abuja are likely to be signed. As a part of youth exchange programme, 10 Member team of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) of Nigeria will

participate in Republic Day Parade 2022.

On 2 March 2021, Government of India supplied a consignment of 3.92 million doses of Covishield vaccine from the Serum Institute of India (SII), under the Covax scheme of GAVI to Nigeria. The Covishield vaccine is the first COVID vaccine approved by NAFDAC. In addition, India also gifted 100,000 doses of Covishield vaccines to Nigeria on 26 March 21.

The Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria and TCIL signed the e-VBAB MoU in September 2021. Under this MoU, India has offered free tele-education to 15000 students and free tele-medicine to 1000 doctors and paramedics. In the year 2021-22, the Indian Council of Cultural relations (ICCR) offered 20 scholarships under the "ICCR Africa Scholarship Scheme" for Nigerian nationals to pursue under-graduate, post-graduate, and higher courses in India. In 2021-22 total 102 civilian training programs have been utilized by Nigeria under e-ITEC (till October 21). Around 1500+ Nigerian students got admitted in various Indian universities under Study in India (SII) programme.

The Indian community in Nigeria is estimated to be about 50,000 persons - about 45,000 Indian nationals and about 5,000 OCIs. MoS (VM) virtually interacted with the Indian community in Nigeria in June 2021. Mission in coordination with Nigerian Security Forces assisted in the safe release of (i) Mr Satendra Bhimlesh on 30 April 2021, who was kidnapped by gunmen on 18 April 2021 from a marble grating factory in Abuja and (ii) Mr Pankaj Kumar, seafarer on 29 October 2021, who was kidnapped by pirates from ship MV Tampen on 05 September 2021 in Gabon and brought to Nigeria. Mission is also rendering consular assistance to 06 seafarers of ship MV Spar Scorpio, who are currently facing trial for alleged involvement in drugs being found on board the ship. In January 2021, the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (PBSA) was awarded to Indian Culture Association (ICA), Lagos, Nigeria. This is the first ever award for any individual or organization in Nigeria. A 10 members Afri Theater Artist group successfully participated in a 2nd National Tribal Festival in Raipur, Chhattisgarh from October 2021. ICCR cultural troupe Baba Gorenath Gotipua Dance Association visited Nigeria from 01-06 November 2021 and successfully performed in Abuja and Lagos. Mission organised the 7th International Day of Yoga in June 2021 and various events under the ongoing AKAM

Under AKAM Mission started gifting books on various subjects to 75 Schools/organisations.

Republic Of Congo

India and the Republic of Congo enjoy cordial and warm relations. India is an important development partner of the Republic Congo.

There are three projects under Government of India LoC being offered to Republic of Congo, which are under various stages of execution - (i) LoC of USD 55 million for Greenfield 600 TPD rotary kiln-based cement plant (ii) LoC of USD 70 million for Rural Electrification & (iii) LoC of USD 89.90 million for

Development of Urban Transportation System for the cities of Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire. India also continued to offer slots to Congolese nationals to pursue various courses in India under capacity building programmes.

This year as part of the AKAM celebrations, the Congolese side has given its approval for installation of the bust of Mahatma Gandhi at a prominent city square and naming of street after Mahatma Gandhi in the capital city of Brazzaville.

As part of the AKAM celebrations, Mission celebrated the 130th Birth Anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on 14 April, 2021, 7th International Day of Yoga in June 2021, Mahatma Gandhi Birth Anniversary celebrations on 02 October 2021, Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations on 31 October 2021

commemorating the Birth Anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Ayurveda Day on 02 November 2021, Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas on 18 November to commemorate the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda and Samvidhan Diwas (Constitution Day of India) event on 26 November.

Republic Of Guinea

Following the visit of Rashtrapatiji to Guinea in August 2019, the bilateral relations have received a big boost in strengthening its relations further. Three officials from the National Agency for Sanitary and Health Security (ANSS), an apex body in the Guinean Ministry of Health, Republic of Guinea participated in the Co-Win Global Conclave held virtually on 05 July 2021. For implementation of e-VBAB Network Project, TCIL supplied Computers, printers, TV, UPS, CCTV, etc. and installed them in the learning center at Gamal Abdel Nasser University Guinea. The Center was inaugurated on 27 July 2021.

Following a military coup d'etat, Col. Mamadi Doumbouya, the Coup leader and the Head of the National Committee for the Rally and Development (CNRD) seized the power and dissolved the Parliament (National Assembly), the Government and abolished the Constitution. Col. Mamadi Doumbouya took oath on 01 October 2021, as interim President and nominated Mr. Mohamed Béavogui as Prime Minister in the transitional government.

As part of AKAM, the Mission celebrated Diwali to promote India's rich cultural heritage, the Constitution Day and the Ayurveda day during the month of November.

Sao Tome & Principe

India and Sao Tome and Principe (STP) enjoy warm and friendly relations, which has been further boosted with the opening of Indian Resident Mission in Sao Tome in September 2020.

STP has consistently supported India in elections to numerous multilateral fora including India's membership to the Executive Council of UNESCO in 2017. STP has supported India to become a Permanent Member of an expanded UN Security Council. Both countries have signed a Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations.

India has been inducted into the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), an organization of Portuguese speaking countries, in July 2021, as an Associate Observer.

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and its counterpart agency, the General Regulatory Authority for Telecommunications AGER completed the process for the signing of the Implementation Agreement (IA) on the establishment of a telemetry earth station in STP. The IA, between ISRO and its counterpart agency, AGER, is expected to be signed during first quarter of 2022.

During the period, both countries deepened their cooperation

to tackle the COVID situation. STP initially sourced 26,000 vials of Made-in-India COVID vaccine, Covishield, through UNDP Sao Tome in June 2021. This was followed by a regular procurement arrangement to meet local demands. India donated medicines worth EUR 95,000 which were handed over to the Sao Tome Health Minister, Dr. Edgar Neves, on 04 June 2021.

As part of AKAM, Mission organized several events/activities including India's Independence Day celebration, Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, screening of Indian films, Introduction of India as a tourist destination, Rashtriya Ekta Diwas and 6th Ayurveda Day.

The Government of India has announced LoC for STP worth USD 15 million for development of SME, health and education sectors.

STP signed the Framework Agreement on ISA and ratified the same. Sao Tome and Principe became the 47th country to join the Government of India's Pan-African e-Network Project, E-Vidhya Bharati and E-Aarogya Bharati (E-VBAB), under the IAFS-I decision.

Senegal

Relations with Senegal continued to deepen and strengthen during the year. MoS (VM) visited Senegal from 04-05 November 2021, to co-chair the Third Meeting of India-Senegal Joint Commission with the Foreign Minister of Senegal.

During the visit, Minister of State also called on President Macky Sall. Two MoUs were signed during the visit: (i) MoU for cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine; and (ii) MoU for training of diplomats. MoS (VM) also met the Senegalese

Minister of Digital Economy and Telecommunications. A commemorative stamp, marking the celebrations of 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries was launched. MoS (VM) also interacted with the Indian community during his visit. A series of events were organized, both online and onsite as part of ongoing celebrations commemorating 75 years of India's Independence.

Secretary (ER) visited Guinea Bissau on 05-06 July 2021, and during his transit through Senegal, met with the Diplomatic

Advisor to the President of Senegal.

Mr. Dame Diop, Senegal's Minister of Employment, Vocational Training, Apprenticeships and Inclusion, joined the Inaugural Session of the CII: India-Africa Higher Education & Skill Development Summit, held virtually on 21 October 2021.

India-Senegal bilateral trade stood at USD 1.1 billion in 2020-21, showing an increase over the previous year, as rice exports from India increased substantially. Our Embassy in Dakar regularly organized online seminars to promote bilateral trade in various sectors, such as Food Processing, Electrical Machinery, Auto Components, Defence sector, etc.

which were well attended and helped explore new avenues of cooperation.

In development partnership, there are several projects under various stages of implementation including in the fields of lift Irrigation for Rice Self Sufficiency, Rural Electrification, cold storage for fisheries development, supply of buses for public transportation and digitization of healthcare sector.

India donated 25,000 doses of COVID vaccine, and also supplied 3,24,000 doses of made-in-India COVID vaccines under Covax facility to Senegal in March 2021.



MoS (VM) called on President of Senegal Macky Sall during his visit to Senegal in November 2021

Sierra Leone

With establishment of a resident Mission in Freetown in August 2020, India-Sierra Leone bilateral relations consolidated further during 2021-22.

The Prime Minister met the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Brig. Rtd. Julius Maada Wonie Bio, on the margins of COP26 at Glasgow on 01 November 2021 during which the two Leaders agreed on a visit by President Bio to India at a mutually convenient time.

The inaugural Foreign Office Consultation between India and Sierra Leone took place in Freetown on 25-26 March 2021 at which the Indian delegation was led by Secretary (ER) and the Sierra Leone side by Director General, Ms. Florence Bangalie. During the meeting, the two delegations reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral partnership and exchanged views of regional, international, and multilateral issues of interest. The Indian delegation also called on Brig. Rtd. Julius Maada Wonie Bio, President, and Ms. Nabeela Tunis, Foreign Minister.

The Learning Centre established at the Fourah Bay College,

University of Sierra Leone with India's assistance was inaugurated by Prof. Alpha Tejan Wurie, Minister of Technical & Higher Education, Republic of Sierra Leone, on 09 July 2021. More than 200 students registered under the eVBAB (eVidhya Bharati eAarogya Bharati) Programme are benefiting from the Centre's infrastructure meant for online education from select Indian Universities.

A number of special virtual training programmes were organised by various Indian institutions for Sierra Leonean officials during the year, including (i) a 2-week programme for Sierra Leonean diplomats by Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS); (ii) a 3-week programme under eITEC for Sierra Leone Civil Aviation Authority (SLCAA); and (iii) A 3-day programme under eITEC for the officials of Sierra Leone National Electoral Commission by India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM). A training programme in ICT and data management systems was organised for a 7-member technical team from the National Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone at IIIDEM in Delhi from

30 November to 10 December 2021.

India continued to be a major trading partner of Sierra Leone and ranked 5th in terms of imports by Sierra Leone. India's exports to Sierra Leone in 2020-21 reached USD 152.11 million, recording an increase of about 30% compared to 2019-20.

India included Sierra Leone as a beneficiary country under its Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme, available to Least Developed Countries (LDCs), through a Gazette Notification issued by the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue) on 22 October 2021. The Scheme provides duty free market access to the beneficiaries on about 98.2% of India's tariff lines.

The Gambia

MoS (VM) visited The Gambia from 01-02 November 2021. During the visit, MoS (VM) paid a courtesy call on the President of The Gambia, Mr. Adama Barrow; had one-to-one discussion with Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad, Dr. Mamadou Tangara; followed by delegation level talks; met the Speaker of the National Assembly; had an interactive meeting with the Indian community. He also visited and reviewed the implementation of various Indian LoC project sites in the country. Two Agreements were signed during the visit: General Framework Agreement for Cooperation which will enable the establishment of Joint Commission; and, visa waiver agreement for diplomatic and official passport holders. In addition, an announcement was made for re-purposing of the USD 500,000/- grant for purchase of 'Made-in-India' dialysis machines. Both sides also agreed to set up Joint Trade Committees to explore ways for deepening and widening bilateral trade. The Gambia released the design of a postal stamp in the context of ongoing celebrations commemorating 75 years of India's Independence. A series of events were organized, both online and onsite as part of ongoing celebrations commemorating 75 years of India's Independence.

An MoU was signed on 08 July 2021 between DARGP (Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India) and PSC (the Public Service

Commission, Office of the President of The Gambia) on promoting bilateral cooperation in personnel administration and governance reforms. The first meeting of the Joint Working Group under the rubric of this MoU was held in November 2021.

India-The Gambia bilateral trade stood at USD 168 million in 2020-21, roughly the same as in the previous year. Our Embassy in Dakar regularly organized online seminars to promote bilateral trade in various sectors, such as Food Processing, Electrical Machinery, Auto Components, Defence sector, etc. which were well attended and helped explore new avenues of cooperation.

In developmental partnership, two LoC projects continued to be implemented; these were: replacement of Asbestos Water Pipes with UPVC pipes and Electricity Expansion Project in Greater Banjul Area.

India supplied 36,000 doses of made-in-India COVID vaccines under Covax facility to The Gambia in March 2021.

ICCR approved 56 slots to The Gambia under ICCR Africa Scholarship for the year 2021-22 out of which 46 students/scholars have already travelled to India.

A Special Training Programme for 30 Gambian diplomats was organized at SSIFS, New Delhi from 14-27 November 2021.

Togo

With the establishment of the First Indian Resident Mission last year, the close friendly ties between India and Togo gained momentum.

Togo supported India's candidature for re-election to the Postal Operations Council (POC) and the council of Administration of the Universal Postal Union at the 27th Congress held on 27 August 2021 and India's candidature of Comptroller and Auditor General as the External Auditor of IAEA for which elections were held on 24 September 2021. India also supported Togolese candidature for the position of Director General of ILO.

Togolese Minister of Trade Mr. Adedze Kodjo led a five-member Togolese delegation in 16th CII-EXIM Bank Digital Conclave held virtually on 13-15 July 2021. Five experts from Togo participated in the Co-WIN Global Conclave held on 05 July. A five-member delegation from Togolese Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development took part in CII India-Africa Agriculture and Food Processing Summit held

virtually on 14-15 September 2021.

Trade between India and Togo amounted to USD 1,847 million in 2020-21, with India's exports to Togo at USD 1,547 million and imports from Togo at USD 300 million.

India and Togo signed an Agreement for USD 40 million LoC project to support rural electrification of 350 villages through photo-voltaic systems.

The Mission in partnership with Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC) organised a B2B meeting with Indian and Togolese companies in the software industry on 15-16 December 2021, two technical professors from Lomé University attended a virtual meeting on the India-Africa Hackathon on 13 December 2021 organised by the Ministry of Education. Minister of Higher Education and Research of Togo, Prof. Majesté Ihou Wateba, attended the first-ever ITEC Day celebrated by the Mission on 02 December 2021. The Mission in collaboration with APEDA

also organised a virtual business interaction on 01 October. 20 companies on both sides participated in the event and discussed opportunities for Indian exporters in non-Basmati rice. In collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology of India, the Mission organized an Interaction with CV Raman Fellowship alumni from University of Lomé TOGO. 12 Togolese researchers participated.

Ministry of Higher Education of Togo nominated a focal point to steer Togo's participation in the India-Africa Hackathon

International Yoga Day was first celebrated in Togo on 21

June with participation of about 100 members of the Indian Diaspora followed by celebrations of Hindi Diwas and Gandhi Jayanti

Several activities have been organised in Togo as part of AKAM including illuminating the prestigious Hotel, webinar, interaction with ITEC Alumni, cultural performances etc.

Mission donated two computers, 15 French-to-English dictionaries and some stationery items to an organisation run by Adviser to President and presented 16 bicycles to a school in Lama Kolide in partnership with the Steel Cube factory in Kara.

EAST & SOUTHERN AFRICA

Botswana

Dr. Erica Keabetswe Mogweetsi Masisi, President of Botswana, members of his cabinet and people of Botswana, welcomed and appreciated the donation of 30,000 doses of Covishield under 'Vaccine Maitri initiative of India' in March 2021.

Bilateral cooperation continued its upswing. India is one of the top importers of rough diamonds for beneficiation, and Botswana's global dominance of gem-quality diamond production ensured close collaboration. Both nations supported each other on international forums including the elections to organs of the United Nations. Botswana ratified the International Solar Alliance on 28 April 2021.

MoS (VM) and Minister of International Affairs & Cooperation of Botswana, Dr. Lemogang Kwape, held a successful virtual interaction on 17 June 2021.

The Minister of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration Mr. Kabo Morwaeng and Minister of Defence, Justice and Security, Mr. Kagiso Mmusi graced the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Day (ITEC) day celebrations on 25-26 September 2021. The Mayor of Francistown, Mr. Godisang Radisigo, joined the tree plantation ceremony on 16 August 2021 to celebrate 'India@75' along with Indian Diaspora.

The Vice President of Botswana, Mr. Slumber Tsogwane, led

the Botswana Delegation's participation in the 16th Edition of the Confederation of Indian Industry-Export Import Bank (CII-EXIM) Virtual Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership from 13-15 July 2021. Two Cabinet Ministers, Minister of Agricultural Development and Food Security, Mr. Karabo Socraat Gare, and Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. Edwin G. Dikoloti, also participated in thematic sessions.

The Minister of Tertiary Education, Research, Science and Technology, Dr. Douglas Letsholathebe, was the Guest of Honour at the Inaugural Session of the CII India-Africa Higher Education & Skill Development Summit held virtually on 21 October 2021.

Bilateral trade between the two countries was USD 634.41 million during 2020-21. It achieved to USD 411.43 million from April-August 2021, due to sustained recovery of Botswana's primary exports (rough diamonds).

Pravasi Bharatiya Samman 2021 was conferred on Mrs. Jamal Ahmad for her excellence in the field of Business. The Indian Origin Diaspora made significant contribution to the COVID relief measures executed by the Government of Botswana. 42 ICCR Scholarships (Under Graduate / Post Graduate / Research) were approved for the nationals of Botswana for the academic year 2021-2022.

Burundi

Under the Africa Scholarship Scheme of ICCR 2021-22, 6 scholarships were offered to Burundi which were all accepted,

and 3 Burundian students have already reported to their respective Universities in India for offline classes.

Eswatini

Government of India granted assistance of 20,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines to Eswatini.

Government of Eswatini signed the Framework Agreement for joining the International Solar Alliance. Ratification of the same by Eswatini Parliament is awaited.

Eswatini was included in the focus countries for the Study in India Programme of the Ministry of Education, Government of India, implemented by the Educational Consultants of India Limited (EdCIL).

Eswatini signed an MoU for participation in the e-VBAB Network Project, India's PAN-African initiative for providing

tele-education and tele-medicine services through virtual means, which is under process in India.

In September 2021, Exim Bank of India made the LoC Agreements effective for construction of a new Parliament Building at a cost of USD 108.28 million and for construction of the Disaster Recovery Site for the National Data Center of Royal Science & Technology Park of Eswatini at a cost of USD 10.40 million.

A 08-member Sibhaca dance troupe of Eswatini took part in the National Tribal Dance Festival 2021 held at Raipur,

Chhattisgarh during 28-30 October 2021.

The first meeting of the Joint Working Group of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Delhi and the Ministry of Health, Eswatini to implement the MoU for Health Cooperation was held in December 2021.

Out of the 08 Defence training slots under ITEC-I for the Training Year 2021-22, two trainees completed their training on 21 December 2021. Selection of 06 trainees is at various processing stages.

Ethiopia

EAM met Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister, Demeke Mekonnen, in New York (26 September 2021) and discussed bilateral relations as also the issue of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam and other developments in the region. Earlier (27 August 2021), EAM and Ethiopian Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister had telephonic conversation and inter alia discussed bilateral relations and UNSC matters including the developments in Ethiopia.

Ethiopian Minister of Trade, Melaku Alebel, participated in the CII-Exim Bank conclave (14 July 2021). CEO of Tourism Ethiopia participated in the segment on tourism and hospitality (15 July 2021). Ethiopian Agriculture Minister Oumer Hussein participated as Guest of Honour in the CII India Africa Agriculture & Food Processing Summit (15 September 2021).

Ethiopian Minister for Women and Social Affairs, Dr. Ergogie Tesfaye Woldemeskel, was conferred the ICCR Distinguished Alumni Award-2021 (26 August 2021).

As part of its austerity measures due to financial constraints and economic crunch that has been compounded by the COVID pandemic, Ethiopia decided to temporarily close about 31 out of about 65 Embassies & consulates. Ethiopian consulate in Mumbai was closed wef 05 September 2021.

Embassy of India in Addis Ababa took the lead in celebrating International Day of Yoga 2021 in Ethiopia (02-30 June 2021), and 100 events were held in various places in Ethiopia including universities (26), schools (2), factories (43) and community events. On the occasion of Hindi Diwas, Kavi Sammelan was held for the first time in Ethiopia at the Embassy premises (18 September 2021). The Embassy organized the participation of Shri Arun Gemini and Smt. Mumtaz Naseem from India at the Kavi Sammelan.

A delegation of police officers from Oromia region and Dire Dawa administration visited National Forensic Sciences University in Gandhinagar (18-20 November 2021).

Kenya

EAM paid an official visit to Nairobi from 12-15 June 2021 and co-chaired the 3rd India-Kenya Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) with his counterpart Amb. Raychelle Omamo, Cabinet

Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Kenya. EAM also had a round table meeting with the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Defence, Trade & Industry, ICT, Energy, and MoSs for Health and Treasury.



EAM met Foreign Minister of Kenya Raychelle Omamo during his visit to Kenya in June 2021

EAM also called on President Uhuru Kenyatta and handed over a letter from the Prime Minister.

During the visit, EAM inaugurated the Mahatma Gandhi Library at University of Nairobi which has been renovated with Government of India grant assistance of USD 1 Million (Picture: EAM Inaugurates the renovated Mahatma Gandhi Library at the University of Nairobi).

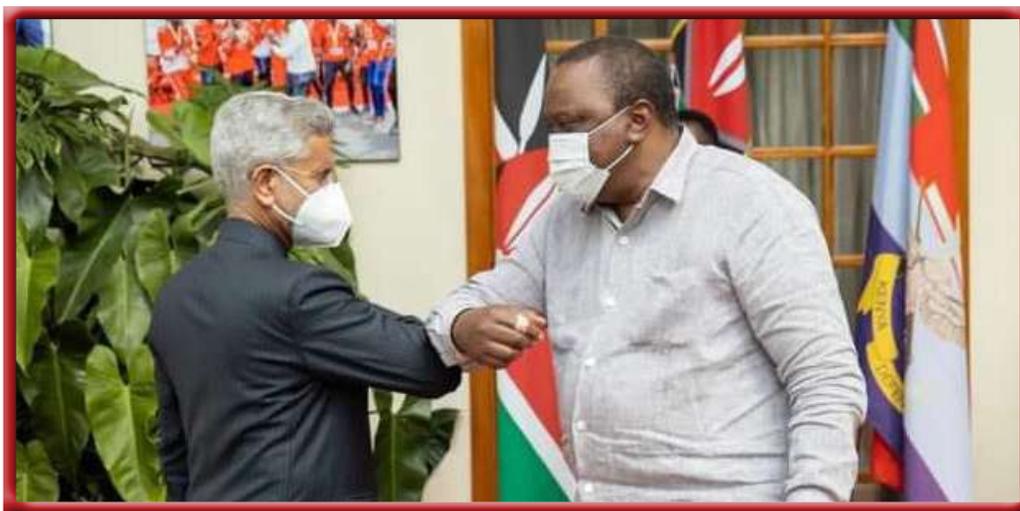
EAM also had virtual interactions with prominent members of the business community and diaspora. The joint statement issued after the JCM called for - joint efforts to combat the COVID pandemic and to consolidate economic collaboration during post-COVID period; for enhanced bilateral ties, both at the government and private sector level, also including cooperation at UN Security Council.

President Uhuru Kenyatta participated virtually in the UNSC meeting chaired by the Prime Minister on Maritime Security on 09 August 2021 during India's month of Presidency.

EAM addressed a virtual UNSC High-level meeting on cooperation between UN and regional and sub-regional organizations chaired by President Kenyatta on 28 October 2021 during Kenya's month of Presidency.

Minister of State participated in the UNSC high-level open debate on 'Peacebuilding and sustaining peace-identity, State-building & the search for peace' chaired by President Kenyatta on 12 October 2021. He also had a bilateral meeting with President Kenyatta on the sidelines of the debate.

Cabinet Secretary (Minister) for Foreign Affairs of Kenya, Amb. Raychelle Omamo met EAM on the sidelines of UNGA. She lauded India as an important partner and a pivot country in terms of South-South Cooperation. The two ministers discussed the need to cooperate and coordinate positions within the UNSC and to cooperate in the health sector, especially in the production of COVID vaccines



EAM met the President of Kenya Uhuru Kenyatta during his visit to Kenya in June 2021

Cabinet Secretary (Minister) for Foreign Affairs, Amb. Raychelle Omamo participated in the Raisina Dialogue also as a speaker.

Ms. Betty Maina, Cabinet Secretary for Trade & Industry, Kenya participated virtually in the Ministerial session of the CII-MEA Indo Pacific Business Summit chaired by Union Minister of Commerce & Industry. Lawrence Karanja, Chief Administrative Secretary, Ministry of Industrialization Trade and Enterprise Development, Kenya addressed the Ministerial session at CII-EXIM Bank India Africa Conclave 2021 at the Special Ministerial Session chaired by the Minister of Commerce and Industry.

Dr. Sara Ruto, Chief Administrative Secretary (MoS), Ministry of Education Kenya participated in India-Africa Higher Education & Skill Development Summit organized by CII. Mission on Virtual Platform. MoS (VM) was the Chief Guest at the event.

INS Talwar visited Mombasa port to participate in the Exercise Cutlass Express, in a trainer role, from 26 July 2021 to 06 August 2021. 12 East African countries, US, UK, India and various international organisations participated in the exercise. It also undertook a bilateral exercise with the Kenya Navy and conducted training onboard for their personnel. A 'Deck Reception' was organized onboard the ship on 27 July 2021. Mr. Ababu Namwamba, Chief Administrative Secretary (MoS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya, Members of Parliament, senior officials from Kenya Navy, Mombasa County, prominent businesspersons & community members were in attendance.

On the occasion of 7th International Day of Yoga, organised in a hybrid mode by the Mission, video messages were sent by Kenya's Minister for Sports, Heritage and Culture; Director General of UN office at Nairobi; MoS, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Governors from several counties across Kenya; and

marathon world record holder and Olympic Champion, Mr. Eliud Kipchoge.

Mr. Ababu Namwamba, Chief Administrative Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Zainab Bangura Director General, UN office at Nairobi, participated in the virtual panel

discussion organised by the Mission on Gandhi Jayanti.

Direct flights between India and Kenya resumed on 20 September 2021, four months after Kenya had suspended it on account of second wave of COVID in India.



EAM inaugurated the renovated Mahatma Gandhi Library at the University of Nairobi in June 2021

Lesotho

As part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' (AKAM) celebrations, High Commission of India in Pretoria donated 75 books on India to the National Library of Lesotho. The books were

officially handed over in the presence of Minister of Education and Training and Minister of Tourism of Kingdom of Lesotho on 20 September 2021.

Malawi

Malawi extended support to India's candidates in the various elections at the UN and related international bodies.

On 05 March 2021, 350,000 doses "Made in India" COVID Vaccines were dispatched to Malawi under Covax facility. On 12 March 2021, India donated 50,000 doses of "Made in India" COVID vaccines.

On 07 May 2021, MoS (VM) had a telephonic conversation with Mr. Eisenhower Nduwa Mkaka, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Malawi, and discussed various matters to enhance bilateral cooperation.

The 7th International Day of Yoga Day was organised on 20 June 2021. In run up to the Yoga Day, a curtain raiser event was organised at Salima on 13 June 2021.

On 16 June 2021, India and Malawi signed an MoU on Cooperation in the field of Trade of Pigeon Peas in Lilongwe for a period of five years from 2021-2026. This MoU will

facilitate export of 50,000 MTs of Pigeon Peas annually from Malawi to India.

The 16th CII-EXIM Bank conclave was held virtually on 13-15 July, 2021. Mr. Eisenhower Nduwa Mkaka, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Lobin C. Lowe, Minister of Agricultural, Mr. Newton Kambala, Minister of Energy and Mr. Sosten Alfred Gwengwe, Minister of Trade from Malawi participated in the event.

As part of "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav", High Commission of India, in partnership with Lilongwe Motor Show, organized the Malawi's biggest automotive exhibition - Lilongwe Motor Show 2021 at Lilongwe Golf Club on 28 August 2021. At the 'India Pavilion', 'Made-in-India' automobiles from Major auto makers including Eicher, Mahindra, TATA and TVS ranging from two-wheeler to passenger buses and heavy trucks and also auto components were displayed.

On September 2021, India donated 7 MTs of essential COVID medicines worth USD 1.4 Million to the Government of the

Republic of Malawi.

On 15 September 2021, ITEC Day 2021 was celebrated at the High Commission of India, Lilongwe. The celebration was graced by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Eisenhower Nduwa Mkaka as Chief Guest. During the year, utilisation of

the online-ITEC slots and the 20 ICCR scholarships offered to Malawi has been satisfactory.

On 22 October 2021, Ms Agnes Nyalonje, Minister of Education of Government of Malawi, participated in India-Africa Education & Skill Development Summit through virtual mode.

Mozambique

Several events were lined up by the Mission as part of celebration of AKAM-India@75. An online course on Gandhian philosophy conducted by Dr. Shobhana Radhakrishna, was organised from 08-29 May 2021 by Indian Council for Cultural Relations which saw a good participation. During June 2021, International Day of Yoga was celebrated and Yoga related events were held in 11 cities and 15 venues including three venues in Maputo. A section of the iconic building of the Central Railway Station of Maputo was illuminated with the

tri-colours of the Indian flag on 15 August 2021.

Following the call of the Prime Minister to increase global Indian exports to USD 400 billion during current financial year, a number of B2B virtual meetings during the coming months have been scheduled by the Mission between various stake holders from both the countries with a view to increase Indian exports to Mozambique.

Namibia

President of Namibia, Dr Hage G. Geingob, thanked India for the gift of 30,000 doses of Covishield vaccines (received in Namibia on 20 March 2021) through several platforms, including expressing his appreciation for India at the virtual Press Conference organised by World Health Organization (WHO) on World Health Day on 06 April 2021.

Mr Obeth M. Kandjoze, Director General of the National Planning Commission of Namibia participated virtually in the 16th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership on 15 July 2021 and spoke in the segment on SERV Africa III: Logging into IT / ITeS growth spheres.

Speaker of Lok Sabha and Mr Lukas Sinimbo Muha, Chairperson, National Council, Parliament of Namibia met on the sidelines of the 5th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in Vienna, Austria on 09 September 2021.

Towards deepening cooperation in law-enforcement, a week-long online e-ITEC course on "Genetics Interpretation of Mixed Profile Results in DNA Testing" was organised by the National Forensic Science University, India from 27 September 2021 for the Namibian Police's officials from National Forensic Science Institute of Namibia. This was the first ever e-ITEC training programme exclusively organised for Namibia.

As part of AKAM celebrations in Namibia, the High Commission of India in Windhoek organised several outreach activities, including Yoga workshops, solar lamps workshop for school students, engaging with Regional Councils and Local Authorities of Namibia, gifting India-related books and reading material to university, lighting up the Chancery facade in tricolour, among others.

As India entered into 75th year of independence, the Mission brought out a special supplement on the theme "Amrit Mahotsav India@75" in a leading Namibian newspaper, which was unveiled by the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of Namibia, Ms Jenelly Matundu, and other cabinet ministers on 15 August 2021. Mission also held high-level engagements with Presiding Officers of the two houses

of Namibian Parliament - Speaker Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi and Chairperson Mr Lukas Sinimbo Muha, as part of AKAM celebrations. In the same context, High Commissioner of India also called on the President of Namibia on 14 September 2021.

People-to-people bonds and the spirit of National Unity were further strengthened by the newly set-up first and only pan-India community association in Namibia - "India-Namibia Friendship Association", which actively held several community events, including Film show, Satsang Sabha and Diwali Utsav, with participation of members of Indian community and friends of India in Namibia.

On the Economic & Commercial front, Mission maintained a strong focus on increasing bilateral trade and investments. Among others, Mission organised a business webinar together with Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India on 14 October 2021 with emphasis on Pharma and medical devices which was followed by virtual B2B meetings between Indian and Namibian companies, as also an "Incredible India Fair" in Windhoek from 22 April 2021-07 May 2021 together with India-Namibia Friendship Association, which brought together and presented beautiful artisanal, handicraft, textile, herbal and food products from India.

India and Namibia signed a MoU for establishment of Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation on 03 November 2021 in Windhoek. The Joint Commission, to be co-chaired by the Foreign Ministers of the two countries, would provide a valuable high-level platform to regularly review and guide progress in all spheres of our close partnership with Namibia.

With the objective of exploring more avenues and new areas of bilateral economic partnerships, a multi-sectoral business delegation from India, under the aegis of Indian Economic Trade Organisation (IETO), visited Namibia from 09-15 November 2021. Mission organised and facilitated their meetings and interactions with all relevant stakeholders in Namibia, including the Government and businesspersons. IETO's India Namibia Trade Forum also signed a MoU for cooperation with Windhoek-based India-Namibia Chamber

of Commerce and Industry (INCCI) during the visit.

Mission continued with outreach activities as part of Amrit Mahotsav celebrations in Namibia. This included interactions with other diplomatic Missions, engaging with children from Indian diaspora on 'Know India' and 'Indian Constitution', special commemorative event with the Windhoek-based India Namibia Friendship Association, showcasing Indian textiles and apparels through a fashion show during the Republic Day 2022 Reception, among others.

A 05-member delegation from Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change visited Namibia in January/February 2022 and held discussions with Government officials and subject experts with regards to the proposed import of Namibian Cheetahs for re-introduction in India.

A 10-member cultural troupe from Namibia participated in the 35th Surajkund International Crafts Mela in Haryana from 01-16 February 2022.

Rwanda

Rwandan President Paul Kagame on 13 April 2021 joined the Prime Minister for the virtual inauguration of the 6th edition of the Raisina Dialogue organized by the Ministry and the Observer Research Foundation. In his speech, President Kagame commended India for playing a major role in supporting Africa's COVID vaccination efforts and spoke about the collaboration between India and Rwanda. India was among the first countries to have supplied COVID vaccines to Rwanda in March 2021.

In April 2021, Rwanda-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre was setup under Government of India's assistance. The Centre aims at promoting entrepreneurship in Rwanda. In July and August 2021 respectively, two projects worth USD 26.77 million and USD 27.88 million, under an Indian LoC of USD 120.05 million in the irrigation sector were awarded. These projects will help in developing irrigation in the dry Eastern part of Rwanda which will give boost to agriculture sector in Rwanda. In October 2021, India donated anti-HIV

medicines to Rwanda to fight against the menace of HIV.

During the period, Mission organized several cultural programs as part of celebrations of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' and to commemorate specific events. On 16 April 2021, the Mission organized a Hindi essay writing competition on the occasion of World Hindi Day. On 18 September 2021, the Mission organised another essay writing competition and poetry recital to mark the Hindi Divas. With the involvement of Indian community in Rwanda, a tree plantation drive was organized by the mission on 20 April 2021.

On Independence Day of India, Mission virtually telecasted flag hoisting ceremony which was followed by Classical Dance performances and Yoga demonstrations. To mark the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, mission organized Cleanliness Drive on 04 October 2021. Mission celebrated ITEC Day on 29 October 2021. Many ITEC Alumni participated in the celebration and shared their experiences of stay and study in India.

South Africa

President Ramaphosa attended the 13th BRICS Summit held virtually on 09 September 2021.

Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, Dr Naledi Pandor and EAM met bilaterally during the G7 Foreign Ministers Meet on 04 May 2021 in London. They spoke about working together to meet the COVID challenge and about economic recovery and Commonwealth issues.

Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, Dr Naledi Pandor and EAM again met bilaterally on 28 June 2021 on the sidelines of G20 Foreign Ministers Meet in Italy and discussed vaccine equity & access, and climate action approaches.

Minister of Commerce and Industry had a virtual meeting with his South African counterpart, Ebrahim Patel, Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition to discuss on WTO TRIPS waiver related to COVID vaccines on 26 April 2021. Both countries agreed to intensify efforts to seek the waiver that would promote vaccine equality in the world.

The Gandhi-Mandela Centre of Specialisation for Artisan Skills (GMCoS) was officially launched in Pretoria on 28 October 2021 in presence of Deputy Minister of Higher Education Mr. Buti Manamela and High Commissioner of India. India and South Africa had signed an MoU to set up the Centre

in 2018. Deputy Minister stated during his address that South Africa values its partnership with the government and people of India and look forward to many more collaborative projects that would help both countries address their national development goals. The Centre has admitted two batches so far, one in 2019 and the new batch in 2021.

The iconic week celebrations in South Africa of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' began on 02 October 2021. The main event was the event at the historic Tolstoy Farm, which is being revived and developed through community efforts. Another popular event was the expedition of 75 people along the Gandhian trail that included sites like Phoenix settlement, Pietermaritzburg, Tolstoy Farm that were associated with Mahatma Gandhi. Other events included a tree plantation drive and an interactive seminar on 'India's journey of 75 years-Perspectives from South Africa'.

The joint Letter of Intent (LoI) between Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of India and South Africa's Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities was signed on 12 May 2021. The LoI intends to establish the process of sharing information and knowledge, to develop projects of mutual interest in disability sector.

Tanzania

EAM met Foreign Minister Amb. Liberata Mulamula on 22 September 2021, on the sidelines of 76th session of UNGA in New York. EAM remarked India would work to advance its development partnership and traditional political cooperation with Tanzania.

Defence cooperation is one of the important pillars of India-Tanzania bilateral relations. The first batch of Indian Military Training Team (IMTT) deployed at Command and Staff College (CSC) in Duluti successfully completed their extended tenure in October 2021. A second batch of IMTT has joined the CSC. IMTT deployment to revise the training curriculum of Tanzanian military institutes was made on special request of late President Magufuli to the Prime Minister during the latter's visit to Tanzania in July 2016.

India-Tanzania 2nd Joint Committee on Hydrography was held through VTC on 04-05 August 2021. Areas of bilateral hydrographic cooperation including establishment of Tanzanian Hydrographic Office was discussed in the meeting.

A consignment of medicine worth INR 1.56 Crore donated by the Government of India, which was originally earmarked for mainland Tanzania, was diverted to Zanzibar. Consul General of India to Zanzibar handed the essential medicines gift to the Minister for Health of Zanzibar at a handover ceremony at Marughubi Medical Store in Unguja on 12 April 2021.

32 ICCR, 6 e-ITEC and 15 Defence ITEC slots were availed

by Tanzania from April-October 2021. During the ITEC Day celebration at the Chancery on 15 September 2021, the Education Minister of Tanzania, Ms. Joyce Ndalichako thanked the Government of India for the ITEC and ICCR scholarships that has benefited thousands of Tanzanians. She mentioned that India remains a favored destination for the Tanzanian students.

LoC water supply project of USD 178.125 million for augmentation of water supply to Dar es Salaam was completed and inaugurated by late Tanzanian President Magufuli in June 2017. A small portion of this project (USD 19.33 million) involving water distribution to Chalinze region which was pending, has begun and is expected to be completed by March 2022.

As part of India@75 celebrations, Baba Gorekhnath Gotipua Dance Troupe from Odisha was sponsored by ICCR to perform at prestigious 40th Bagamoyo International Dance Festival on 28 October 2021.

Tanzania supported India's candidature for elections to Postal Union Council (POC) and Council of Administration (CA) of Universal Postal Union. Tanzania's Bureau of Standards has conveyed its support to ISO for establishment of ISO Technical Committee on AYUSH and AYUSH related products at International Organization for Standardization. Tanzania has also proposed reciprocal support for India's candidature for re-election to UNESCO Executive Board 2021-25 and Indian candidature to International Law Commission for 2023-2027.



EAM met Foreign Minister of Tanzania Liberata Mulamula on the sidelines of 76th UNGA in September 2021

Uganda

MoS (VM) visited Uganda for three days from 11-13 November 2021 and helped cement India-Uganda relations on a wide range of bilateral, regional, and international problems as well as laying out a roadmap for future engagements. He paid a visit to Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni during his stay. The minister also met with Ugandan Parliament Speaker,

Jacob L Oulanyah, who was invited to India for the Public Account Committee's centenary celebrations in December 2021. MoS (VM) met with Uganda's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Oryem Okello to address a wide range of bilateral topics, including trade and investment, health, energy, agriculture, cultural exchanges, Indian Community-

related issues, and other bilateral and multilateral issues. In these areas, the two sides agreed to work more closely together. He inaugurated the e-Vidhya Bharti e-Arogya Bharti (e-VBAB) Learning Centre at Makerere University's College of Computing and Information Science in Kampala. MoS (VM)

interacted with the Indian diaspora in Kampala and attended the Indian Business Forum held by the Indian Association of Uganda during his visit. He also spoke at an event hosted by the Uganda Investment Authority. MoS (VM) also paid his respects to Mahatma Gandhi's bust in Jinja.



MoS (VM) met with the Parliament Speaker of Uganda Jacob Oulanyah during his visit to Uganda in November 2021

India gifted 1 lakh Covishield vaccines to Uganda in March 2021. The 2nd phase of Pan-Africa e-network project was launched by the Government of India in Uganda. A university and a hospital was identified for e-VBAB. Online courses by the partner universities in India were started from the academic year 2020-21 under e-Vidya Bharati. A centre for assisting online courses/examination purpose was set up at Makerere University in October 2021.

On this occasion a virtual quiz competition on Yoga and India culture was organized which was attended by people from all across Uganda. On Hindi Diwas 2021, the Mission organized online competition on essay writing, poetry writing and speech competitions, which was attended by diaspora children. A Cultural Troupe from Uganda participated in the 2nd National Tribal Dance Festival held at Raipur, Chhattisgarh during October 2021. A contingent of Indian Paralympians participated in the Uganda Para Badminton International Tournament which was held in Kampala, in November 2021. A 2-day exhibition on Khadi was held on 29-30 July 2021 in the Chancery Auditorium. Select group of visitors like diplomats, diaspora, and government functionaries attended this event adhering to the COVID SOPs.

National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) and The Uganda Electricity Generation Company Limited (UEGCL),

Uganda signed an MoU for cooperation in the power sector on 19 August 2021 on a virtual platform. Technology Associates (TA), a leading providers of IT Solutions in Uganda signed an MoU in April 2021 with National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) to collaborate on the payment network systems.

Africa Scholarship Scheme of ICCR 2021-22 offered 35 scholarships to Uganda which were all accepted and 27 Uganda ICCR scholarship students have already reported to their respective Universities for offline classes.

International Trade Centre (ITC) supported Indian Trade and Investment for Africa (SITA) Initiative conducted online training to launch Indian cotton-picking technology for Uganda's cotton sector development in Kasese district, Uganda. The Kapas Plucker machines were launched in an event inaugurated by the High Commissioner. Mr. Fred Kyakulaga Bwino, Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, Republic of Uganda participated at the first edition of CII India-Africa Agriculture & Food Processing Summit 2021 organised virtually on 14 September 2021 in partnership with the Ministry. He gave a special address at the Farm Mechanisation and Irrigation Solution session.

Zambia

Zambia being LDC, India continued to give duty-free market access & preferential duties and concessional business visa. Zambia remained an attractive destination for India's private

investments, which is over USD 5 billion, in the mining sector, manufacturing of copper cables and pharmaceutical, etc.

Zambia has regularly supported India's candidatures at international organisations and UN agencies. In 2021, Zambia supported India's candidature for the Human Rights Council for the period 2022-24. Zambia has also supported India's candidature for the Executive Board of UNESCO for the term 2021-25 at the elections to be held during the 41st Session of the General Conference of UNESCO in November 2021, and the World Heritage Committee (2021-25) at the elections to be held during the 23rd General Assembly of the State Parties to the 1972 convention in November 2021, an indication of strong bilateral relations.

India is constructing 650 Pre-fabricated Rural Health Posts under USD 68 million LoC extended to Zambia. Out of 650 health posts, 563 were commissioned and made operational. It received the appreciation of the people of Zambia.

Zimbabwe

MoS (VM) had a virtual meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Dr. Frederick Shava, on 28 June 2021. The Ministers reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relationship, including political cooperation, cooperation in the fields of health, energy, trade, investments and at multilateral fora.

India gifted 10 ambulances, which had been promised during the visit of Vice President to Zimbabwe in 2018. A consignment of 35,000 Covaxin vaccine doses were provided in the month of March 2021. India also handed over three vehicles for the Indo-Zim Technology Centres, for which latest technology machines worth approx. USD 3 million have been supplied under Phase II.

The cooperation continued in multilateral arena too. During the year, India contributed USD 1 million through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund for climate resilient agriculture in the districts of Chiredzi and Mangwe, which is expected to benefit over 5000 small farmers.

Zimbabwe ratified the Amended Framework of the International Solar Alliance and deposited the original Instrument of Ratification with India in June 2021.

Work on Deka Water Pumping and River Water Intake System, for which Government of India has extended a LoC of USD 48.1 million, commenced during the year.

Vice President Gen (Retd) Constantino Chiwenga delivered a keynote address at the Inaugural Session in the 16th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership, which was

held virtually in July 2021. In addition, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Dr Frederick Shava, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Prof. Mthuli Ncube, the Minister of Energy and Power Development, Mr. Soda Zhemu, the Deputy Minister of Health and Child Care, Dr. C.J. Mangwirow, also participated and addressed various sessions of the Conclave. The participation of Vice President and four other Ministers indicates the importance attached by Zimbabwe to its relationship with India.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, Indian exports to Zambia during April-September 2021 increased to USD 179.00 million from USD 164.13 million during the corresponding period in 2020.

Observing COVID protocols, Mission organised International Day of Yoga; a Tree Plantation Drive in collaboration with Zambian Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources to commemorate birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi; Cleanliness Drive; and also took part in the inaugural Diplomatic Fun Fair organized by the Zambian Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation wherein, the Mission was awarded by Government of Zambia for best cultural performance.

The Mission organized a number of celebrations on the occasion of 75th Anniversary of India's Independence (Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav). Namaste Zimbabwe Week to commemorate AKAM was held from 21 to 27 November. The main cultural event in Harare, showcasing Kathak, Manipuri, vocal classical, Bollywood, Bharatnatyam etc. was attended by Zimbabwe's Minister for Youth, Sport, Arts and Creation, Ms. Kirsty Coventry, and Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Mr. C. Chiduwa. The event in Bulawayo was attended by Minister of State for Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, Ms. Judith Ncube, and Deputy Minister for Industry and Commerce, Mr. Raj Modi. Other programmes during the week included screening of a Bollywood movie, publication of special supplement, inauguration of a Constitutional Wall at the Chancery, screening of documentary on ZBC TV and organization of a Health Camp in Bulawayo.

The first ever bust of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled by Minister of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services, Ms. Monica Mutsvangwa, at the Hindu Society / Westridge School premises on 02 October.

8

EUROPE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

CENTRAL EUROPE

Albania

Relations between India and Albania have traditionally been warm and friendly. 500,000 doses of COVID vaccine (Covishield) were donated as part of India's assistance to the Republic of Albania to fight the pandemic on 18 April 2021.

Keisi Gega from Albania Ministry of Health participated in the Co-WIN Global Conclave on 5 July 2021.

The 7th International Day of Yoga 2021 was celebrated in Albania on 27 June 2021. Many young people interested in

this ancient system of knowledge participated in this event.

E-talk on theme of "Tale of two Capital Cities - New Delhi & Tirana" was held on 31 August 2021 between Indian architect Dikshu Kukreja and Ms. Anuela Rishtani, Deputy Mayor of Tirana. They spoke on their experience in New Delhi, on urban transformations, increasing green cover and pedestrian areas, improving air quality, enabling usage of alternative means of transportation and making city spaces more child-friendly.

Austria

India and Austria historically share friendly ties. The bilateral relations were further strengthened during the year through meeting at the level of the leaders, Parliamentary exchanges, trade interactions, engagement with the wider community through cultural programmes and community events despite the continued challenges and restrictions due to COVID.

Within a few weeks after being sworn-in as the new Federal Chancellor of Austria Alexander Schallenberg, had a brief interaction with Prime Minister on 1 November 2021, on the sidelines of COP26 in Glasgow.

After a gap of 10 years, the Foreign Office Consultations were successfully held in March 2021. The Indian delegation

was led by Additional Secretary (Europe) while the Austrian delegation was led by DG (Bilateral/Political) Director from the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Both sides discussed a wide spectrum of issues including those at bilateral, regional, global and multilateral fora. The two sides identified issues and areas requiring focused attention including the MoUs/Agreements under discussion.

In May 2021, Ambassador, on behalf of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), signed a MoU with University of Vienna for appointment of a short term Chair on India Studies in the University during a virtual event.

During India-EU Leaders' Summit in May 2021, the incumbent Federal Chancellor of Austria, Sebastian Kurz vocalised Austria's 'full solidarity with India' along with the clear desire to 'strengthen all partnership between the EU and India.

During the 2nd wave of COVID pandemic in May-June 2021, Austria extended bilateral assistance of 1900 oxygen cannulas, 396 oxygen cylinders and 5521 vials of Remdesivir.

The new Austrian Ambassador to India Katharina Weiser arrived at New Delhi in July 2021 and presented her credentials in August 2021 at a virtual ceremony in Rashtrapati Bhawan.

After a long hiatus of over a year caused by the pandemic, the Embassy organised an in-person Independence Day celebrations at India House. The event witnessed participation from the local community and friends of India. Marking the launch of India@75 celebrations, Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav in Vienna, the Embassy organised a grand cultural evening and a food festival on 16th August, 2021. Many senior Austrian government officials, diplomatic corps, diaspora and local community participated in the event.

An Indian delegation led by Lok Sabha Speaker, including Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha and other senior officials participated in the Fifth World Conference of the Speakers of Parliament held in Vienna on 6-8 September 2021. The Indian delegation also participated in the First Global Parliamentary Summit on Counter Terrorism on 9 September 2021. The Speaker had a bilateral meeting with the President of Austrian National Council Mr. Wolfgang Sobotka on issues of cooperation, cultural and Parliamentary exchanges. In addition, the Speaker had several bilateral meetings with Speakers of other Parliaments and interacted with members of Indian community in Austria.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

India's relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to be steady during the year. The International Day of Yoga was organised at National Museum of Sarajevo on 21 June 2021.

The total bilateral trade for the period January – May 2021 stood at USD 80.6 million approx., an increase of 52.4% over the corresponding period in last year.

Bulgaria

India's relations with Bulgaria strengthened further based on bilateral exchanges and cooperation in multilateral fora. An online seminar on "Trade & Investment Opportunities in Bulgaria" was co-hosted by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) and the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce & Industry on 7 October 2021. An online seminar on "Investment & Trade Opportunities in the Defence and Aerospace Sector in India" was organised by Invest India on 12 October 2021 which saw participation by top Bulgarian

defence companies.

The 7th International Day of Yoga was celebrated in June 2021 in more than 40 cities of Bulgaria. India and Bulgaria supported each other's candidatures in multilateral fora, including in the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Croatia

During the EU-India virtual summit on 8 May 2021, Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković expressed solidarity with India and said "We are building a strategic partnership with India on strengthening economic cooperation and jointly combating the climate change, the digital transition and global security." Later, on the sidelines of Glasgow Summit of COP26 on 4 November 2021, the two Prime Ministers had the chance to meet physically.

The first ever visit of EAM to Croatia, in the 30 years old diplomatic relationship between the two countries, took place on 3 September 2021 when EAM paid a short visit to Zagreb

and met Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković and held detailed talks with Croatian Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Gordan Grlić Radman.

The 1st International Yoga & Ayurveda Conference was organized with the support of Ministry of AYUSH on 3-5 October 2021 in Zagreb with the participation of 40 speakers and experts from Croatia and other European countries, along with 6-member AYUSH delegation. A MoU was signed between All India Institute of Ayurveda and Kvarner Health Tourism Cluster in the city of Rijeka for cooperation in the traditional medicine and healthy lifestyle area.

Cyprus

India and Cyprus enjoy excellent bilateral relations. EAM had a virtual meeting with Foreign Minister Nikos Christodoulides on 16 February 2021. Both Ministers undertook a detailed review of bilateral ties, commonality of views on major international issues, economic cooperation and people to people ties. Both Ministers also discussed a wide range of regional and multilateral issues especially in the context of India's membership in the UNSC. Both Ministers discussed India-EU relations.

Foreign Minister of the Republic of Cyprus Nikos Christodoulides held a telephonic conversation with EAM on 29 April 2021 and on 12 July 2021 and discussed the mandate renewal of United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) & Cyprus problem, COVID pandemic and support and travel restrictions. EAM and Foreign Minister Nikos Christodoulides met on 21 September 2021 at the sidelines of UN General Assembly (UNGA) and exchanged views on regional and international issues including Afghanistan.

India has put Republic of Cyprus in the Category-I Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) as an eligible country for the purpose of regulation 5 (a) (iv) of SEBI (FPI) Regulations 2019. This

development signaled new opportunities for further growth for the fund industry in Cyprus. The 9th session of India-Cyprus Joint Committee on Economic, Scientific, Technical and Industrial Cooperation (JCEC) was held in virtual mode on 21 October 2021.

Foreign Minister Nikos Christodoulides was the Keynote speaker during the virtual India-Cyprus Economic Cooperation Conference held in energy sector on 24 March 2021. Webinars in Energy [CERA and NTPC Ltd] and Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises [Ministry of MSME of India and Ministry of Energy, Commerce & Industry of Cyprus] sectors were held between India and Cyprus on 17 May 2021 and 9 June 2021 respectively.

Cyprus supported India's candidature in OPCW, Council of International Maritime Organization under category (B) for the term 2022-23, the council of Administration (CA) and the Postal Operations Council (POC) of UPU (Universal Postal Union), the Council of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for 2022-24 and External Auditor of International Atomic Energy Agency for CAG (Comptroller and Auditor General of India).

Czech Republic

Bilateral relations remained to be robust between India and Czech Republic. The 7th round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Czech Republic was held on 22 January 2021 at Prague. During the consultations, both sides reviewed entire gamut of bilateral cooperation to include political, defense and security, economic and commerce, science and technology, consular matters, culture and education. They shared views and experiences on combating COVID pandemic, amplifying the vaccination programme. The two sides also had an in-depth exchange of views on Regional and International issues of mutual interest and agreed to enhance

cooperation in UN and Multilateral arena including current stint of India as UN Security Council (UNSC) member for the period 2021-22. EAM had a telephonic conversation with Czech Foreign Minister Jakub Kulhanek, on 30 April 2021 where they discussed on COVID pandemic and other issues of mutual interest.

Chief of Defense Staff led a delegation to an official visit to the Czech Republic in November 2021. He met Czech defense officials and representatives of the defense product manufacturing sector.

Denmark

Bilateral relations continued to strengthen during the year. In the first visit to India by a Head of Government post-COVID pandemic, Prime Minister of Denmark Mette Frederiksen paid a State Visit from 9-11 October 2021. In her bilateral exchanges, Prime Minister Frederiksen held talks with Prime Minister. She also called on President of India. EAM called on Prime Minister Frederiksen. During the bilateral talks, both sides reviewed the progress in Green Strategic Partnership and agreed to further expand collaboration in the areas of agriculture technology, including in the sectors of food safety, cold chain, food processing, fertilizers, fisheries, aquaculture, etc. New areas of cooperation like Smart Water Resource Management, Waste to Best- creation of best resources from waste, and efficient supply chain management were also identified. Four Government-to-Government MoUs and Agreements in the fields of traditional knowledge, skill development, mapping of ground water resources and coolant technologies were exchanged during the visit. Apart from

these, three commercial agreements were also concluded on the sidelines of the visit. Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen also extended invitation to Prime Minister for the second Nordic Summit in Copenhagen. Earlier, Prime Minister Frederiksen was invited as Chief Guest at the inauguration of the Raisina Dialogue and delivered her keynote address virtually on 13 April 2021.

The 4th Joint Commission meeting was held on 4 September 2021 in Copenhagen. EAM co-chaired the meeting along with Foreign Minister of Denmark Jeppe Kofod. EAM also had an audience with Queen Margrethe II and a courtesy meeting with Prime Minister Frederiksen. A MoU on Health and Medicine was signed between the two sides and a Joint Working Group on Health was established under the Joint Commission. Prime Minister Frederiksen handed over a letter to EAM addressed to the Prime Minister describing Denmark's commitment to raise global climate ambition and mobilizing

sufficient climate financing to address this challenge. EAM earlier had a virtual meeting with Danish Foreign Minister Jeppe Kofod on 6 April 2021 and discussed bilateral, regional and vaccine cooperation. EAM also had a tele-conversation with Danish Foreign Minister on 19 June 2021 and 24 June 2021 and discussed vaccine cooperation.

Danish Minister of Climate, Energy and Utilities Dan Jorgensen, visited India from 7-10 September 2021 with

a strong business delegation. He called on the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy, and Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change. During his visit, a joint Centre of Excellence for Offshore Wind Energy was launched in New Delhi. Joint Working Group meetings took place on Animal Husbandry on 24 August 2021, Renewable Energy on 10 September 2021, Power on 10 September 2021 and Health on 7 October 2021.



Prime Minister welcomed Prime Minister of Denmark Mette Frederiksen in New Delhi in October 2021

Estonia

India's relations with Estonia were significantly upgraded with the decision to open a Resident Mission in Tallinn, reflecting a shared desire to enhance our partnership.

EAM had a virtual meeting with the Estonian Foreign Minister Eva-Maria Liimets on 21 May 2021. Both Ministers discussed cooperation in the UNSC, as well as cooperation in the fields of cyber security and digital transformation. The first in-person meeting between the Foreign Ministers took place in New York on 17 August 2021 on the sidelines of the Indian Presidency of the UNSC. Both Ministers discussed working

together on maritime and cyber security and exchanged views on the developments in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Liimets also was present during the tribute ceremony at the UN Peacekeepers Memorial on 18 August 2021 together with EAM and UN Secretary General.

11th round of India-Estonia Foreign Office Consultations took place on 25 November 2021. India and Estonia worked closely together as non-permanent members of the UNSC for the year 2021. Estonia was among the first country in EU to recognise both Covishield and Covaxin vaccines.

Finland

India's relations with Finland remained warm and friendly and have diversified into collaboration in research, innovation, and investments by both sides. A Virtual Summit between Prime Minister and Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin was held on 16 March 2021. This was the first interaction between the two leaders during which a Joint Statement was issued covering cooperation across different sectors. Prime Minister had a pull aside meeting with the President of Finland Sauli Niinisto on 2 November 2021 on the sidelines of COP-26

Summit in Glasgow. EAM had a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister Haavisto on 21 May 2021 on the COVID situation in India. On 22 September 2021 EAM met Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto on the sidelines of the UNGA and discussed the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

The 11th round of Foreign Office Consultation was held on 23 November 2021 in Helsinki. A Virtual Round Table with Indian IT companies based in Finland was organised on 25

May 2021 to identify the elements of the Digital Partnership. A webinar to explore the opportunities for cooperation in vocation education was organized on 30 September 2021 by the Indian Embassy with the support of National Skills Development Cooperation and Education Finland. The fourth Joint Working Group (JWG) under the MoU for cooperation in Renewable Energy was held virtually on 23 September 2021 with a focus on hydrogen fuels. The MoU between consortium

of 10 Finnish universities and 23 IITs in India for cooperation in higher education sector was renewed in September 2021.

Finland sent 324 oxygen concentrators to India via the EU's Civil Protection Mechanism during the COVID crisis in India. Finland has accepted Covishield and Covaxin as approved vaccines from India.



Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Finland Sanna Marin at the India-Finland Virtual Summit in March 2021

Greece

The EAM paid an official visit to Greece on 25-27 June 2021. He held bilateral talks with his counterpart Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias. Both sides had a comprehensive exchange of views on further consolidating the bilateral relations. The two Ministers also discussed regional and multilateral issues in detail.

During the visit, EAM called on Prime Minister of Greece

Kyriakos Mitsotakis. EAM also unveiled the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Athens on 26 June 2021. The statue will act as a strong symbol of friendship between the two countries.

The Greek Foreign Minister signed and handed over the Agreement on the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to the Indian side. The EAM welcomed Greece to the family of the ISA.



EAM, Foreign Minister of Greece Nikos Dendias, and Athens Mayor Kostas Bakoyannis unveiled the new Mahatma Gandhi statue, during EAM's visit to Greece in June 2021

Holy See

India and the Holy See have friendly relations dating back to the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1948. India is home to the second largest Catholic population in Asia.

In a historic development, after a gap of 21 years, Prime Minister met His Holiness Pope Francis in a private audience at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican on 30 October 2021. During the meeting, the two leaders discussed the challenges

posed by COVID and climate change. The Pope appreciated India's assistance to countries in need during the pandemic. The Prime Minister extended an invitation to the Pope to visit India at an early date.

Prime Minister also had a brief meeting with the Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin on the same day.



Prime Minister met His Holiness Pope Francis at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican in October 2021

Hungary

India's friendly relations with Hungary continued to grow steadily although the COVID pandemic impacted the pace of activities.

EAM met Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peter Szijjarto on the sidelines of Bled Strategic Forum on 1-2 September 2021 in Slovenia and again on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York on 22 September 2021.

Secretary (West) visited Hungary for the 10th round of India-Hungary Foreign Office Consultations on 19 January 2021. The Hungarian side was led by Dy. State Secretary for development of Eastern Relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dr. András Baranyi. The Indian delegation also called on Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto. Both sides underscored the historically warm and cordial relations and reviewed various aspects of bilateral cooperation. The two sides also exchanged views on regional and international situation of mutual interest and agreed to enhance their cooperation in the multilateral fora.

Hungary and India exchanged notes for mutual recognition of COVID vaccination certificates on 8 October 2021. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India issued notification to bring this into effect from 25 October 2021.

President of the Indian council of Cultural Relations visited Hungary from 29 September-1 October 2021. Apart from meeting Deputy State Secretary Márton Schöberl in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, President ICCR also held meeting with the Indologists at the Department of India studies of Eötvös Loránd University and delivered a public speech at this University on the topic "India@75: From the past, through the present, to the future." He also attended the Hindi Diwas celebrations organised at the Amrita Shergill Cultural Centre (ASCC) of the Embassy of India. The visit of President ICCR took place in the context of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav activities being organised by the ASCC.

The 160th Birth Anniversary of Nobel laureate Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore was celebrated in Balatonfüred on 5

May 2021 which was attended by the Mayor of Balatonfüred. Gurudev Tagore had briefly stayed in this city in November 1926. As part of Azadi ki Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, an exhibition of paintings on Mahatma Gandhi by Elizabeth

Saas Brunner and Elizabeth Brunner - mother daughter duo painters, was organised at Nagykanisza on 3 November 2021. The event was attended by the Member of Parliament from the city and the Mayor of Nagykanisza city.

Iceland

The relationship between India and Iceland continues to be warm and friendly. There are around 357 Indian nationals (129 NRIs, 81 PIOs) in Iceland, most of whom are in service, business or are students.

During the COVID pandemic, Iceland donated 15 ventilators and 12,000 tablets of Favipiravir tablets, which was received by India on 2 June 2021. The bilateral trade between India and Iceland was USD 17.13 million in 2020-21. The balance of trade is in favour of India. There are about 8 Icelandic companies operating in India. Iceland was President of the Arctic Council from May 2019 to May 2021. India is an Observer in Arctic Council (an inter-governmental platform of Arctic states).

Reykjavik hosted the Arctic Circle Assembly, the world's largest annual international gathering on the Arctic, from 14-17 October 2021. Indian Ambassador to Iceland participated in the event.

Iceland supported India's candidatures for the post of External Auditor to Organization for the Promotion of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in April 2021, for the post of VP/Delegate for Asia in the Executive Committee of Interpol Criminal Police Organization (ICPO) in September 2021, at the Council of International Maritime Organisation (IMO) at Category B on 10 December 2021.

Latvia

2021 marked 30 years of diplomatic relations between India and Latvia. Pandemic restricted bilateral engagements to a certain extent.

Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins participated in the EU-India Leaders Meeting and interacted with Prime Minister. Highlighting India as an important cooperation partner in the Indo-Pacific, Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins welcomed the EU decision to resume negotiations for the ambitious, comprehensive and mutually beneficial EU-India trade agreement.

Latvia provided EUR 50,000 contribution through UNDP India to procure critical medical equipment for the state of Nagaland in May 2021.

Ambassador Tanmaya Lal presented credentials to the President of Latvia. Egils Levits in a virtual ceremony on 25

May 2021. Ambassador also interacted in virtual format with Deputy Speaker of Saeima Dagmāra Beitnere-Le Galla and State Secretary of Latvia Andris Pelšs.

MoS (ML) received Latvian Ambassador Artis Bertulis on 5 October 2021. Ambassador Bertulis also discussed about further strengthening historic and cultural ties with India and Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

Two Members of Latvian Parliament (Saeima) Artis Lejins and Krisjanis Feldmanis participated at the Independence Day celebrations organized by the Indo-Latvian Chamber of Commerce on 15 August 2021.

An 8-member Indian Women Tennis Team visited Latvia in April 2021 to participate in the first-ever Billie Jean Cup play offs. The women tennis team included Saina Mirza, Ankita Raina, Karman Kaur Thandi, Rutuja Bhosale and Zeel Desai.

The Principality of Liechtenstein

The bilateral relations between India and The Principality of Liechtenstein continued to be smooth. The Indian Embassy in Berne is concurrently accredited to the Principality of

Liechtenstein and maintains regular contact with the Indian Diaspora in the Principality.

Lithuania

India and Lithuania enjoy cordial relations that are marked by close cultural linkages. The economic and commercial ties have grown in recent years and the bilateral trade between India and Lithuania stood at USD 485 million in 2020-21. Indian investment in Lithuania includes Indorama Group's investment of over USD 200 million in a manufacturing plant and HCL

Technologies which has taken over the IT infrastructure services of Barclays in Vilnius employing over 500 people. Indorama has set up a plant in the Klaipeda Economic Zone to manufacture plastic resin. Indian investment is increasing in Lithuania.

Malta

India and Malta maintained cordial relations during the year, cooperating both at the bilateral level and at United Nations and multilateral fora. Malta sent 20 oxygen concentrators to Holy Family Hospital in New Delhi as part of its initiative to support India during a very difficult stage of the pandemic.

Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of Malta Evarist Bartolo attended the Gandhi Jayanti event celebrated on 2

October 2021 by the High Commission as the Chief Guest. The event was followed by a Peace Car Rally which was flagged off by Foreign Minister Bartolo and High Commissioner.

The Indian expatriate community in Malta continues to grow in strength, with the majority group consisting of health workers garnering praise for their service to the Maltese health care system, especially during the COVID pandemic.

Moldova

An India Centre was inaugurated in the International Free University of Moldova (ULIM), Chisinau to mark India@75 celebrations.

An online meeting was held between Ambassador and Governor of the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia of Moldova to discuss cooperation between India and Gagauzia in trade & investment, education, culture and capacity-building.

The 7th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2021 was celebrated

at six different places in Chisinau: On 20 June (Niagra Fitness Club), 20 June (Dendrariu Park), 21 June [Free International University of Moldova (ULIM)], 21 June (Jiva Yoga Centre), 22 June (Anasuya Yoga Centre) and 26 June (Yoga Studio, Surya).

Hindi Day was celebrated in Chisinau, Moldova on 24 September 2021. The programme included recital of Hindi poems, dances and live Hindi quiz. The event was attended by 50 local participants. During the occasion, the Embassy also donated a collection of 187 DVDs containing Hindi films to the Indian Center at ULIM.

Montenegro

India's relations with Montenegro have traditionally been close and friendly since the days of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of which it was a constituent republic. There is considerable goodwill and feeling of friendship for India in Montenegro.

Ambassador Jaideep Mazumdar presented his credentials to Montenegrin State President Milo Djukanovic on 8 February 2021, who expressed satisfaction with traditionally good relations between the two countries and short communication to be established at the highest levels. He also welcomed the

planned opening of Center of Indian Culture in Montenegro.

In a video message published on the website of the President of Montenegro on 17 April 2021 the First Lady Lidija Djukanovic, invited Indians to visit Montenegro.

An Indian diplomat participated in the 14th edition of the Summer School for Young Diplomats organized in a virtual format by the Montenegrin Ministry of Foreign Affairs in July 2021. The event was attended by 70 participants from 30 countries.

North Macedonia

Relations between India and the Republic of North Macedonia are warm and cordial. North Macedonia supported India's candidature in various multilateral forums. International

Day of Yoga 2021 was celebrated in Skopje, capital of North Macedonia and Ohrid city on 26 -27 June 2021.

Norway

Former Minister of Environment and International Development of Norway Erik Solheim, visited India during 19-24 April 2021 on an invitation from the ICCR under the Distinguished Visitors Programme (DVP). The visit was aimed at creating greater awareness about the domestic and foreign policy issues of India.

In April 2021 the Norwegian Government announced a contribution of Norwegian Kroner 20 million (USD 2.4 million) in humanitarian funds towards India. The assistance was channeled through the Red Cross Society.

The fourth meeting of the India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development was held on 9 June 2021 under the co-Chairmanship of Member Secretary, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister Ratan P. Watal (EAC-PM), and Ambassador of Norway to India Hans Jacob Frydenlund.

A virtual meeting was held between EAM and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway Ine Marie Eriksen Soreide, on 21 June 2021 to review bilateral relations.

EAM and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway Ine Marie

Eriksen Soreide held a bilateral meeting in New York on 21 September 2021 on the sidelines of the UNGA and discussed

issues of global importance.

Poland

India and Poland share a long-standing friendly relationship, marked by strong political partnership, vibrant economic engagement and traditional cultural links. This positive trend in the relationship, particularly economic and commercial ties, is reflected in the 108% increase in the bilateral trade over a period of a decade i.e. from to USD 1.32 billion in 2010-11 to USD 2.73 billion in 2020-21. Poland continues to be India's largest trading & investment partner in the Central & Eastern Europe region.

The Polish Foreign Minister Zbigniew Rau virtually participated in the 6th Raisina Dialogue in April 2021. The Minister underlined that an effective global response to COVID is only feasible with the collaboration of multilateral institutions.

Secretary (West) virtually participated in the 10th Community of Democracies Ministerial Conference on "Democracy and Resilience: Shared goals", which was organized on the sidelines of the UNGA session on 22 September 2021.

The second Policy Planning Dialogue between India and Poland was held virtually on 24 March 2021. ICCR has two Chairs in Poland – a Hindi Teacher in Warsaw University and a Chair of Indian studies at Jagellonian University, one of the oldest universities in Europe. ICCR is in the process of setting up a Roma Research Centre (RRC) at the University of Silesia, Katowice.

Romania

At the invitation of Foreign Minister of Romania, EAM addressed the Annual Meeting of Romanian Diplomacy virtually on 8 September 2021. Prior to this, Foreign Minister of Romania Bogdan Aurescu addressed the Raisina Dialogue online in April 2021.

On 1 July 2021, MoS (VM) had a virtual interaction with the Indian community in Romania, Moldova and Albania. MoS (VM) highlighted efforts of government led by Prime Minister to boost Indian economy and to ensure welfare of Indian community abroad. More than 40 leading members from Indian community including students from Moldova joined this virtual interaction.

Taki Government College (TGC), India and Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE), Romania hosted an online event on 7 May 2021 in collaboration with the Embassy of India, Bucharest, to mark the birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.

A book 'Ayurveda in Romania - Volume 2' was launched in Romania on 28 May 2021. The book in Romanian and English languages has articles on Ayurveda by experts from India and Romania.

A photographic exhibition on India 'Lens Vision' was held in Oradea City Museum - Cultural Complex, Romania in collaboration between the International Association Euro Foto Art (AIEFA), Romania and Bengal Photography Institute from Kolkata (India). 72 photographs by Sanjoy Bhattacharya, President of Bengal Photography Institute and members of the Institute were displayed.

The 7th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2021 was celebrated at four places in Romania: On 21 June 2021 (Seeds of Happiness Centre), and 25 June 2021 (Roaba de Cultură), and Cluj-Napoca and Timisoara on 26 and 27 June 2021. An online event 'Yoga for well-being' was also held on 20 June 2021.

A photo exhibition 'Saree - Tradition and Continuity' was organised by Euterpe Center of Art, Bucharest from 3 July -30 July 2021.

An event "Tribute to Rabindranath Tagore" ("Omagiu Lui Rabindranath Tagore") was organized by Cluj Center for Indian Studies at the Casino Urban Cultural Center, Cluj-Napoca on 23 July 2021. An Ayurveda camp was also organised by AMN, Romania at Octavian Goga Library in Cluj.

An online meeting between ISRO & Romanian Space Agency (ROSA) was held on 29 July 2021. ISRO and ROSA made presentations about space activities being carried by India and Romania respectively.

Hindi Day was celebrated in Embassy of India, Bucharest on 14 September 2021. The programme included recital of Hindi poems, songs and sharing of experience in teaching and learning Hindi by Indians and Romanians.

The Embassy donated to the Romanian-American University a collection of 250 books, the vast majority of them in Hindi language on 21 September 2021. This collection of books encompasses one of the largest numbers of books in Hindi language that has been donated in recent times to an academic institution in Romania by the Embassy of India.

A photography exhibition on India was inaugurated in the Romanian Parliament on 27 September 2021 to mark 75th anniversary of India's Independence. The exhibition displayed work of photographers from the Bengal Photography Institute and was curated by President of Euro Foto Art Association, Oradea, @tefan Tóth István.

The Embassy donated a collection of 280 books on Indian history, art, policy and culture to libraries in Ocnita, Gura Ocnitei and Raci in Dambovită county on 14 October 2021. The Mayor of Gura Ocnitei, Sorin Vasile Ionita welcomed this initiative and expressed his desire for future collaboration.

Serbia

Two high level visits during this period helped to sustain the momentum of high level contacts in recent years. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia Nikola Selaković, paid an official visit to India on 19-20 September 2021, as a special envoy of the President of Serbia. During his visit, he called upon Vice President of India and held discussions with EAM, as well as with MoS (ML). Both sides had a comprehensive exchange of views on further consolidating and deepening of bilateral relations including holding of the next rounds of Foreign Office Consultations and Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation in the next few months. They also expressed satisfaction at continuation of high level exchanges between the two countries and discussed opportunities for enhancing collaboration in sectors like agriculture, food processing, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, electronics, IT & ITeS, heavy engineering, machinery & equipment, infrastructure and construction.

Both sides welcomed finalisation of reciprocal arrangement on recognition of COVID vaccine certificates issued by each other's national authorities. An agreement on gainful employment for dependents of members of diplomatic Missions and consular Posts was signed during the visit.

The MoS (ML) led the Indian delegation as Special Envoy of the

Prime Minister, to the High Level Commemorative Meeting to mark the 60th anniversary of the Non-Aligned Movement held at Belgrade on 11-12 October, 2021. In addition to attending the commemorative NAM meeting, MoS (ML) met the Serbian leadership and discussed ways to further strengthen ties between our two friendly countries. MoS (ML) called on the President and Prime Minister of Serbia. She also held detailed discussions on various aspects of our bilateral engagement in separate meetings with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and Information, Ministers of Trade, Tourism & Telecommunications, and of Foreign Affairs.

A Cultural Exchange Programme between India and Serbia was also signed during the visit. The other engagements included addressing the teaching staff and students at the Faculty of Law, University of Belgrade, interaction with a select group of Indologists and Indophiles, and paying respects at the busts of Mahatma Gandhi and Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore.

The visit provided further momentum to the close and friendly relations between India and Serbia. Both sides agreed on expansion and diversification of partnership between the two countries.



MOS (ML) addressed the high-level meeting to mark the 60th Anniversary of NAM in Serbia in October 2021

Slovakia

On 2 July 2021, MoS (VM) held virtual consultations with State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia, Ingrid Brockova. Both Ministers discussed the entire gamut of bilateral relations, including ways to strengthen cooperation in trade, investment, culture, science &

technology and people to people contacts. Multilateral issues including cooperation at various fora such as the UN and the EU were also discussed. They agreed to continue efforts to further step-up and broaden engagements between India and Slovakia.

Slovenia

India-Slovenia bilateral relations continued to remain cordial. The 8th Foreign Office Consultations between India and Slovenia took place on 10 December 2021 in virtual format. The consultations were led on the Indian side by Secretary (West) and on the Slovenian side by State Secretary (Deputy Minister), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr. Stanislav Rašičan.

The Foreign Office Consultations were held in the back drop of Slovenia celebrating 30 years of independence this year and Slovenia's Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the period July-December 2021. Next year, India and Slovenia will be commemorating 30 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations.



The 8th Foreign Office Consultations between India and Slovenia held in December 2021

Sweden

Despite COVID, India-Sweden engagement continued to intensify in 2021. Prime Minister, and the then Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven held a Virtual Summit on 5 March 2021 where they discussed bilateral issues and other regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest. The two leaders also reviewed the extensive ongoing engagement between India and Sweden and explored avenues of further diversifying the themes of India-Sweden partnership. In 2021, there were two more interactions between the two Prime Ministers. Prime Minister Löfven participated in the India-EU Leaders' summit on 8 May 2021 and welcomed the resumption of the trade talks with India. During the meeting, it was highlighted that these talks will help boost trade and investment relations between India and Sweden as well as create jobs in EU and India. Prime Minister Löfven again met Prime Minister on the sidelines of COP26 in Glasgow in early November 2021.

Minister of Commerce and Industry held a virtual meeting with Minister for Foreign Trade and Nordic Affairs Anna Hallberg in April 2021. The two Ministers discussed ways to enhance trade and investment between the two countries.

Raksha Mantri and Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist spoke at the India-Sweden Defence Industry Cooperation Webinar on the theme of 'Capitalising on Opportunities for Growth and Security' on 8 June 2021. On this occasion an MoU was

signed between Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) and Swedish Security and Defence Industry (SOFF) to promote bilateral defence industrial relations.

Minister of Business, Industry & Innovation and Minister of State for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, Space & Prime Ministers Office jointly inaugurated the day-long 8th India Sweden Innovation Day held in hybrid format on 26 October 2021. Secretary, (DST& DBT) and Darja Isaksson, Director General of Vinnova, Swedish Agency for Innovation also addressed the inaugural session. Senior business leaders from both countries were among the speakers. The widely attended event had the theme of 'Accelerating Green Transition'.

Foreign Minister Ann Linde participated at the 'informal lunch' with EAM in Gymnich held on the margins of the EU Foreign Affairs Ministers' meeting in September 2021.

A MoU on collaboration in the field of environmental protection and sustainable development was signed between CSIR-NEERI and IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute in Nagpur on 18 October 2021.

The Indian Navy Ship 'INS Tabar' visited Stockholm from 30 July-1 August 2021 on a goodwill visit. INS Tabar received

a ceremonial welcome at the Royal Palace of Stockholm. A Deck Reception was held where Swedish Deputy Chief Joint Operations Major General Jonas Wikman was the Chief Guest.

Major Swedish companies including IKEA India, Volvo group, H&M, True Caller, Ericsson and others assisted the COVID relief efforts in India.

The Indian Women Football team visited Sweden, for the first time, to play two friendly matches against Swedish teams in preparation of AFC Women's Asian Cup in 2022. Thomas Dennerby from Sweden is the coach for the Indian Women Football Team.



Prime Minister interacted with Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven, on the sidelines of COP26 in Glasgow, November 2021

Switzerland

India and Switzerland relations continued to be warm and cordial. EAM had a telephonic consultation with his counterpart Federal Councillor Dr. Ignazio Cassis on 9 June 2021. MoS (ML) visited Switzerland from 27 September- 1 October 2021 on an official visit. During her visit, MoS (ML) called on President of the Swiss Confederation Guy Parmelin, and discussed the entire gamut of bilateral relations. MoS (ML) also met women Parliamentarians and Secretaries of Switzerland, exchanged views on women empowerment and shared major achievements of India towards empowerment of women. She also the key spoke at the 18th Annual General

Meeting (AGM) of the Swiss India Chamber of Commerce.

President of ICCR paid an official visit to Switzerland from 30 October- 2 November 2021. During his visit the ICCR President jointly inaugurated the Incredible India Showcase at the Bern Fernweh Festival along with Mayor of Berne, Mr. Alec Von Graffenried. 4th India-Switzerland Financial Dialogue was held on 11 May 2021 and 18th session of India-Switzerland Joint Economic Commission was held on 9 September 2021.



MoS (ML) addressed the Annual General Meeting of Swiss-India Chamber of Commerce in Zurich in October 2021

Turkey

There was limited bilateral engagement during the period in view of COVID related travel restrictions. Notable among the high level interactions is EAM's meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu on the margins of the 9th Ministerial Conference of "Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process" on 29 March 2021 at Dushanbe.

In support of India's fight against the COVID pandemic, Turkey

supplied 630 Oxygen cylinders, 50 ventilators and 5 Oxygen Generation Plants in May 2021.

Commemoration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) in Turkey commenced on 21 June 2021 with the flagship International Yoga Day events in Istanbul, Ankara, Cappadocia, Mersin and many other places in Turkey. A number of other events were also organised under AKAM.

EUROPE WEST

United Kingdom

With the successful India-UK Virtual Summit held on May 4, 2021, the year 2021 saw a significant boost in India-UK bilateral relations. During the Virtual Summit, Prime Minister and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson adopted an ambitious **India-UK Roadmap 2030** to steer cooperation for the next ten years and elevate bilateral ties to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership'. The two Prime Ministers emphasized that enhanced India-UK bilateral cooperation can not only reap mutual benefits but also be a global force for good to revive lives and livelihoods, promote peace and prosperity around the world. The two leaders also launched an 'Enhanced Trade Partnership' (ETP) to tap into the full trade potential between the two countries through negotiating a comprehensive FTA and set a target of more than doubling bilateral trade by 2030.

COVID Cooperation: India and UK have shared commitments in mitigating COVID pandemic. During COVID second wave, the UK Government supported India with more than 600 units of vital medical equipment (495 oxygen concentrators and 200 ventilators) and 3 oxygen generation units, each producing 500 litres of oxygen per minute.

High-level Political Exchanges: Prime Minister visited the UK from 31 October-2 November 2021 to attend the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) World Leaders Summit in Glasgow. On the sidelines, he had a bilateral meeting with the UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson on 1 November 2021 where he reiterated India's commitment to closely work with the UK on climate finance, technology, innovation and adaptation of clean technologies and also reviewed the implementation of the Roadmap 2030. On 2 November 2021, both leaders jointly launched the ambitious 'Global Green Grids - One Sun, One World, One Grid initiative' programme and the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS) initiative under CDRI.

EAM visited the UK from 3-6 May 2021 to attend the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting. EAM had a bilateral meeting with UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab on 6 May 2021 to discuss and take forward the outcomes of the Virtual Summit. Both Ministers regularly spoke to each other to closely review the implementation of the Roadmap 2030 and discuss other topical regional and global issues of mutual

interest.

UK's new Foreign Secretary Elizabeth Truss, visited India from 22-24 October 2021 and held talks with EAM on 22 October 2021 to review the India-UK Roadmap 2030 and for further enhancing cooperation in key priority areas.

National Security Advisor (NSA) met his UK counterpart Sir Stephen Lovegrove in London for the India-UK NSA-level Security Dialogue on 3 November 2021.

Foreign Secretary visited the UK from 23-24 July 2021 and held a detailed review of bilateral relations with his counterpart Permanent Under-Secretary, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Philip Barton. He also met Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth Lord Tariq Ahmad, FCDO; and various other senior officials, think-tank groups and media persons.

Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, visited Glasgow to attend COP26 Summit from 29 October-2 November 2021 and from 8-14 November 2021. During his visit, he met the COP26 President Mr. Alok Sharma. Earlier, COP26 President Alok Sharma visited India from 16-18 August 2021 to discuss further collaboration on potential COP26 outcomes.

Economic Relations: From 1 April-30 September 2021, India-UK Merchandise Trade was USD 7.9 billion with India's export amounting to USD 4.9 billion and import from the UK at USD 2.9 billion. The Mission facilitated first-ever import of the Geographical Indication tagged Jardalu mango, King chilli and Dragon fruit to the UK.

The 11th Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) meeting was held on 2 September 2021 virtually between the Minister of Finance and Chancellor of Exchequer, UK, Mr. Rishi Sunak. They endorsed the agreement to work towards a comprehensive FTA and discussed strengthening cooperation in fintech, sustainable financing and progress of the India-UK strategic partnership on GIFT City (Gujarat International Finance Tec-City) amongst others.

The Commerce and Industries Minister met the UK Secretary

of State Anne-Marie Trevelyan, for International Trade on 13 October 2021 in Italy on the sidelines of G20 Trade Ministers meet. The UK Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan visited India from 12-14 January 2022 for the 15th JETCO meeting. On that occasion, the negotiations on India-UK FTA were formally launched by CIM and the UK Trade Secretary.

MoUs and Agreements: MoU on: (i) India-UK Migration and Mobility Partnership (MMP) and (ii) India-UK Global Innovation Partnership (GIP) were signed during the visit of EAM on 4 May 2021 in London. A Joint Working Group (JWG) envisaged under the MoU on MMP held its first meeting on 25 August 2021. The MoU on MMP allows for a Youth Professional Scheme (YPS) which would create opportunities for 3,000 Indian students and young professionals to visit and work in the UK for a two-year period. Besides, the following MoUs/agreements were signed/declared during the Virtual Summit – (i) Joint Declaration of Intent on cooperation in the fields of Digital and Technology, (ii) MoU on cooperation in the field of Telecommunications/ICT, (iii) Statement of Principles on new joint work between India and the UK on the India Energy Security Scenarios Calculator, (iv) MoU in the field of medical products regulation between the UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)

and (v) MoU on Pharmacopoeial Cooperation between the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) and the British Pharmacopoeia (BP).

India-UK Agreement on “Customs Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters” was signed in May 2021. MoU between the “London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and the All India Institute of Ayurveda on Clinical Trial of Ashwagandha for promoting recovery from COVID in the UK” was signed in July 2021.

Institutionalised Dialogues: Several institutional dialogues between India and UK took place in 2021 including the i) the first India-UK Consular Dialogue through video conferencing on 22 September 2021; ii) India-UK Energy Dialogue on 8 October 2021 virtually between Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy, and Member of Parliament and Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Kwasi Kwarteng. The two sides deliberated and agreed on a Forward Action Plan on Power and Clean Transport, Renewables, Green Finance and Clean Energy Research as part of the Roadmap 2030; iii) the second India-UK Multilateral Dialogue in London on 18 October 2021; iv) the inaugural India-UK Maritime Dialogue held virtually on 18 October 2021 and v) Cyber Deterrence Dialogue on 25 November 2021.



Prime Minister met Prime Minister of UK Boris Johnson on the sidelines of the COP26 Summit in Glasgow in November 2021

Defence Cooperation: Bilateral defence engagements with the UK substantially increased in 2021. High level official interactions include the visit of Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) to UK (July 2021) and the visits of UK's Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter, Chief of the General Staff, UK Army General Sir Mark Carleton-Smith, and the UK's First Sea Lord/Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sir Tony Radakin to India in the month of October 2021.

The UK's Carrier Strike Group (CSG) made a port call at Indian

Ports from 21-24 October 2021 in Mumbai and Goa. Maiden India-UK joint Tri-service exercise with UK CSG, 'Ex Konkan Shakti' was also conducted from 21-27 October 2021 (both harbour and Sea Phase). The sixth edition of 'Ex Ajeya Warrior' was conducted in India from 7-17 October 2021 at the Forward Training Node (FTN), Chaubatia (Uttarakhand). Indian Army Team participated in the 'Ex Cambrian Patrol 2021' conducted by UK Army from 8-17 October 2021 and won gold medal during the competition. INS Tabar visited Portsmouth, UK, from 13-16 August 2021 as part of the Western Fleet OSD 01/2021

to enhance the existing cooperation between the Indian Navy and Royal Navy through operational, administrative, diplomatic and professional interactions.

Cultural Cooperation: The High Commission of India, through the Nehru Centre (TNC), organised several events with cultural and academic distinguished personalities to further strengthen cultural cooperation and people-to-people connect between the two countries. Some of the important events organised include London Basant Festival (9 April 2021), Remembering Ustad Allarakha (29 April 2021), Gurudev and

Environment (8 May 2021), 1971 WAR - Indian Naval attack on Karachi (31 May 2021), Pranayama Summit – Pranayama Science and Veda Chanting (23-24 June 2021), Synergy – A confluence of Classical Dances (8 July 2021), Launching of an App - Little Guru UK -Learning Sanskrit (9 September 2021), 'Hindi Diwas' (14 September 2021). International Yoga Day – 2021 was organised with a series of programmes on yoga for elderly people, children and Special Forces (who contributed immensely during COVID for the UK's National Health Service (NHS), Police and other staff).

Germany

Germany is one of India's most important partners in Europe, owing to the strength of bilateral relations, as also Germany's key role in the EU. On 7 March 2021, India and Germany marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. The anniversary is being commemorated through several events to be held in the year 2021-22. As part of the celebrations, commemorative stamps were issued by both countries on 10 June 2021.

Recent high-level political exchanges: Prime Minister and then-German Chancellor Angela Merkel participated in the India-EU All Leaders' Meeting held on 8 May 2021. Both held a telephone conversation on 23 August 2021 to discuss bilateral relations, the COVID pandemic, and the situation in Afghanistan.

On 31 October 2021, Prime Minister met the German Chancellor and then-Chancellor-designate Olaf Scholz on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rome to discuss bilateral relations. Prime Minister acknowledged German Chancellor Angela Merkel's immense contribution in strengthening bilateral ties. The two leaders also interacted on the sidelines of COP26, held on 1 November 2021.

On 22 September 2021, EAM met German Foreign Minister on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) for a G4 meeting, and then for a bilateral exchange on Afghanistan.

The 50th anniversary of the German-Indian Parliamentary Friendship Group of the Bundestag was commemorated on 22 June 2021. It was attended virtually by the Chairman of the Indian Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs and Minister of State, German Ministry of Foreign Affairs Niels Annen, and then-Chairman of the German-Indian Parliamentary Friendship Group Mr Dirk Wiese, among others. A special message by MoS (VM) was screened on the occasion.

On 10 September 2021, Parliamentary State Secretaries from Germany's Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, Dr Maria Flachsbarth and Norbert Barthle, visited Delhi and handed over the Instrument of Accession to the Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to Secretary (ER). During the visit, they also met Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy, as well as Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

On 3 June 2021, Secretary (West) held virtual bilateral UN consultations with State Secretary Antje Leendertse on

the German side. The Indian delegation highlighted India's priorities during its UN Security Council (UNSC) tenure.

COVID Cooperation: In May 2021, during the second wave of the pandemic in India, Germany supplied ventilators, and Remdesivir and monoclonal antibodies, in line with the strong cooperation between the two countries during the pandemic. The German armed forces set up a mobile oxygen production and filling plant in Delhi, and a team of German experts trained members of the Indian Red Cross for operation of the plant.

Economic and Commercial Relations: Germany is India's largest trading partner in Europe. It has consistently been among India's top ten global partners and was the seventh-largest trading partner in FY 2020-21. Bilateral trade in 2020-21 was USD 21.76 billion registering a marginal decline of about 1% over FY 2019-20. During 2021-22 (until October 2021), bilateral trade was USD 13.83 billion, which was an increase of 16% over the corresponding period in FY 2020-21.

Germany is the 7th largest FDI source for India. The total FDI from Germany to India from April 2000-September 2021 is over USD 13 billion. In FY 2020-21, German FDI in India was USD 667 million, which was 37% more than in FY 2019-20. There are more than 1,700 German companies and over 600 joint ventures in India. A Market Entry Support Programme, the 'Make in India Mittelstand' (MIIM) for German Mittelstand (SMEs) and Family-Owned Businesses is being implemented by Embassy of India, Berlin to support high potential Mittelstand companies for manufacturing in India. As of date, 152 companies are being facilitated through this Programme with a declared investment of nearly EUR 1.46 billion. More than 30 of these companies are 'hidden champions' that are world market leaders in niche products/technologies.

In 2021, German automotive company Webasto invested USD 34 million to set up a sunroofs manufacturing facility in Pune. Bayer, a German agrochemical group launched a new manufacturing plant at Vapi in Gujarat with an investment of USD 28 million. German auto component major ZF Friedrichshafen AG has lined up a EUR 200 million investment in India and a fifth of the investment volume will be allocated for a tech centre in Hyderabad for doing global research and development (R&D) work for the company.

There are more than 240 Indian companies operating in Germany. Investments are mostly in IT, automotive, pharma, biotech and manufacturing. Major clusters of Indian companies

are in the States of North-Rhine Westphalia, Hesse, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. Fast Track mechanisms are in place by DPIIT and the German Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) to address issues/ grievances of companies in India and Germany.

Development Cooperation: India is Germany's largest Development Cooperation partner. For India, Germany is the 2nd largest partner, after Japan. Total bilateral Technical and Financial Cooperation, since it began in 1958, amounts to more than EUR 22 billion. Major projects are in the sectors of energy (renewables, Green Energy Corridor), Indo-German Solar Partnership, Skill Development and sustainable urban development (water/sanitation/waste, climate friendly urban mobility, smart cities).

The annual meeting of the Indo-German Negotiations on Development Cooperation took place virtually on 24 November 2021. Germany made new commitments of more than EUR 1.2 billion towards achieving cleaner energy, more sustainable cities & better protection of natural resources.

Defence Cooperation: The German naval frigate 'Bayern' embarked on its journey to the Indo-Pacific region on 2 August 2021. On 26 August 2021, Indian Navy's INS Trikand and frigate Bayern conducted exercises in the Gulf of Aden, to facilitate interoperability and exchange of best practices. The frigate is

expected to make a port call in Mumbai in January 2022.

S&T and Education Cooperation: Cooperation in S&T is an important aspect of the India-Germany partnership with many scientific establishments in India having close partnerships with German R&D institutions, including the Max Planck Society, Fraunhofer Laboratories and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Over the last few years, Germany has emerged as a destination of choice for Indian students and researchers. As per 2020 figures, more than 28900 Indian students are currently studying in Germany.

To encourage young Indian researchers to undertake applied research at an industrial set up in Germany, the Indo-German Science and Technology Center (IGSTC) launched PhD and post-doctoral industrial fellowships on 14 June 2021. On 24 November 2021, the IGSTC also launched the WISER (Women Involvement in Science and Engineering Research) programme, with the aim to build scientific capacity, retain and promote women researchers in India/Germany.

The Department of Non-Resident Keralites Affairs (NoRKA), the state-run employment agency of the Government of Kerala, signed an agreement with the German Federal Employment Agency (FEA) on 2 December 2021 for placement of health professionals from the State of Kerala as registered nurses in Germany under Germany's Triple Win Programme.

France

India and France enjoy a Strategic Partnership since 1998. Over the years, the strong and trusted bilateral relationship has acquired greater depth in areas of defence and security cooperation, space and civil nuclear cooperation and convergence of views on a range of regional and global issues, including counter-terrorism, cyber and digital governance, Indo-Pacific, Climate change and UN reforms.

India and France also enjoy vibrant cultural and educational linkages reflected in the growing people-to-people contacts, further strengthened by entry into force of the Migration and Mobility Agreement on 1 October 2021 after its ratification by the French Parliament.

Recent high-level political exchanges: Prime Minister and French President Emmanuel Macron have been in touch with each other through telephonic conversations and in-person meetings. On 26 May 2021, both leaders spoke over telephone during the peak of second wave of COVID pandemic in India. President Macron reiterated French support and solidarity and sent much needed oxygen generators and essential equipment to India. Both also spoke over telephone on 21 September 2021 and the discussions *inter alia* included situation in Afghanistan, combating spread of terrorism and illicit drug trafficking and ways to enhance bilateral collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region. Both Prime Minister of India and President of France also met on 30 October on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rome.

French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian, visited India from 13-15 April 2021 for talks with EAM. They discussed regional and global issues of mutual

interest and recognised the immense opportunities for greater collaboration in diverse sectors such as trade and investments, defence and security, health, education, research and innovation, energy and climate change between the two countries. French Foreign Minister also participated in the Raisina Dialogue during the visit. French Minister for Armed Forces Florence Parly visited India for the Annual Defence Dialogue with Raksha Mantri on 17 December 2021.

The 35th Strategic Dialogue chaired by NSA and Diplomatic Adviser to the President of France was held in Paris on 5 November 2021. The Dialogue included wide ranging, future oriented topics, reaffirmed the major defence and security partnership for Indo-Pacific, discussed ways to expand bilateral and regional cooperation, and measures to deal with new threats, and French support to India's defence industrialization and self-reliance.

Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France Francois Delattre, visited New Delhi from 21-22 December 2021 to chair the Foreign Office Consultations with India's Foreign Secretary. At the official level, several important institutional dialogues were held between India and France, including the Maritime Cooperation Dialogue on 11 October 2021 in Paris, led by Deputy National Security Advisor, India-French dialogue on Counter-Terrorism on 16 November 2021 and dialogue on Disarmament and Nuclear Proliferation on 18 November 2021 all held in Paris. Bilateral consultations on China took place at Paris on 2 April 2021 and bilateral consultations on Africa took place by video-conference on 20 April 2021.

EAM has been invited by the French Government to deliver

an opening address at the Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific which will be held in Paris on 22 February 2022. It is likely to witness the participation of French President Macron, President of EU Council Charles Michel, President of EU Commission Ursula Von der Leyen and the Foreign minister of Japan during the opening ceremony. EAM is also expected to participate in the Ministerial Council of the Indian Ocean Commission to be held on 23 February 2022 in Paris.

Defence Cooperation: The major ongoing defence-related projects include the purchase of Rafale aircraft and the P-75 Scorpene Project. Delivery of Rafale aircraft after India Specific Enhancement and associated weapons systems are taking place in a timely manner and out of 36, all but three have been delivered to India by the French side.

Exercise Varuna was held from 25 to 27 April 2021 off the Coast of Oman with French Navy's Carrier Strike Group where UAE attended as an observer. Ex-Varuna highlights growing bonhomie and showcases increased levels of synergy, coordination and inter-operability between the two friendly navies. Indian Navy also participated in Exercise La Perouse (Multilateral Exercise with France, US Japan and Australia) from 5 to 7 April 2021 in Bay of Bengal. The latest edition of Exercise Shakti was held in Frejus, France, from 15-26 November 2021. The Indian Chief of the Air Staff visited France from 19-24 April 2021 and Chief of Naval Staff-designate visited France from 15-16 November 2021 for the 7th edition of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Conclave of Chiefs hosted by French Navy at Paris.

The 15th meeting of India-France High Committee on Defence Cooperation (HCDC) took place in Paris on 25 November 2021, after a gap of five years. The Indian delegation was lead by Indian Defence Secretary. Both sides have expressed strong desire to carry forward the momentum in the Defence equipment and Defence industrialization.

Space and Civil Nuclear Cooperation: France remains a major supplier of components and equipment for the Indian space programme. ISRO and CNES are currently finalizing an agreement to implement the Trishna infrared satellite project between 2024 and 2030. An Implementing Arrangement between ISRO's Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) and French National Space Agency (CNES) for cooperation concerning Human Spaceflight programme, specifically on sharing of expertise in space medicine, was exchanged during the visit of French Foreign Minister to ISRO HQs in April 2021.

A team from *Électricité de France* (EDF) visited India to submit

the binding Techno Commercial Offer (TCO) for 6 units of proposed Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant to Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) on 18 April 2021. Both sides are working on the project including the TCO.

Economic Relations: France is one of the largest investors in India with a cumulative FDI stock of approximately USD 10 billion till December 2020. There are nearly 150 Indian companies operating in France (including subsidiaries) with more than 7000 employees. Due to COVID pandemic, the total bilateral trade in 2020 saw a decline of 23.1% year on year at Euros 9 billion. The bilateral trade for the year 2021 has picked up significantly and has already touched almost Euros 12 billion for the period November 2020 - October 2021.

On 16 June 2021, Prime Minister virtually delivered a keynote address at the 5th edition of VivaTech-2021 which is Europe's largest digital technology exhibition. India had a digital pavilion with 15 Indian startups. Minister for Electronics and Information Technology of India and Minister for Digital Affairs of France virtually participated in the inaugural session of 1st India-France Digital Partnership Summit, InFinity (India-France Innovation in Information Technology) organized by Indian Embassy in Paris on 24- 25 November 2021 which saw over 16000 registered participants and 450 start-ups in the online exhibition.

EAM along with Minister for Industrial Attractiveness of France participated in the Indo-Pacific Business Summit on 6 July 2021. EAM also delivered the inaugural address at the 3rd edition of the 'Ambition India' Business Forum held on 29 October 2021 in which the Telangana was the guest state from India and was led by Telangana Minister for Commerce and IT, Municipal Administration and Urban Development.

Collaboration between ISA and France were further strengthened when Director General of ISA Dr. Ajay Mathur, visited France from 14 - 16 September 2021 during which he met heads of various international organisations working in the field of Energy. Ambassador participated in the virtual MoU Signing Ceremony on 7 October 2021 between NTPC & EDF on Cooperation in International Power Sector.

Cultural Cooperation: France will be the Guest of Honour at the World Book Fair, Delhi to be held between 8-16 January 2022 where a number of French authors, publishers and journalists will participate. The French Embassy will also organise an event on mural painting during Ministry's Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) week of 21-27 February 2022.

Monaco

India and Monaco established diplomatic relations in 2007 and the Ambassador of India in Paris is concurrently accredited to the Principality of Monaco.

Key areas of India-Monaco cooperation include trade, tourism and tax matters which enrich the overall positive relations

between India and Monaco. The two sides endeavour to exploring other areas as well, including cultural relations, cooperation on marine biodiversity and clean energy.

Belgium

India and Belgium enjoy excellent bilateral relations. The bilateral ties were further strengthened by various political interactions including EAM's meeting with his counterpart Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Belgium Sophie Wilmes, in September 2021 on the sidelines of UNGA. Secretary (West) met her counterpart DG Bilateral Affairs (Belgium) in Brussels in October 2021. The Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty between India and Belgium was signed on 16 September 2021. The 3rd meeting of the JWG on Renewable Energy between India and Belgium was held on 28 October 2021.

Trade and Economic relations: The total bilateral trade in goods between India and Belgium from January to August 2021 totals EUR 7.75 billion. The total bilateral trade in

services between India and Belgium is EUR 892 million, during the same period. Total investment by Belgium in India stood at USD 2.4 billion from April 2000 to June 2021, making it the 20th most important investor in India. The India-Belgium Luxembourg Economic Union Joint Commission (India-BLEU JCM) established in 1997 is the main forum for deliberating on bilateral economic and commercial issues. The 17th Session of the India - BELU JCM was held on 16 September 2021.

COVID cooperation: Belgium provided 9000 vials of Remdesivir to India. Belgium also facilitated airlift of critical life support equipment from the Ostende airport by special Indian Air Force planes. Six such flights in May-June 2021 helped airlift 19 cryogenic oxygen containers, 950 plus oxygen cylinders, and 43 oxygen concentrators to India.

The Netherlands

The Netherlands is a key trade and investment partner of India in the EU. The Virtual Summit between Prime Minister and the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte on 9 April 2021 marked the high point of India-Netherlands interactions in the year 2021. The two leaders agreed on instituting a '**Strategic Partnership on Water**' to further deepen the Indo-Dutch cooperation in the water related sectors, and upgrading the JWG on water to Ministerial-level. The leaders also exchanged views on regional and global challenges including climate change, counter-terrorism, COVID pandemic and agreed to leverage the emerging convergences in new areas of Indo-Pacific, resilient supply chains and global digital governance.

Momentum of bilateral engagement in diverse sectors was kept up with meeting of JWG on Health (20 April 2021); JWG meeting under MOU on Spatial Planning, Water Management and Mobility Management (9 June 2021); JWG meeting on agriculture cooperation (10 June 2021); Meeting on water cooperation (7 September 2021); meeting of India-Netherlands Joint Committee on Science and Technology (22-23 September 2021) and meetings between officials from Indian Space Research Organization & Netherlands Space Office (July 2021 and October 2021). The Indo-Dutch Virtual Mission on Key Enabling Technologies for Societal Challenges in the Water, Agriculture & Health which took place in September 2021 helped to enhance the already strong trade and investment relationship.

The Foreign Office Consultations between India and the Netherlands were held on 10 November 2021 in The Hague, Netherlands. The Indian delegation was led by Secretary (West) and the Dutch side was led by Secretary General, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs Paul Huijts. Both sides reviewed the implementation of the outcomes of the Virtual Summit including the Strategic Partnership on Water and agreed to work together to commemorate 75 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Netherlands in 2022.

Lok Sabha Speaker met President of the Senate of Netherlands Jan Anthonie Bruijn in October 2021 on the sidelines of the G20 Parliamentary Speakers Summit in Rome and discussed ways to enhance parliamentary cooperation between the two countries.

COVID Cooperation: The Netherlands through European Union extended assistance during the second wave of COVID pandemic in India. In May 2021, Indian Air Force airlifted cryogenic tankers from the Netherlands which were leased by an Indian company. KLM Royal Dutch Airline continued to operate flights between India and the Netherlands under an Air Bubble agreement between the two sides.

Economic relations: Trade and investment ties continued to be an important pillar of bilateral ties. In the period of April 2000 to September 2021, the Dutch investments in India comprised of USD 38.78 billion standing at the fourth position. For financial year 2021-22 (April - September) the investment inflows were USD 2.13 billion. During 2021-22 (April- October) India's exports were USD 5.73 billion and India's imports stood at USD 2.44 billion.

Embassy of India, The Hague jointly with International Maharishi Ayurveda Foundation and Maharishi European Research University (MERU) organized the International Ayurveda Congress in Roermond, the Netherlands on 23 November 2021. Minister of State for AYUSH addressed the congress online. Ayurveda experts and scholars from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Serbia, and Switzerland joined the congress. Four formal diploma and certificate courses in Ayurveda to be conducted by MERU were given certificate of accreditation by Ministry of Ayush.

Diaspora and Cultural Cooperation: The Netherlands which is already a home to significant Indian community and student population continued to be a preferred destination and during 2021 their numbers grew further by 9%. AKAM celebrations continued with various events and activities. On 130th Birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar a virtual exhibition of photographs from his life and making of the Indian Constitution was organized. International Day of Yoga 2021 celebrations took place in a hybrid format on 19 June 2021. On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti an event 'Mahatma ko Naman' was held at The Gandhi Centre in The Hague along with a school outreach programme to take the teachings and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi to the young minds and inculcate the values of truth, non-violence and peace in them.

The Netherlands will be a partner country in the 10th edition of Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit (VGGs) scheduled to take

place from 10-12 January 2022 in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Luxembourg

India enjoys warm and friendly relations with the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. The bilateral ties received a major boost with the successful Virtual Summit between the two Prime Ministers in November 2020. As a follow up to the Summit, Luxembourg joined the International Solar Alliance on 4 February 2021. A MoU between SEBI and Luxembourg Regulator CSSF was signed in June 2021. B Medical Systems, a Luxembourg based global leader in vaccine cold chain and medical refrigeration, also set up operations in India in a record time which was actively facilitated by the Ministry.

The bilateral relations were further strengthened by various political interactions including EAM's meeting with his counterpart Foreign Minister of Luxembourg Mr. Jean Asselborn, in November 2021 at the Dubai Expo. As agreed at the Virtual Summit, the inaugural Foreign Office Consultations were held in Luxembourg on 12 November 2021. It was

chaired by Secretary (West) from the Indian side and Secretary General from the Luxembourg side. Luxembourg is one of the main partner countries for the 10th edition of the VGGs and the Prime Minister of Luxembourg will be visiting India from 9-12 January 2022 to participate in the Summit and also have a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister on the sidelines.

Economic relations: The total bilateral trade in goods between India and Luxembourg from January to August 2021 stood at EUR 29 million while the figure in services trade in 2019 was EUR 190 million. Total investment by Luxembourg in India stood at USD 3,478.93 million from April 2000 to June 2021, making it the 15th most important investor in India. The India-Belgium Luxembourg Economic Union Joint Commission (India-BLEU JCM) established in 1997 is the main forum for deliberating on bilateral economic and commercial issues whose 17th Session was held virtually on 16 September 2021.

Spain

India-Spain relations consolidated over the year. Prime Minister met his Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez on the sidelines of the G20 Summit on 31 October 2021. EAM met the then Spanish Foreign Minister Arancha Gonzalez Laya at G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 29 June 2021 in Matera, Italy. A six member Parliamentary delegation from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha represented India at the 143rd Inter Parliamentary Union Assembly from 26-30 November 2021 in Madrid, hosted by the Spanish Congress.

MoS (ML) made an official visit to Spain from 14-17 September 2021 and had discussions with Spanish Foreign Minister José Manuel Albares and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Ángeles Moreno Bau. The two sides reviewed agreements under consideration and ways to strengthen economic, business, cultural, scientific and educational cooperation. MoS (ML) visited Casa de la India in Valladolid. MoS (ML) also delivered a talk on India's Development Assistance at the Spain India Council Foundation on 16 September 2021 as part of AKAM.

Economic relations: 2021 saw India-Spain trade recover to pre-pandemic levels, reaching USD 4.9 billion in the first three quarters. Commerce and Industries Minister and the Spanish Trade Minister Reyes Maroto had a virtual bilateral meeting on 22 April 2021 before flagging off the *India Spain Business Roundtable*. The signing of a USD 2.5 billion contract to procure 56 C295 military transport aircraft from *Airbus Spain*, 40 of which will be made in India by *Tata Advanced*

Systems, represents the first *Make in India* project in the defence aircraft sector. Thanks to a renewed interest in India's automobile, food processing and infrastructure sectors, Spanish FDI cumulative stock in India crossed the USD 3.5 billion milestone, making Spain the 16th biggest FDI investor.

Cultural cooperation: India and Spain enjoy vibrant cultural ties. The Embassy of India actively celebrated 75 years of independence through various cultural programs across the country. An AKAM Special Week was organized from September 11 to 17, which included The Beatles in India exhibition in Valladolid inaugurated by MoS (ML) along with several cultural events and diaspora interaction programs. A 2-day cultural outreach program which included around 15 AKAM events was held in the city of Guadalajara on July 17th and 18th. Birth centenaries of Satyajit Ray and Pandit Ravi Shankar, along with 100 years of Visva Bharati University, Shantiniketan were celebrated with seminars, talks and documentary screenings. Webinars were held on niche tourism options in India like Mountaineering and Rajasthani architecture on the sidelines of the FITUR 2021 International Tourism Fair. Two Indian films and one documentary (Beatles in India) competed in the 66th Seminci Film Festival Valladolid, in which the Indian film Last Film Show won top honours. Embassy in collaboration with Casa de la India launched a Lecture Series at the University of Valladolid on the theme Cultural Diplomacy of India. Special events were also held to mark the International Day of Yoga and the Ayurveda Day.

Andorra

India and the Principality of Andorra maintain close and friendly ties. Andorra and India supported each other at various multilateral fora. Andorra was one of the first countries in Europe to recognise *Covaxin*. Andorran Foreign Minister

Maria Ubach Font conveyed Andorra's support and solidarity with India during the second COVID wave and appreciated our vaccine drive. The 7th International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Andorra at the iconic *Plaça de Casa de la Vall*.

Ireland

India and Ireland enjoy warm and historic ties that are underpinned by shared commitment to democratic values, rule of law and multilateralism. Ireland has consistently supported India's candidature at various international and multilateral fora. India and Ireland hold non-permanent membership of the UNSC for the term 2021-2022.

Irish Prime Minister Michael Martin participated in the India-EU Leaders' Meeting held in Porto (8 May 2021) and welcomed connectivity partnerships and the emphasis on People to People exchanges in education, research, science and technology. Prime Minister Martin also referred to India's strengths in digital economy and the possibility of both countries working together to ensure protection of data. However, due to the pandemic related restrictions, there has been no exchange of bilateral visits during the period.

COVID emergency assistance: Ireland was one of the first EU members to respond to India's 2nd COVID wave crisis and sent emergency medical assistance of 1248 oxygen concentrators, 425 ventilators and 2 oxygen generators in two consignments to India.

Economic relations: Trade between India and Ireland for the financial year 2020-21 was EUR 882.17 million with Indian exports amounting to EUR 537.04 million and imports EUR

345.12 million. The total trade turnover for the first nine months (January-September) of 2021 (EUR 996 million) has already crossed the total for 2020 (EUR 890 million) and may cross the 2019 figure (EUR 1116 million) shortly. A G2G virtual meeting, led by Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME), and the Irish Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment was held (12 August 2021) to exchange best practices/policies on MSME's in both countries and to discuss sectors for the subsequent B2B meetings.

Chairs with UCC and ICCR: Two MOUs for Chairs on India Studies sponsored by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) were signed with: (i) New Chair at University College of Cork (UCC) (13 September 2021) (ii) Extension of short-term Chair at Dublin City University (DCU) (20 July 2021).

Indian Community: There are approximately 45,000 persons of Indian origin in Ireland, of whom approximately 26,500 are Persons of Indian origin and approximately 18,500 are Non-resident Indians. The bulk of the community is in health-care, IT, engineering and senior management positions. The community is well-regarded locally and has integrated well into Irish society. Former Irish Prime Minister and current Deputy Prime Minister Leo Varadkar (41 years) has Indian ancestry (father is Indian, mother is Irish).

Portugal

India and Portugal share a time tested relationship based on historical maritime connections, diaspora linkages and shared values of democracy and multilateralism. The year 2021 was particularly significant in the bilateral relationship for the first ever India-EU Leaders' Meeting which was held under the Portuguese Presidency of EU. India was also accepted as Associate Observer in the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) at the XIII CPLP Summit held in Luanda, Angola on 16-17 April 2021, opening up a larger forum to co-operate with Lusophone countries for cultural and economic development in areas of mutual interest.

Political Relations and High Level Exchanges: The first India-EU Leaders' Meeting which was held in hybrid format on 8 May 2021 in Porto, Portugal saw participation of Prime Minister, the European Commission and European Council Presidents and, unprecedentedly, all 27 EU member state leaders. On the eve of the Leaders' Meeting Prime Minister and Prime Minister Antonio Costa had published a joint article in *Politico*, urging closer ties between "the world's two largest democratic spaces" through concerted efforts to bolster effective multilateralism and a rules-based world order. A virtual EU-India Business Roundtable with Prime Minister Costa was held on 8 May 2021, encompassing sector debates on climate, health and digitalisation. Notwithstanding the hybrid format of the meeting, public visibility was ensured as the Porto City Hall was lit up in the Indian national colours.

Earlier, on 28 April 2021, EAM held a virtual meeting with Foreign Minister of Portugal Santos Silva where they reviewed

the status of outcomes from the previous high-level visits and the preparations for the Leaders' Meeting in May in Porto. On 23 June 2021, EAM and Foreign Minister Santos Silva jointly participated in the online talk "The Future of India-EU Relations".

MoS (ML) paid an official visit to Portugal from 12-14 September 2021. After a review of bilateral relations with her counterpart, Secretary of State (SoS) for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Francisco André, they signed the bilateral agreement on the recruitment of Indian citizens to work in Portugal. Portugal is the first EU country with which India has signed a dedicated agreement on labour mobility; it is also the first such document signed by Portugal with a non-EU partner. MoS (ML) met Foreign Minister Santos Silva, SoS for Internationalisation Eurico Brilhante Dias and the Minister of Culture Graça Fonseca during her visit. MoS (ML) also met Executive Secretary of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) Zacarias da Costa – the first such high-level interaction since India joined as an Associate Observer in July 2021.

In terms of institutional engagements, the 5th Joint Economic Committee Meeting between India and Portugal was held in New Delhi on 8-9 April 2021, which was chaired by SoS for Internationalisation, Eurico Brilhante Dias and Minister of State for Commerce and Industry. An MoU for cooperation in Consulting, Lab Testing and R&D was signed between the two major footwear design and development institutes FDDI (India) and CTCP (Portugal). The 2nd India-Portugal JWG on

Defence was held virtually on 28 September 2021.

Economic and Commercial Relations: Bilateral trade saw a considerable boost in 2021, notwithstanding the impact of the COVID pandemic: India-Portugal trade between January and June 2021 amounted to EUR 428.58 million (up 15.28% on 2020), with the trade balance continuing to be firmly in India's favour. Indian imports were worth EUR 62.68 million (up 23.63% on 2020) whereas Indian exports were worth EUR 420.54 million (up 25.05% on 2020).

During the year, Indian companies like Sugee Group and BILITI Electric, a multinational company, part of the Indian group Gayam Motor works (GMW) invested in Portugal. BILITI Electric will set up a production unit, for their three-wheeled electric vehicle with a quick swappable battery system called the Smart Swapp which they plan to sell throughout Europe.

Cultural Exchanges: Various events held to promote culture exchanges and celebrate India@75 included the launch of 'Little Guru' app for learning Sanskrit; the exhibition "India in Portugal - a Time of Artistic Confluence" at the Soares dos Reis National Museum in Porto whose opening was

attended by Foreign Minister Santos Silva and the Mayor of Porto; commemoration of the 160th Birth Anniversary of Guru Rabindranath Tagore; 7th International Day of Yoga celebrations in association with the Portuguese Yoga Federation; the 'Colours of Independence' event at the Lusófona University in Lisbon on 4 September 2021; a virtual Global Conference on Hindi Day, International Ayurveda Day and a live Constitution Day Quiz.

On 12 October 2021, the 'Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize' – an initiative by the Ministry of Education – was conferred by Prime Minister Antonio Costa to 30 winning schools at the Hindu Temple of Lisbon, in a ceremony that also included the Portuguese Minister of Education Tiago Brandão Rodrigues. Having originally been announced in December 2019 during the visit of Prime Minister Costa to New Delhi to participate in the International Gandhi@150 Executive Committee Meeting, it targets students from primary and secondary education for imbibing the important teachings of Gandhi through annual theme based projects promoting the development of essential skills of citizenship.

Italy

India and Italy bilateral relations witnessed a significant upgrade in 2021 with the first ever visit by Prime Minister to Italy from 29-31 October 2021 for the G20 Summit and his first in-person meeting with Italy's Prime Minister Mario Draghi during which a strategic partnership on clean energy transition was launched by the two countries. The year also saw resolution of the two long pending issues with Italy, i.e. closure of the Enrica Lexie marines case and lifting of the ban on the Italian state controlled defence company Leonardo. Italy and India continue to support each other in the multilateral arena with Italy supporting India's candidature for Interpol elections.

High level exchanges: A number of high-level exchanges, both virtual and in person, took place in the year principally in connection with the Italian presidency of G20. Prime Minister attended G20 meeting on Afghanistan organized by Italy (October 2021) and also had telephonic conversation with him. There were several visits by Indian Cabinet Ministers for G20 ministerial meetings - two by EAM (June and October 2021), two by Commerce and Industry Minister (Oct 2021), Finance Minister (Oct 2021), and Health Minister (Sept 2021). From the Italian side, Foreign Minister Di Maio participated virtually in the Raisina Dialogue on 6 April 2021. Speaker of Lok Sabha visited Italy for P20 in October 2021. The year also witnessed the first ever virtual interaction between Members of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and the Members of the Italy- India Parliamentary Friendship Group (March 2021). India actively participated in various meetings of Italian G20 presidencies and has joined the Troika along with Italy following the Summit.

On the defence front, COAS visited Rome from 7-9 July 2021 after a gap of over 12 years and INS Tabar made a port call at Naples on 3-4 July 2021.

Amid the pandemic crises this year, both the countries expressed solidarity and supported each other. During the second wave in India, Italy sent as many as 3 consignments of various items including oxygen generator plants, ventilators, essential medical equipment. Italian multinational company SOL concluded a deal to lease 4 ISO Cryogenic containers (20 MT capacity).

Economic relations: Italy is amongst India's top five trading partners in the EU. Bilateral trade in the period of January to July 2021 registered a growth of 36.01% over the same period in 2020 reaching a total of USD 5.46 billion. The 21st session of India-Italy Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation, co-chaired by Minister for Commerce and Industry and his counterpart was held on 9 July 2021 in virtual mode and the first ever India-Italy Innovation Day was held on 14 July 2021.

Cultural Cooperation: Both countries celebrated festivals of each other's country in 2021. A number of events were held as part of AKAM celebrations. International Day of Yoga 2021 was celebrated for the first time at the headquarters of the local Foreign Ministry with physical celebrations in multiple locations in Italy, the biggest one in Rome which also happened to be the first big gathering after the lockdown. An MoU between ICCR and University of Naples was signed for establishment of an Indian Chair.

India's presence and profile considerably increased in the top governing bodies of 3 Rome-based UN agencies on agriculture (FAO, IFAD and WFP) with India's selection for – President of Executive Board of WFP till 02/2023; Chair of Evaluation Committee of IFAD for two years; Chair of International Steering Committee of FAO for International Year of Millets 2023. India continued to be a member of the FAO Council and Executive Boards of IFAD and WFP. The other notable developments include enhancement of contribution to

IFAD to USD 47 million, plus USD 20 million as loans. India has the largest program of any country that receives IFAD's

assistance globally. An Indian was also selected as Assistant Vice President in IFAD.



Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Italy Mario Draghi at the G20 Summit in October 2021

San Marino

India's relations with San Marino remained cordial and friendly. Both the countries have established a fruitful cooperation, particularly within international fora, but also at a bilateral level on issues of common interest. San Marino

was among the first European countries to formally agree with India on mutual recognition of vaccine certificates. Bilateral trade between the two countries stood at USD 0.34 million.

The European Union

The EU and India share a Strategic Partnership established in 2004 based on shared values and principles. The bilateral ties are multifaceted and covers a broad spectrum of topics. The political momentum in the relations was further intensified in 2021-22 with the first ever India-EU Leaders' Meeting in Porto, Portugal in 27+1 format in hybrid mode.

High-level exchanges: Prime Minister participated virtually in the first ever India-EU Leaders' Meeting in May 2021 in which the leaders of all the 27 EU Member States as well as the President of the European Council Charles Michel, and the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen participated. The important outcomes of the meeting include resumption of negotiations for balanced and comprehensive free trade and investment agreements and also an agreement on Geographical Indications; launching of 'Connectivity Partnership'; enhancing bilateral cooperation on digital and emerging technologies; and the EU's decision to join the CDRI. Further, Prime Minister met the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission on the sidelines of G-20 Summit in Rome in October 2021.

The bilateral relations were further strengthened by various Ministerial level meetings including EAM's meeting with EU's High Representative and the Vice President of the European Commission (HRVP) Josep Borrell in May 2021 in London where a Joint Press Statement on Afghanistan was issued; in June 2021 in Rome on the sidelines of G-20 meeting; and in July 2021 in Tashkent on the sidelines of International Conference on Regional Connectivity of Central

and South Asia. EAM also met the European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen in June 2021 in Rome. Moreover, he also participated in the informal meeting of the EU Foreign Ministers (Gymnich) in Slovenia in September 2021.

Minister of Commerce & Industry met his EU trade counterpart Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice President of the European Union in October 2021 on the sidelines of G-20 meeting in Italy. In addition to the above meetings, Mr. Frans Timmermans, the Executive Vice President of the European Commission for European Green Deal visited India in October 2021, to discuss climate related issues. Executive Vice President of the European Commission for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age Margrethe Vestager visited India in January 2022 and held meetings with her Ministerial counterparts.

In continuation of the India-EU Leaders' Meeting, the 3rd round of the India-EU Strategic Partnership Review Meeting was held in October 2021 in Brussels to take stock of the implementation of the decisions taken during the Leaders' Meeting. It was co-chaired by Secretary (West) of the Ministry and Deputy Secretary-General for Global and Economic Issues at the European External Action Service (EEAS). Both sides reviewed the India-EU Strategic Partnership, discussed political and economic relations and exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. During the visit, Secretary (West) also held the Foreign Policy and Security Consultations with the Deputy Secretary General for Political Affairs, EEAS.

Other institutional dialogues that were held in 2021-22 include the first ever India-EU Climate Change Dialogue (18 April 2021); India-EU Joint Working Group on Environment (28 April 2021); India-EU Joint Working Group on Information and Communication Technology (19 April 2021) ; India - EU Working Group on WTO issues (23 July and 7 September 2021); India-EU Animal Health Technical Working Group (27 October 2021); India - EU Energy Panel Meeting (1 December 2021); Maritime Security Dialogue (1 February 2021); first India-EU Security and Defence Consultations (2 February 2021) and India-EU Cyber Dialogue (4 February 2021).

Further to enhance cooperation in defence and security, India and EU conducted the first ever joint naval exercise in June 2021.

Economic relations: The total bilateral trade in goods between India and the EU from January to August 2021 was EUR 55.29 billion. In addition to this, India-EU bilateral Trade in Services in 2020 was valued at EUR 27.59 billion. Moreover, The EU is India's one of the largest sources of FDI with FDI flow of around USD 88 billion during the period April 2000 to March 2021.



Prime Minister participated in the first ever India-EU leaders' Meeting along with leaders of all 27 EU Member States and the President of the European Council Charles Michel, May 2021

9

THE AMERICAS

NORTH AMERICA

United States of America

India and the United States (US) enjoy a comprehensive global strategic partnership covering almost all areas of human endeavour, anchored in shared democratic values, convergence of interests on a range of issues, a substantial

bilateral agenda and vibrant people-to-people contacts. The two countries are engaged in regular high-level interactions, Ministerial level dialogues and are working together on regional and global issues.



Prime Minister met US President Joseph Biden during his visit to Washington DC in September 2021

High-level/Leader-level Interaction

The bilateral relationship continues to gain depth and momentum with high-level dialogue between the Leaders of the two countries. Prime Minister spoke to President-elect Joseph Biden on 17 November 2020 to congratulate him on his victory in the Presidential elections. After President Biden assumed charge, on 8 February 2021, the two Leaders spoke over the phone and reiterated their commitment to consolidate the bilateral partnership. They spoke again on 26 April 2021, committing to work closely together in the fight against COVID. Prime Minister spoke to Vice-President Kamala Harris in June 2021 in the context of vaccine supplies to combat COVID.

At the invitation of President Biden, Prime Minister visited Washington D.C from 22-25 September 2021 for his first in-person bilateral meeting with the former since the new US Administration assumed charge. The leaders reviewed the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership and potential for strengthening bilateral cooperation further. Prime Minister said that India and the US were entering a decade of transformation, based on the pillars of tradition of democratic values, technology, trade, talent of our people, trusteeship of nature, and above all, trust. They discussed the COVID situation and ongoing India-US collaboration to contain the pandemic.

The Leaders exchanged views on regional developments in South Asia, including the situation in Afghanistan, and reiterated their shared commitment to working together to counter global terrorism; and condemned cross-border

terrorism. They exchanged views about the Indo-Pacific region, and reaffirmed their shared vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. Prime Minister invited President Biden and the First Lady Dr. Jill Biden to visit India.

Prime Minister met US Vice President Kamala Harris and discussed areas of future collaboration, including space cooperation, Information Technology, especially emerging and critical technologies, as well as the cooperation in the healthcare sector. Both recognised the vibrant people-to-people linkages as the bedrock of the mutually beneficial flow of knowledge, innovation and talent between our two countries. They also acknowledged the importance of collaborative action on climate change.

During his visit, Prime Minister held one-on-one meetings with CEOs of five US based tech companies and exchanged views about investment opportunities in India. During the visit of Prime Minister, the US Government handed over 157 stolen artifacts, largely belonging to 11-14th CE, including 45 artifacts belonging to BCE.

Prime Minister participated in the Quad Leaders' Virtual Summit on 12 March 2021 and the first in-person Quad Leader's Summit held in Washington DC on 24 September 2021. Prime Minister also participated in virtual Leaders' Summit on Climate 22-23 April 2021 convened by President Biden. Prime Minister also participated in two plurilateral events hosted by President Biden, the Global Supply Chain Summit on the sidelines of G20 Summit in Rome on 31 October 2021 and the Build Back Better World Event at COP26 in Glasgow on 1 November 2021.



Prime Minister and US Vice-President Kamala Harris in Washington DC in September 2021

Bilateral Dialogues

EAM visited the US from 23-28 May 2021 for wide ranging discussions with Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Defence Secretary Lloyd J. Austin, United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan. He also interacted with other US leadership and Congressional leaders, and the US business community. Secretary of State

Antony Blinken visited New Delhi on 27-28 July 2021 during which he called on the Prime Minister and met EAM and National Security Advisor.

US Special Presidential Envoy on Climate (SPEC) John Kerry visited India on 06-08 April 2021 and 12-14 September 2021 to discuss bilateral collaboration on climate and energy issues, and issues related to COP26.

A Congressional delegation (Codel) led by Senator John Cornyn, co-Chair of the Senate India Caucus, visited India from 12-13 November, 2021. Other members of the Codel included Senator Mike Crapo; Senator Mike Lee; Senator Tommy Tuberville; Congressman Tony Gonzalez and Congressman Jake Ellzey (R-TX). The delegation met the Prime Minister, EAM and National Security Advisor (NSA). Separately, Senator Steve Daines (R-MT) visited Delhi and Bangalore from 07-09 November 2021. He met with the Commerce and Industries Minister on 8 November 2021.

Foreign Secretary visited the US from 1-3 September 2021.

During the visit, he met with US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Bonnie Denise-Jenkins and Principal Deputy NSA Jonathan Finer. Deputy Secretary Wendy Sherman visited India from 5 to 7 October 2021. She called on EAM, NSA, Foreign Secretary and Flag Officer Commanding in Chief of Western Naval Command. US Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West visited India on 16 November 2021 to exchange views on the situation and recent developments in Afghanistan.



EAM met US Trade Representative Katherine Tai during his visit to US in May 2021

Defence Cooperation

Defence cooperation has emerged as one of the key pillars of the bilateral relations. It is wide-ranging and encompasses high-level engagement, policy dialogues, exercises, procurement, joint projects, research and capacity building. The US Secretary of Defense Lloyd J Austin visited India

from 19-21 March 2021 as part of his first visit to Asia after assuming charge. He called on the Prime Minister and met Raksha Mantri, EAM and the NSA. Secretary Austin reiterated the U.S. Government's continued commitment towards strengthening the bilateral defence relations between the two countries.



EAM with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in New Delhi in July 2021

Raksha Mantri spoke over telephone with Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin on 20 September 2021 and discussed bilateral and regional matters, including developments in Afghanistan and combating terrorism in the region.

The 16th India-US Defense Policy Group meeting was co-chaired by Defence Secretary and Under Secretary for Defense Policy Dr. Colin Kahl on 08 October 2021 in Washington DC. The two sides reviewed the progress in operationalising India-US Major Defence Partnership, military-to-military engagements, implementation of foundational defence agreements, defence exercises, strengthening technology cooperation and defence trade.

The 15th India-US Defence Procurement and Production Group (DPPG) was held on 04-05 October 2021 in virtual mode.

The 11th meeting of the India-US Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) was held virtually on 09 November 2021. It was preceded by the meeting of the various working groups and the DTTI Industry Collaboration Forum on 09 November 2021.

The Industrial Security Agreement summit between India and the United States was held between 27 September-1 October 2021 at New Delhi. The summit was organised to develop protocol for the exchange of classified information between the defence industries of both the nations.

The Executive Steering Groups Meetings for Army, Air Force and Navy exchanges were held through the year to deepen military-to-military cooperation. The Military Coordination Group (MCG) also held its meeting for the year 2021.

Chief of Air Staff attended Pacific Air Chiefs' Symposium in Hawaii from 30 August-02 September 21. Chief of the Naval Staff participated in the 24th International Seapower Symposium-2021 in Newport from 14-18 September 2021.

Chief of Defence Staff visited the US from 27 September to 01 October 2021.

General Richard D. Clarke Commander of US Special Operations Command visited India from 30 July-01 August 2021. General James C McConville, the US Chief of Staff visited India from 03-05 August 2021. This was followed by the visit of Adm. John C. Aquilino, Commander for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and US Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Gilday from 13-15 October 2021.

17th India-US joint bilateral military exercise YUDH ABHYAS conducted from 14-29 October 2021 at Alaska, where 300 US Army soldiers belonging to First Squadron (Airborne) of the 40th Cavalry Regiment and 350 soldiers of 7 MADRAS Infantry Battalion Group of Indian Army participated. India-US Army Special Operations Forces Bilateral Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR 2021 was held at JBLM, Seattle from 1-15 November 2021. A Mountain Validation Exercise was also conducted from 02-06 November 2021 with participation from the Indian Army.

The 25th edition of Malabar Naval Exercise, multilateral naval exercise led by India was held in two phases with the participation of Naval forces of India, US, Japan and Australia. The first phase was conducted at Guam (US) in August-September 2021 and second phase in Bay of Bengal in October 2021.

Indian Navy participated in the U.S. led multilateral Exercise CUTLASS Express- 2021 from 26 July - 7 August 2021, off the coast of Kenya. Indian Navy also participated in the La Perouse naval exercise from 5-7 April 2021 along with the U.S. Navy and as an Observer in Exercise SEACAT 2021 on 10-13 August 2021.

Indian Navy formally took over the first two of its MH-60R Multi Role Helicopters (MRH) from the US Navy in a ceremony in San Diego on 16 July 2021.



Prime Minister met US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin in New Delhi in March 2021

Security and Counter Terrorism

The 18th meeting of the India-US Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and the 4th session of the India-US Designations Dialogue was held in Washington, D.C., on October 26-27, 2021, led by Joint Secretary (Counter Terrorism) and U.S. State Department Acting Coordinator for Counterterrorism.

Both sides pledged to expand cooperation on law enforcement, information sharing, exchanging best practices, and increasing strategic convergence on counter terrorism challenges. They discussed mutual legal and extradition assistance and opportunities for bilateral law enforcement training, including at the Central Academy for Police Training in Hyderabad, India.

They applauded ongoing Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) training, shared best practices on countering terrorism financing and use of the internet for terrorist purposes and decided to continue counter terrorism cooperation in multilateral fora, including FATF.

The second meeting of the Counter-Narcotics Bilateral Working Group was held on 02 June 2021. Both sides exchanged views on narcotics-related challenges and committed to a bilateral framework of policy engagements and expanded cooperation to help reduce the threat of illicit drugs in both countries. Both sides also committed to use a sub-working group to establish a framework for bilateral cooperation to address the drug threat within the two countries.

Economic and Commercial relations

The US is India's second largest trading partner and a major destination for exports of goods and services. Bilateral trade in goods and services was nearly USD 149 billion in 2019. Trade decreased in 2020 due to COVID, reaching USD 121 billion. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the year saw a growth in exports of pharmaceutical products, electrical and electronic products, processed foods and cereals. Bilateral trade in goods during April-August 2021, increased by 84.71% to reach USD 47 billion (US official statistics). Bilateral trade is in India's favour by more than USD 20 billion.

The US replaced Mauritius as the second-largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) into India during 2020-21 with inflows of USD 13.82 billion (Source: MoC and I). Two-way investments reached USD 62.6 billion in 2019. The US is one of the top 5 investment destinations for Indian companies.

Minister of Commerce and Industry virtually interacted with US Trade Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai thrice since she assumed charge. In a VC on 25 March 2021, they discussed bilateral trade and agreed to revitalize engagement through the India-US Trade Policy Forum. On 14 May 2021, they discussed virtually increasing vaccine production, and the proposed waiver to certain provisions of the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) for the COVID pandemic. USTR met Minister of Commerce and Industry on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rome in October 2021.

The 12th Ministerial-level meeting of the India-United States Trade Policy Forum (TPF) was held in New Delhi on 23 November 2021 co-chaired by the Minister of Commerce and Industry and US Trade Representative, Ambassador Katherine Tai. They recognized the importance of engaging in collaborative discussion on the full range of existing and emerging issues affecting our trade relationship and explored important, emerging trade policy issues. Agreement was reached on market access facilitation for mangoes and pomegranates, pomegranate arils from India, and cherries and alfalfa hay for animal feed from the US.

Minister of Commerce and Industry virtually interacted with his counterpart Ms. Gina Raimondo, Secretary of Commerce on 28 April 2021 upon her confirmation.

The US Deputy Secretary of Commerce Don Graves and EAM addressed the Indo-Pacific Business Summit organized by the Ministry on 06-08 July 2021.

India co-hosted with the US, the Indo-Pacific Business Forum, which was held on 28-29 October 2021. EAM and US Secretary of State participated in the Forum.

During her visit to the US from 11-18 October 2021, Finance Minister co-chaired the eighth India-US Economic and Financial Partnership Dialogue in Washington D.C. on 14 October 2021 with her counterpart Janet Yellen, Secretary of Treasury. Discussions were held on the macroeconomic outlook and recovery from the COVID pandemic, financial regulatory and technical collaboration, multilateral engagement, climate finance, anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism.

Finance Minister also had several interactions with US business leaders, investors, think-tanks, Indian Diaspora and academic community to explore opportunities for enhanced economic and financial collaboration with the US.

The 10th India-US Financial Regulatory Dialogue was held virtually on 15-16 June 2021. The Dialogue was led by the Additional Secretary (Financial Markets), Department of Economic Affairs and Deputy Assistant Secretary, International Financial Markets, US Department of Treasury.

The Trade Facilitation Arrangement (AEO-MRA Mutual Recognition Agreement) was signed in September 2021. Customs administrations of both countries will agree to recognise the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) authorisation issued under the other country's programme and provide reciprocal benefits to each other's AEOs leading to a reduction in timeframe for the movement of cargo.

On 8 October 2021, India and the US joined 134 other members of the OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework in reaching agreement on the Statement on a Two-Pillar Solution to Address the Tax Challenges Arising from the Digitalization of the Economy. On 24 November 2021, India and the US reached an agreement on a transitional approach with respect to India's charge of 2% equalisation levy on e-commerce supply of services. US will terminate the currently-suspended additional duties on goods of India that had been adopted in the DST Section 301 investigation.

Several Indian and US Ministers participated in the fourth USISPF Annual Leadership Summit, held virtually in September 2021, and at the USIBC's India Ideas Summit held virtually on 06-07 October 2021.

Climate and Energy

The India-US Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 partnership was launched at the Leaders' Summit on Climate in April 2021 by the Prime Minister and President Biden. It aims to mobilize finance and speed clean energy deployment; demonstrate and scale innovative clean technologies needed to decarbonize sectors including industry, transportation, power, and buildings; and build capacity to measure, manage, and adapt to the risks of climate-related impacts. The Partnership proceeds along two tracks: the Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP) and the Climate Action and Finance Mobilization Dialogue (CAFMD).

On 9 September 2021, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and US Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm chaired the first ministerial meeting of the revamped US-India Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP). They reviewed the progress across its existing four pillars of cooperation:

1. Power and Energy Efficiency;
2. Responsible Oil and Gas;
3. Renewable Energy; and
4. Sustainable Growth

They announced the addition of the fifth pillar on Emerging Fuels, to promote cleaner energy fuels. A new India-US Task Force on Biofuels was also announced to build on the scope of work on cooperation in biofuels sector.

The inaugural Ministerial Meeting of the Climate Action and Finance Mobilization Dialogue (CAFMD) was launched on 13 September 2021, in New Delhi, co-chaired by Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate and SPEC John Kerry.

On 17 September 2021, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change participated in the Major Economies Forum, convened by President Biden.

At COP26 in November 2021, SPEC Kerry signed the framework agreement for the US joining the International Solar Alliance.

Imports of petroleum and natural gas from the US in 2020-21 was USD 6.7 billion. Cumulative imports from the US for the period starting 2011-12 to 2020-22 were worth nearly USD 18 billion, making the US an important partner for India's energy security.

Science and Technology and Space Cooperation

Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) are working together in joint microwave remote sensing

satellite for Earth observation, named NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR). ISRO sent the S-band SAR (Synthetic Aperture Radar) to Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in March 2021 and BDH (Baseband Data Handling) package was sent to JPL on 15 August 2021 for further integration activities. S-SAR Electrical and Mechanical integration with L-SAR and integrated tests are in progress; ISRO team is deputed at JPL for these activities.

India-US cooperation in Science and Technology is multi-faceted and has been growing steadily under the framework of the India-US Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement signed in October 2005, which was renewed for a period of ten years in September 2019. The Indo-US Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF), a bi-national autonomous organization established to promote cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation has continued to play an important role in strengthening cooperation in this field. The IUSSTF has granted awards to 8 virtual research centres and 11 start-ups.

Cooperation in Healthcare and COVID Pandemic

Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare virtually interacted with the US Secretary of Health and Human Services on 7 May 2021.

The fourth meeting of the India-US Health Dialogue was held on 27-28 September 2021 in Delhi to discuss strengthening epidemiological research and surveillance, vaccine development, One Health, zoonotic and vector-borne diseases, health systems and health policies etc. An MoU was signed between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the US Department of Health and Human Services for cooperation in Health and Biomedical sciences. Another MoU was signed between Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for cooperation on International Centre for Excellence in Research.

On 26 April 2021, Prime Minister and President Biden held a telephone conversation during which they committed to working closely in the fight against COVID. President Biden committed to provide emergency COVID relief to India, including oxygen-related supplies, vaccine raw materials, therapeutics and identifying sources of raw materials to be made available for manufacture of vaccines in India.

As the second wave of COVID impacted India in April 2021, the US Government, the Congress, several States in the U.S, their private sector, and the Indian diaspora extended their wholehearted support to India to help contain the pandemic. Seven flights carrying emergency supplies from the US Government landed in India by 17 May 2021. Overall, the US Government's commitment for COVID assistance to India was worth almost USD 100 million and included oxygen cylinders and ventilators, Remdesivir medicine, masks, rapid diagnostic kits, and an oxygen generation plant.

Both sides were in regular contact throughout the COVID pandemic to exchange views about supply chain resilience, vaccine related issues, resuming international travel, health

protocols etc. As part of this engagement, on 22 September 2021, Prime Minister participated in the virtual Global COVID Summit convened by President Biden. EAM participated in the COVID Ministerial convened by the US Secretary of State on 10 November 2021.

At least four Indian companies have been collaborating with U.S. based agencies to develop and mass produce COVID vaccine, which are at different stages of clinical development and assessment.

Education

Education Minister addressed a virtual roundtable meeting with participation of presidents from several US Universities on 'Advancing India-US Education Partnership' on 10 November 2021. They discussed the potential to further deepen collaborations and build knowledge partnerships, especially in interlinking industry, academia and policy makers of both our countries, under India's National Education Policy 2020. They committed to facilitate mutually beneficial partnerships in research, two-way mobility of students and teachers, institute-to-institute collaborations and leveraging the opportunities in India's education landscape, and in partnering and working together.

As per a report by Institute of International Education (IIE), 1.67 lakh Indian students went to US for higher education in the 2020-2021 academic year, forming nearly 19% of the total international students arriving in the US in the same year. There were more than 207,000 Indian students studying in the US in 2020, accounting for almost 17% of total international students in the US.

Under the Fulbright Nehru program, a total 172 grants were given to Indian and US applicants for program year 2021-22.

People-to-People Ties

People to people linkages have been one of the key drivers of the India-U.S. partnership. About 4.2 million Indian Americans/ Indian origin people reside in the US. Indian Americans [3.18 million] are the third largest Asian Ethnic group in the US. The Indian community is affluent, well-educated and are among the highest tax-payers. There are four persons of Indian-origin in the US Congress and several in State legislatures. Indian-origin persons have been appointed to several senior positions in the US Administration. Indian skilled professionals are considered a valuable asset. Flow of Indian students to the US has become an important aspect of the two countries' knowledge and innovation partnership.

The Indian Embassy and the Consulates organized the seventh International Day of Yoga on 21 June 2021 on the theme 'Yoga for Wellness' in a hybrid format. A large number of yoga enthusiasts from all over the US joined the virtual celebration of Yoga Day.

The Indian Embassy and Consulates held several events celebrating the 75 years of India's independence under the theme Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. Several events to celebrate the momentous occasion are being held across the US.

Easing of travel restrictions

COVID related travel restrictions imposed through Presidential Proclamation in May 2021 were eased and starting on 08 November 2021, Indians vaccinated with Covishield and Covaxin began travelling to the US with proof of vaccination status and negative RT-PCR test.

MoUs/Agreements signed

- Project Agreement for Air-Launched Unmanned Aerial Vehicle under the Joint Working Group Air Systems under the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative, was signed in July 2021 to deepen defence technology collaboration through co-development of defence equipment.

- The Second Amendment to the Statement of Guiding Principles (SGP) on Triangular Cooperation for Global Development was signed on 30 July 2021 to extend the validity of the Agreement to 2026.

- Trade Facilitation Arrangement (AEO-MRA Mutual Recognition Agreement) was signed in September 2021.

- MoU between Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the US Department of Health and Human Services for expanding cooperation and partnership in the healthcare sector was signed on September 2021.

- MoU between Indian Council of Medical Research and the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease was signed in September 2021 to continue joint support for the Indo-U.S. International Center of Excellence in Research (ICER) program – an infectious disease research partnership at the National Institute for Research on Tuberculosis in Chennai.

- The Updated Partnership Agreement between the Ministry of Earth Sciences and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) was signed in August, 2021 for ocean and atmospheric observations for improved weather and climate predictions. A new joint oceanographic data portal was launched.

Engagement under the Quad framework

Since 2017, Quad engagements have increased and intensified. After several official level meetings since 2017 the Quad group gained momentum.

Following up on their meeting in Tokyo in 2020, Quad Foreign Ministers met virtually on 18 February 2021 to review ongoing efforts to combat the COVID pandemic, response to climate change and furthering cooperation in areas such as maritime security, HADR, supply chain resilience and counter-terrorism.

On 12 March 2021, Prime Minister participated in the first Quad Leaders' Summit virtually, hosted by President Biden. Upgrading the dialogue to the highest level was a logical conclusion, following annual meetings of Foreign Ministers and Senior Officials' Meetings since 2017. The Leaders

reiterated their common vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. The three practical areas identified for partnership at the Summit were affordable and equitable

COVID vaccine access for the Indo-Pacific; strengthening climate actions; and critical and emerging technology.



Prime Minister at the Quad Leaders' Virtual Meeting in March 2021

On 24 September 2021, Prime Minister participated in the first in-person Quad Leaders' Summit in Washington DC, along with Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga of Japan, and President Biden. The Quad Leaders took stock of progress made since their March 2021 Summit, especially with respect to the COVID vaccine partnership. They discussed regional issues including the situation in South Asia and the Indo-Pacific.

The Leaders announced the setting up of the Quad Infrastructure Coordination Group to share assessments of regional infrastructure needs and coordinate approaches. They also set up the Space Cooperation Working Group to exchange satellite data for monitoring and adapting to climate change, disaster preparedness, and responding to challenges in shared domains. A Fellowship program was launched for 100 students per year to pursue Masters and Doctoral degrees in STEM fields in the US.

Since establishing a new Critical and Emerging technologies working group in March, Quad has been focussed on technical standards, 5G diversification and deployment, horizon-scanning, and technology supply chains. At the September Summit, a 'Quad Principles on Technology Design,

Development, Governance, and Use' was issued.

Prime Minister announced that India will supply eight million doses of Janssen vaccine manufactured by Johnson and Johnson in India under the Quad vaccine initiative, starting in October 2021. Launched in March, the Quad Vaccine Partnership was launched to help enhance equitable access to safe and effective vaccines in the Indo-Pacific region, with the aim to produce at least one billion doses of COVID vaccines by the end of 2022. Biological E company in India will manufacture these vaccines with US Development Finance Corporation supporting the company with financing.

Focusing on Climate change, a Quad Shipping Taskforce was formed with participation of ports, including Los Angeles, Mumbai Port Trust, Sydney (Botany), and Yokohama, to form a network dedicated to greening and decarbonizing the shipping value chain. The Clean Hydrogen Partnership will strengthen and reduce costs across all elements of the clean-hydrogen value chain. The Quad countries will convene a Climate and Information Services Task Force and build a new technical facility through the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure that will provide technical assistance in small island developing states.



Prime Minister with his counterparts from Japan, USA and Australia at the Quad Leaders' Summit in September 2021

Canada

High Level engagements

During the COVID, pandemic India and Canada maintained bilateral dialogue on issues of common interest. On 10 February 2021, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau spoke to Prime Minister over phone in the context of Canada's requirement of COVID vaccines from India, following which, 500,000 doses of Covishield vaccines were delivered in March 2021.

EAM had a substantive discussion with Canada's Foreign Minister Marc Garneau on 27 April 2021 and 01 September 2021. They continued their dialogue through a virtual meeting on 05 May 2021 and an in-person meeting on 29 June 2021 in Matera, Italy, on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers meeting. They discussed bilateral and global issues such as combating the COVID pandemic; climate change, terrorism and regional issues of mutual interest.

Commerce and Industry Minister met Canada's Minister for International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development Mary Ng, on 11 October 2021 in Sorrento, Italy on the margins of the G20 meeting. They discussed issues related to bilateral trade, potential for a trade agreement, and cooperation in energy, new technologies, manufactured goods, and services.

Finance, Trade and Industry

Bilateral trade was worth USD 2.968 billion from 01 April 2021 to 31 August 2021. India's exports to Canada during this period were USD 1.982 billion and imports were worth USD 0.985 billion. Portfolio investments from Canada into India increased from USD 5 billion to more than USD 55 billion in the last six years as Canadian investors consider India as an attractive destination for investments.

More than 600 Canadian companies have established presence in India and more than 1000 companies are pursuing business opportunities in India. Negotiations for India and

Canada Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) have resumed. The last virtual meeting on CEPA was held on 20-22 October 2021 and on BIPPA on 22 June 2021.

In order to enhance bilateral trade and attract Canadian investments into India, several conferences and buyer-seller meetings were organised virtually between Canadian and Indian businesses in association with industry associations and chambers of commerce.

Science and Technology

On 16 July 2021, an MoU between the India-Canada Centre for Innovative Multidisciplinary Partnership to Accelerate Community Transformation and Sustainability (IC-IMPACTS) and Mitacs, India was signed to support research collaborations in sectors of mutual interest, including integrated water management, safe and sustainable infrastructure, and public health.

Under the IC-IMPACTS program between Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) Canada, various projects are under implementation. DST has been supporting Industrial research and development projects with Canada which have potential for application.

Education

India is the top source of foreign students with 230,000 Indian students studying in Canada. 69 reputed Canadian faculty members visited India so far under the Global Initiative of Academic Works (GIAN) programme for teaching assignments in Indian institutions. Under the Scheme for promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) to improve research ecosystems in India's higher education institutions

19 projects under SPARC have been awarded to Canadian faculties. 106 projects were awarded under GIAN.

The Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (SICI) is a bi-national organization established in 1968 for fostering education and cultural cooperation and collaboration between India and Canada. On 2 November 2021, SICI signed an MoU with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Government of Saskatchewan province to further academic cooperation between educational institutions in Saskatchewan and India.

Cultural Exchanges

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau extended his best wishes on India's Independence Day and other Indian festivals.

To mark the annual International Day of Yoga, 82 Yoga events (virtual and physical) were organized, including Yoga at Niagara Falls and a special virtual Yoga session for Parliamentarians on 20 June.

Under the banner of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, several cultural events were organized.

A statue of Goddess Annapurna, patron Goddess of the city of Varanasi (likely dating back to 18th century) and unethically acquired in 1913, was discovered in the art collection of University of Regina in Canada. The statue was returned by

the University and arrived in India on 15 October 2021. It was installed in the Kashi Vishwanath Temple of Varanasi on 15 November 2021.

Defence and Security Cooperation

A National Investigation Agency team visited Canada on 04-05 November 2021 to take forward cooperation in investigation of terrorism.

Consular Cooperation

India and Canada cooperated closely in evacuating their stranded nationals from each others' countries. Direct flights between India and Canada were suspended on 23 April 2021, and were resumed from 27 September 2021 onwards.

Mutual support during Covid-19

India and Canada collaborated in dealing with the global pandemic. India supplied 500,000 Covishield vaccines, Paracetamol and Hydroxychloroquine to Canada. During the second wave of COVID in India in April-May 2021, Canada supplied Remdesivir, ventilators, oxygen concentrators, oxygen generation plants and donated USD 10 million through Canadian Red Cross to Indian Red Cross.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Argentina



EAM met Argentine Foreign Minister Felipe Solá on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Matera, Italy in June 2021

India's bilateral cooperation with Argentina was marked by increased interactions, including through various bilateral

dialogue mechanisms as well as in various multilateral fora. EAM met Argentine Foreign Minister Mr. Felipe Solá on the

sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting at Matera, Italy on 30 June 2021 and comprehensively discussed issues of bilateral interest. Finance Minister of India met Mr. Martin Guzman, Minister of Economy of Argentina in Washington DC on 14 October 2021 on the sidelines of the Annual Meetings of IMF and World Bank.

The relationship between both the countries witnessed enhanced engagements in Space and Mining. Cabinet approved an MoU on cooperation in the field of Mineral Resources with Argentina on 02 June 2021. A delegation led by the Secretary, Ministry of Mines visited Argentina from 29 August to 03 September 2021 to finalize and take forward the partnerships in Lithium.

International Day of Yoga was organized virtually through Mission's social media as well as the specially created website www.diadelyoga.com.ar under the slogan "Yoga for wellness" in 2021. Minister of Culture of Argentina Mr Tristan Bauer joined the Ambassador of India in celebrating the 160th birth anniversary of Gurudev and paid floral tribute at the bust on

07 May 2021.

The first-ever Indian Coffee Tasting session was organized by the Embassy of India in Argentine on 27 August 2021. It was jointly inaugurated by the Agriculture Minister of Argentina Mr Luis Bastera and the Ambassador of India. A video message from Minister of State External Affairs was also played. Attendees included coffee experts & importers, media, government officials, prominent citizens and diplomats. Another event on Indian Coffee was organized at the iconic café, La Biela, on 22 October 2021.

The bilateral trade stood at USD 2.90 billion with exports of USD 618.72 million and imports of USD 2.28 billion from April to October 2021. The 6th India-Argentina Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) was held on 24 November 2021 in Delhi. Mr. Pablo Anselmo Tettamanti, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Argentina led the Argentine delegation, while the Indian delegation was led by Secretary (East).

Bolivia

India-Bolivia bilateral ties which acquired greater substance following the State visit of the President of India to Bolivia in 2019, continued to offer huge scope for beneficial cooperation for prosperity, especially in areas of critical mineral resources, trade and business. EAM held a bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister Rogelio Mayta on 05 August 2021 in Tehran during which issues of bilateral and multilateral importance, including cooperation under the International Solar Alliance, were discussed. India's readiness to cooperate in the IT, Pharmaceuticals and Transportation sectors was conveyed. Foreign Minister Mayta expressed the Bolivian Government's readiness to rejuvenate. He assured cooperation on areas such as pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, mineral resources, cultural cooperation, traditional systems of medicine etc.

Discussions on lithium partnership were held with Bolivian authorities from January to August 2021. The first meeting of the India-Bolivia Joint Working Group on Traditional Systems of Medicine was held virtually on 12th October 2021. Areas of bilateral cooperation under the MoU in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy were discussed. It was decided to hold the next meeting in November 2021.

Trade between India and Bolivia has been growing and there is significant scope for improvement. In 2020, India was Bolivia's eighth largest supplier, the largest export destination and fourth-largest trading partner. Several online business sessions and business to business meetings were held in the past year to promote trade and business between the two countries in different sectors of potential.

Under India's Technical and Economic Cooperation programme (ITEC), 11 Bolivian nationals attended the e-ITEC courses, till October 2021, in virtual format due to the ongoing pandemic. In October 2021, the work on setting up the Center

of Excellence in Information & Communication Technologies (CENETIC) in Cochabamba began under the India-Bolivia Agreement signed for the purpose in March 2019. A bust of Mahatma Gandhi gifted by the Government of India was unveiled in La Paz on 31 August 2021 by the Mayor of La Paz and Ambassador of India. Yoga has become popular in Bolivia with an increasing number of Yoga practitioners from Bolivia participating in the 7th International Day of Yoga celebrations in June 2021.

The embassy of India in association with the Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) and the Bolivian National Chamber of Commerce (CNC Bolivia) organized a business session on the promotion of India's engineering goods exports to Bolivia on 16 November 2021. Also, a virtual business event to promote the export of Indian Chemicals to Bolivia was held on 23 November 2021. The Embassy in association with the Bolivian National Chamber of Industries (CNI Bolivia) organized an event to promote India's plastic and rubber products to Bolivia on 01 December 2021. Embassy facilitated Bolivian importers participation in the virtual Buyer Seller Meet organized by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) from 08 to 11 December.

As part of India@75 Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, "Dekho Apna Desh" Quiz contest, screening of documentary highlighting Communal Harmony, a variety programme of Indian and Bolivian dances, tourism promotion events and a workshop on Bhangra were organised during November and December 2021. Cultural performers from Bolivia have been actively participating in events being organized by our Mission as part of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" celebrations to commemorate 75 years of Independence of India.

Brazil

India and Brazil continued to expand their strategic partnerships in various sectors of cooperation. The momentum in India-Brazil relations created during President Bolsonaro (PB)'s historic visit to India in January 2020 as the Chief Guest during the Republic Day celebrations continued with his attending the Republic Day celebrations in Brasilia with 9 of his cabinet colleagues in January 2021. PB's public acknowledgement of India's supply of vaccines was equally matched by vociferous reporting in Brazilian media.

PB attended the BRICS summit hosted by India on virtual mode on 09 September 2021. Brazilian Foreign Minister and many other Ministers of Brazil attended BRICS and IBSA FM and Ministerial level virtual meetings hosted by India. EAM also met the new Brazilian FM Amb. Carlos Alberto Franca at the G-4 meeting held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Session in New York. Ahead of COP 26 on 27 October 2021, Environment Ministers of India and Brazil held a virtual meeting and exchanged views on climate change. In September 2021, the Brazilian Senate adopted a congratulatory vote praising India vaccinating more than ten million people a day.

Numerous meetings, webinars and interactive sessions aimed at expansion of cooperation in various sectors such as health and pharmaceuticals, traditional medicine, defence and defence industrial cooperation, agriculture, mining and culture were organised. The Embassy of India in Brazil also pursued 3Ts (Trade, Technology and Tourism) interests and country-specific export targets with several object-oriented events.

Following sustained efforts, there has been a 100% increase in India's exports to Brazil during April-October 2021 over the same period in 2020 (i.e. from USD 2.11 billion in April-October 2020 to USD 4.26 billion in April-October 21), ahead of the export target set by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for Brazil.

The 1st India-Brazil JWG on Oil & Natural Gas took place in April 2021 and JWG on Bioenergy in August 2021. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) and the Administrative Council for Economic Defense (CADE) of Brazil signed an MoU for bilateral cooperation in June 2021.

A Brazilian delegation visited India to participate in the 7th India-Brazil Joint Defense Committee (JDC) held in New Delhi on 01 December 2021, which discussed strengthening

strategic partnership, military-military exchanges, training and defence industrial cooperation.

Meetings in virtual format were organized with Brazil's top ten Ready Made Garment retail chains to promote sourcing of apparel, accessories, carpets, and handicrafts. Embassy of India offered design support (in collaboration with IIFT) and e-Commerce solutions to the participating companies. The Embassy supported a virtual Buyer-Seller-Meet on Indian Handicrafts organized by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts from 08-15 December.

Several meetings were held with the representatives of the Brazilian Edible Oil Association (ABIOVE) and Brazil's export promotion agency, Apex Brazil to augment the supply of soybean oil to India to meet the growing demand. An India-Brazil Agritech Cross-Incubation Programme 2021 was organized with the partnership between MRE, Anprotec and the Department of Science & Technology-India on 07 December 2021.

As part of India @75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) celebrations, the Embassy organized several activities. The Mission, in collaboration with The Alliance for Volunteerism (Aliança pelo Voluntariado) of the Civil House of the Presidency of the Federative Republic of Brazil organised an online talk on "Holistic Approach to Yoga in the Modern Era" by Dr Manmath Gharote, Director of Lonavla yoga Institute on the occasion of the 7th International Day of Yoga celebrations. The event was graced by the First Lady of Brazil Mrs. Michelle Bolsonaro.

The Embassy organized a webinar in celebration of 6th Ayurveda Day on 02 November 2021 in collaboration with the Brazilian Suddha Yoga & Ayurveda School and the Jamnagar Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, on the theme "Ayurveda for Nutrition". The Mission also celebrated Gandhi Jayanthi, and Diwali Festival in a befitting manner under AKAM celebrations. Senators and Federal Deputies among other dignitaries participated in the Diwali celebration organized by the Mission on 5 November 2021 under AKAM. The Mission also organized the celebration of Constitution Day of India on 26 November 2021, Mahaparinirvan Divas on 06 December 2021, Commemoration of First War of Independence on 17 December 2021 and Good Governance Week in December 2021.

Late Prof. Heleno Bolfarine of Brazil was awarded the 10th Professor Mahalanobis International Award in Statistics.

Chile

India-Chile relations continue to grow and strengthen with ongoing bilateral interactions and cooperation including in the multilateral fora. The second round of negotiations on Expansion of India-Chile PTA took place virtually on 08-09 April 2021 followed by the third round on 06-07 October 2021. This round brought together the negotiating groups on Market Access, Rules of Origin, Sanitary and Phytosanitary

Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade. Chilean Air Force participated in an online symposium "Artificial Intelligence for Air Warriors" organized by FICCI and the Indian Air Force (IAF) in April 2021.

The seventh Round of India-Chile Foreign Office Consultations took place on 13-14 September 2021 in Santiago. The two

sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations including trade and investments, defence, agriculture, health and pharmaceuticals, energy, space, cooperation in Antarctica, disaster management, cultural and consular issues. EAM held discussions with his Chilean counterpart on issues of mutual interest including improvement in economic engagement and green energy, on the sidelines of UNGA in New York in September 2021.

Association of Fruit Exports of Chile AG (ASOEX), Chile exported 4,451,087 boxes of fresh fruits in 2020-21, an increase of 133.07% compared to the same period of 2019-20. The Embassy of India, Santiago in collaboration with Chilean agencies organized a virtual programme on the occasion of 'International Day of Yoga' on 21 June 2021. The embassy organized a virtual B2B meeting on 1 September 2021 in association with Indian Council for Leather Exports (CLE). The second meeting between the Ministry of Electronics

and Information Technology, Government of India (MeitY) and Chilean Economic Development Agency (CORFO) for collaboration in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) took place virtually on 13 October 2021. The embassy organized a gala event of the textile exhibition on Indian silk sarees on 8-14 November 2021 in association with the Cultural Corporation of Las Condes. A virtual Buyer-Seller Meeting (BSM) in association with Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) was organised from 8-15 December 2021. A virtual BSM in collaboration with Tea Board India in February 2022 and a physical BSM in association with Handloom Exports Promotion Council are planned for March 2022.

A series of cultural and commercial activities were organised every month to celebrate India@75 Azad Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM).

Colombia

Relations between India and Colombia were further strengthened with several high-level engagements between the two countries. A continued upward trend is seen in cooperation in various fields including trade and commerce, science & technology, space, health and pharmaceuticals, and close coordination on regional and global issues.

MoS paid an official visit to Colombia from 04-06 September 2021 and held a comprehensive bilateral dialogue with the

Vice President and Foreign Minister of Colombia Ms. Marta Lucia Ramirez and Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation of Colombia Mr. Tito José Crissien Borrero. The two Ministers signed an MoU between India and Colombia on Cooperation and Exploration of Peaceful Use of Space. EAM met the Vice President and Foreign Minister of Colombia Ms. Marta Lucía Ramírez on 25 September 2021 on the sidelines of UNGA in New York and held discussions on issues of mutual interest.



EAM and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Ms. Marta Lucia Ramirez, during her visit to India in October 2021.

Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia Ms. Marta Lucia Ramirez visited India from 01-03 October 2021. She was accompanied by a 48-member delegation comprising of the Minister of Health and Social Protection Dr. Luiz Fernando Ruiz, Vice Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation Mr. Sergio Cristancho Marulanda, and representatives of private companies and universities. The main focus of the visit was a collaboration in the field of Health and Pharmaceuticals, Science and Technology and

Space. During the visit, Ms. Ramirez met Vice President of India on 01 October 2021 and exchanged views on bilateral cooperation in many areas. On 02 October 2021, EAM held a comprehensive bilateral dialogue with Ms. Ramirez, on issues such as Health, Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology and Space. Regional and international issues of mutual interest were also discussed. EAM underlined India's priorities concerning UN reforms. The leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation in multilateral fora. Two letters of intent for cooperation in the

fields of biotechnology and medical research were also signed by the Department of Biotechnology and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) with their Colombian counterparts. Minister of State External Affairs also met Ms. Ramirez on 03 October 2021, with whom she had very productive discussions during the visit to Colombia in September 2021.

The ninth round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Colombia was held through a video conference on 07 May 2021. The Indian side was led by Secretary (East) and the Colombian side was led by Mr. Francisco Javier Echeverri, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs. During the consultations, the entire gamut of bilateral ties including strengthening of economic and commercial relations, cooperation in the field of science and technology, defence, agriculture, space, energy, pharmaceuticals, culture, education and sports, and regional and multilateral issues were discussed.

On 14 April 2021, a video conference between the Department of Science and Technology (DST) of the Ministry of Science & Technology of India and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Minciencia) of Colombia was held to discuss the strengthening of cooperation in the field of science and technology.

Despite pandemic restrictions and logistical challenges, bilateral trade between India and Colombia continued to show a substantial increase over 2020-21. To strengthen economic, commercial and business links, several business events and

virtual business conferences and buyer-seller meets were organised in collaboration with the Indian Export Promotion Councils including Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC), Engineering Export Promotion Council of India (EEPC), Indian Electrical and Electronics Manufacturers Association (IEEMA), Plastics Export Promotion Council (Plexconcil), Electronics and Software Export Promotion Council (ESC-EPC), Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), CAPEXIL, etc.

To facilitate cooperation between India and Colombia in the field of agriculture and fisheries, an MoU for cooperation on the subject will be concluded in February 2022.

Under India@75 Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM), cultural and academic outreach programmes were organized in Colombia, including photographic exhibitions on Indian art and culture, Indian cultural weeks at universities and schools, conferences and seminars at Colombian Universities and think tanks dedicated to studies of Indian culture and economy, film screenings on virtual platforms, social media campaigns, among others. 7th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2021 was celebrated in various cities of Colombia from 01-21 June 2021 with 27 events including Yoga and meditation sessions, lectures and conferences on Yoga. Tourism promotion events, Constitution Day, 6th Ayurveda Day, Mahaparinirvana Diwas, World Hindi Day etc. were celebrated in a befitting manner during November and December 2021 and January 2022.



MOS (ML) signed an MoU on Cooperation in Space with Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia Ms. Marta Lucia during her visit to Colombia in October 2021

Cuba

India's bilateral relationship with Cuba remained warm and cordial. India has existing Lines of Credit (LOCs) worth USD 248 million to Cuba. At the 4th General Assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) held in virtual mode from 18-21 October, 2021 and which was chaired by our Minister of Power, New & Renewable Energy and DG ISA, the Cuban Minister of Energy & Mines Mr. Liván Arronte attended as Vice-Chair of LAC region. They discussed the strategic plan for

the next five years, including the development of photovoltaic solar energy at affordable costs.

Sixth Ayurveda Day was celebrated in Havana at the Ayurveda Center (Panchakarma Centre), La Paradera, where two Vice Ministers of Public Health Mr Fernando Navarro Martínez and Dr. (Ms.) Tania Margarita Cruz Hernández participated. Panchakarma Centre is the first of its kind in Latin America, a

cooperation product between the two countries. The Embassy organised several cultural events as part of India @75 Azadi

Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations including the Constitution Day and Mahaparinirvan Divas.

Ecuador

Relations between India and Ecuador continued to strengthen during the period. Virtual business meetings in pharmaceuticals and plastics were organised in collaboration with Pharmexcil and Plexconcil, with Ecuadorian businesses.

Under India@75 "Azaadi ka Amrit Mahotsav" (AKAM) celebrations, the 152nd Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated in Guayaquil, Ecuador from 01-02 October 2021, a photographic exhibition on the life of Mahatma Gandhi was organized at the Municipal Museum of the city of Guayaquil, and another

photographic exhibition was organized in Quito on 14 August 2021. The 6th Ayurveda Day was celebrated by organising a virtual programme on 05 November 2021 with the participation of Ms. Barbara Flores of Divine School, Ecuador and a virtual conference on Ayurveda on 11 November 2021 with the participation of Ms. Maria Fernanda Bueno from WAH Ayurveda and Dr. Aswathy from Ecuador. A gastronomy festival "Cultural meeting and gastronomy of the countries" held at Cuenca, Ecuador on 11-12 December 2021, showcased Indian cuisine.

Mexico

Bilateral relations between India and Mexico continued to strengthen with high-level exchanges. The year 2021 began on a high note for both countries as they participated as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council for the period 2021-2022. The Mexican authorities appreciated the arrival of 870,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII), on 14 February 2021.

EAM visited Mexico from 26-28 September 2021. This was his first visit as EAM to Mexico. EAM participated in the commemorative events of the 200th anniversary of the consolidation of Mexican Independence along with other world leaders. He called on the President of Mexico Mr. Manuel López Obrador and with Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard, he held extensive discussions on bilateral relations and global issues of mutual interests. Both sides expressed their keen willingness to cooperate in areas such as commerce, outer space, innovation, science and technology, health and pharmaceuticals, education, culture and people-to-people contacts.

A delegation from National Defense College (NDC) visited Mexico as part of the Foreign Studies Tour Programme from 11-16 October 2021 and held interactions with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense, Navy, Economy and academic institutions of repute.

Embassy of India in Mexico organized India - Mexico Economic Opportunities Forum from 16-18 November 2021 with the Ministry of Economy of Mexico to showcase opportunities for investment in India and explore the growth of exports from India.

As part of India @75 Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, Embassy organized spectacular Iconic Week for 2021 from 31 October - 05 November with the participation of esteemed dignitaries from local government, and dance presentations by Bollywood Group from ICCR. In continuation, Iconic Week of 2022 from 26 January - 01 February was organized on a grand scale with Lalit Kala Academy, ICCR, Ministry of Textiles, Ministry of Culture and others as partners.

Paraguay

The bilateral relationship between India and Paraguay continued to strengthen. On 11 March 2021 EAM held a telephonic conversation with Mr Euclides Acevedo, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay on the coronavirus situation. Subsequently, India donated 200,000 doses of Covaxin to Paraguay in March-April 2021.

The India-Paraguay bilateral trade stood at USD 142.56 million with exports of USD 133.64 million and imports of

USD 8.92 million from April to October 2021. The 3rd India-Paraguay Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) were held on 01 December 2021 in Asuncion. Secretary (East), led the Indian delegation, while the Paraguayan delegation was led by Mr Raúl Cano Ricciardi - Vice Minister of Economic Relations and Integration at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Paraguay.

The Indian Cabinet approved the opening of an Indian Embassy in Paraguay. Efforts are underway to establish the Embassy.

Peru

Bilateral relations between India and Peru continued to grow in sectors like trade and commerce, traditional systems of medicine, defence, renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, capacity building, culture etc.

India-Peru bilateral trade also witnessed substantial growth

in the current Financial Year. A series of virtual business interactions and Buyer-Seller Meets were held to highlight trade and business opportunities for Indian companies with a focus on sectors like medical devices, pharmaceuticals, critical health technologies, automobiles, agricultural machinery, customized vehicles, leather and footwear, electronic

products, technology, tourism, services, textile machinery, etc. Earlier this year, the Peruvian regulator issued a resolution that facilitated the export of peanuts from India. The Indian side permitted in September 2021 import of Peruvian citrus fruits and blueberries into India. Sixth-round of negotiations to finalise a Trade Agreement between India and Peru is being planned this year.

Several Trade and business events were organized to promote engineering goods in association with EEPC India on 16 November 2021, chemical products with Chemexcil on 23 November 2021, and plastics & rubber goods with Plexconcil and Capexil on 1 December 2021. Embassy joined an event held in Lima for the official re-launch of MSN Labs Peru on 25 November 2021. Embassy together with CAPEXIL organised virtual B2B meetings on the export of India's ceramics on 15-16 December. Trade promotion events and BSMs were held in the last quarter of the Financial Year with a focus on textiles, pharmaceuticals and leather, as well as business and investment opportunities with Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Ministry of AYUSH and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Medical Faculty of the National University of San Marcos held an online meeting in July 2021 on cooperation in traditional systems of medicine. A meeting was held on 27 October 2021 with the Vice Minister of Defence Resources at the Peruvian Ministry of Defence to initiate action on various mutually agreed points like training, exchanges, defence industrial cooperation, online interaction between the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) and Peruvian organizations

such as FAME (Arms and Ammunition Factory of Army) etc. The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) signed an MoU on Cooperation with the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP) on 22 October 2021 to enhance mutual understanding and friendship through the promotion of cooperative and collaborative institutional relations.

Over 4 candidates attended various e-ITEC courses. Embassy of India, Lima organized a series of events highlighting various identified themes in Peru as part of India@75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) celebrations to commemorate 75 years of India's Independence. Two-week long celebrations were held from 12-26 June 2021 with 16 events focusing on different facets of Yoga, on the occasion of 7th IDY.

Under the Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD) Scheme, a Festival of India titled "Amrit Mahotsav" was held in Lima on 08 December 2021 celebrating the great diversity of Indian culture and tradition. The 6th Ayurveda Day with "Ayurveda for Poshan" as the main theme was celebrated on 02 November 2021 through a virtual event highlighting India's wisdom in Ayurveda and its significance in daily nutrition to maintain a healthy life. Several events were held highlighting India's cultural heritage, achievements, national unity, scientific and technological advancement, development partnership and contribution of diaspora. Constitution Day, Mahaparinirvan Divas, as well as various programs highlighting India's cultural diversity, tourism, development cooperation business opportunities etc. were held from January - to March 2022.

Uruguay

India continued to maintain close bilateral ties with Uruguay. The 4th India-Uruguay Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) were held on 29 November 2021 in Montevideo. Secretary (East), led the Indian delegation, while the Uruguayan delegation was led by Ms. Carolina Ache Batlle, Deputy

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay.

The India-Uruguay bilateral trade stood at USD 171.76 million with exports of USD 87.64 million and imports of USD 84.12 million from April to August this year.

Venezuela

Relations with Venezuela remained close and cordial. On 01 October 2021, India and Venezuela celebrated the 62nd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Both the countries have cooperative relations in the multilateral fora. EAM held a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of Venezuela Mr. Felix Plasencia on 25 September 2021 on the sidelines of UNGA in New York. They discussed meeting COVID challenges and reviewed the bilateral ties. They also agreed to cooperate in the multilateral arena.

India-Venezuela trade registered an overall figure of USD 252.70 million for April-August 2021. Of this, USD 224.02 million were exports from India to Venezuela and USD 29.58 million imports from Venezuela. The embassy of India in Caracas organised a commercial event to promote trade and tourism with Venezuela on 27 October 2021 which saw

the participation of senior leaders, officials and the business community of Venezuela.

As part of India@75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, the Embassy of India at Caracas has organized a series of events including Cultura de la India, Khana de la India, Yoga de la India, Namaste India and Bollywood Arepa. Other important events during the period included the organization of Gandhi Jayanti with the participation of the Venezuelan Vice Foreign Minister and the inauguration of 'Gandhi Centre' in Caracas, Venezuela.

Seventh International Day of Yoga was celebrated at La Casona in Caracas with the participation of the Venezuelan Minister of Culture, Vice Foreign Minister of Asia, Middle East and Oceania and a large group of Yoga lovers.

Iconic India Week was celebrated in Caracas from 24-30 November 2021. Minister of State External Affairs delivered a message virtually to launch the event. Senior leadership from Venezuela, important members of cultural organisations

and business associations participated in India Week. Several commercial events were held in January and February 2022 to promote exports from India to Venezuela.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Belize

India's close and friendly relations with Belize continued in 2021. India donated 25000 doses of the 'Made in India' AstraZeneca vaccine on 05 March 2021. India's dialogue at the level of Foreign Minister in multilateral fora such as SICA, CARICOM, CELAC and the Commonwealth have provided

institutional frameworks for strengthening ties with Belize. Belize and India continue to support each other issues in the UN and other multilateral fora including Belize's support for India's candidature for the UN Security Council non-permanent seat for the term 2021-2022.

Costa Rica

India and Costa Rica continued to maintain friendly relations. The 3rd round of India-Costa Rica Foreign Office Consultations was held on 16 September 2021 in San Jose. Secretary (East) led the Indian side. The Costa Rican side was led by Ms Adriana Bolanos Argueta, Vice Minister of Bilateral Affairs and International Cooperation. Both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation in trade, health, pharmaceutical and space.

in 2013. The bilateral trade from April to August this year stood at USD 89.37 million with the export of USD 55.77 million and import of USD 33.60 million.

A protocol for the establishment of the India-Costa Rica Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) was signed between the Department of Commerce and the Costa Rican Ministry of Foreign Trade in June 2021 under the provisions of the MoU on Economic Cooperation signed between the two countries

Embassy in collaboration with the University of Costa Rica, San Jose virtually launched gamified Sanskrit learning App 'Little Guru' on 30 April 2021. The event was attended by students, members of faculties, Dean and Vice Rector of University of Costa Rica along with Government Representatives. University of Costa Rica has been teaching Sanskrit for over 50 years. Professor Hilda Chen Apuy, who visited India on a UNESCO scholarship in the 1950s, introduced studies on Indian History, Philosophy and Sanskrit at the University of Costa Rica.

El Salvador

The year 2021 witnessed further enhancement of India's relations with El Salvador. The 3rd Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between the two countries were held in San Salvador on 17 September 2021. The Indian side was led by Secretary (East), and the Salvadoran side was led by Ms. Adriana Mira, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Integration and Economic Promotion. During the FOC, the two sides comprehensively reviewed the current status of bilateral relations in all fields including political, economic, cultural, trade and consular affairs. The possibilities of expanding cooperation in the fields of agriculture, science and technology, space, energy, education, health and traditional medicine and tourism were also discussed. Both sides exchanged an MoU between Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), MEA and the Specialized Institute of Higher Education for Diplomatic Training (IEESFORD), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador.

the International Law Commission for the term 2023-27; and the Human Rights Council for the term 2022-24.

On the multilateral front, India received support for its candidature to UN Security Council for the term 2021-22; Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for the term 2022-23; Executive Committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);

On the commercial front, trade relations improved between the two countries. Bilateral trade volume stood at USD 87.94 million during 2020-21, and at USD 95.14 million during April-October 2021 which is steadily growing over the years, with a balance of trade in India's favour.

As a part of India @75 celebrations, the India-El Salvador Friendship Association was formed in San Salvador on 6 September 2021 with the aim to focus on promoting culture, cuisine, commerce and people to people contact between the two countries. The Embassy of India organized ITEC Day celebrations in San Salvador on 06 September 2021. Ambassador Adriana Mira, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Integration and Economic Promotion, participated in the event as Chief Guest and appreciated the role of Government of India in providing scholarships for Salvadorans. 210 scholars from El Salvador have completed their training in India in various fields.

Guatemala

Relations between India and Guatemala have steadily strengthened in the commercial, cultural, and political sectors. Second Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and Guatemala were held virtually on 5 May 2021. The Indian side was led by Secretary (East), and the Guatemalan side was led by Mr. Carlos Ramiro Martínez, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the FOCs, both sides

comprehensively reviewed the current status of bilateral relations in all fields including political, economic, cultural, trade and consular. They discussed the possibilities of expanding cooperation in the fields of agriculture, science and technology, space, energy, education, health and traditional medicine and tourism.



MoS (VM) met Foreign Minister of Guatemala Pedro Brolo in July 2021

Minister of State for External Affairs Shri V. Muraleedharan [MoS (VL)] visited Guatemala from 04-06 July 2021. This was the first ministerial visit to Guatemala in six years. During the visit, MoS (VL) called on the President of Guatemala Dr. Alejandro Giammattei and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala Ambassador Pedro Brolo Vila, and discussed issues of bilateral, regional and international significance.

On the multilateral arena, Guatemala continued to support India's candidatures in various international bodies

Since the advent of COVID, the commercial engagement has been shifted to the online sphere. Since April 2021, the Mission in collaboration with various Indian chambers of commerce and local chambers of commerce has arranged 6 Virtual Buyer-Seller Meets in various sectors including electronics, leather, and ceramics. On 06 December 2021, Embassy organized a workshop titled "Warehousing Opportunities for Indian Companies in Guatemala". An Indian company has signed Expression of Interest with a Guatemalan company to promote warehousing facilities for 20 Indian companies. This would be the beginning for Indian companies targeting Guatemala as a warehousing hub in Central America. This would also promote expansion of Indian businesses in Central America. The Mission facilitated evacuation of 8 Indian nationals from Guatemala during this period.

As a part of the India @75 celebrations, Embassy of India organized an event to celebrate the success of Solar

Mamas from Guatemala with Vice President participating as the Chief Guest. Addressing the gathering, the Vice President of Guatemala H.E. Guillermo Castillo Reyes praised the Government of India for its contribution in capacity development among Guatemalans. Guatemala is an ITEC partner country since 1997-1998 and ITEC training programmes remain strong connect between India and Guatemala. Till date 227 Guatemalans have been trained under ITEC programme. This includes 20 women from the indigenous community of Guatemala who have been trained at Barefoot College in India to become Solar Engineers and Entrepreneurs. Similarly, on 03 December 2021, the Embassy organized a special event for ITEC alumni members from Guatemala. Vice Foreign Minister Ambassador Ava Atzum Arévalo participated as the chief guest. The event included a quiz on 75 years of India's freedom, and also an exhibition on 75 years of India's Development Story.

The 7th International Day of Yoga (IDY) was celebrated across Guatemala throughout the month of June 2021. The celebrations started with curtain-raiser event on 03 June 2021 with Guatemalan Olympic Medalist Eric Borando and continued with celebrations in the famous city of Atitlan and Mazatenango. For the first time IDY was celebrated in the Constitutional Plaza, located in front of the National Palace. The IDY celebrations culminated with the celebration at the National Stadium Doroteo Guamuch Flores, attended by more than 100 yoga practitioners along with the Vice Foreign

Minister Ava Arévalo, Olympic Gymnast Ana Gómez and famous Guatemalan Artist Chris Papita. On 02 November 2021, the Embassy in association with Dabur International organized an Ayurveda Day on 02 November 2021.

As part of India @75 celebrations, Embassy of India in collaboration with Universidad del Istmo de Guatemala and Universidad Francisco Marroquín, established an "India Corner" at the Paiz Riera Library and Ludwig von Mises Library respectively which includes a selection of books on Indian History, Culture, Foreign Policy, and Indian film industry, among others; The Embassy in collaboration with Guatemala City Cricket Team organized cricket tournaments for cricket lovers in Guatemala on 12 June 2021; The Embassy in collaboration with Royal Enfield Guatemala organized a motorbike rally on 26 June 2021, which started from Embassy premises and concluded at Pueblo Real, Tecpan (ancient Capital of Guatemala) where a life-sized statue of Mahatma Gandhi has been placed as part of his 150th birth anniversary.

To commemorate 75 Years of India's Independence, the

Embassy of India organized a grand exhibition titled "Namaste India" in Cayalá, Guatemala City on 14 and 15 August 2021, showcasing India's development story. An estimated 3000 visitors visited the two-day event. On 02 October 2021, a grand Gandhi Jayanti celebration was organized by the Embassy of India at the 'Patio De La Paz' the symbol of peace at the National Palace of Guatemala. A book on the celebrations of the Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was released during the event. A short Spanish documentary on the life of Mahatma Gandhi was projected during the event. On 08 October 2021, as a part of the celebrations of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' and the continuation of Gandhi Jayanti celebrations, Ambassador of India presented a mini bust of Mahatma Gandhi and a copy of the commemorative book published by the Embassy of India to celebrate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi to President of Guatemala Dr. Alejandro Giammattei. President during his remarks conveyed that Mahatma Gandhi is one of the world leaders whose life and teachings have a great impact on him.

Nicaragua

India's bilateral trade with Nicaragua remained warm and cordial. Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Mr. Denis Ronaldo Moncada had two meetings with EAM, one in Tehran in August 2021 and the second in New York in September 2021 on the sidelines of the UNGA.

Within the constraints of the pandemic, the Embassy of India in Panama celebrated the 7th International Day of Yoga at the

Alexis Arguello Sports Centre in Managua with support from the Government of Nicaragua. Foreign Minister Mr. Denis Ronaldo Moncada was the chief guest for the event in which over 150 Yoga enthusiasts joined and practised Yoga protocol.

The bilateral trade stood at USD 45.90 million with export of USD 42.56 million and import of USD 3.34 million from April to September this year.

Panama

India continued to maintain friendly bilateral ties with Panama. The bilateral trade with Panama from April to September this year was valued at USD 226.52 million with export of USD 108.50 million and import of USD 118.02 million.

International Day of Yoga was celebrated in a hybrid format with the main event at the Headquarters of the Ministry of Culture where the vice minister was the Guest of Honour. For the first time, the event was held at the Ministry of External Relations attended by the vice minister. Embassy of India, Panama hosted a week-long Virtual Yoga and Ayurveda classes on its Facebook Yoga page from 14 - 18 June 2021

in which 16 Yoga and Ayurveda practitioners from Panama presented different yoga classes/talks/meditation sessions. The embassy of India also organised an event to commemorate Gandhi Jayanti on 02 October 2021 at the location of Gandhi Statue at 5 de Mayo Square in Panama City. On the occasion, the Republican Band of Panama played the national anthems of India and Panama.

ISRO held several virtual discussions with the Panamanian side and finalised the text of the Agreement between Panama and India for Cooperation in the Field of Space Sciences, Research and its Applications.

CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

Antigua & Barbuda

India's relations with Antigua & Barbuda continued to grow steadily with enhanced momentum. Antigua & Barbuda appreciated India's donation of 40,000 vaccines as a part of the "Vaccine Maitri" Initiative. The Antiguan Government also received USD 110,000 million as funding under the

India-UNDP South-South Cooperation Office for distribution to around 800 beneficiaries as part of Output 2 of the "Strengthening National Health Capacities and Reducing Negative Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19 Crisis in Antigua and Barbuda" project being implemented by UNDP.

The Government of Antigua & Barbuda supported India's candidature for membership to the Human Rights Council, elections to which were held in October 2021. It looks towards

India for more collaborations in many sectors for technology and knowledge-sharing.

The Bahamas

Bilateral relations between India and The Bahamas continued to advance during the year. On 27 October 2020 a telephonic conversation was held between EAM and the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Bahamas Mr. Darren Allen Henfield. The discussions focused on cooperation in the context of COVID, development partnership and cooperation in the UN

and Commonwealth. In 2020-21, bilateral trade between India and the Bahamas was worth USD 40.40 million. In July 2021, a consular camp was organized in Nassau to deal with the consular issues of the Indian community without having to send documents to Jamaica.

Barbados

India and Barbados enjoy close and cordial relations and interact actively in the UN, Commonwealth and NAM. Prime Minister Mia Mottley congratulated Prime Minister on

achieving the milestone of administering one billion COVID vaccines. Barbados supported India's candidatures in various multilateral bodies.

Dominica

India enjoys warm and cordial relations with the Commonwealth of Dominica. Dominica continued to be supportive of India's candidature for the UN bodies. By donating 70,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine in February this year, India became the first country to provide Dominica with vaccines, which prompted a mass vaccination campaign in the country.

On 7 May 2021 India and Dominica signed a bilateral agreement for visa free movement of diplomats and officials, further consolidating the close relationship between the two countries. The Agreement allows holders of Diplomatic and Official passports to visit Dominica without requiring a visa for a specified tenure.

Dominican Republic

India and Dominican Republic continued to maintain warm and cordial relations. In September, Foreign Ministry (MIREX) fondly remembered that the country was beneficiary of international solidarity when the Government of India sent 30,000 doses of vaccines to the country, which facilitated the start of a successful vaccination programme in the

Dominican Republic. As robust relations with the Dominican Republic continued, India decided to open her Embassy in the Dominican Republic. Dominican Republic had established its Embassy in India in May 2006. An advance team from the Ministry visited the Dominican Republic for opening the new Mission.

Grenada

India enjoys traditionally friendly and cordial relation with Grenada. A virtual meeting between Grenada's Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Forestry, Charles Peter David, with Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare of India MoS (AFW) was held on 27 May 2021. Indian side highlighted the pioneering work done by ICAR and offered training programmes for assisting Grenada. Both sides agreed to work together for sharing techniques in rice production and aligning positions at FAO, UNGA and other fora. India and Grenada continued to cooperate extensively in the multilateral fora, including by extending support to candidatures.

fully funded Grant-in-aid Project, in the Parish of St. Mark's, Grenada was inaugurated on 08 December 2021, in presence of the High Commissioner of India Arun Kumar Sahu. The Opening Ceremony, organised by the Grenadian Government, was presided over by the Parliamentary Representative for St. Mark's and Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Climate Resilience and Environment - Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, in presence of a number of senators, ministers, senior officials and media persons. Acknowledging the long-standing friendly relations with India, Dr. Clarice expressed his gratitude to the people and government of India for this generous support.

The Union Community Complex - a Government of India

Guyana

India and Guyana enjoy close ties. Bilateral relations between Guyana and India have gained momentum with the

government in Guyana; Guyana is keen to develop greater partnerships with India in various sectors. India is offering

training and capacity building in civilian, defence and media sectors for nation building under ITEC Programme with 50 slots for Guyana in 2021. Guyana received India's donation of 80,000 vaccines as a part of "Vaccine Maitri" Initiative. Under Development Partnership Programme, India has executed various development projects in the past in Guyana under Grant and Line of Credit (LoC). India has recently completed the installation and commissioning of 12 heavy-duty irrigation/drainage pumps with LoC funding of USD 4 million; operationalized USD 50 million LoC funded East Bank-East Coast Road Linkage project; upgrading regional hospitals in Bartica, Suddie & West Demerara with LoC of USD 17.5 million; construction of an Ocean Ferry by Garden Reach Ship Builders & Engineers Ltd at the cost of USD 12.73 million, etc.

Prime Minister had announced a USD 150 million LoC for solar, renewable energy and climate-change-related projects for CARICOM countries in 2019. Under this, India has extended an LoC of USD 7.29 million to the Government of Guyana for procuring and Installing Solar Home Lighting systems for 30,000 homes in the Hinterland Communities. In this connection, an MoU between the Government of Guyana and EXIM Bank was concluded in October 2021.

Indira Gandhi Open University (IGNOU) and Jain "Deemed To Be" University have been selected by the Ministry of Education of Guyana under the Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) to provide online scholarships to Guyanese. Out of the 4500 on-line Scholarships that will be offered by the Government of Guyana annually for five years, 3200 per year will be from these two Indian universities. IGNOU

signed an MoU with the Ministry of Education, Government of Guyana through a remote event on 01 October 2021.

An MoU between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and University of Guyana was signed on 15th October 2021 on the establishment of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Chair of Indian Studies in University of Guyana.

In 2020-21, bilateral trade between India and Guyana increased significantly with USD 35.69 million exports from India (+40%) compared to USD 25.21 million in 2019-20. Imports from Guyana during the corresponding period was USD 11.28 million.

India has started purchasing crude oil from the Government of Guyana in July 2021. Indian Oil Corporation Ltd's crude oil purchase from Guyana marks an important step in the diversification of crude sourcing by India.

Export of 122 tractors to Guyana by Mahindra & Mahindra India was facilitated in 2021. These tractors will be used nationwide in various hinterland/tribal areas of Guyana.

There is also strong cooperation in the multilateral fora. The Government of Guyana has supported India's candidature for membership to various UN bodies and international agencies.

As part of India@75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, a number of cultural activities were organised including the Republic Day and Holi, which is popularly known as Phagwa in Guyana, with the participation of top dignitaries of Guyana.

Haiti

India continued to maintain close cooperation with Haiti. In April 2021, Ambassador launched the Amrit Mahotsava India @75 through a radio talk show. She apprised the listeners about the theme, India's freedom struggle and the two-year

long events. She interacted with the Indian community on 11 April 2021, and updated the members about Government of India initiatives regarding Indian Diasporas and recent changes in OCI guidelines.

Honduras

Relations with Honduras are moving steadily upwards. However, no high-level political exchange took place with Honduras during the year due to the outbreak of the COVID pandemic. On the multilateral fora, Honduras continued to extend support to Indian candidatures to various international bodies

On the commercial front, trade relations remained satisfactory between the two countries. Bilateral trade volume stood at

USD 175.94 million during 2020-2021, and at USD 180.35 million during April-October 2021, with the balance of trade in India's favor.

M/s. Apollo International Limited, the Indian implementation agency, for the Jamastran Valley Irrigation Project which was sanctioned under the Line of Credit by the Government of India, worth USD 26.50 million, started the implementation process of the project during the year.

Jamaica

India's bilateral relations with Jamaica continued to advance in the year. Bilateral trade between the two countries during the year was valued at USD 66.29 million, with Indian exports worth USD 64.06 million and Indian imports valued a USD 2.23 million. An online Trade exhibition was launched in collaboration with the World Trade Centre (WTC), Mumbai in order to provide a platform for interaction between the

Indian and Jamaican businesses, including from Jamaica and the Bahamas. In July 2021, a bust of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled in the May Pen city in presence of the local Custos and Mayor. The India-Jamaica Friendship Garden was unveiled jointly by the High Commissioner and three Ministers of the Jamaican government.

The Embassy launched India Knowledge Initiative Fund (IKIF) in the presence of the members of the Indian community. The fund has been raised through contributions from local Indian community members and will be used to send Jamaican students to take up higher education in Indian Universities. A 16-page special digest on the completion of 175 years of Indians in Jamaica was also published in the leading Jamaican Newspaper, 'The Gleaner', with messages from the Governor General, Prime Minister and the Foreign minister of Jamaica.

To mark the 7th International Day of Yoga 2021, seven Yoga sessions were organized in different parts of Jamaica with the assistance of local Yoga and meditation teachers, in addition to essay and drawing competitions. In June 2021, an Indian food festival was organized at India House for the diplomats, officials and other prominent members of the Indian community.

To mark India@75, a total of 750 food packets were distributed

to the less fortunate, 500 care packages were distributed to the underprivileged and infirm in St. Mary Province door to door, an Indian cultural competition was organized for the community kids and a friendly cricket match was organized. Recitation competitions and cycle rallies were organized to mark Hindi Day and Gandhi Jayanti respectively.

To mark 75 years of Independence during November 2021, the High Commission of India signed an agreement with the Nature Preservation Foundation to create an India-Jamaica Friendship Garden in the Hope Botanical Gardens, Kingston. The High Commission also sent four Jamaicans, including an MP and a Senator, to India for ICCR's one week Gen-Next Democracy Programme exposure trip. The Speaker of the Jamaican House of Representatives gave the keynote address during the Constitution Day celebrations at the Chancery. In December 2021, the High Commission conducted three simultaneous medical camps in Kingston in association with Indian doctors and pharmaceutical companies.

St. Kitts & Nevis

India and St. Kitts and Nevis continue to maintain close ties. In February 2021, India donated 20,000 vaccines to St. Kitts and Nevis as a part of the Vaccine Maitri Initiative. The two countries also cooperated in the multilateral fora with St.

Kitts and Nevis extending support for India's candidature to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

St. Lucia

India shares close and friendly relations with St Lucia. The government of India has taken new initiatives to augment interactions at the highest level to further consolidate our bilateral relations. Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre on the 75th anniversary of the 'birth of the great nation of India', praised the contribution to Saint Lucia's growth by Indian nationals who made this country their home. According to Pierre, Saint Lucia has benefited immensely from India as a state and from individual nationals who had made this country their home. On behalf of the government and people of Saint Lucia, Pierre wished Prime Minister and the Government and People of

India a happy and prosperous 75th Independence anniversary.

Saint Lucia continued to lend its support to India in the Multilateral fora, including by supporting India's candidature to various international bodies.

The Project Steering Committee Meeting on 'Upgrading Saint Lucia's capacity to provide impactful vocational training for marginalized youth' was held in September 2021 and progress was monitored.

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

India and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) enjoy close and cordial relations and extend full mutual support at many international fora. SVG has supported India's successful candidatures in the elections to positions in multilateral organizations. The SVG Indian Heritage Foundation commemorated the 160th anniversary of the arrival of Indians to St Vincent (1861-1880) on 1 June 2021.

The 6th Project Steering Committee Meeting on Arrowroot

Industry Modernization for Sustainable and Climate Resilient Rural Livelihoods Project of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, under India-UNDP Fund amounting to USD 1,034,267 was held on 08 September 2021.

The Cabinet approved the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and Saint Vincent and Grenadines for the exchange of information and assistance in collection with respect of taxes on 23 June 2021.

Suriname

India shares close and friendly relations with Suriname which have been reinforced by unique cultural and people to people

connect over a period of 148 years. The bilateral relations between the two countries scaled new heights in recent

years. Suriname supported India in the elections to various international bodies.

Under the Development Cooperation Partnership Programme of the Government of India, four projects concerning Milk Central processing plant, up-gradation of the transmission network, maintenance and servicing of three Chetak helicopters and solar electrification of 50 villages in the hinterland of Suriname have made good progress. A proposal for the construction of a new soccer stadium is also under consideration by the Government of India. Besides, three projects under a grant of USD 1 million announced during the first-ever meet between Prime Minister and Heads of State/Government of CARICOM-member states are under process. As a gesture of solidarity with the people and government of Suriname, India sent 50000 doses of the made-in-India Covishield vaccine. President Santokhi congratulated Prime Minister on crossing the one billion COVID vaccination mark.

The Embassy of India, Paramaribo & Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre celebrated ICCR's 71st Foundation Day on 09 April 2021 with an evening of Indian Dance and Music. Minister of Foreign Affairs Albert Ramdin was the Chief Guest. On the occasion the mission launched the first-ever gamified Sanskrit learning app 'Little Guru'. As part of its outreach to cultural associations, the Embassy donated musical instruments to various associations. The Mission & Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre celebrated the 7th edition of International

Day of Yoga with live streaming on Social media. Deputy Speaker of National Assembly of Suriname Dr. Dew Sharman was the Chief Guest. Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) Day was celebrated on 20 August 2021 at the Chancery with the participation of over 30 NRIs of Suriname.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2021 in Public Service, conferred by President of India upon President of the Republic of Suriname Mr. Chandrikapersad Santokhi in the virtual PBD Convention on 09 January 2021, was handed over to the President on 23 November 2021 by the Ambassador. Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture virtually attended the ceremony from India and congratulated the President.

As part of India@75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, the Embassy organized a series of events including a National Unity Week was observed on 28 October 2021 at Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC), distribution of medals to 7 winners of Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz and also prizes to the winners of Hindi Poetry Competition on 20 July 2021. The 6th Ayurveda Day was celebrated on 02 November 2021 with Minister of Public Works and interim Minister of Agriculture Mr. Riad Mohamed and the Ambassador jointly unveiling a plaque marking the gifting of a medicinal plant nursery by the Embassy of India in Paramaribo. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's birth celebration was organised at Mata Gauri Place on 19 November 2021.

Trinidad and Tobago

Bilateral relations between India and Trinidad and Tobago (T&T), a girimitiya country with a significant Indian diaspora population, continue to be warm and cordial. Trinidad and Tobago has been supportive of India's candidature at the international fora. Government of T&T has accepted the proposal of the Government of India regarding grant-in-aid of USD 1 million under the UNDP Fund which was announced by Prime Minister during the meetings on the margins of UNGA in September 2019. The project has been officially implemented by the Pan American Health Organization/WHO under the India-financed USD 1 million India-UNDP Project in T&T in support of the T&T Ministry of Health's response to the COVID pandemic.

On 13 April 2021 T&T received the donation of 40,000 doses of AstraZeneca Covishield vaccine as a gift from the Government of India. The vaccine was received by Minister of Health Terrence Deyalsingh and Foreign Affairs and CARICOM Minister Dr. Amery Browne, among other officials on arrival in T&T.

Second round of FOCs was held between India and T&T in Port of Spain on 16 August 2021. Indian side was led by Secretary (East) and T&T was led by Mr. Bruce Lai, Permanent Secretary (PS), Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs. Both sides reviewed the entire gamut of the bilateral relationship such as trade and economic cooperation and health and pharmaceuticals, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), information technology-enabled services (ITES), Science and Technology and Space, Renewable Energy, Agriculture, food processing, tourism, hotel and hospitality industry.

As part of India @75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, the Embassy organized a number of events to mark the Ayurveda Day, Constitution Day, Birth Anniversary of Birsu Munda, Mahaparinirvana Diwas, World Hindi Day, Indian Film Festival, Holi, Diwali etc. during the year, with participation of the local dignitaries.

10

BIMSTEC & SAARC

India is a founding member of both SAARC and BIMSTEC. Activities under SAARC and BIMSTEC complement India's 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' policies.

SAARC



MoS (RRS) with SAARC Secretary General during the latter's visit to India in August 2021

The South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), founded in 1985, is a regional consensus-based organization consisting of eight Member States. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are the seven founding members. Afghanistan joined the regional organization in 2007 through the signing of a Joint Declaration. SAARC Secretariat is located in Kathmandu, Nepal and Secretary General Esala Ruwan Weerakoon from Sri Lanka has been serving as the 14th Secretary General, since March 2020. Nepal will continue to hold the Chair of the organization till the next Summit.

The pandemic including global travel restrictions in general, and the second wave of COVID in member states in particular, significantly affected the activities of SAARC during the year.

The 16th Informal Meeting of the SAARC Finance Ministers

BIMSTEC

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization comprising seven member states around the Bay of Bengal region. BIMSTEC constitutes a unique link between South and South-East Asia with five Members from South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka) and two from South-East Asia (Myanmar and Thailand). The BIMSTEC region brings together 1.68 billion people - 21.7% of world population and a combined GDP of around USD 3.5 trillion. The BIMSTEC's permanent Secretariat is located in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Tenzin Lekphell from Bhutan is currently serving as the 3rd Secretary General of the organization. Sri Lanka will continue to hold the Chair of the organization until the next Summit.

The 17th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting was held in virtual mode with the participation of all BIMSTEC Member States on 01 April 2021. EAM participated in the meeting. The meeting endorsed the recommendations of 21st Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) (held in September 2020) and Special SOM (held in March 2021) and other BIMSTEC sectoral mechanisms for adoption at the next BIMSTEC Summit. The recommendations include adoption of the BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity and signing of three MoUs/Agreements namely the BIMSTEC Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters; MoU on Mutual Cooperation between Diplomatic Academies/Training Institutions of BIMSTEC Member States; and Memorandum of Association on the Establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility (TTF) in Colombo, Sri Lanka. They also endorsed Rationalization of Sectors and Sub-sectors of cooperation under the BIMSTEC framework which will be adopted at the next BIMSTEC Summit. The Indian Cabinet, in June 2021, approved the signing of the Charter at the next BIMSTEC Summit.

The First Meeting of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection Coordination Committee (1st BGICC) was held virtually in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 30 June 2021. The Meeting discussed the functions and mandate of BGICC as mentioned in the MoU

was held on 5 May 2021 on the theme "Economic Recovery from COVID-19: Towards Inclusive and Resilient Growth", in virtual mode, on the sidelines of 54th Annual Meeting of Asian Development Bank (ADB). India was represented by Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs at the meeting. The participants discussed the impact of the pandemic on their respective economies along with challenges and measures needed for sustainable and green growth in the region.

14th SAARC Secretary General Esala Ruwan Weerakoon, paid a customary introductory visit to India from 9-13 August 2021. During the visit, he met Secretary (East) and Foreign Secretary, and called on MoS (RRS) and EAM. He visited SAARC Disaster Management Centre (SDMC)-Interim unit at Gandhinagar on 11 August 2021 and South Asian University (SAU) in Delhi on 13 August 2021.

for Establishment of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection and TOR of the BGICC. The Meeting also discussed the importance of formulating BIMSTEC Policy for Transmission of Electricity and a BIMSTEC Policy for Trade, Exchange of Electricity and Tariff Mechanism in accordance with the TOR of the BGICC and to undertake BIMSTEC Grid Inter-connectivity Master Plan Study.

India hosted the 8th Meeting of Agriculture Experts of BIMSTEC countries virtually on 31 August 2021. Secretary, Department of Agricultural Research and Education chaired the meeting. India offered six slots each of scholarships for Master's and PhD programmes in agriculture and other initiatives for capacity development and training. The meeting discussed cooperation in trans-boundary diseases of livestock, poultry, aquatic animals, biosecurity in aquaculture and precision farming.

BIMSTEC Secretariat and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) jointly organized a virtual workshop on BIMSTEC Trade Facilitation Strategic Framework 2030 on 14 September 2021 and a Consultation Workshop on Transport Connectivity Infrastructure Financing on 16 September 2021.

The First Meeting of the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission (BCIC) was hosted virtually by Bhutan on 20 September 2021. The Meeting finalized the draft text of the Procedures and Rules of BCIC.

The First Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Himalayan Science Council (HSC) was hosted on 12 October 2021 by India in virtual mode. The Meeting, chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, negotiated the draft Concept Paper on the Proposal for HSC and agreed to prepare the Memorandum of Association (MoA) on the Establishment of the Council.

A two-day International Web Based Symposium on the topic 'BIMSTEC: A Vehicle for Growth and Development', was organized by the Institute for Social and Cultural Studies

(ISCS), Kolkata in partnership with the Ministry on 25-26 October 2021. Foreign Secretary and Secretary General of BIMSTEC, Tenzin Lekphell, addressed the inaugural session.

The 6th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals was held on 28-29 October 2021, in virtual mode. The Meeting discussed BIMSTEC Action

Plan on Drug Control, publication of the BIMSTEC Annual Drug report, capacity building measures for preventing and suppressing illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals, setting up a hot line to be used by focal points, and setting up an electronic BIMSTEC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk to facilitate sharing of intelligence.



17th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting held in virtual format in April 2021

11

NALANDA UNIVERSITY

Nalanda University was established by an Act of Parliament in November 2010 with an objective to emerge as an international institution for pursuit of intellectual, philosophical, historical and spiritual studies. Nalanda University is declared as an institute of national importance with a pre-eminent focus on international character.

The University was established in the backdrop of a proposal mooted by Singapore at the 2nd East Asia Summit (EAS) in 2007 in Philippines for reviving ancient Nalanda and establishing a 21st century institution of learning, linking South and East Asia. Subsequently, in 2009, with India's active collaboration, the EAS Leaders issued a Joint Statement supporting the establishment of the Nalanda University as a non-state, non-profit, secular and self-governing institution with a continental focus at the 4th EAS Summit in Thailand.

The Nalanda University Act came into force in November 2010. An intergovernmental MoU on Nalanda University was signed by 8 EAS participating countries in October 2013. Thereafter, 9 more EAS and other participating countries have signed the MoU, taking the participating countries number to 17. The 17 participating countries are - Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Mauritius, Myanmar, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Academics

The Nalanda University commenced its academic activities in 2014 with two Schools, with two Master's programmes and 14 students. Over the past five years, a slew of measures were initiated to reinvent and strengthen the University. The current focus is on creating innovative academic architecture and build administrative systems to support the growth and progress of the University.

The University has scaled up its academic programmes and expanded its Schools and Centres. At present, the University offers 6 Masters Programmes through its 5 Schools. The University at present has 736 students including 173 students from 31 overseas countries and 45 faculty members including 18 foreign faculty.

A new Academic Architecture based on international standards was introduced by the University in 2017. Interdisciplinary innovative courses with a focus on cutting edge research in new frontiers of learning have been also introduced. It is ensured that the courses are audited every year.

The Master level courses are reinvented and restructured as Foundation, Bridge, Advanced and Specialized courses with a research dissertation at the Masters level.

All courses are in a Cafeteria Model with a number of electives on the menu which are interdisciplinary.

New courses in the Schools as demarcated in the Act and Statutes have become functional and there is an endeavor to benchmark them by international standards. In 2017, 3

courses were taught at Nalanda University; by 2021-22, 17 courses are being taught including short courses in Yoga and Meditation; Sanskrit; Pali; Korean; English etc. The number of Schools also have gone up from 3 in 2017 to 5 Schools in 2021.



As a nodal University, Nalanda University is nominated to anchor the India-ASEAN Network of Universities. The University will lead in establishing the road map for linkages, twinning programmes, exchanges, joint-research, credit transfer and other collaborative initiatives.

An announcement was made by Prime Minister during the 4th BIMSTEC Summit in Kathmandu that for research on art, culture and other subjects in the Bay of Bengal, India would set up a dedicated Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies at the Nalanda University. The University has established a Centre for Bay of Bengal Studies and 30 Scholarships for students from the Region are being initiated.

Policy Initiatives

During 2021-22, a number of Statutes were initiated and made with statutory approvals and assent by the Visitor. The detailed Academic Ordinances as per international framework were developed covering all aspects of Academic Architecture including Schools and Centres; Evaluation; Credit/Grades; Admission Process; Eligibility Criteria; Cafeteria Model; Teaching Calendar; Scholarships; Global Ph.D. and Post-Doctoral Fellowship etc.

The Nalanda University (Amendment) Statutes, 2021, and the Nalanda Universities (Academic) Ordinances, 2021, received the assent of the Visitor during 2021 and have been vide Gazette Notification in December 2021.

Campus Infrastructure Development

The Government of India sanctioned INR 1749.65 Crores under Capital Expenditure for construction and development of the University Campus at Rajgir in 2014. The construction of the University Buildings comprises of the Academic and Administrative buildings along with campus amenities, utility structures and site development works. During the year, the campus infrastructure development intensified with completion of nearly 90% of construction work.

The University Campus is a NET-ZERO sustainable green campus. The key sustainability features include, net zero energy, net zero water, net zero waste and net zero emission. This hybrid concept featuring renewable energy sources with the indigenous approach and its integration with various innovative technologies may exemplify rational approaches to construction of other upcoming projects/campuses and community construction models in future.

Some of the most important and indigenous aspects and palette of concepts for passive methods operating at different scales are -

- Use of Desiccant Evaporative (DEVAP) technology for cooling/heating of the buildings.
- Solar Integrated thermal storage technology for HVAC System.
- Smart LED lighting, Digitally Addressed Lighting

Interface (DALI) integrated with occupancy sensor.

- Use of Compressed Stabilized Earth Blocks (CSEB) instead of common burnt clay bricks.

- Use of integrated boxes of masonry to achieve seismic stability.
- Use of thick cavity walls to increase thermal resistance.



Night view of Nalanda University Campus

12

INDO-PACIFIC

Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

India's relationship with ASEAN is a key pillar of India's foreign policy and the foundation of its Act-East Policy. ASEAN centrality is an important element of India's Indo-Pacific vision. India-ASEAN Partnership, which started in 1992, would be touching the 30th anniversary milestone in 2022 and the two sides are planning to celebrate in a befitting manner. In 2021, Brunei chaired ASEAN under the theme of 'We Care, We Prepare, We Prosper'. Singapore took over the position of ASEAN Country coordinator for India from Thailand, for the next three years.

The 23rd ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting was held virtually on 28 April 2021. The Meeting reviewed the status of ongoing ASEAN-India cooperation under the whole spectrum of political-security, economic, socio-cultural and developmental cooperation areas. The Meeting also deliberated on the steps to implement the ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2021-2025) and discussed ways to further strengthen the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership.

On 4 August 2021, EAM co-chaired the ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister of Thailand, Mr. Don Pramudwinai. The Meeting reviewed the status of ongoing cooperation between ASEAN and India in all areas including connectivity, education, capacity building and maritime cooperation. It also reviewed the progress in implementation of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2021-2025) and discussed

commemoration of the upcoming 30th anniversary of ASEAN-India relations in 2022.

On 28 October 2021, Prime Minister co-chaired the 18th India-ASEAN Summit, held virtually, with Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei, the current Chair of ASEAN. The leaders announced the Year 2022 as India-ASEAN Friendship Year to commemorate 30 years of ASEAN-India Partnership in 2022. The two sides also adopted the ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Cooperation on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) for Peace Stability and Prosperity in the Region - to build upon the synergies between the ASEAN Outlook for the Indo-Pacific and India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI). During the Summit, Prime Minister also announced India's support for establishing the ASEAN Cultural Heritage List so as to further strengthen the ASEAN-India Cultural and Civilizational connectivity.

During the course of the year, various dialogues, conferences and workshops between ASEAN and India were held to take forward this partnership in various areas. These include:

1. The 3rd ASEAN-India Conference (AIC) on Cultural and Civilizational Links was held on 7-8 October 2021 in hybrid mode in Hanoi and was hosted by ASEAN India Centre, New Delhi and the Vietnam Institute for Indian and Southwest Asian Studies (VIISAS) at Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences

(VASS). Minister of State (MoS RRS) and Vietnamese Vice Minister, Nguyen QuocDzung addressed the inaugural session of the Conference. The Conference touched upon various aspects of ASEAN-India Cultural and Civilizational Linkages including Contemporary Cultural Interactions and Diversity, Digitalization, Tourism, Education and Youth in Culture and Shared Heritage.

2. India-ASEAN Business Summit was organized virtually in collaboration with CII on 7-8 October 2021. The Business Summit was addressed by EAM in the Inaugural Session and Commerce and Industries Minister in the Special Plenary Session for Trade Ministers from the region. Spread across two days with eleven focused sessions covering

different tracks, it witnessed participation of 9 Ministers from ASEAN countries and more than 900 delegates.

3. The 3rd India-ASEAN Track 1.5 Cyber Dialogue was organized virtually in collaboration with Observer Research Foundation on 20 October 2021 which saw participation of various experts and government representatives from ASEAN member states and India. The Dialogue continued to promote India's interactions with ASEAN on cyber issues and digital connectivity. The discussions centered around important issues related to cyber security including encryption, protecting critical infrastructure, and building resilient connectivity infrastructure.



18th ASEAN-India Summit held virtually on 28 October 2021

East Asia Summit (EAS)

Established in 2005, the leaders-led EAS platform continued to be an important part of the ASEAN-led framework in the Indo-Pacific. India attended the EAS Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) held virtually on 24 June 2021. The SOM leaders exchanged views on various areas of cooperation under EAS and discussed ways and means to strengthen EAS to make it more effective and responsive in the face of emerging challenges.

On 4 August 2021, EAM participated at the East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting held virtually. The meeting reviewed the EAS cooperation and future direction for the same and also exchanged views on current regional and international developments including the COVID pandemic and post-pandemic recovery.

On 27 October 2021, Prime Minister participated in the 16th East Asia Summit via videoconference hosted by Brunei. Prime Minister, in his remarks, highlighted India's efforts to fight

the COVID pandemic. He also spoke about the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" Campaign for post-pandemic recovery and in ensuring resilient global value chains. Prime Minister also reaffirmed "ASEAN centrality" in India's Indo-Pacific vision and highlighted the synergies between ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI). The EAS leaders adopted three Statements on Mental Health, Economic recovery through Tourism and Sustainable Recovery, which have been co-sponsored by India.

India, in collaboration with Australia, organized the 5th EAS Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation on 23-24 November 2021 at Kolkata in hybrid format, in partnership with ASEAN-India Centre (AIC) at Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), National Maritime Foundation (NMF) and Centre for East and North East Regional Studies, Kolkata (CENERS-K). The Conference is India's flagship event at EAS. During the conference experts from both government and academia from participating

countries deliberated upon various aspects of maritime security cooperation in four areas including Maritime Security, Resource and Information Sharing, Science and Technology

Cooperation, and Pandemic and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management.



EAM co-chaired the ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers’ Meeting with the Foreign Minister of Thailand in August 2021

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

IORA held the 21st IORA Annual Council of Ministers’ Meeting on 17 November 2021 in a hybrid format in Dhaka where Bangladesh took over IORA’s Chairmanship from UAE for the period of next two years. MoS (RRS) represented India during this meeting. MoS, in his remarks, reaffirmed India’s strong commitment to strengthening IORA, the largest organization in the Indian Ocean Region, to promote peace, security and prosperity in the region as well as in the wider

Indo-Pacific. During the Strategic Dialogue on the topic ‘Impact of COVID and perspectives of economic recovery in the Indian Ocean Region’, providing an overview of India’s own experience of combating COVID pandemic, MoS underlined India’s assistance as the first responder in the region including during the COVID pandemic and emphasized India’s readiness to share its experience and resources in the spirit of solidarity.



11th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers’ Meeting convened on 4 August 2021 via videoconference

As a country committed to the strengthening of IORA, India undertook various initiatives during the current year including assisting the IORA Secretariat, conducting capacity building workshops in the areas ranging from Yoga and traditional medicines to Remote sensing, UNCLOS and Ocean Data Management. India also led and participated in discussions on various issues under IORA. This year, IORA finalized its criteria for selection of Secretary General in which India participated and welcomed Ambassador Salman Al-Farisi as the new Secretary-General of IORA.

As the lead country for Disaster Risk Management and Academic, Science & Technology areas of IORA, India held the First Experts Group Meeting of DRM, First Working Group Meeting of Science, Technology and Innovation and the 26th meeting of Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG) during the course of this year. India also hosted the 8th Indian Ocean Dialogue virtually on 15 December 2021 in collaboration with Indian Council of World Affairs.

Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)

Prime Minister announced the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) at the East Asia Summit in Bangkok in November 2019, as a non-treaty based, open initiative for cooperation among countries in the region for a collaborative solution to global challenges.

The IPOI focuses on seven central pillars of Maritime Security, Maritime Ecology, Maritime Resources, Capacity Building and Resource Sharing, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, Science, Technology and Academic Cooperation, Trade, Connectivity and Maritime Transport.

Taking lead on pillars of Maritime Security and Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, India has invited interested countries to come on board on one or more pillars of IPOI. Australia has taken the lead on the Maritime Ecology pillar of IPOI, Japan on the Connectivity pillar and France and Indonesia have taken the lead on the Maritime Resource pillar of IPOI. The countries on board IPOI are discussing various ways and means to enhance cooperation in the region.

Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC)

The Mekong Ganga Cooperation which was established in 2000 is one of the oldest initiatives in the Mekong sub-region. The 11th MGC Foreign Ministers' Meeting, co-chaired by EAM and Mr. PrakSokhonn, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cambodia, was held virtually on 21 July 2021. The meeting marked the 20th anniversary of MGC by inaugurating MGC website and by releasing a video documentary highlighting the cultural, historical, religious, social and economic bonds shared by the MGC countries. The Ministers also reviewed the status of MGC mechanism and exchanged views of further strengthening India's partnership in various areas of

cooperation.

Quick Impact Project (QIP) Scheme has been one of the major mainstays of MGC partnership. These are short-term, low-cost, community oriented projects for development of social infrastructure in the region. During the MGC Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the number of QIPs was increased from 5 to 10 per annum for Laos and Myanmar making it 10 for each of the 4 CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) countries. In the year 2021, a total of twenty new projects have been initiated under the QIP scheme.

Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

The 13th ASEM Summit with the theme "Strengthening Multilateralism for Shared Growth" was held virtually on 25-26 November 2021. Vice President led the Indian Delegation for the Summit. Vice President addressed the Plenary and Retreat session at the Summit. During his address, Vice President congratulated all the ASEM partners on the 25th anniversary of the ASEM process. He emphasized on the need for Reformed Multilateralism for a purposeful reform of existing global institutional structures including the UN Security Council. Addressing the Retreat Session, he touched upon regional and international issues of interest and concern

including COVID Pandemic, maritime safety and security and climate change.

India participated in various ASEM activities organized in the run up to the 13th ASEM Summit including the "Asia-Europe Forum on Women, Peace, and Security", hosted virtually by Cambodia on 13-14 October 2021 and the 11th Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting held virtually on 16 November 2021.



5th EAS Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation held in November 2021

Other Engagements

India attended the Extra-ordinary Council of Ministers' (COM) Meeting of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) hosted by France (the current IOC Chair) at Reunion Island on 25-26 November 2021. India joined IOC as development partner in 2020 and attended its first IOC COM meeting in this capacity in May 2021.

India joined Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) as a Development Partner in 2019 and is working together with member countries to chart out India-ACMECS Development Partnership Plan.

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UNITED NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Maldives Abdulla Shahid, was elected as President (PGA) of the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). At the invitation of EAM, PGA-elect Abdullah Shahid visited New Delhi from 22-24 July 2021. During the visit, PGA-elect paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister and held talks with EAM on key international, multilateral, regional and bilateral issues of mutual interest. He also shared his vision for his UNGA Presidency, and exchanged views on several global challenges that the United Nations is currently seized with. India was the first country that Abdulla Shahid visited in his official capacity as PGA-Elect.

The 76th session of the UNGA opened on 14 September 2021. The theme for the 76th UNGA Session was “Building resilience through hope to recover from COVID-19, rebuild sustainably, respond to the needs of the planet, respect the rights of people and revitalize the United Nations”. India actively participated and effectively articulated its position on relevant issues.

Prime Minister addressed the General Debate of the High-Level Segment of the 76th UNGA in New York on 25 September 2021. Sharing his own experiences, Prime Minister affirmed that democracy could deliver, democracy had delivered. Emphasizing that the impact of India’s development on global progress was evident – he said, “when India grows, the world

grows; when India reforms, the world transforms”.

Prime Minister met PGA on 27 September 2021, during his visit to New York for the 76th session of the UNGA. Prime Minister expressed India’s support for PGA’s “Presidency of Hope” and appreciated the resonance this vision has had among UN Member States.

Despite the scaled-back format due to prevailing COVID related restrictions on in-person gatherings, the 76th UNGA was an important platform for India. As the leading voice of the developing world, Prime Minister’s address at the High-Level Segment of the 76th UNGA provided an opportunity to project India’s views on a range of issues, including COVID and vaccine equity, international terrorism, international peace and security, reformed multilateralism and sustainable development. India’s high-level engagement with the UN has also helped project its longstanding and growing credentials as a South-South development partner, especially in the context of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, Financing for Development and India’s commitment to the idea of global partnership under SDG-17 including on climate change.

UN Security Council

On 01 January 2021, India took its place as an elected member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for the term 2021-22. During the period of the report, India participated in various meetings of the Security Council related to issues in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and Latin America, as well as on thematic issues such as counter-terrorism, peacekeeping and women, peace and security.

India assumed the Presidency of the UNSC for the month of August 2021. On 9 August 2021, Prime Minister chaired a high level Virtual Open Debate of the Security Council on International Maritime Security. This was the first time that an Indian Prime Minister chaired a UN Security Council Meeting. A Presidential Statement was also adopted- the first ever product of the UNSC on the holistic concept of maritime security.

During its UNSC tenure of 2021-2022, India was also nominated to Chair the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee, 1970 Libya Sanctions Committee and to chair the Counter-Terrorism Committee in 2022.

EAM chaired an Open Debate on 18 August 2021 on the theme "UN Peacekeeping Operations - Protecting the Protectors: Technology and Peacekeeping". A Presidential Statement was adopted during this meeting - the first ever standalone product of the Council focused on technology and peacekeeping.

EAM also presided over the adoption of Resolution 2589 (2021) drafted by India on enhancing the measures to strengthen the accountability of crimes against the peacekeepers serving in UN peacekeeping operations. The resolution was co-sponsored by 80 countries, including all the 15 members of the UNSC.

Another initiative that was undertaken in August was the launch of UNITE AWARE Platform, in partnership with the UN. India contributed USD 1.64 million to the Department of Operational Support for the UNITE AWARE platform.

This is in keeping with India's image as a front-runner in Peacekeeping related issues. The UNITE AWARE platform aims at improving overall security situation of Peacekeeping Missions by providing real-time terrain-related information and by helping detect threats.

EAM also chaired a briefing session of the UNSC on 19 August 2021 to discuss the Secretary General's 13th biannual report on the threats posed by ISIL/Da'esh to international peace and security.

Foreign Secretary chaired the Open Debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question on 30 August 2021. Foreign Secretary also presided over the adoption of Resolution 2593 (2021) on 20 August 2021, the first since the fall of Kabul to Taliban. The Resolution called for Taliban's commitment on: Afghan territory to not be used by terrorists; safe, secure and orderly departure of Afghans and all foreign nationals from Afghanistan; respect for human rights of all including women, children and minorities.

There was consistent high-level participation by India in various meetings of the Security Council through the year, including by EAM, Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, MoS (VM), MoS (ML), MoS (RRS), Foreign Secretary and Secretary (West).

In keeping with the high level participation in various meetings of the Security Council through the year, MoS (RRS) for the Ministry, participated in the UNSC Open debate on 'Maintenance of International Peace and Security: Exclusion, Inequality and Conflicts' in New York on 09 November 2021. During this visit to New York, MoS (RRS) also held bilateral meetings with the Foreign Ministers of Mexico and Estonia respectively. He also met UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres (UNSG), and PGA on 10 November. UNSG and MoS (RRS) discussed a number of issues, like - UN reforms, vaccines, sustainable recovery from COVID and climate change.

Reform of the UN Security Council

In 2021-22, India continued its efforts to move forward the process of UNSC Reforms, through its active engagement with reform-oriented groupings like the G-4 and L-69.

The Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN) process resumed in the 75th UNGA Session after being interrupted in the previous session due to COVID related restrictions on in-person meetings. During these meetings, there was growing support from Member States for improved working methods of the IGN. In the 76th UNGA session, India will continue to work with like-minded delegations to ensure concrete progress, including through commencement of text-based negotiations with the objective of achieving concrete outcomes in a fixed time frame.

The G-4 Foreign Ministers (India, Brazil, Germany, and Japan) held their annual meeting virtually on 22 September 2021, on the sidelines of the 76th UNGA High-Level week. In a Joint Press Statement, the G-4 Ministers expressed their strong determination to work towards launching text-based negotiations without further delay in the IGN. Reaffirming that it was indispensable to reform the UNSC through an expansion of both categories, permanent and non-permanent seats, they expressed strong support to the Common African Position (CAP) as enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration. They also decided to intensify dialogue with all interested Member States, including other reform-minded countries and groups, in order to seek concrete outcomes in a definite time-frame.

Peacekeeping

India continued to be the largest cumulative contributor of UN Peacekeeping troops, having provided around 2,53,000 troops since 1950s. As on 31 October 2021, India was the third largest contributor with 5,538 personnel (military, police and civilian) deployed in nine UN missions. As of date, 174 Indian Peacekeepers have sacrificed their lives while serving in UN missions.

At the deliberations in UN, India continues to stress the need for serious and institutionalized consultations with Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) in mandate formulation; need for prioritization of mandates and allocation of adequate resources for implementation; necessity to remove all national caveats as they hinder performance; need for dedicated counter-IED measures; need for enhancing security of camps; appropriate caution on the issue of 'robust mandates'; and legal safeguards for troops in robust offensive operations.

During this period India supported UN Peacekeeping efforts by :

(a) Contributing 200,000 doses of COVID vaccines for uniformed personnel deployed in various field missions, which were utilized by August 2021.

(b) In June, India renewed all peacekeeping pledges made for the FY 2020-21 registered at UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (UNPCRS). In addition, India pledged for providing air assets to United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali / MINUSMA.

(c) Demonstrative of its continuous support for the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P), India has pledged to further contribute USD 1 million for multiple projects under four important thematic areas of A4P: Women Peace and Security, Safety and Security, Conduct and Partnership.

International Training Programme for UN Peacekeepers: India employs its United Nations (UN) peacekeeping experience to partner with other Member States in capacity building initiatives. A Pre-Deployment Training of Trainers (ToT) Course for the peacekeepers from friendly countries would be organized in January 2022 in collaboration with Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK), New Delhi. This training programme aims at preparing prospective Contingent Officers for future UN Peacekeeping operations. The United Nations Political Division in association with CUNPK would also be organizing a National Investigation Officers (NIO) Course for military officers from select countries around the world from 14-25 February 2022.

The 2nd United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting was organized in a virtual format in Seoul, Republic of Korea on 07-08 December 2021. The leader of the Indian delegation to the Ministerial, Raksha Rajya Mantri (RRM) made a pre-recorded keynote address at the event and conveyed India's pledges to the UN peacekeeping operations:(a) One Infantry Battalion Group; (b) One Engineer company; (c) One Signal Company; and, (d) One Corvette without helicopter

Counter-Terrorism

As part of the 2nd Counter Terrorism (CT) Week, from 21-30 June 2021, the Permanent Mission of India to the UN in New York separately co-organized an event on countering financing of terrorism and participated in the 2nd High-Level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, held from 28-30 June 2021.

A side event, "Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) in the Post-COVID-19 Landscape", was co-organized by the Permanent Mission of India to the UN in New York with France, UN Office on Drugs and Crime (ODC), Office of Counterterrorism (OCT), and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). Representatives of Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team (MT), French Ministry of Interior, National Investigation Agency of India (NIA) also participated. The event focused on terrorist financing threats and trends within the post-COVID landscape, with a particular focus on the misuse of digital space for terrorist financing purposes.

The 7th review resolution of Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS) was adopted on the final day of the 2nd CT Week by consensus. India constructively contributed during the negotiations of the strategy, accentuating discussion on strengthening member states' obligations towards countering financing of terrorism, addressing use of new technologies by terrorist groups for organizing funding, recruiting cadre, and spreading propaganda and false narratives, and upholding the

rights of victims of terrorism.

Secretary (West) participated in a commemoration event on 20 September 2021 marking the 20th anniversary of the September 11 ("9/11") attacks. The event was organized by the United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism [UNOCT] and the 9/11 Memorial Museum at the 9/11 memorial in New York, on the sidelines of the 76th UNGA.

Since 2018, India has been generously contributing to support UN efforts to strengthen capacity of member states, particularly in the areas of countering financing of terrorism, and countering travel of terrorist. In May 2021, funding of USD 500,000 was provided to continue to support these programs.

Secretary (West) had a bilateral meeting with the, Under Secretary General Vladimir Voronkov, UN Office of Counter Terrorism on 27 September 2021 on the sidelines of UNGA High Level Week. Indian delegation conveyed India's continued support to the mandate of UNOCT, including financial support for capacity building of the member states, stressed the importance of balanced implementation of GCTS, and conveyed India's concerns related to counter-terrorism issues.

Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) of the UN Security Council: India will be Chairing the CTC of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in 2022. The Permanent Mission of India, New York (PMI, NY) has been regularly participating in the meetings of CTC and has been engaging with the Counter

Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) of the CTC on various issues related to the implementation of UNSC resolution 1373 (adopted unanimously on 28 September 2001, a counter-terrorism measure passed following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States) and other relevant Security Council resolutions. India also participated in the annual special meeting of the CTC on 04 November 2021.

1267 Committee (ISIL & Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee) and Monitoring Team: The PMI, NY, participated in the meetings and deliberations of 1267 committee. The Mission engaged the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team (MT) on the issue of improving the effectiveness of Asset-Freeze and exemption measures. On 18 November 2021, India participated in the joint special meeting of 1267 Committee and Counter Terrorism Committee, in which India called for effective implementation of Security Council resolution 2462 (2019) for countering financing of terrorism. A visit of the Monitoring Team to India is being proposed for March 2021.

Inter Parliamentary Union Assembly: The 142nd Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly was held virtually during 24-27 May 2021. Parliamentary Delegation led by Lok Sabha Speaker attended the Session. The overall theme of the Assembly was "Overcoming the Pandemic Today and Building a Better Tomorrow: the Role of Parliaments". During the Meeting, an outcome document on the main theme, and two resolutions were adopted.

The 143rd Assembly of IPU was held in Madrid, Spain,

from 26 - 30 November 2021. Member of Parliament Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab, in the Lok Sabha led an 11-member Indian Parliamentary Delegation to the event. Three outcome documents were adopted by the Assembly: (i) Madrid Declaration on Contemporary challenges to democracy; (ii) Resolution on legislation worldwide to combat online child sexual exploitation and abuse and, (iii) Resolution on harnessing global parliamentary support for vaccine equity in the fight against COVID pandemic.

On the margins of the IPU Assembly, India organized the 7th edition of BRICS [Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa] Parliamentary Forum on the theme "Role of BRICS Parliaments in Ensuring Equitable and Inclusive Post-Pandemic Economic Recovery".

Fifth World Conference of Speakers

The Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament was scheduled to be held in two parts - a virtual meeting and an in-person meeting. A virtual meeting of the Conference, which was the first time in its 20-year history, was held during 19-20 August 2020, under the overall theme of "Parliamentary Leadership for More Effective Multilateralism that Delivers Peace and Sustainable Development for the People and Planet". The in-person Meeting of Fifth World Conference of Speakers was held in Vienna, Austria during 07-08 September 2021. Parliamentary delegation headed by Lok Sabha Speaker attended the Meeting in Vienna.

Non-Aligned Movement

MoS (VM) participated in the Mid-Term Ministerial meeting of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) held in virtual format on 14 July 2021, with the theme "Non-Aligned Movement at the Center of Multilateral Efforts in Responding to Global Challenges". In his address, MoS (VM) stressed that to be a relevant and effective stakeholder in navigating global challenges, NAM's approach had to be inclusive, transparent, and anchored in reformed multilateralism. He also called on NAM to lead efforts to strengthen international legal frameworks to combat terrorism and its enablers.

MoS (ML) led the Indian delegation as the Special Envoy of the Prime Minister at the High-Level Commemorative Meeting to mark the 60th anniversary of the NAM held at Belgrade on 11-12 October, 2021. In her address at the Plenary Session of the Conference, MoS (ML) called on NAM members to

ensure continuing relevance and influence of NAM on global outcomes. She underscored the need for NAM to focus on core contemporary issues like climate change, terrorism and tackling the COVID pandemic. On the sidelines of the High-Level NAM Meeting, MoS (ML) also held a bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister of Uganda General Jeje Odongo, and discussed ways to further strengthen and revitalize NAM under the upcoming Chairmanship of Uganda from 2023.

On the sidelines of the 143rd Assembly of IPU held in Madrid from 26-30 November 2021, the first inaugural Meeting of the NAM Parliamentary Network was held on 28 November 2021, wherein a 3-member Indian Parliamentary delegation participated. At the end of the NAM Parliamentary Network Meeting, a "Madrid Declaration" was adopted by the participating delegates.

Alliance for Multilateralism

On 23 September 2021, Alliance for Multilateralism held a virtual ministerial meeting to commemorate its second anniversary. In her address to the meeting, Secretary (West) called for reformed multilateralism that reflected today's realities, gave voice to all stake holders, addressed

contemporary challenges and focused on human welfare.

On 24 September 2021, a Ministerial Summit for Information and Democracy was held in a virtual format. The Summit was the first high level meeting of the "International Partnership for Information and Democracy", an initiative of the Alliance

for Multilateralism. Addressing the meeting, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting highlighted the importance of tackling the issue of “Infodemic” at the highest level. He outlined the steps taken by Government of India to respond

to this challenge during the pandemic through swift and clear communication based on science and facts, and ensuring regular and authentic flow of information.

The Commonwealth

Foreign Secretary addressed the Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting held in virtual format on 16 September 2021. India continued its support to Commonwealth UN Missions with its annual contribution of USD 250,000 to the Joint Office for Commonwealth Permanent Missions to the United Nations for the year 2021-22.

India’s annual contribution (USD 0.15 million) for the year

2021-2022 was made to the Commonwealth Small States Office in Geneva. During the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held in London in 2018, Prime Minister had announced India’s enhanced contribution to the Commonwealth programs for small States and to double our financial support to the Commonwealth Small States Offices program in New York and Geneva.

Democracy Initiatives

Community of Democracies (CoD) is a global inter-governmental coalition of States to bring together governments, civil society, and the private sector in the pursuit of a common goal: supporting democratic values and strengthening democratic norms and institutions around the world. Secretary (West) addressed the 10th High Level meeting of the CoD, which was held on the sidelines of the 76th UNGA on 22 September 2021 in a virtual format.

India makes an annual contribution of USD 150,000 to the United Nations Democracy Fund to support democracy initiatives around the world including through community activism, electoral processes, gender equality, media and freedom of information, rule of law and human rights, strengthening civil society interaction with government, tools for knowledge and youth engagement.

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IIDEA): IIDEA is an inter-governmental organization, with a mandate to support and advance democracy worldwide. Mainstreamed across all of its work is gender and inclusion, conflict sensitivity and sustainable development. India is a founding member and apart from making regular annual monetary contributions, an eminent Indian has also been in the Board of Advisors (BoAs) from the outset, the former Chief Election Commissioner of India Dr. S.Y. Quraishi, is a member of the BoAs since 2013, and would be completing his third consecutive term in December 2021. On 1 December 2021, former Chief Election Commissioner of India Sunil Arora, was appointed as a member of the BoAs for a three-year term beginning 1 January, 2022.

International Day of Yoga

International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebrations are organised every year by the Permanent Mission to the UN at the UN Headquarters building. Due to COVID restrictions at UN Headquarters, Mission organised virtual celebrations of IDY 2021 on June 2021 on the theme “Yoga for Wellness” through UN Web TV and Mission’s social media platforms.

The IDY 2021 event was designed to focus on how the practice of Yoga can promote the holistic health of every individual and can be a powerful tool for managing physical and mental well-being of an individual. President of the 75th UNGA Volkan

Bozkir and UN Deputy Secretary General Amina Mohammed delivered special remarks highlighting the importance of Yoga during the COVID pandemic. There was also a panel discussion on the theme “Yoga and Well-being”. The panel speakers included President of Saudi Yoga Committee under the Ministry of Sports Padmashri Nouf Al Marwaai, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Founder of Medi Yoga, India Dr. Krishna Raman. Indian Permanent Mission also partnered with UN Department of Global Communications (DGC) to ensure greater participation and wider coverage for this year’s celebrations.

International Day of Non-Violence

On 2 October 2021, the Permanent Mission of India to the UN hosted a virtual commemoration to mark the International Day of Non-Violence, with an audiovisual presentation bringing together the thoughts and perspectives of global leaders, past and present, on the life and work of Mahatma

Gandhi. The UNSG and the PGA delivered special messages on the occasion, highlighting the continuing relevance of Gandhian principles for the UN and its objectives.

United Nations Day

Prime Minister in his 'Mann Ki Baat' programme aired on 24 October 2021, highlighted India's efforts for world peace and global wellness to mark the United Nations Day, that was being commemorated worldwide on the same day [October

24]. Speaking of the special role played by Indian women in establishing UN's power and influence, Prime Minister also highlighted India's role at the UN for global peace, poverty alleviation, climate change, issues of labourers and health.

Hindi in the United Nations

Usage of Hindi in UN public communications (UN news, weekly audio bulletins on UN radio and UN social media) began in March 2018 following the first MoU signed by the UN with any country. Since then there has been a steady increase in volume

and frequency of Hindi content in both the Hindi website of the UN and its social media sites including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The MoU with the UN on usage of Hindi has been extended by five more years till 2025

UN General Assembly

The Third Committee of the General Assembly continued to focus on the examination of human rights questions, including reports of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council (HRC). The Committee interacted with special rapporteurs, independent experts, and chairs of working groups as mandated by the HRC. During the 76th UNGA a total of 63 resolutions were adopted by the Committee and India co-sponsored 26 resolutions. India has participated and delivered statements in various UN forums, including the high-level event of the UNGA on Culture and Sustainable Development

(21 May 2021), Special Session of the General Assembly on Challenges and Measures to Prevent and Combat Corruption and Strengthen International Cooperation (02-04 June 2021), the high-Level Meeting of the UNGA on HIV and AIDS (08-10 June 2021), 14th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (15-17 June 2021), and the high-level meeting of the UNGA to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (22 September 2021).

Human Rights, Humanitarian and Social matters

The Third Committee of the General Assembly continued to focus on the examination of human rights questions, including reports of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council. The Committee interacted with special rapporteurs, independent experts, and chairs of working groups as mandated by the Human Rights Council. The Committee addressed important social development questions such as the advancement of women, the protection of children, youth, family, aging, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, the treatment of refugees, international drug control, and indigenous issues. During the 76th UNGA, a total of 63 resolutions were adopted by the Committee; India co-sponsored 26 resolutions. The 11th Session of the UNGA's Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing was held in hybrid format from 29 March-01 April 2021. The discussions focused on measures taken by the Member States to enhance the promotion and protection of the human rights and dignity of older persons with special emphasis on the right to work, access to the labor market, and access to justice for older persons.

The 54th Commission on Population and Development (CPD) was held in hybrid format from 19-23 April 2021 on the priority theme 'Population, food security, nutrition, and sustainable development. Minister of Health and Family Welfare, participated in the meeting and delivered the national statement through a pre-recorded video. This Commission primarily follows up to the implementation of the Programme

of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development by monitoring, reviewing, and assessing the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional, and international levels. The high-level event of the UNGA on Culture and Sustainable Development was held on 21 May 2021, Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, delivered the national statement through a pre-recorded video.

Special Session of the General Assembly on Challenges and Measures to Prevent and Combat Corruption and Strengthen International Cooperation was held from 02-04 June 2021. Minister of State, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions participated and delivered the national statement through a pre-recorded video. A political declaration was adopted at the opening ceremony of the session. The high-Level Meeting of the UNGA on HIV and AIDS was held from 08-10 June 2021, at the UN Headquarters at New York in a hybrid format. Minister of Health and Family Welfare, participated in the meeting and delivered the national statement through a pre-recorded video. 2021 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS 'Ending inequalities and getting on track to end AIDS by 2030' was adopted at the opening session of the meeting.

The 14th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was held on 15-17 June 2021. Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of the Republic of India delivered the

statement through a pre-recorded video, highlighting India's progressive step on the issue including through the enactment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act in 2017, and other policies and initiatives aimed at developing a conducive environment for persons with disabilities to enable them to enjoy rights and realize their potential. The high-level meeting of the UNGA to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action was held on 22 September 2021. PR participated and delivered the national statement at the meeting. A political declaration was adopted at the meeting. The high-level meeting of the UNGA on the appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons was held on 22-23 November 2021 at UNGA in New York in a hybrid format. Minister of State for Home Affairs delivered our national statement through a pre-recorded video. 2021 Political Declaration on the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Person was adopted at the opening session. The 60th session of the Commission for Social Development will be held from 07-16

February 2022 on the priority theme "Inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being, and dignity for all: eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve the 2030 Agenda". The Commission primarily follows up to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development by monitoring, reviewing, and assessing the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional, and international levels. The 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women will be held from 14-25 March 2022 on the priority theme "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programs". The outcome of the session will take the form of agreed conclusions, an inter-governmentally negotiated document. The Commission is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Economic and Social Issues

In April 2021, the then Minister of Electronics & Information Technology participated at the UN High-Level Thematic Debate on Digital Cooperation and Connectivity and spoke on Whole-of-Society Approaches to End the Digital Divide. In May 2021, former Minister of Science & Technology Dr. Harsh Vardhan participated in the virtual 6th Annual Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology, and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals and delivered a statement on "Science, technology and innovation for a sustainable and resilient COVID-19 recovery, and effective pathways of inclusive action towards the SDGs". At the 20th Session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation on 1 June 2021, MoS (VM) delivered a statement on "Accelerating the achievement of the SDGs through effective implementation of the BAPA+40 outcome document while responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and similar global crises".

On 14 June 2021, Prime Minister participated at the UN High-Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation, and Drought, organized by the PGA, and in his statement highlighted India's lead in addressing land degradation issues. India was represented at the Ministerial Thematic Forum on

Energy Transition for the High-Level Dialogue on Energy by Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy on 23 June 2021. In July 2021, India participated in the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development that was convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. The forum focused on the theme of "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development". This Forum reviewed SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 & 17. The Eleventh Session of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management took place in end-August 2021 with the participation of a delegation from the Survey of India. India delivered the keynote address at the UN Day for South-South Cooperation on "Solidarity in support of a more Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Future" in September 2021. Mission also co-hosted the World Toilet Day event in November 2021, sharing best practices from India's Swachh Bharat Mission.

2030 Agenda

Strategies for a 'New India' by 2022 and the country's vision for 2030 are aligned with the spirit of achieving the 2030 Agenda. The various flagship programs- Poshan Abhiyaan, Ayushman Bharat, Swachh Bharat, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Skill India, Ujjwala Yojana, Rural Electrification program, Smart Cities Mission –directly address the challenges

highlighted by the SDGs. The slogan of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' mirrors the essence of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, of leaving no one behind. India continued to highlight its success in adopting, implementing, and monitoring SDGs and shared details of these success stories for the benefit of other member states.

Elections

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for the term 2022-24 - elected by acclamation at the election held in

April 2021. Executive Board of UN Women for the term 2022-24 elected by acclamation at the election held in April 2021.

Executive Board of the World Food Programme elected by ECOSOC for the term 2022-24 by acclamation at the election held in April 2021. Economic and Social Council for the term 2022-24, securing 179 votes in the election held in June 2021. HRC for the term 2022-24, securing 184 votes which were the highest in the Asia-Pacific Group, in the election held in October 2021. India's candidate Dr. Bimal N Patel, was elected to the International Law Commission for the term 2023-27, securing 163 votes which were the highest in the Asia-Pacific Group, in the election held in November 2021.

India was elected to the Council of Administration (CA) and the Postal Operations Council (POC) of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) at the 27th Universal Postal Union Congress held at Abidjan on 25 August 2021. UPU is a specialized agency of the UN and the primary forum for cooperation between postal sector players. Praveen Sinha, currently Special Director, Central Bureau of Investigation, was elected to the post of Delegate, Asia Region on the Executive Committee of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). The

elections were held at the 89th General Assembly Session of INTERPOL in Istanbul, Turkey on 23-25 November 2021. India was elected as a member of the UNESCO Executive Board (EB) for its 2021-2025 term, along with Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, China, and Cooks Islands, in the Asia Pacific Group. The elections were held in Paris on 17 November 2021 during the 41st General Conference of UNESCO. India secured a seat on the World Heritage Committee (WHC) for the period 2021-2025. The elections were held on November 25 2021, during the 23rd General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention on Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage. India was re-elected for membership of the Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) under category 'B' for the biennium 2022-23. India has been associated with the IMO since its inception and has been taking an active part in its activities. The elections were held at the 32nd Session of the Assembly of IMO in London on 10 December 2021.

UN HRC

India completed its fifth term at the HRC in 2021. India continued its engagement and participation in, inter-alia, sessions of the HRC, annual forum meetings, intergovernmental working group proceedings, and human rights Treaty Bodies reporting process. Also, continued its high-level engagement with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the independent UN experts on human rights issues. India submitted its fourth Periodic Report on International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in September 2021. India has been re-elected to the HRC for the term 2022-2024 at the elections held in UNGA in New York, for the sixth term, on 14 October 2021.

India co-sponsored various resolutions including on 'Menstrual hygiene management, human rights and gender equality' tabled by the African Group, 'Enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights' by NAM at the 47th HRC session, and 'Right to Development' by

NAM at the 48th HRC session. India joined Joint Statements by a group of countries on various human rights issues such as Leprosy, fair and equitable distribution of vaccines globally, Accelerating Change on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation, Extreme poverty and human rights, 'Women, peace and diplomacy' among others besides those delivered by NAM during the HRC Sessions. Indian delegation to the 48th Session of HRC was led by Secretary (West). Also, she met the UN High commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet.

Financing for Development

The ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development is an intergovernmental process mandated to discuss the follow-up and review of the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. India continued to contribute to this effort.

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Secretary (Labour & Employment) Apurva Chandra held the post of Chairperson of the Governing Body of International Labour Organisation (ILO) for the period from October 2020 to June 2021. A delegation led by Secretary (Labour and Employment) Sunil Barthwal, attended the 343rd Governing Body meeting of the ILO held from 01-13 November 2021. A delegation led by the then Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour and Employment attended the first part of the 109th Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) held from 03-19 June 2021. The Minister of State for Labour

and Employment led the delegation to the resumed session of the ILC held from 25 November -11 December 2021. The then Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Labour and Employment addressed the virtual NAM Labour Ministers meeting of Geneva Chapter held on 4 June 2021 on the sidelines of the 109 ILC. The 344th Session of the Governing Body of the ILO scheduled to take place in March 2022 will discuss India's proposal on Social Security of Migrant workers.

World Health Organization (WHO)

India actively participated in the 74th World Health Assembly (WHA) Session from 24-31 May 2021 and the Special Session of the WHA from 29 November- 1 December 2021. Indian Delegation was led by the Secretary, Minister for Health and Family Welfare. India co-sponsored the resolution on 'Strengthening WHO's Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies', which led to the establishment of an Open-ended Inter-governmental Working Group (WGPR) to review the findings and recommendations of various review Panels/Committees. India is currently serving as a member of the Executive Board (EB) of the WHO for 3 years from May 2020 onwards. Minister for Health and Family Welfare has been appointed as the Chair of the STOP-TB Partnership based in Geneva. India's Chairmanship of the Stop TB Board would continue till 2024.

Secretary (West) during her visit to Geneva from 11-15

September 2021 met with the WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. WHO gave Emergency Use Listing to Bharat Biotech's Covaxin on 03 November 2021. This was the first such WHO authorization given to a vaccine fully developed & produced in India. India has so far supplied COVID related medical and other assistance to over 150 countries. Since January 2021, over 94 million doses of COVID vaccines have been supplied to 94 countries and 2 UN entities in the form of a grant, through commercial export or the COVAX facility. The Government of India and the WHO are working on finalizing the Agreement and Terms of Reference for the establishment of a Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in India. WHO, in collaboration with the Government of India launched a mobile application called m-Yoga App on the International Day of Yoga on 21 June 2021.

World Intellectual Property Organisation

India's relations with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) continued to progress further in 2021. India took over as the Regional Coordinator of the Asia and Pacific Group, the second-largest regional group in WIPO, in October 2021. India's global ranking further improved in the

Global Innovation Index to 46 this year, a jump of 35 places since 2015. India was ranked among the top 8 countries on WIPO's World Intellectual Property Indicators 2021 for IP filing activity worldwide, India also recorded a growth of 11.8% in the number of patents granted in 2020.

TRIPS Waiver

India along with South Africa has taken the lead in the World Trade Organisation on a COVID vaccine Intellectual Property Rights waiver and the use of flexibilities of the TRIPS Agreement and the Doha Declaration on TRIPS Agreement

and Public Health. India continued to work to mobilize Member States towards ensuring equitable and affordable access to COVID vaccines.

Refugees and Migrants

India actively participated in various meetings organized by the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) as a member of its Executive Committee and Standing Committee. EAM

participated virtually at the UN High-Level Meeting on the Humanitarian Situation in Afghanistan 2021 organized by UNOCHA in Geneva on 13 September 2021.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Secretary (CPV & OIA) participated virtually in the International Dialogue on Migration in Geneva on 15th October 2021. He also participated virtually at the 112th

Session of IOM Council on "Impact of COVID-19 on Borders, Migration, and Mobility: Learning Lessons and Preparing for the Future" on 30 November 2021.

South Centre

The ongoing cooperation mechanism between India and the South Centre continued to grow in 2021. In February 2021 at its Twenty-First Meeting, the Council of Representatives

decided to extend Mohandas Pai's term as a member of the Governing Board of the South Centre.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

India ranked 10th in the Global Cyber Security Index (GCI) 2020 released by ITU on 29 June 2021, which is a jump of 37 places, thereby demonstrating India's success and commitment in

this field. Minister of State for Communications participated in the Ministerial Roundtable Session of the 50th-anniversary edition of ITU Digital World 2021 on 12 October 2021.

Focus on Climate and Nature in upcoming events

Ocean Conference in February 2022 aims to propel science-based innovative solutions for starting a new chapter of global ocean action; COP15 biodiversity in May 2022 will review the achievement and delivery of the CBD's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; COP15 on desertification in May 2022 will focus on land degradation issues, and Stockholm+50 on the human environment to discuss transformation leading to sustainable and green economies. India will continue to emphasize its position at these forums. India continued to

focus on strengthening engagement with fellow developing countries, especially Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and Small Developing Island States (SIDS) through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund and IBSA Fund in the spirit of South-South cooperation. The Indian delegation participated in the annual Ministerial meetings of the LDC and LLDC groups on the sidelines of the 76th UNGA high-level week, and also in the preparatory events leading up to the fifth UN Conference on LDCs, which is scheduled to be held in Doha, Qatar on 23-27 January 2022.

COP26

26th Conference of Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was held in Glasgow, United Kingdom (UK) from 31 October-13 November 2021. Prime Minister participated in the World Leaders Summit, organized as a part of COP26 from 01-02 November 2021. Prime Minister announced Panchamrit, India's enhanced commitments as follows: (i) to reduce the emissions intensity of its GDP by 45% by 2030 from 2005 level; (ii) to achieve 50% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel based energy resources, by 2030; (iii) to achieve 1 billion tonne reductions in the projected emissions between now and 2030; (iv) to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy capacity by 2030; and (v) by the year 2070, India will achieve the target of Net Zero.

Prime Minister along with Prime Minister of UK Boris Johnson, and Prime Minister of Australia Scott Morrison launched a new initiative for technical assistance and capacity building in Island States called the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS). IRIS is jointly funded by India, UK and Australia and will be spearheaded by Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). Prime Minister also launched the Green Grids Initiative-One Sun One World One Grid (GGI-OSOWOG) initiative with Prime Minister of UK Boris Johnson. GGI-OSOWOG will bring technical, financial and research cooperation to help facilitate cross-border renewable energy transfer projects, which will provide OSOWOG its global infrastructure.

International Solar Alliance

India was granted Observer Status for the International Solar Alliance in UNGA. Initiatives were launched under CDRI and under International Solar Alliance (GGI-OSOWOG- Green Grids Initiative-One Sun One World One Grid) at the COP26. India voiced the developing country's position during climate-

related negotiations in the UN, focusing on the importance for developed countries to fulfil their pre-2020 commitments. Climate Ambition needs to go hand-in-hand with the framework for financial, technical, and capacity-building support to countries that need it.

Developmental issues and Climate Action

Climate change remained one of the main focus in the October - December session, with COP26 shaping several discussions. Several events were organized in the run-up to COP26, including a High-Level Meeting convened by the President

of the 76th UNGA on Delivering Climate Action for People, Planet & Prosperity on 26 October 2021, where Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change made a virtual intervention.

Arctic Council

Russia assumed the Presidency of the Arctic Council during the Ministerial Meeting held at Reykjavik on 20 May 2021. Union Minister of Science and Technology, Health and Family Welfare, and Earth Sciences participated in Arctic Science Ministerial (ASM 3) held on 08-09 May 2021 virtually. He stated that "India would continue to play a positive role in deepening shared understanding of the Arctic through

observation, research, capacity building, as well in promoting sustainable development of the region through international cooperation". Senior Arctic Officials (SAO) meetings are held twice every year. The recent meeting on 01-02 December 2021 was attended by a senior official from the National Centre for Polar & Ocean Research (NCPOR).

Biodiversity Summit

15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in Kunming from 11- 15 October 2021 in hybrid format. The first part (part I) was held online from 11 to 15 October 2021, and the Second part (part II) would be held in person in Kunming, China from 25 April to 8 May 2022. Biodiversity Summit came up with Kunming Declaration with a Theme of Ecological Civilization: Building a shared future for all life on Earth. Kunming Declaration was adopted by over 100 countries including India. The adoption

of the declaration will create momentum for a new global biodiversity pact. The declaration made a reference to the '30 by 30' target which is a key proposal being debated at the COP15, that would afford 30% of the Earth's land and oceans will be protected by 2030. Indian Delegation headed by Additional Secretary Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, participated in the virtual Conference on CBD.

Ramsar Convention

During this year five Indian sites namely, Thol and Wadhvana in Gujarat; Sultanpur and Bhindawas in Haryana and Haiderpur Wetland in Uttar Pradesh were declared as Ramsar

sites under the 1971 Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. This is a manifestation of India's centuries-old ethos of preserving natural habitats.

Montreal Protocol

During this year the cabinet approved the ratification of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on substances

that deplete the Ozone layer. This is another step forward towards India's leadership in tackling climate change.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Mission participated in the 154th, 155th & 156th meetings of Committee of Permanent Representatives of UNEP, held

virtually, on 20 May, 28 September, and 30 November 2021, respectively.

UN-Habitat

The first session of the Executive Board for the year 2021, was held virtually from 07-08 April 2021. India is a member of the 36-member Executive board. Mission also participated in the Second session of the Executive Board for the year 2021 which was held on 15 and 16 November 2021 in a hybrid format.

International Fund For Agricultural Development (IFAD), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and World Food Programme (WFP)

India is an active member of the Executive Board of IFAD and continues to be the member of the Evaluation Committee of IFAD. India is also the Chair of the Emoluments Committee of the IFAD. India Room in IFAD Headquarters has been established and the artefacts have been installed in April 2021. India continues to participate in FAO as a member of the FAO Council. India is in the FAO Council for another term from 01 July 2020 to 30 June 2023. It also continues to serve as a member of various committees such as Committee

on Fisheries, Committee on Forestry, Committee on Food Security, Committee on Commodity Problems, and Committee on Agriculture. India is a member of the International Steering Committee on the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables since January 2021. India is the Chair of the Committee on Agriculture-28 from October 2020 to 2022. The Committee on Agriculture is one of the FAO's important governing bodies providing overall policy and regulatory guidelines on issues related to agriculture, livestock, food safety, nutrition, rural development, and natural resources management. This is for the second time that India has been elected as the Chair of COAG since inception. India is actively engaged in the Food System Summit held in September 2021 through discussion in different action tracks especially in Action Track 4 on livelihood. India has been elected Vice President of WFP Executive Board and List B convenor of 54 countries on 5 April 2021. India has been elected to the Executive Board of WFP for the period 2022-24 in April 2021.

UNITAR

Permanent Representative of India to the UN Offices in Geneva was appointed as a member of the Board of Trustees of the UNITAR from March 2021 to February 2024.

India contributed USD 50,000 to the UNITAR Trust Fund for

Women Empowerment for 2020/2021. The contribution will be used for undertaking Women Leadership Program.

UNDRR

Prime Minister launched World Leaders Summit on 02 November 2021 at COP26 in Glasgow an initiative for SIDS called IRIS. It will promote resilient, sustainable, and inclusive

infrastructure development in SIDS. It witnessed high-level political representation from UK, Australia, Fiji, Jamaica, and Mauritius.

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

A seven members delegation led by AS & MD, National Water Mission attended the meeting organized by the UNECE from

29 September - 01 October 2021.

Universal Postal Union

India was elected with 134 votes to the Council of Administration (CA) at the 27th Universal Postal Union (UPU) Congress in Abidjan. India won the highest votes in CA elections from South Asia & Oceania region. India also got elected with 106 votes (out of 156 countries) to the Postal Operations Council (POC) at the 27th UPU Congress in Abidjan.

Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

Following XXXII ICCROM General Assembly, held on 27-28 October 2021, India was elected as a member of the ICCROM Council for a four-year term and has also been elected by the General Assembly to serve on the Council's Finance and Audit Committee.

International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and

UN Organization on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

India participated in the 30th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) held in Vienna from 17-21 May 2021. India also participated in the

10th Session of the Assembly of Parties of International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) held in Vienna in October 2021.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

In April 2021, India and UNIDO signed an agreement to establish a Facility for International Cooperation on Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (FIC-ISID) to create and share knowledge, build capacity and facilitate projects and partnerships on inclusive and sustainable industrial development under Sustainable Development Goal SDG-9. At

the 19th General Conference of UNIDO held in Vienna from 29 November- 03 December 2021, India was re-elected to UNIDO's key decision-making bodies, Industrial Development Board (IDB), and the Programme and Budget Committee (PBC).

IBSA Fund

Since its inception in 2006, the IBSA Fund has disbursed over USD 41.41 million, supporting 38 development projects in 33 countries, with the majority of them being LDC. India has been a regular contributor to the IBSA fund since its inception and

has contributed USD 16.1 million to date. As of 2021, a total of 8 projects are ongoing; 24 projects have been completed, and 7 projects are under preparation for implementation.

India-UN Development Partnership Fund

The India-UN Development Partnership Fund (Fund), established in 2017, has developed a portfolio of 64 development projects in partnership with 48 developing countries, focusing on Southern-led, demand-driven developmental and transformational projects. Over the past year, the Fund has worked rapidly to support projects responding to the COVID pandemic. These projects are

spread across countries such as Tonga, Belize, Guyana, St Kitts, and Nevis, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Antigua and Barbuda, St Lucia, Papua New Guinea, and Grenada and have focused on supplying medical equipment and building healthcare capacities, mitigating socio-economic impact and catalysing recovery.

UNESCAP

Ambassador and Permanent Representative (PR) of India to United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) led the Indian delegation at the 77th Commission Session held in virtual mode from 26-29 April 2021 and delivered the country statement on the theme 'Building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific'. Ambassador chaired the 6th session of the Committee on Environment of UNESCAP and also delivered the keynote remarks during the

Commemoration of the 2nd International Day of Clean Air for blue skies organized by UNESCAP and Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the UNEP on 7 September 2021. The second Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific were convened by UNESCAP from 16-19 November 2021. Officials of the Embassy and the line ministries participated in various Intergovernmental Committee meetings of UNESCAP during this period.

UNESCO

The 211th session of the Executive board was held at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris from 07-21 April, 2021. Professor J S Rajput, India's representative to the Executive board attended the session and delivered his speech during the plenary session. The 44th session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) was held in virtual format from 16-31 July 2021. India had two nominations- Dholavira for inscription and the Kaktaiya Rudreshwara Ramappa Temple in the representative list of the World Heritage site. Both Dholavira and Kakatiya Rudreshwara Ramappa Temple were inscribed on the World Heritage List taking the total number of Indian sites inscribed to 40. The next session (45th session) of WHC will be held in Kazan, Russia. The 212th session of the Executive board was held from 06-20 October 2021. India's National Statement was delivered highlighting the importance of Universal Brotherhood, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. From the Asia Pacific Group, India was chosen as the chair of

Finance and Administrative Commissions (FA) during the 41st session of General Conference from 12-24 November 2021. This was the first time in the past 75 years that India will chair the FA Commission as full chair. India also got elected to Information For All Programmes (IFAP) and Management of Social Transformation Programme (MOST). The 23rd General Assembly of the State Parties to the WHC was held on 24-26 November 2021. India won the elections for a four-year tenure 2021-2025. Once in 2 years, nominations are done for the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. India's nomination 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' was inscribed into the List on 16 December 2021 increasing the total from India to 14. The International Centre of Theoretical Physics awarded the 2021 Ramanujan Prize in Mathematics to Indian Mathematician Professor (Dr.) Nina Gupta. Srinagar, the capital of the union territory of J&K was inscribed on the UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav

MoS (ML) visited Geneva on 29 September 2021 and participated in the 'Splendid saga of Indian Sarees' event on Indian textiles organized by the Mission as part of India @ 75 celebrations. MoS (ML) also met and interacted with

Indian professionals working at the UN and International Organizations in Geneva. Mission organized several events as a part of celebrations of the Azadika Amrit Mohatsav in Geneva.

Women's Day

On 08 March 2021, the Permanent Mission of India to the UN organized the first edition of 'Dr. Hansa Mehta Dialogue' to raise awareness of the global community on gender equality, empowerment of women, and human rights of women

and girls. The inaugural edition of the dialogue focused on women's economic empowerment in the context of the COVID pandemic, with a keynote speech from Chief Economist of IMF, Dr. Gita Gopinath.

14

MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

XIII BRICS Summit

India held the rotating BRICS Chairship in 2021 for the third time after 2012 and 2016. India's Chairship in 2021 coincided with the 15th anniversary of BRICS. India chose the overall theme "BRICS@15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus".

Four priorities were outlined for the Chairship year:

- Reform of the multilateral system,
- Counter-terrorism cooperation,
- Using digital and technological solutions for attaining SDGs, and
- Enhancing People to People exchanges.

Over 140 events were organised during India's Chairship year.

Prime Minister virtually hosted and chaired the XIII BRICS Summit on 09 September 2021, wherein President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, President Vladimir Putin of Russia, President Xi Jinping of China, and President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa led their respective delegations.

At the Summit, Prime Minister highlighted several firsts achieved during India's Chairship, including 1st BRICS Digital Health Summit, 1st BRICS Ministerial Joint Statement on Multilateral Reforms, BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan, Agreement on Cooperation in field of Remote-sensing Satellites Constellation, BRICS Alliance on Green Tourism, BRICS Water Ministers meeting etc. Highlighting the leading role that BRICS countries can play in the post-COVID global recovery, Prime Minister called for enhanced BRICS cooperation under the motto of 'Build-back Resiliently, Innovatively, Credibly and Sustainably'. At the conclusion of the XIII BRICS Summit, the BRICS leaders adopted the New Delhi Declaration.

Several important outcomes were achieved during India's BRICS Chairship:

- First ever BRICS Joint Statement on Strengthening and Reforming of the Multilateral system,
- Revised BRICS Terms of Reference,
- BRICS Counter-Terrorism Action Plan,

- Operationalization of the Agricultural Research Platform,
- Action Plan 2021-2024 for Agricultural Cooperation,
- Innovation Cooperation Action Plan 2021-2024,
- Signing of Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Remote-sensing Satellites Constellation,
- Statement on Cooperation on the Multilateral Trading System
- Framework for Cooperation in Trade in Professional Services,
- Framework for Ensuring Consumer Protection in E-Commerce,
- Declaration on Cooperation for Protection of Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions,
- Implementation Roadmap on Trade and Investment aspects of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025,
- Finalization of BRICS Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters, and
- Finalization of Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Regulation of Medical Products for Human Use.

BRICS Sherpas and Sous Sherpas held their fourth and concluding meeting under India's Chairship on 15 December

2021. The meeting was chaired by Secretary (CPV & OIA) as India's BRICS Sherpa. China will take over the Chairship of BRICS starting 1 January 2022.

The meeting provided an opportunity to review the activities held this year. For its Chairship, India had chosen the theme 'BRICS@15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus' with the following priorities -

- Reform of the Multilateral System;
- Counter Terrorism cooperation;
- Using Digital and Technological Solutions for attaining SDGs; and
- Enhancing People to People Exchanges

During the year, nearly 150 BRICS meetings and events were organized, of which about 20 were held at the Ministerial level. Intra-BRICS cooperation was extended to new areas, such as the inaugural BRICS Digital Health Summit and the 1st Meeting of BRICS Water Ministers.

Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs/ International Relations

EAM chaired the meeting of BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs/International Relations through video conferencing on 01 June 2021. The 'BRICS Joint Ministerial Statement on Strengthening and Reforming of the Multilateral System' was adopted. This is the first ever Joint Statement by BRICS countries seeking reform of the multilateral system including the UN Security Council. The Joint Statement also for the first time listed the principles for strengthening and reforming the multilateral system.



BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting held virtually in June 2021

G20 Summit

Prime Minister led India's delegation to the G20 Rome Summit which took place on 30 & 31 October 2021 in Rome under the theme "People, Planet, Prosperity". Prime Minister

participated in all three Summit Sessions: Global Economy and Global Health; Climate Change and Environment; and Sustainable Development.



Prime Minister at the G20 Summit in October 2021

In the session on Global Economy and Global Health, Prime Minister spoke of India's vision of 'One Earth, One Health' as an important principle to tackle not only the current pandemic but also any future global crisis. In the session on Climate Change and Environment, Prime Minister talked about Climate Justice and suggested that the developed countries must aim to make at least 1 percent of their GDP available to finance green projects in developing countries. He presented three actionable points in front of G20 partners which include the creation of:

- a. a clean energy projects fund,
- b. a network of research institutions working on clean-energy in G20 countries which will work on new technologies as well as their deployment-related best practices, and
- c. an institution to create global standards in the field of green hydrogen to encourage its production and use.

On Sustainable Development, Prime Minister spoke about the shared responsibility to achieve the SDGs and the important role of G20 in this.

The G20 Leaders adopted the G20 Rome Declaration. The Declaration delivers a strong message on recovery in terms of the economy and across different sectors like health, employment, education, tourism, and most significantly, climate action. The G20 Leaders agreed on a shared vision to combat climate change and to take important steps towards the achievement of gender equality.

India played an instrumental role in the finalization of the Declaration. For the first time, G20 recognized 'sustainable and responsible production and consumption', as outlined in SDG-12, as a critical enabler to meet climate goals. The G20 Leaders agreed on the 'global net zero' and recognized the role of initiatives like Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) in accelerating the agenda of sustainable urban planning. India wholeheartedly supported the agenda of bridging the global 'Digital Divide', having successfully done so domestically.

Other important outcomes for India from this year's G20 Summit were recognition of the need to protect the interests of small and marginal farmers while talking about sustainable agriculture, food security, and nutrition; need for mutual recognition of travel documents, including testing and vaccine

certificates; G20's call to end gender-based violence and address the glaring gaps in workforce participation between men and women and strengthening G20's position on the denial of safe havens to corruption offenders and their assets.

India entered the G20 Troika (along with Italy and Indonesia, the current G20 Chair) on 01 December, 2021.

India's G20 Sherpa and Minister of Commerce & Industry, Textiles, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution participated in the first Sherpa Meeting convened by Indonesia, on 07 & 08 December in virtual mode. It was India's first G20 meeting since joining the G20 Troika. India looks forward to making constructive contribution to the G20 process as a member of the Troika and shaping the global narrative on key socio-economic issues when it will take over G20 Presidency in December 2023.

Global Health Summit 2021

Global Health Summit 2021 was jointly hosted by the Italian Presidency and the European Commission on 21 May 2021. The Rome Declaration was adopted at the Summit.

Extraordinary G20 Leaders' Summit on Afghanistan

Prime Minister participated in the Extraordinary G20 Leaders' Meeting on Afghanistan on 12 October 2021. Prime Minister emphasized the need for the international community to ensure that Afghanistan has immediate and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance and also underlined the need to ensure that Afghan territory does not become a source of radicalization and terrorism, regionally or globally. Prime Minister called for an inclusive administration in Afghanistan, which includes women and minorities. He conveyed support for the important role of the United Nations in Afghanistan and called for renewed support of the G20 for the message contained in UN Security Council Resolution 2593 on Afghanistan. Prime Minister called on the international community to forge a unified international response without which it would be difficult to bring about the desired change in Afghanistan's situation. The participants shared their views on topics ranging from humanitarian assistance, the collapse of the economy, access to education, security issues, and illegal trafficking in Afghanistan.

G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting

The G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting was convened on 22 September 2021. EAM represented India. The meeting exchanged ideas on what useful contribution the Group could bring to ongoing international efforts in relation to the Afghan crisis. Participants concurred on the indispensable role of the UN and the importance of the continued presence of its

agencies in the country, reaffirming full support to its efforts in assisting the Afghan people. They focused on the guarantee of free, safe, and unfettered access to humanitarian assistance and basic services especially in the light of the upcoming winter season, prevention of terrorism, and upholding human rights for women, children, and minorities.



EAM at the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting on Afghanistan held virtually in September 2021

Joint Meeting of G20 Foreign and Development Ministers

For the first time, G20 hosted the Joint Meeting of G20 Foreign and Development Ministers as well as the meeting of G20 Development Ministers in Matera, Italy on 29 June 2021. EAM represented India at these meetings. The meeting of the G20 Foreign and Development Ministers' focused

on the issue of food security. The Ministers adopted the 'Matera Declaration' which called on the group to create a food coalition for cooperation and coordination to address needs and priorities set by developing countries with a focus on smallholder farmers, women and youth. The Development Ministers' Communiqué called on the group to focus their attention on financing for sustainable development and achieving SDGs.

G7

The UK, with the G7 Presidency for 2021, invited India, Australia, the Republic of Korea, and South Africa as 'Guest Countries' to engage with the G7 process in 2021. It was held under the overall theme of 'Build Back Better' and focused on leading global recovery from COVID while strengthening resilience against future pandemics; promoting future prosperity by championing free and fair trade; tackling climate change and preserving the planet's biodiversity, and championing shared values.

Prime Minister participated in the Guest Sessions of the G7 Summit held on 12-13 June 2021 in virtual format. Prime Minister highlighted the need for genuine global solidarity and leadership and spoke of 'One Earth, One Health'. He

highlighted the need for Climate Action to include all dimensions of mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer, financing and equity, climate justice, and lifestyle change, to provide the necessary space for the developing countries to grow. Prime Minister was the lead Speaker for the session on 'Open Societies and Open Economies', and highlighted India's democratic credentials noting that India could emerge as a reliable hub for diversified supply chains. The Leaders of the G7 and Guest countries adopted the 'Open Societies Statement' during the Summit. The UK also released a Presidency Statement on the 'Road to COP26' which mentioned achievements and contributions of G7 and guest countries, including India, on climate action.

India also participated in the Working Group meetings on issues of Health, Digital Economy, and Environment. EAM

represented India at the G7 Foreign and Development Ministerial meeting.



EAM at the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held virtually in May 2021

India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA)

IBSA Events

India is the current IBSA Chair and focused this year on revival of IBSA mechanisms. A number of IBSA events were held in 2021. Ministerial-level events included 6th IBSA Women's Forum (16 March 2021); IBSA Tourism Ministers' Meeting (12 August 2021); 1st IBSA National Security Advisors Meeting (25 August 2021); and 1st IBSA Youth Summit (26-28 August 2021). Events at official-level included IBSA Tourism Senior Officers' Meeting (10 August 2021); IBSA Senior Officials' Meeting on Traditional Medicines (17 August 2021); 5th IBSA Tripartite Meeting of National Organisations of Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment (25-26 August 2021); IBSA Joint Working Group on Energy (27 August 2021); IBSA Working Group Meeting on International/Trilateral Development Partnerships (31 August 2021); 7th

Meeting of IBSA Joint Working Group on Agriculture (31 August 2021); and IBSA Tri-Nations Conference on Small and Medium Enterprises (02-04 September 2021). People-to-people level events included Inaugural IBSA Coffee Festival (04-05 August 2021); 7th IBSA Academic Forum (11-12 August 2021); and IBSA Youth Summit (26-28 August 2021);

IBSA Fund

IBSA Fund-supported projects help partner countries in the Global South to achieve their national priorities as well as other internationally agreed development goals. Since its inception, the IBSA Fund has disbursed over USD 44 million, supporting 35 development projects in 31 countries. India has been a regular contributor to the IBSA fund since its inception.

Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)

The ACD Foreign Ministerial Meeting took place on 17 November 2021. The ACD Chairmanship was transferred from the Republic of Turkey to the Kingdom of Bahrain. The

ACD Blueprint 2021-30 was adopted.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

India continued to engage with OECD under its stated policy of 'Limited Sectoral Engagement'.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

India continued its engagement in various UNCTAD meetings. 03-07 October 2021.
The XV session of UNCTAD took place in virtual format from

World Trade Organisation

Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, DG WTO, visited India from 20- 23 October 2021. DG WTO called on Prime Minister and had meetings with EAM and other Union Ministers.

15

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

DPA I

The scope and reach of India's development assistance has seen considerable expansion in the past few years. India's abiding geo-political, strategic and economic interests and the need to effectively deliver India's assistance programme has prompted greater engagement with developing countries, particularly on the development assistance front. In recognition of this, the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) was created in January 2012 to effectively handle India's development aid projects through the stages of conception, launch, execution and completion. The DPA functions in close coordination with the Territorial Divisions in the Ministry, which continue to be the principal interlocutors with partner countries in identifying their developmental needs and priorities. The DPA is progressively developing the expertise required to handle projects in varied sectors and regions through the stages of project formulation, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

India's development partnership is based on the needs of the partner countries and is geared towards responding to as many requests received from these countries as technically and financially feasible. The main instruments of India's development assistance include LoC, Grant assistance, High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs), Technical Consultancy, Disaster Relief and Humanitarian aid, as well as capacity-building programmes for civilian and military training under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC). The focus of development assistance has been the countries in India's neighborhood, CIS and Africa, though India is also expanding its development assistance reach to South East Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, Pacific Island Countries, etc.

Lines of Credit (LoC)

LoCs are essentially concessional loans. Government of India LoCs are offered to foreign countries on a bilateral basis. This operation is carried out jointly by the Ministry and

Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, through the Exim Bank of India.

Objective of LoCs

Through LoC, India can help the partner countries throughout various stages of project implementation such as project formulation, technical studies and identifying suitable project management consultants and execution companies. Under LoCs, the partner countries have a benefit of lower interest rates, long moratorium period of 5 years and extended repayment period of 20-25 years. The partner countries have great flexibility in identifying sectors and choosing the projects, based on their national priorities. Further, since substantial part of any development project under LoC is

carried out with local sub-contractors utilising local material, it helps the local industry and the economy in the partner countries.

The portfolio of LoCs has been diversified geographically as well as sectorally. Geographically, LoCs have now been extended to Russia and Central Asian countries. Sectorally, LoCs have been extended for financing projects in new sectors like Connectivity, ICT, Health, Renewable Energy, Oil Refinery, Water & Sanitation etc.

LoCs in the Neighbourhood

The focus of LoCs has been on development initiatives undertaken in the borrowing countries, particularly in our neighbourhood based on Government of India's Neighbourhood First Policy.

1. **Bangladesh:** Bangladesh is the largest development partner under India's LoC programme. India has extended 4 LoCs amounting to USD 7.862 billion to the Government of Bangladesh, which comprises more than 25% of India's LoC portfolio of USD 31.17 billion extended to 65 countries around the world.
2. **Sri Lanka:** Government of India has extended 11 LoCs worth USD 2.13 billion to Sri Lanka, making it the second largest development partner under Government of India's LoC programme.
3. **Nepal:** 4 LoCs have been extended to Nepal aggregating USD 1.65 billion for various infrastructure development projects such as roads, power generation, transmission lines, rehabilitation, reconstruction and housing, etc.
4. **Myanmar:** Government of India has extended 10 LoCs worth USD 475.57 million to Myanmar for infrastructure projects across a wide variety of sectors including railways, power, telecommunication, oil refineries, irrigation & agriculture.
5. **Maldives:** Government of India has extended 5 LoCs worth USD 1.33 billion to Maldives which includes the Greater Male Connectivity Project.

LoCs in CIS

During the Second Meeting of India-Central Asia Dialogue held on 28 October 2020,

EAM announced a Government of India LoC offer/availability of USD 1 billion for 5 Central Asian Countries viz. Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and

Kyrgyzstan, for priority developmental projects in fields such as connectivity, energy, IT, healthcare, education, agriculture, etc

Government of India has extended two LoC of USD 488 million to the Government of Uzbekistan including for Social Infrastructure & other Development Projects.

Development Projects in Africa

India's partnership with Africa is based on a consultative model of cooperation and sharing of development experiences, and is focused on addressing the priorities and needs of the African countries. The engagement with African countries through various development partnership initiatives has witnessed a marked increase in the last decade. The three India-Africa Forum Summits [IAFS I, II & III] in 2008, 2011 and 2015 have further reinforced the development partnership with the continent.

A total of 206 LoCs amounting to USD 12.35 billion have been extended by the Government of India to African countries in varied sectors such as power plants, hydroelectricity, power transmission & distribution networks, dams, roads, railways, ports, agriculture & irrigation, industrial units, skills development, civil construction etc. Activities in the new sectors such as Telecommunication and Solar power have also been expanded and strengthened under the Government of India LoCs to Africa in this year. Some large iconic projects by the Government of India in Africa include construction of Parliament building, Convention Centers etc. People oriented projects in the area of Drinking Water and sanitation and Rural Electrification are also being undertaken in African countries.

Development Projects with grant assistance in Neighbouring countries

The development projects being undertaken with Government of India grant assistance in neighbouring countries cover a range of sectors from infrastructure development, including construction, roads & bridges, waterways and transmission lines as also power generation, agriculture, capacity building, education, health, rural development etc.

Sri Lanka Housing Project

India's development partnership with Sri Lanka is based on a consultative approach, factoring in the priorities of the Government of Sri Lanka. The ongoing housing project

involving construction of 50,000 houses for resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Sri Lanka is progressing well.

The construction and repair of 46,000 houses for under an owner-driven process Internally Displaced Persons in the Northern and Eastern provinces have been completed.

The construction of remaining 4,000 houses in the Central and Uva provinces for the Indian Origin Tamils (IOTs) employed in the plantation sector is also nearing completion. As on 30 November 2021, 3833 houses out of 4000 have been completed and remaining 104 houses are under various stages of construction.

An announcement was made by the Prime Minister during his visit to Sri Lanka in May 2017 for construction of additional 10,000 houses for the Indian Origin Tamils in the Central and Uva provinces of Sri Lanka. Letters of Exchange between the Government of India and Government of Sri Lanka to implement the project through community driven model was signed on 12 August 2018. The site locations and beneficiaries are being finalized by the Government of Sri Lanka.

LOC Projects likely to be completed shortly

The following LoC Projects are in their final stages of execution and are likely to be completed soon:

- i. Electrification of 183 rural communities in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Regions in Ghana (Phase II);
- ii. (220 kV Double Circuit Koshi Corridor Transmission Line (Inaruwa – Basantpur – Baneshwar – Tumlingtar) Project in Nepal;
- iii. Power Transmission Project in Mali connecting Bamako and Sikasso via Bougouni;
- iv. Procurement of Rolling stock for Sri Lanka Railway;
- v. Upgrading of roads viz. Charikot-Tamakoshi-Jiri sector of Lamosanghu-Tamakoshi-Jiri Road, in Nepal;
- vi. Electrification expansion project for Greater Banjul Area in Gambia;
- vii. Construction of 756 social housing units in Marc Tabaic and Dagotier sites in Mauritius;

viii. Supply, Testing and Commissioning of Flood Pumps in Mauritius and

ix. Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 16 LPG Fired Human Incinerators in Mauritius.

G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) - Background

Government of India LoCs are extended on a bilateral basis to several Low and Lower Middle Income (L&MI) countries on concessional credit terms for undertaking various development projects. Many of these countries are highly indebted and poor and belong to the list of poorest countries of the International Development Association (IDA) initiative of World Bank as well as the UN list of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Because of the unprecedented impact of COVID pandemic on these poorest countries, the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, at a meeting held on 15 April 2020, agreed on the issue of suspension of debt service payment by official bilateral creditors for the poorest countries that request forbearance. In accordance with this G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (G20 DSSI), the debt suspension relief is to be made available to the Government of India-supported LoC Borrower Governments as per the standard template of G20 DSSI. Accordingly, the Government of India has approved the request for debt service suspension in respect of 17 countries viz. Cameroon, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Republic of Congo, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, Maldives, Togo, Comoros, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso and Democratic Republic of Congo.

Overseas promotion of Lines of Credit

The Government of India is strongly promoting the development partnership initiatives through LoC across the world through Social Media, Monthly newsletters etc. Under new digital outreach initiatives, a dashboard has also been developed on the website of the Ministry for regular updates on LoCs. Our Missions are also promoting the significant occasions and milestones like signing of LoC Agreements, foundation stone laying and commencement ceremonies, inauguration ceremonies etc. on various social media platforms.

DPA II

Capacity Building through Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)

As the flagship capacity building programme of the Government of India, the ITEC programme has a footprint in 160 countries and has contributed to the capacity enhancement of more than 2,00,000 professionals since its inception in 1964. Apart from being a powerful tool of India's soft power diplomacy, the

ITEC programme has also assumed the mantle of leadership in capacity building initiatives in South-South Cooperation.

Apart from providing capacity building training programmes in the traditional areas of governance, ITEC has been expanded to include emerging areas like AI, Nano technology, forensics and cyber security. ITEC now enables participating professionals to access programmes and registrations using

a dedicated online portal and provides its training content through reputed partner institutions like Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), Indian Institute of Management (IIMs), National Law University (NLUs) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in the public sector as well as reputed institutions in the private sector. The Ministry continues to engage actively with professionals trained under ITEC through initiatives like ITEC Day celebrations and social media engagements. It is a matter of much satisfaction that over the years ITEC alumni has become a powerful catalyst in forging strong ties with India.

Civilian training under ITEC

As of date, ITEC content is provided through nearly 12000 training slots in 383 courses across 98 institutions in India for civilian professionals in developing partner countries under various ITEC programmes. Apart from these regular courses, country specific special courses are also conducted from time to time based on requests received from foreign governments. These courses are for specific capacity building requirements like English Language (for various Gulf, Central Asian and LAC countries), Yoga Trainers, Forensic investigation and Police training (for Seychelles), Proficiency-cum-Professional Development course for Teachers (Bangladesh), Athletics (Maldives), Mid-Career Training Programme for civil servants (Bangladesh and Myanmar), Hospitality and Tourism management (Cambodia), etc.

Apart from the physical/in-India training, ITEC content for civilians is also delivered through three other broad channels. The e-ITEC channel provides online, real-time training delivered by Indian Institutes to professionals located in partner countries. The ITEC Onsite channel provides customised content to our partner countries by shifting the training to the country itself by deputing training professionals for short duration. The content for these programmes focuses on the requirements of our partner countries in sector-specific trainings like Fertilizer Technology; Fisheries Technology; Agriculture and allied sectors; Teachers' Training and Research; Open Education Resources; Securities Markets; Wind Energy; Rural Electrification; South-South Cooperation etc. The ITEC Executive is the third channel, which is an exclusive programme for senior level functionaries and policy makers in our partner countries; this channel delivers content through the medium of conferences, workshops and study/exposure visits which provide an understanding of practices and systems in India.

In FY 2020-21 and 2021-22 (till date) none of the scheduled regular physical/in-India courses, ITEC Onsite programmes or ITEC-Executive programmes could be conducted due to COVID. However, the Division kept up a regular calendar of e-ITEC training programmes. During the year 2021-22, 83 courses have been conducted and a total of 3114 participants have participated in these training programmes until October 2021. A total of 120 courses have been planned for the current FY 2021-22. During the FY 2021-22, 23 special e-ITEC courses were conducted and 04 more are in the pipeline.

Defence training under ITEC

During 2021-22, 2740 ITEC defence slots were allotted to 70 partner countries. Courses covered under Army, Navy and Air Force were related to security and strategic studies, defence management, electronics, mechanical, marine engineering, Long C, Long N, marine hydrography, counterinsurgency, jungle warfare, qualified flying instructor, ground duty, flying training etc. Few courses were also offered in Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Senior Defence Management Course (SDMC), Higher Defence Management Course (HDMC), Defence Management Course (DMC) and the National Defence Academy (NDA). Additionally, 192 slots to 31 partner countries were offered by Indian Coast Guard in 03 courses i.e. Maritime Law and Ops course; Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) ops and Search and Rescue (SAR) course; International Maritime Organization (IMO) level I & II course. In TY 2020-21, 34 National Defence College (NDC) slots have been allotted to 21 partner countries. The course started in February 2021 at National Defence College, New Delhi.

In TY 2020-21, due to prevalent Covid pandemic, less no. (total 1460) ITEC defence slots were allotted to partner countries, out of which 635 slots were utilised. TY is from July-August till June. During the TY 2020-21, there was good participation despite COVID restrictions.

Deputation of ITEC experts

Deputation of experts to partner countries based on their requirements has served a very important role in sharing Indian expertise with the developing world.

As of date, 41 experts in various fields are on secondment to the host governments, in areas of Defence, Health, Agriculture, Architecture, Disaster Response, Archaeology, Ayurveda, Law formation and English Teaching etc. Few training teams have also been deputed to Kazakhstan, Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Uganda and Seychelles.

Grant Projects in Other Developing Countries

As part of India's commitment towards South-South Cooperation, it is extending developmental assistance by way of taking up grant assistance projects aimed at economic cooperation and capacity building keeping in view the local requirements. Several Centres of Excellence in IT (CEITs) are in various stages of implementation in partner countries around the world viz. Argentina, Namibia, Egypt, PIC, etc. Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) in Belize and Zanzibar are also under implementation during this period.

Under the 'India for Humanity' initiative, the Division organises Jaipur Foot Camps in close coordination with Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS) in partner countries, which have been very successful in the past and several camps are in the pipeline.

DPA III

India's Development Partnerships

Inspired by the spirit of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', India's international development cooperation has expanded significantly in recent years in its geographical reach as well as in the areas of cooperation. It is natural that most of India's significant development partnerships include the neighbouring countries given the focus of India's external engagement on its immediate and extended neighbourhood supported by the 'Neighborhood First' and 'Act East' policies. Another noteworthy feature of India's development partnerships has been its demand-based nature and the close alignment of priorities with those of the partner countries.

As the DPA arm of the Ministry has gained experience over the last nine years, the sustainability of projects besides the project delivery and implementation have received increased attention. India's development partnership model has received a high degree of acceptance from its partners because of the focus on keeping the requirements and priorities of the partner country at the center of the projects.

India's approach towards developmental partnerships has been a comprehensive one offering assistance and sharing of India's own developmental experience in the full spectrum of activities, ranging from creation of infrastructure to building capacities to education, healthcare, agriculture and community development.

India's development assistance has been a major catalyst for creation of much needed infrastructure in the partner countries such as railway links, roads & bridges, waterways, border-related infrastructure, transmission lines, power generation, hydropower etc.

Afghanistan

India has been a steadfast partner in reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan despite serious security challenges. The principal focus of India's development assistance to Afghanistan has been to build capacities of Afghan nationals and its institutions for governance and delivery of public service, develop socio-economic infrastructure, secure lives and promote livelihoods.



India-assisted Myanmar Institute of Information Technology project in Mandalay

Some of the key Indian projects in Afghanistan are the new 'Parliament Building in Kabul (2015), and the Afghan India Friendship Dam, earlier known as Salma Dam (2016) which underline India's commitment to the rebuilding of a united, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan. Both countries launched together the 'New Development Partnership' in September 2017 to further enhance India's development assistance to Afghanistan. India has agreed to undertake the Shatoot Dam project which will provide drinking water to residents of Kabul besides rehabilitation of the existing irrigation and drainage network, and necessary tests and surveys for the project are being carried out.

In support to housing project initiated by Afghan government for returning refugees, India is undertaking Afghan housing project, a low cost housing project, for returning Afghan refugees in Khanakay-Qasamabad near Jalalabad. Under the project 4765 houses are being built at an estimated cost of USD 27.364 million.

India is supporting High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) spread across all the 34 provinces of Afghanistan by extending grants assistance. Since 2005, four, three phases of community-based projects funded by Indian grants and covering areas like agriculture, education, labour, rural development and public health have been implemented

by the Afghan government agencies thus building local capacity towards project management. Under Phase I and II implemented during 2005-2009, USD 20 million was provided for undertaking 116 projects. Under the Phase III launched in 2012, funding of USD 100 million was provided for 420 projects of which 336 350 have been completed. At the 2020 Afghanistan Conference held in Geneva in November 2020, EAM of India announced launch of Phase-IV of HICDPs with grants assistance of USD 80 million for implementing around 100 new projects in Afghanistan.

Support for education and capacity building programmes is an important aspect of India's development partnership with Afghanistan. Under the Special Scholarship Scheme for Afghan Nationals (SSSAN) administered by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), 1000 annual scholarship slots are provided to Afghan students for studying in universities and institutes across India. Since 2006, more than 10,000 Afghan students have been trained under this scheme. In addition, another 500 scholarship slots are provided for children/dependents of martyrs of Afghan National Defence and Security Forces and 614 fellowships for Agricultural studies, administered through the Department of Agricultural Research and Education and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. India is also supporting establishment of the Afghanistan National Agriculture Sciences and Technology University (ANASTU) in Kandahar which is the first university of its kind in Afghanistan.

However, due to the current political situation, Grant in Aid projects in Afghanistan are on hold except support of scholarship programmes for students presently enrolled in Indian University. Government of India also supplied 75000 MT of wheat to Afghanistan as a humanitarian assistance despite the challenge of COVID.

During April–September 2020, India supplied 75,000 MT of wheat to the Government of Afghanistan as grant assistance despite the challenges of COVID.

Myanmar

India is providing support for three major road connectivity projects in Myanmar which aim to strengthen regional connectivity by building the road network between Myanmar and the North-Eastern States of India. Under the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Corridor (KMMTTC) Project, an international port has been built at Sittwe in Myanmar. The stretch of Kaladan river connecting Sittwe Port with Paletwa has been developed for navigation and a well-resourced Inland Water terminal has been established at Paletwa. Work is also going on to build a road between Paletwa and Zorinpui on the India-Myanmar border. India has supported implementation of two projects in Myanmar related to India-Myanmar-Thailand (IMT) Trilateral Highway, namely, re-construction of sixty-nine bridges and their approaches in the Tamu-Kyigone-Kalewa road section (150 kms) and upgradation of the Kalewa-Yargi road section (120 kms). Once completed, the Trilateral Highway will provide seamless connectivity for the North Eastern states of India with Myanmar, Thailand and other ASEAN countries and facilitate movement of goods and traffic.

India also provided support for capacity building projects in Myanmar, namely establishment of the Myanmar Institute of Information Technology (MIIT) in Mandalay, India Myanmar Centre for Enhancement of IT Skills (IMCEITS) in Yangon and the Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research and Education (ACARE) near Naypyidaw.

Nepal

India-Nepal developmental partnership extends to a wide spectrum of projects, including infrastructure projects in areas of railways, road, electricity transmission lines, police training and vocational training. India is undertaking development of rail links with Nepal for enhancing the ease of movement of people and goods. Under the first phase, Jayanagar-Bardibas Rail Link (68.72 kms) and Jogbani –Biratnagar Rail Link (18.60 kms) are being developed at an estimated cost of around INR 950 crores. The Jaynagar to Kurtha rail section (34km) which is the first broad gauge passenger rail line in Nepal has been handed over to Government of Nepal on 22 October 2021 for train operations. Kurtha-Bijalpura section is physically complete and likely to be handed over to Nepal in near future. Preparatory work for construction of a new electrified rail line connecting Raxaul to Kathmandu is being carried out by Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL) of India.

India has completed construction of two Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) at Birgunj and Biratnagar in Nepal along the India-Nepal Border to facilitate trade and movement of goods and traffic. These were handed over to the Government of Nepal in 2018 and 2020 respectively. Work has started at two more ICPs planned at Nepalgunj and Bhairahawa.

Under the ambit of India's assistance for development projects, the Nepal-Bharat Maitri Polytechnic is being built at Hetauda, Nepal for providing vocational training. India is also assisting Nepal to construct Nepal Police Academy at Panuati.

Sri Lanka

A modern state-of-art Cultural Centre has been constructed at Jaffna under India-Sri Lanka development partnership. The Cultural Centre includes a 2-storied museum, 12-storied learning tower, an auditorium block, a public square and a floating stage for cultural performances.

Earlier, India had helped establish an Island wide Emergency Ambulance Services with a total of 209 ambulances in Sri Lanka during 2018 -2019.

Maldives

India and Maldives have a growing development partnership involving both grant and LoC assistance. The projects completed in 2019 included installation of streetlights in Male, launch of RuPay card, gifting of CGS Kamiyaab and MoUs on setting of fish processing plants in Addu Atoll.

India is assisting in construction of a new Ministry of Defence building for Maldives. The construction work of the Institute for Security and Law Enforcement Studies is in final stages and the process of handing over the premises has been started. India provided grants for construction of additional facilities at the Composite Training Centre at Maaflaafushi Island built with India's assistance.

During 2020, Maldives has been the largest recipient of India's COVID related assistance. India has also announced support for the Greater Malé Connectivity Project through a grant of USD 100 million and a LoC of USD 400 million has been started. The GMCP involves construction of bridge and

causeway links between the Islands of Vilingli, Gulhifalhu and Thilafushi with Malé. The project is the largest infrastructure project to be undertaken in the country and is expected to become the new economic lifeline for Maldives.



India-assisted Greater Male Connectivity Project in Maldives

Mauritius

India has been providing development assistance to Mauritius in various sectors, including infrastructure, health, education and capacity building. Under its assistance programme, India has extended a grant of USD 353 million as a Special Economic Package to Mauritius in 2016, for implementation of six projects in Mauritius, namely, Metro Express (USD 275 million), New Supreme Court Building (USD 30 million), Education-Tablets (USD 14 million), Social Housing for Poor (USD 20 million), New ENT Hospital (USD 14 million) and 4 Medi-clinics & 2 Area Health Centres (AHCs).

The first phase of Metro Express Project in Port Louis built under the India-Mauritius Development Partnership and operationalized in 2020 proved to be a major success with a record number of ridership reached in the first year. The new Supreme Court building in Port Louis built with grant assistance of USD 28.12 million from India was jointly

inaugurated by the Prime Ministers of India and Mauritius on 30 July 2020. Other significant infrastructure and capacity building projects completed by India in Mauritius are building an ENT Hospital, Social Housing Project in Port Louis and the E-Tablet project to provide teaching aids for primary schools in Mauritius. India also provided grant assistance for construction of a Civil Services College in Port Louis. In the wake of the catastrophic oil-spill off the coast of Mauritius in August 2020, India dispatched 30 tonnes of technical equipment and material to assist in the oil-spill containment operations. India has agreed to undertake construction of the Renal Transplant Unit at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Hospital in Mauritius under Government of India's grant assistance of USD 10 million. The project was announced by the Prime Minister in October 2019, during the joint video inauguration of the first phase of Metro Express and ENT Hospital projects



Prime Minister inaugurates the Metro express and ENT hospitals built in Mauritius in October 2021 in conference

Tajikistan

India is providing support for construction of an eight Lane Bypass from western gate to Village Chortute road in Tajikistan, 9.2 km long consisting of four Lanes in both directions including footpath and an automobile bridge. The

total road work comprises two phases. Construction of phase 1 has been started from December 2020 at the contract cost of USD 17.46. million and Detail Project Report (DPR) for phase II has been submitted.

DPA IV

International Heritage Restoration Projects

A new Division – DPA IV was established in the Ministry in January 2020 to act as a nodal point to deal with heritage restoration projects undertaken by the Government of India across the globe. India has been reaching out, with its expertise and experience through Archaeological Survey of India for restoration and conservation of ancient cultural heritage monuments and temples in the South-East Asian region at Ta Prohm and Preah Vihear in Cambodia, My Son

in Vietnam and Wat Phou in Lao PDR. Similar restoration/conservation projects are already being taken up in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Bhutan, Nepal and other parts of the world. New projects for excavation, restoration and conservation of Buddhist sites located in Central Asia are under consideration. DPA-IV Division is also mandated to promote preservation of manuscripts & scriptures, museology, etc. Efforts have been made for rolling out projects based on digital documentation of heritage in partner countries.

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ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

The Economic Diplomacy Division (ED), is an economic arm of the Ministry of External Affairs. It facilitates foreign investment flows and promotes bilateral trade, tourism, education and traditional Indian medicine, in coordination

with Indian Missions/ Posts abroad, Territorial Divisions of The Ministry, Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India, State Governments and foreign Missions/ Posts in India. The following tasks were undertaken by the ED Division in 2021-22:

International Solar Alliance (ISA)

With the United States signing the Agreement on 10 November 2021 on the sidelines of COP26 in Glasgow, 101 countries have now signed the Framework Agreement of the ISA. As on date, 80 of these countries have ratified the Framework Agreement. The Amendments to the Framework Agreement of the ISA, which effectively opened its Membership to all UN Member countries including those lying beyond the Tropics, entered into force on 8 January 2021.

ISA attained Observer status in the UN General Assembly on 10 December 2021. 74 countries co-sponsored the draft resolution for Observer Status to the ISA and it was adopted in the UN General Assembly's Sixth Committee on 28 October 2021. Subsequently, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 76/123 and unanimously decided to invite the ISA to participate in the sessions and work of the UN General Assembly in the capacity of an "Observer".

India continues to be the President of the ISA General Assembly up to the year 2022. ED Division, in coordination

with the nodal Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), helped organise the Fourth General Assembly of the ISA which was held in virtual format on 20 October 2021. The Agenda for the Fourth Assembly was built in the Strategic Plan of the ISA and its components encompassing Country Partnership Framework, Private Sector Engagement Strategy, and Multi-Donor Trust Fund for programmatic support and Blended Finance Risk Mitigation strategy. The ISA Assembly endorsed a Political Declaration on its 'One Sun One World One Grid' initiative and deliberated on various other key initiatives of the ISA such as the Solar Investment Roadmap for 2030 and the progress made by ISA over the past year.

Prime Minister announced the 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) initiative, with a vision of connecting solar energy across borders. The fundamental concept behind OSOWOG is to develop a transnational grid to transport the solar power generated across the globe to different load centres. During COP26 in Glasgow, at the World Leaders Summit on 2 November 2021, Prime Minister, along with UK

Prime Minister Boris Johnson, U.S. President Joseph Biden, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, among

others, presented the Green Grids Initiative-One Sun One World One Grid (GGI-OSOWOG) to the world.



USA joined as the 101st Member of ISA

Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)

ED Division, in association with CDRI, promotes the disaster resilience of infrastructure globally by working towards reducing economic losses and improving the wellbeing of communities in the face of calamities.

The ongoing efforts of coordination between ED Division and CDRI are targeted towards engaging additional members, representing diverse geographic and socio-economic contexts, disaster risk profiles as well as capacities to mitigate

and adapt to climate change and disasters. As on date, the Coalition consists of 35 members including 28 national governments, 5 international organizations and 2 private sector organizations. Brazil, Bangladesh, Canada, Dominican Republic, Ghana, and Haiti are the new members. Several countries have supported the mandate of CDRI through the commitment of financial resources, and by providing technical assistance through secondments and nomination of experts to different programme Appraisal and Steering Committees.

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

ED Division participated in the Commission Session of UNCITRAL where Joint Secretary (Economic Diplomacy) delivered the statement on behalf of India. The Division has also been participating and actively coordinating on the various working groups of UNCITRAL which include:-

1. Working Group I on Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs): In light of the difficulties that many MSMEs around the world are currently facing and will continue to face as a result of the Covid pandemic, the Working Group

has been deliberating on future text to provide guidance on the adoption of reforms in the domestic legal frameworks to facilitate MSMEs' access to credit.

2. Working Group II on Dispute Settlement: This Working Group has been discussing expedited arbitration and the UNCITRAL draft Expedited Arbitration Rules.

3. Working Group III on Investor-State Dispute Settlement Reform: The Working Group continued its deliberations on Investor-State Dispute Settlement Reforms,

in particular, the draft Code of Conduct for adjudicators in International Investment Disputes prepared jointly by the UNCITRAL Secretariat and International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) Secretariat. This Working Group has been frequently meeting through intersessional meetings.

4. Working Group IV on Electronic Commerce: The Working Group continued its deliberations on the draft provisions on the use and cross-border recognition of identity management and trust services including the draft explanatory note to the draft provisions.

5. Working Group V on Insolvency Law: This Working Group is discussing a draft legislative guide on insolvency law for micro and small-sized enterprises, after the conclusion of which it proposes to take up the topics of civil assets tracing and recovery, and the applicable law in insolvency proceedings.

6. Working Group VI on Judicial Sale of Ships: The discussions in this Working Group pertain to preparing an international instrument on the recognition of judicial sales of ships.

Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)

The PCA is an inter-governmental organisation of which India has been a member since 1950. The PCA signed a host country agreement with India in 2008 to set up a permanent facility in India. While this is still in the works, the PCA has been conducting PCA-India Conferences and workshops under the ambit of the Host Country agreement which is being facilitated by this Division. The 3rd conference, held in virtual format between November 2020 and February 2021, was inaugurated by Chief Justice of India, in presence of Foreign Secretary, Secretary-General of PCA, and other dignitaries

on 21 November 2020. Further, most of India's investment treaty cases are administered by the PCA, and the Division in such cases coordinates with the PCA through the Mission in Hague.

ED Division, along with the Indian Mission in Hague, was actively involved in framing the rules and procedures for election of the Secretary-General of PCA and has been coordinating matters pertaining to the election of the next Secretary-General of the PCA.

Energy Security

The ED Division coordinates India's joint association with the International Energy Agency (IEA). The Division is also the primary coordinating agency facilitating Indian energy ministries' engagements with the IEA. The Division is working closely with the IEA and other line Ministries to work out a framework/ Strategic Partnership for strengthening of

institutional ties and advancing potential paths to IEA Membership for India. Besides facilitating India's energy engagements at the multilateral forum, ED Division is also a part of the group of line ministries involved in pursuing bilateral energy dialogues with various countries.

Market Expansion Activities

To strengthen the efforts of our Missions/Posts abroad in increasing exports and investments and to enable them to extend a constructive response to the growing demands of Indian industry and business, the Ministry allocates the fund under Budget Head "Market Expansion Activities". The allocation of funds to our Missions/Posts abroad is coordinated by the Division and is based on the volume of bilateral trade handled by them (discounting oil imports). The expenditure under this Budget Head by Missions/Posts is governed by "Expenditure Guidelines for Market Expansion Budget".

The Budget enables our Commercial Wings to respond effectively, handle in a time bound manner the routine trade and investment enquiries, provide information on the economic and business climate in countries of their concurrent accreditation and more importantly identify new business opportunities by undertaking promotional activities such as market surveys, seminars, workshops, outreach activities targeting Chambers of Commerce, Industry Associations etc. During the current financial year, the Division has allocated

INR 9.5 crores to various Indian Missions/Posts abroad.

Website and Global Mapping of Resources

The ED Division's website launched by the EAM on 16 December 2020 aims to be a one-stop source of business information on India for readers, foreign enterprises and businesses, Indian business houses looking to expand their global footprint, and State Governments for choosing their partners abroad for investment, technology cooperation, state/city partnerships and to encourage trade and tourism. The website provides snapshots of major economic indicators drawing a pen-picture of the Indian economy, its various sectors, government policies and regulations, and useful links for Indian trade promotion organizations. The website also details Government of India's initiatives including those for improving the business environment, the most recent policy reforms, and incentives aimed at attracting foreign investment. Further, it outlines the latest information and data specific to Indian states.

The website acts as a source of information on foreign countries, investment opportunities abroad, and provides investment-related assistance on Indian missions around the world. The section on World Resource endowments & opportunities provides the database depicting global supply and demand of resources such as minerals, materials, technologies, trade, agricultural exports, employment opportunities, etc. This section is a useful platform for Indian

businesses, State Governments, and readers to have easy access to the demand and supply-side profiles of resources. The goal of the ED website is to project 'Brand India' in a contemporary and comprehensive way by providing two-way information on the Indian economy and business environment in India and its States for foreign enterprises, as well as for providing information on countries around the world for Indian businesses going abroad.

Industrial Outreach, Investment Promotion and Publicity

- Trade Promotion Council of India's (TPCI) annual flagship event 'IndusFood': The ED Division, in collaboration with TPCI helped organize an event from 20-21 March 2021 for promotion of India's exports in the Food and Beverages sector. The main objective of this conclave was to have an informal interaction with a view to iron out matters of concern to foreign buyers and Indian exporters and discuss issues such as regulatory mechanism, non-tariff barriers, tariff barriers,

etc.

- 16th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project partnership: The ED Division, in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), helped organise the 16th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project partnership from 13-15 July 2021.



Inaugural Session of the Indo-Pacific Business Summit organised by CII in partnership with the Ministry

- Virtual Exhibition and Buyer Seller Meet on Digital Healthcare: The ED Division, in collaboration with Indian Chamber of Commerce helped organize a virtual exhibition and Buyer Seller Meet on digital healthcare on 14-15 July 2021, with the aim to provide the necessary support for integration of digital health infrastructure in the country.

- Indo-Pacific Business Summit: The ED Division, in coordination with CII, helped organise the first edition of Indo-Pacific Business Summit from 6-8 July 2021, over virtual platform. The Business Summit had participation of governments, enterprises, business chambers, think tanks and academia from the countries in the region. The Summit

engaged on how India and the countries in the Indo-Pacific region can enhance economic partnerships and collaborate for future economic development.

- South Asia Power Summit on digital platform: The ED Division, in collaboration with CII, helped organize the "South Asia Power Summit" on a digital platform on 21 October 2021 to strategize on how to enhance power trade and hydro development in the changing power market scenario.

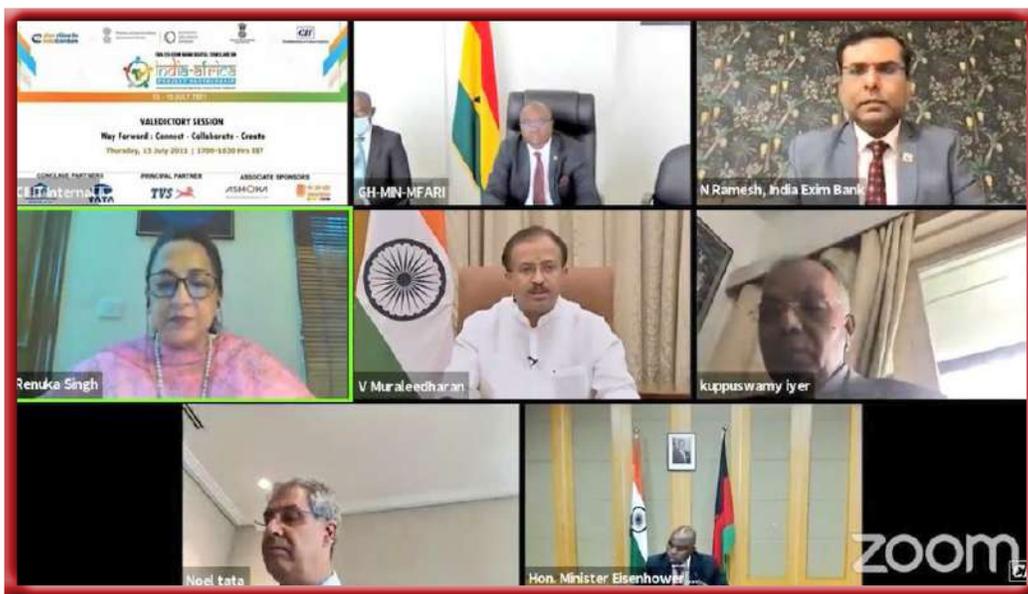
- Indo-Pacific Business Forum: The ED Division, in association with the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) co-hosted the 4th edition of the Indo-Pacific

Business Forum (IPBF), which was held in a virtual format on 28-29 October 2021. The inaugural session of the event was addressed by EAM and Mr. Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State, U.S. as keynote speakers. The event witnessed the participation of 75 panelist speakers and more than 1000 viewers. This was the first edition of IPBF that was held in South-Asia. The event witnessed the participation of top CEOs of multinational companies from U.S., India and Indo-Pacific countries. The Forum’s discussions featured the very latest developments impacting key areas of growth, including climate resilience, energy, digital economy and healthcare, as well as policy recommendations and new opportunities for expanded public-private partnerships.

- **Global Energy Expo & Conference:** The ED Division, in coordination with the Indian Chamber of Commerce helped organize the Virtual Global Energy Expo & Conference on 17-18 November 2021. The event aimed to discuss the issues pertaining to accelerating sustainability in the New & Renewable Energy sector.
- **Global Chemicals & Petrochemicals Manufacturing Hubs in India-2021:** The ED Division extended assistance to Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals and FICCI

for the second edition of the summit on “Global Chemicals & Petrochemicals Manufacturing Hubs in India-2021” (GCPMH 2021) on 25-26 November 2021 in New Delhi in hybrid format. The event aimed to provide a platform for investors and other stakeholders to interact and forge alliances, highlight, and promote segment wise investment opportunities in Chemicals and Petrochemicals sectors.

- **Conference - Building bridges in the Indo-Pacific:** The ED Division extended assistance to ASSOCHAM in the organization of their Virtual Inaugural Conference - Building bridges in the Indo-Pacific held on 30 November 2021. The event aimed to help to translate the geo-economic implications to launch a new roadmap for a focussed commercial engagement in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Dissemination of Business and Economic Outreach Products:** The ED Division supports the Missions/Posts abroad in economic and business outreach activities by providing them with relevant promotional, publicity and knowledge/information material on India’s policy environment, policy decisions, investment opportunities, and trade-related matters, among others.



16th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership in July 2021

Civil Aviation

The ED Division is the nodal division in MEA for all matters relating to Air Services Agreements with foreign countries and airlines, and works closely with the Ministry of Civil

Aviation on these matters. The Division also provides input on requirement of flight operations or code share to promote tourism, and to strengthen bilateral / multilateral relations.

Investment Treaties

The ED Division actively participates in investment treaty negotiations and has been involved in coordinating these negotiations and providing requisite inputs from a policy/political perspective and from an international law perspective. India is in the process of terminating its old generation investment treaties and is actively engaged with over 30 countries in negotiating investment treaties based on the new model- Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) of 2015. Matters pertaining to investment treaties involve origin countries/foreign relations and issues relating to international

law. The correspondences about BIT with other countries are routed through the ED Division. The Division also attended the Parliamentary Standing Committee meetings on the subject "India and Bilateral Investment Treaties" where the issues pertaining to India and its investment treaties including the disputes under these treaties were discussed.

The ED Division has also been providing requisite advice and assistance in the proceedings of Investment Treaty Arbitration Cases.

Social Security Agreement (SSAs)

SSAs, broadly defined, are bilateral agreements between India and other countries which are designed to protect the interests of cross border workers, that is, Indians working abroad, as well as nationals of those contracting countries working in India. The main aim of SSAs is to provide for the avoidance of 'no coverage' or 'double coverage' and ensure equality in treatment of the workers of both countries.

Bilateral SSAs protect the interests of Indian professionals and skilled workers working abroad by providing three benefits- avoiding make double social security contributions, easy remittance of benefits (exportability), and aggregating the contribution periods (in two countries) to prevent loss of benefits (totalization). The Ministry is the "competent authority" for negotiating the SSAs. EPFO has been designated as the Liaison Agency to operate the provisions of SSAs and for issuing Certificates of Coverage (COC) to the employees of establishments covered under the Act. Till date, India has

signed and ratified SSAs with a total number of 20 countries and more than 30 are in the pipeline.

Inputs to Various Boards/Committees

The ED Division is a member of several Boards/Committees such as Export Promotion Council for EOUs & SEZs (EPCES) (Ministry of Commerce & Industry), Project Exports Promotion Council (PEPC), India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), Invest India, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) and Water and Power Consultancy Service Ltd (WAPCOS). The officers of ED Division also represent MEA on groups constituted on cartelisation/hoarding of pulses, Market Access Initiative (MAI), etc. As part of these Boards/Committees, the ED Division regularly participates in their meetings and provides necessary inputs and guidance of The Ministry.

Sectoral Group of Secretaries (SGOS)

The ED Division, on behalf of The Ministry, participates in the SGOS Groups 3 and 7 on Resources and Economy respectively. The broad mandate of the groups is to improve the investment environment in India by improving physical connectivity, competitive approvals, investor friendly policies, growing exports and reducing high import dependence. The key performance indicators pertaining to The Ministry include enhancing regional connectivity initiatives, construction of border haats, ICPs, Development Partnership with Africa, and improving 3-Ts (Trade, Tourism and Technology). To this end, the Division has been providing regular updates on the progress made on specific connectivity projects and development partnership initiatives.

Registration of bidders procuring supply from land border countries for public procurements in India under GFR, 2017 Rule 144 (xi)

In line with the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance (Public Procurement Division)'s amendment of Rule 144 of the GFRs, 2017, on restricting/screening of procurement from other countries, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has constituted the Registration Committee (RC) with members from The Ministry, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and sectoral Ministry. The Ministry is being represented in this Committee by the ED Division. The Ministry has examined the whole process of the registration in its intent and objectives and has provided substantive detailed inputs to the DPIIT which has been well received by the multi-ministry Registration Committee. These inputs have become part of pro forma to seek detailed information from the applicants and for Administrative Ministries' meaningful due diligence process. So far, the Ministry has received 6 applications from the DPIIT for views which are at various stages of examination, while inputs in 2 cases have already been sent to the DPIIT.

Regulation of FDI from land border countries

Government of India has amended FDI guidelines vide Press Note 3 issued on 17 April 2020, mandating all FDI proposals to undergo government approval route process. DPIIT as a nodal Ministry for FDI policy has constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) to look into the issues and to devise guidelines for processing of such FDI applications. The Ministry, MHA, DPIIT and Administrative Ministries (AMs) are members of the IMC. The Ministry has given inputs to the DPIIT which are extremely important for the examination of

FDI proposals such as desirability of the investment; impact on local competitiveness; value addition in terms of number of employment generation and enhancement of technical/ technological competitiveness. So far, the Ministry has received about 70 applications of FDI from land border countries. Some of these have been disposed off, whereas others are at various stages of examination in a time bound manner.

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STATES DIVISION

The States Division is primarily mandated with the facilitation of external economic engagement of States through the network of Indian Missions and Posts abroad and Branch Secretariats/Regional Passport Offices in India. In a year marked by the brutal second wave of COVID pandemic followed by a gradual return to normalcy, the States Division has persevered and worked relentlessly to make up for the lost time and opportunities, by exploring all avenues that will allow facilitate fulfilment if all aspects of its mandate. The States Division has also pursued its mandate proactively in the North East Region by organising the North East Resident Commissioners' Interactive Session with Minister

of State, RajkumarRanjan Singh (MoS [RRS]), and the North East Round Table Conference scheduled to be held in Imphal in early 2022.

The States Division also facilitated the launch of Series-I of Haryana Africa Conclave.

Liaising with States and UT governments through regular interactions with their Resident Commissioners continued. Several Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between state governments and cities with their foreign counterparts to establish sister-state and city partnerships were facilitated by the States Division.

Facilitating Diplomatic Outreach by States

Joint VC Meeting on 03 June 2021, attended by OSD (States), and chaired by the Minister of State Commerce & Industry and Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying was on fisheries subsidies and negotiations. Both the suggestions of the State Division have been incorporated in this action plan approved, viz, i) coalition building with like-minded/similarly placed nations and ii) craft fall-back formulations, to back up India's needs.

Virtual Meeting with Guidance, Tamil Nadu: OSD (States) held a virtual meeting with Ms Pooja Kulkarni, MD & CEO of Guidance, the nodal agency for investment promotion and facilitation in Tamil Nadu, on 17 August 2021.

Interactive session with Resident Commissioners of North East Region with MoS (RRS): In pursuance of the Prime Minister's directive to facilitate the international engagement of our States and Union Territories, an interactive session with Resident Commissioners of North East Region with MoS (RRS) was held on 10 September 2021. The first of its kind meeting was held to understand first hand from the States in the North East Region as to how the Ministry can facilitate and assist their international engagement. The meeting was attended by RCs and Nodal Officers from 08 North Eastern States comprising Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura Nagaland and Sikkim. Their inputs were collected and it was proposed that a new initiative, Northeast Roundtable

will be launched. The first meeting is envisaged at Imphal.

Haryana-Africa Conclave: Series-I States Division facilitated launch of Series-I of Haryana Africa Conclave on 28-29 October 2021 at Chandigarh. Foreign Cooperation Department, Government of Haryana, in consultation with the Ministry, organised the event, with the objective of strengthening cooperation between Haryana and African nations in the areas of mutual interest and promoting all-round cooperation. The event was attended by Ambassadors of 12 African countries namely Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, Tanzania, Madagascar, Kenya, Nigeria, Eritrea, Zimbabwe and Senegal.

On 09 November, 2021, States Division organised a working Lunch to promote the Vibrant Gujarat Summit in which Secretary (ER) and Regional Deans of Diplomatic Corps participated.

On 25 November 2021, the States Division also facilitated a Curtain Raiser event followed by dinner at Hotel Leela Palace in New Delhi for foreign diplomats in India who are participating in the Vibrant Gujarat Summit scheduled to be held on 08-12 January 2022.

States Division represented the The Ministry in and facilitated international promotion of SARAS-IITF Fair on 16 November 2021 at PragatiMaidan, New Delhi. The SARAS 2021 was organized by the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj at ITPO, and was joined by 130 Self Help Groups with their unique products and crafts to showcase to the international community.

OSD (States) represented The Ministry at the UP Agro Vision 2021 held on 16-18 December 2021.

State Facilitation Abroad by Missions/ Posts

States Division organised State facilitation activities through Indian Missions and Posts abroad, to promote investments and tourism from their country of accreditation to States and UTs. Funds made available by the States Division, under the budget head 'State Facilitation Abroad' were utilised for these activities.

Overcoming the challenges posed by the COVID pandemic, several events, promotions, contests, etc. were organised to facilitate State promotion, for e.g. CGI Medan on 26 November

2021 organised an open-for-all event relating to promotion of Indian States as part of the AzadikaAmritMahotsava (AKAM) celebrations. In the event, videos relating to economic and infrastructural developments of Indian States during the past few years were played. It was followed by discussion of Consul General with guests regarding scope of development in other dimensions related to health, education etc. In addition to this, various standees were placed showcasing diverse culture and famous monuments in different states of India. The event also featured delicacies from different states of India.

Liaising With State and UT Governments

States Division served as a bridge connecting the Ministry with State and UT governments, by facilitating, among others, coordination of incoming and outgoing visits of high-level trade delegations.

The State Division participated on behalf of the Ministry in the 28th, 29th and 32nd Inter-Ministerial Consultations on issues of North-Eastern States through several webinars, held in the

context of North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS) during the period of this report.

As a part of AKAM Celebrations, the States Division is also disbursing funds under its budget head "State Facilitation & Knowledge Support" to States proposing to conduct events under the AKAM Platform.

Facilitation of MOUs with Foreign City/States

During the year 2019-20, States Division has facilitated signing of the following MoUs, (some of are under process currently), with foreign entities, such as cities and state Governments:

MoU between Urban Development, Government Of Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development & Finance Corporation (India) and Innovation Centre Denmark, Bangalore was cleared on 20 July 2021.

Tripartite MoU between the World Agro-Forestry (Kenya), Department of Agriculture, Marketing and Cooperation, Government of Andhra Pradesh and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (India) to develop and Implement a Joint Research Program was cleared on 10 August 2021.

Draft Project Agreement between the GIZ and the World Agroforestry for initiating pilot project entitled 'Sustainable Biochar Production and use through Agroforestry Systems in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha: A Climate-Resilient Soil Management Approach' Short Title: 'Sustainable Biochar Production through Agroforestry System' was cleared on 15 September 2021.

Agreement between the Vital Strategies, Implementing partner of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative and the Government of Karnataka (India) was cleared on 23 September 2021.

MoU between Ministry of Commerce of Thailand, Royal Thai Government (Thailand) and Department of Industries and

Commerce, Government of Telangana (India) was cleared on 26 November 2021.

Agreement for per-feasibility study of waste-to-energy

plant between Goa Waste Management Corporation and IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute – was cleared on 01 December 2021.

Interaction of States with Foreign Diplomats in New Delhi

Facilitated visit of Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran, Ali Chegeni to Hyderabad from 17-20 August 2021.

Facilitated visit of Dan Jannik Jorgensen, Minister for Climate, Energy and Utilities, Royal Danish Embassy and Ambassador Freddy Svane to Tamil Nadu. They also called on the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 08 September 2021.

Facilitated visit of Emmanuel Lenain, Ambassador of France to Mumbai, Maharashtra from 29 September to 01 October 2021.

Facilitated visit of Ambassador of Thailand, Pattarat Hongtong with Embassy officials to Gorakhpur and Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh on 17-18 September 2021.

Facilitated visit of German Ambassador, Walter J. Lindner to Ajmer, Rajasthan to address the participants of the inaugural German Festival organized by Mayo College on 06-07 October 2021.

Facilitated visit of Consul General of Republic of Singapore, Pong Kok Tian to Tamil Nadu on 12 October 2021.

Facilitated visit of Consul General of Singapore in Mumbai, Cheong Ming Foong to Gujarat on 21-22 October 2021.

Facilitated visit of Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia, Artis Bertulis to Nagaland (Dimapur, Kaziranga & Kohima), from 06-14 November 2021 accompanied by spouse, and a Third Secretary from the Embassy of Latvia, along with a delegation of three Latvian music professors in connection with the music master classes in Choir singing to be arranged

in Nagaland and to visit the officials there.

Facilitated visit of Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia, Artis Bertulis to West Bengal, Kolkata on 16-17 November 2021 to present a special set of book on Latvia as part of celebrating the Latvian Centenary on behalf of the National Library of Latvia to the National Library of India in Kolkata.

Facilitated visit of Ambassador of France, Mr. Emmanuel Lenain accompanied by Consul General of France in Pondicherry and Chennai, Lise Talbot to Coimbatore on 15-16 November 2021.

Facilitated visit of Consul General of France in Kolkata, Didier Talpain and Diplomatic Liaison Officer to Odisha, Anjita Roy Chaudhury, from 25-27 November 2021. During the visit, they intend to meet the Chief Minister, his Cabinet Ministers, Secretaries and Policy makers of Government of Odisha.

Facilitated visit of German Ambassador, Walter J. Lindner, to Hyderabad, Telangana from 04-06 December 2021, which resulted inter-alia in launch of virtual German Library in Hyderabad.

Facilitated visit of Consul General of France in Mumbai, Jean March Sere Charlet to pay courtesy call on Governor of Maharashtra.

Facilitated visit of Consul General of France in Mumbai, Jean March Sere Charlet to Madhya Pradesh to pay courtesy call on Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh.

Facilitated visit of Ambassador of Thailand, Pattarat Hongtong to Amritsar, Punjab on 10-11 December 2021.

State Facilitation Abroad Fund to Missions/ Posts

The Division, after taking into account the demands from various Missions/Posts abroad and the availability of funds under the head – 'State Facilitation Abroad' in financial year 2020-21, has issued sanctions amounting to Rs. 5 crores to 131 Indian Missions/Posts so far.

'State Facilitation And Knowledge Support Fund'

The Division issued sanction of Rs. 2,00,000/- accorded to Tourism Department, Government of Rajasthan, for incurring expenditure during financial year 2016-17 for providing accommodation and local transport to the international artists in connection with 'Udaipur World Music Festival, held from 10-12 February 2017.

The Division issued sanction of Rs. 2,00,000/- accorded to Head of Regional Passport Office, Pune to conduct an event/ seminar with Symbiosis Skills and Professional University on topics such as Agro Tourism, Eco Tourism, Food Processing and Exports.

The Division issued sanction of Rs.4,00,000/- accorded to Head of Branch Secretariat, Chennai for hosting events involving participants such as workers seeking employment abroad, NGOs, Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Foreign Offices in Chennai, etc.

The Division issued sanction of Rs. 7,635/- accorded to Vango Enterprises for provision of standees and flower bouquets for the Interactive Session of North East Resident Commissioners with MoS (RRS).

'State Facilitation and Knowledge Support Fund' to organise State Specific events under AKAM.

- a. The Division issued sanction of Rs.1,50,000/- accorded to Branch Secretariat, Hyderabad.
- b. The Division issued sanction of Rs.12,04,000/- accorded to State Government of Meghalaya.
- c. The Division issued sanction of Rs.3,00,000/- accorded to Regional Passport Office, Mumbai.
- d. The Division issued sanction of Rs. 13,90,000/- accorded to State Government of Sikkim.

Clearances To State Projects, Funded By External Agencies:

During the period of April 2020 to March 2021, the Division facilitated Ministry's approval of 20 Externally Aided Projects to be undertaken in North Eastern States, funded by multilateral and bilateral agencies such as WB-IBRD, ADB, JICA, etc. Several more projects are currently under process for approval.

States division has also envisaged a Round Table Conference in Imphal in January 2022 for which in principle approval has already been accorded.

Following the success of the first North East Buyer Seller Meet, the second edition is proposed to be held in February 2022.

18

DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS (D&ISA)

India participated actively in multilateral forums relating to disarmament, non-proliferation and international security, taking into account its national security interests and priorities in the international security arena. India also engaged with countries bilaterally and presented its perspectives in regional forums on these matters. India's contributions underlined its longstanding commitment to the goal of universal and non-discriminatory nuclear

disarmament, support to global peace and security in areas such as space, maritime and weapons of mass destruction, while responding to the evolving international security environment and initiatives by various countries. India's hosting of a high-level deliberation on maritime security at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) chaired by the Prime Minister on 9 August 2021 highlighted the evolving maritime issues and received wide appreciation among the international community.

First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

India put forth its views on disarmament and international security matters at the 76th session of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York from 4 October- 4 November 2021. Foreign Secretary delivered a statement on the occasion of the UNGA high-level plenary meeting on 28 September 2021 to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, where he reiterated India's support

to global, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament.

Resolutions put forth by India at the First Committee on "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction" and "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" were again adopted by consensus by the First Committee in

November 2021. India's two other resolutions in the 2021 First Committee- "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons", which calls for negotiations on an International Convention for prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and "Reducing Nuclear Danger", which suggests the review of nuclear doctrines and immediate steps to reduce the risk of intentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons - were also adopted through a very broad support of

the UN member states. The UN Secretary-General's Report, mandated by India's resolution in 2020 on the role of science and technology, reviewed scientific developments and their potential impact on international security and disarmament. India also presented its positions on specific resolutions in the First Committee on various matters including nuclear, chemical and biological disarmament, non-proliferation, space security, cyber security and related matters.

Conference on Disarmament (CD)

India participated in and contributed to the CD sessions from January to September 2021, presenting its positions on all the core agenda items of the CD including nuclear disarmament, prevention of an arms race in outer space, new types of weapons of mass destruction, transparency in armaments, women's participation and role in international security, and youth and disarmament. Foreign Secretary addressed virtually the High-Level Segment of the CD on 22 February 2021, where he underscored India's advocacy for a comprehensive and balanced Programme of Work to enable the Conference to commence negotiations on issues of pressing global importance.

While the CD was unable to reach consensus on a Programme

of Work, the work continued in the form of thematic debates on various agenda items. India presented its perspective in these thematic sessions. India launched a new initiative in the framework of 'Disarmament for Youth', aimed at bringing disarmament and international security issues closer to the younger generation.

India participated in the informal meetings of the 25-member Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Nuclear Disarmament Verification (NDV). India also participated in meetings on disarmament related issues in other forums, including those organized by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and other think tanks.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

As a present member of the UNSC, India participated in deliberations on various matters pertaining to international security in the UNSC. India also engaged with relevant committees of the UN on specific matters relating to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and associated developments pertaining to Syria, DPRK and other UNSC Committees and Panels.

During India's Presidency of the UNSC, Prime Minister chaired the UNSC High-Level Open Debate on enhancing maritime security on 9 August 2021. Underlining the vision of a safe, secure and stable maritime domain, Prime Minister highlighted the need for collective effort to address piracy, terrorism, illegal activities in the maritime domain, maritime disputes, climate change and natural disasters. Towards this, he proposed a global roadmap of maritime security cooperation at the UNSC based on five principles, namely: removal of barriers for legitimate maritime trade; settlement of maritime disputes peacefully and only on the basis of international law; collectively addressing natural disasters and maritime threats by non-state actors; preserving maritime environment and maritime resources by addressing ocean pollution, oil-spills,

over-fishing, and increasing cooperation in ocean science; and, encouraging responsible maritime connectivity based on sustainability and absorption capacity of countries.

Foreign Secretary delivered a statement at the UNSC briefing convened on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, wherein he reiterated India's role as a key partner in the global non-proliferation efforts, the need for the international community to pay closer attention to the illicit proliferation of networks and reaffirmed India's voluntary, unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosive testing.

As a part of the ongoing Comprehensive Review of the implementation of UNSC Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 (2004), India's measures to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and its delivery systems and related materials, equipment and technologies were reviewed and assessed to be consistent with the requirements as per the assessment matrix. Under India's WMD Act 2005, advisory committees held their review, and relevant orders relating to UNSC resolutions on non-proliferation of WMDs were implemented through authorities concerned.

UNSG's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (ABDM)

As a member of the ABDM, India's representative participated in the 75th and 76th Sessions of the Board, held virtually in February and June 2021 respectively, following which the

ABDM submitted its report to the UN Secretary General, assessing the developments and prospects of progressing the international disarmament agenda.

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

At the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), India engaged in the CWC's implementation in terms of chemical weapon destruction, industry verification, national measures and international cooperation. In April 2021, India's Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) was elected as the External Auditor of the OPCW for the next three years by an overwhelming majority of the OPCW membership. India was also re-elected as the member of the Executive Council (EC) of the OPCW representing Asia Group for another

two-year term in the light of its standing and role in the field of chemicals. The EC-96 approved the Facility agreement between OPCW and India regarding our Single Small-Scale Facility for research on protective purposes. India also fulfilled its implementation requirements under the CWC in terms of declarations, contributions and cooperation activities at the OPCW and presented its perspectives on matters relating to the Convention and its implementation.

Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC)

India participated in the Annual Meeting of State Parties to the BTWC from 22-26 November 2021 in Geneva where India affirmed its call for the institutional strengthening of the Convention, including negotiations on an effective, universal and non-discriminatory verification mechanism. The BTWC Meeting of Experts was held in hybrid format after a gap of about 2 years from 30 August to 8 September 2021, resuming discussions on strengthening of the convention, enhancing national implementation, reviewing international developments in the field of science and technology,

cooperation and assistance, among others. India also continued its annual submissions to the BTWC and engaged constructively with other countries on specific issues such as establishing an Article VII database to facilitate provision of assistance to countries by matching specific offers and requests for assistance, and on developing the scientific review process under the BTWC. The first session of the Preparatory Committee to the 9th BTWC Review Conference was held on 20 December 2021 to outline arrangements for the Review Conference scheduled in 2022.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)

India participated in the meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) under the CCW on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS) on 3-13 August 2021, 24 September-1 October 2021 and 2-8 December 2021. India also participated in the Meeting of Experts (16-17 August 2021) and the 23rd Conference of High Contracting Parties (10 December 2021) to Amended Protocol-II of the CCW relating to mines which adopted a declaration on Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). India engaged in the Meeting of Experts (18 August 2021) and the 15th Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (9 December 2021). India also participated constructively in the 6th Review Conference of CCW (13-17 December 2021), which considered developments in the field of conventional arms and decided to renew the mandate of the GGE on LAWS to evaluate it further.

India participated in the 7th Biennial Meeting of State Parties from 26-30 July 2021 held in a hybrid format, to review the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action (UN PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). India presented its

views on the importance of addressing illicit arms trafficking, its linkages with terrorism and contributed to the outcome document adopted by the Biennial meeting which included actions to address challenges at the national, regional and global level, illicit trade, measurability of implementation of PoA, armed violence and tracing of illicit SALW. India also engaged in the UNSC meeting on the threat to international peace and security posed by the illicit trade in SALW and the UNSC briefings on SALW in September and October 2021.

India participated in and presented its perspectives in the UNSC Open Debate on "Mine Action and Sustaining Peace: Stronger Partnerships for Better Delivery" (8 April 2021), 24th International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and UN Advisors (25-27 May 2021) and as an Observer at the 19th meeting of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in a virtual format (15-19 November 2021). India reiterated its respect and due consideration for the provisions of international humanitarian law in this regard and outlined its contribution towards training on demining and capacity building for various countries.

Strategic Export Control Regimes

India engaged as a member of multilateral export control regimes towards the goals of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and its delivery systems. This included harmonising with and participation in the development of guidelines for export controls and lists of material, equipment and technologies regulated under the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) and

Australia Group (AG), and harmonising with the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

India participated in the AG Implementation meeting held virtually (May 2021), the Experts and General Working Group meetings of WA in Vienna (September, October and November 2021), and the MTCR Plenary (October 2021) for

deliberations on evolving the control lists and practices of the respective export control regimes. These meetings also reviewed technological developments, proliferation trends and addressing these developments as they emerge.

The Ministry continued to contribute to the export licensing processes of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group (IMWG), led by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), for controlled dual-use items under Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies (SCOMET); by the Department of Defence Production (DDP) for export of Category 6 (Munitions List) items of SCOMET; and, by the Department of Atomic Energy for exports of nuclear-related goods. The Ministry engaged with enforcement mechanisms in the context of national non-proliferation objectives.

The Ministry coordinated and participated in outreach activities to enhance awareness of India's strategic export controls among industries, chambers and organizations. Region-specific outreach programmes in the form of webinars were organized for industries dealing in defence and dual use items in July and August 2021, in partnership with industry chambers viz. the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)- for the southern, western, eastern and northern regions of India. The fourth National Conference on Export Controls was held in an online format in March 2021 with the Federation of Indian

Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI). These outreach programmes witnessed sound participation from various sectors like defence, aerospace, communications, information technology, electronics, chemicals, biotechnology, etc. Sector-specific outreach events were also organised in partnership with the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in February 2021; as well as on intangible technology transfers in partnership with relevant government and industry stakeholders viz. the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) in July 2021. A Guidance Note on Intangible Technology Transfers developed by NASSCOM with relevant government organisations was released during this event.

Dialogue with other countries

Bilateral disarmament and non-proliferation dialogues were held during the year with Japan (February 2021), Australia (March 2021) and France (November 2021), where developments on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda relating to nuclear, chemical, biological domains, as well as outer space security, conventional weapons and strategic export controls were discussed. Consultations with U.S. senior officials in the area of arms control, non-proliferation and international security were undertaken in September 2021. A separate dialogue on outer space was held with Japan in November 2021 and with UK in December 2021.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

India participated in the 65th session of the IAEA General Conference (GC) held at Vienna from 20-24 September 2021, as well as in the meetings of the Board of Governors held in March, June, September and November 2021. At these meetings, India contributed to deliberations relating to nuclear safeguards issues, peaceful uses of nuclear energy,

technical cooperation, nuclear security and safety-related issues.

India's CAG was selected as the next External Auditor of the IAEA for a six-year term from 2022 to 2027 at the 65th IAEA GC in a closely contested election.

Civil Nuclear Cooperation

India engaged with various countries in the area of nuclear power generation and other peaceful uses of nuclear energy, such as radioisotope application in the field of medicine. Inter-Governmental Agreement between India and the Republic of Ghana on Cooperation on the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy was signed in September 2021. Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) for cooperation in the field of atomic energy for peaceful purposes were signed between the Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) of India and Ghana Atomic Energy Commission in July 2021, and between GCNEP and the National Nuclear Centre of the Republic of Kazakhstan in September 2021. An arrangement was reached between the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board of India and the

Nuclear Safety Authority of France in September 2021.

The first pour of concrete for the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant Units 5 and 6 being, built with Russian cooperation, took place in June 2021. These units were also placed under IAEA safeguards during the year. India also continued to contribute to mega science projects such as the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) based in France, the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) project with the US and Square Kilometre Array (SKA)- involving various partners towards scientific research.

Outer Space Matters

India presented its perspectives on matters related to outer space at the thematic discussions in the Conference on Disarmament, and meetings of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and its subsidiary bodies. Apart from continuing as Chairperson of the

Working Group in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on UN COPUOS, India was selected as the Chairperson of a new working group on Long Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. India continues to collaborate bilaterally with various countries on the peaceful uses of outer space

through multifarious activities and provision of space services, such as satellite launch services and training support. India continued to observe the provisions of the Hague Code of Conduct (HCoC), such as pre launch notifications of India's

ballistic missile and space launches and submission of annual declarations to the arrangement. India participated in the 20th Annual Regular Meeting of HCoC held in Vienna on 7-8 July 2021.

Maritime Security Affairs

As an important stakeholder in maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region and globally, India maintained active engagement with countries and multilateral organizations. India held maritime security dialogues during the year with EU (January 2021), Vietnam (April 2021), Japan (September 2021) and UK (October 2021) to exchange perspectives about the developments, cooperation opportunities and strengthening maritime security internationally. At the meetings of the Djibouti Code of Conduct- Jeddah Amendment, where India is an observer country, India engaged in terms of sharing our experiences and discussing opportunities for enhancing maritime security in the waters of the Western Indian Ocean. India's expanded its engagement with various countries at the Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean region (IFC-IOR) where Australia, Singapore, UK, Maldives, Myanmar and Seychelles positioned their liaison officers during the year towards enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation in the maritime domain.

India participated in two plenary meetings of the G7 plus

Friends of Gulf of Guinea (G7+FoGG) held virtually from 23-25 June 2021, and at Dakar, Senegal from 24-26 November 2021, towards enhancing maritime security capabilities in the region. India participated in the various preliminary meetings of the newly formed Strategic Planning Steering Group (SPSG) of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and Friends of the Chair Meeting of CGPCS held on 16 December 2021 for formulating the future approach of CGPCS.

India also continued to engage with Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) based in Singapore, Co-operative Mechanism on the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS), Aids to Navigation Fund (ANF) Committee in the Straits of Malacca, and other forums. The Indian candidate was elected as the next Executive Director of the ReCAAP-Information Sharing Centre, Singapore for a three-year term commencing in 2022 with two-thirds majority in a contest involving other candidates.

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defence Minister's Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus)

The Minister of State for External Affairs, Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh (MoS [RRS]) attended and addressed the 28th ARF Ministerial meeting held virtually on 6 August 2021 regarding security developments pertaining to the South East Asian region and beyond. Under the ARF List of Track I Activities for Inter-Sessional Year 2021-2022, India co-chaired the 3rd ARF workshop on "implementing United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS) and other international instruments to address emerging maritime threats" from 1-2 June 2021, co-chaired ARF Workshop on Law of the Sea and

fisheries on 7-8 December 2021 and became the co-chair of the 13th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security.

India also engaged with the ASEAN ADMM Plus where the annual meeting was attended by Raksha Mantri on 16 June 2021 in a virtual format. As co-chairs, India and Indonesia conducted the 16th and 17th meetings of ADMM Plus Experts Working Groups on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief in April and November 2021.

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

The EAM addressed the Sixth Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the CICA States held in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan from 11-12 October 2021. The theme of the meeting was 'Security and sustainable development in Asia in new realities of the post pandemic world' and it culminated with the (i) Establishment of a CICA Council of Eminent Persons (ii) Transforming CICA Think Tanks into an annual forum and (iii) Updating the Confidence Building Measures under CICA. EAM highlighted India's contribution to partner countries in CICA and beyond, particularly on Covid-19 response, and India's thoughts on advancing security and cooperation in the Eurasian

region, such as on the menace of terrorism and situation in Afghanistan. As a Co-coordinator in CICA in the area of 'Energy Security', India hosted a virtual Workshop titled 'Renewable Energy for Energy Security' in June 2021 and attended and shared its views in CICA Financial Summit, (April 2021), CICA Business Council and Business Forum meetings, (June 2021), Seminar on Military-Political Dimension (August 2021), and International Forum on Opportunities for Cooperation in the field of Digitalisation of Economy (September 2021).

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LEGAL AND TREATIES DIVISION

UNITED NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Sixth Committee (Legal) of the United Nations General Assembly

The Sixth Committee of the United Nations is one of the main Committees of the United Nations General Assembly and a primary forum for consideration of international legal issues. It provides an opportunity for the UN member States for the consideration of legal questions. The Committee met during the 76th session of the General Assembly, from 4 October-19 November 2021 to deliberate on the legal issues of international importance. Like the previous years, the Legal and Treaties Division followed the work of the Sixth Committee and actively participated in its deliberations.

Terrorism and related issues dominated the discussions before the Sixth Committee at the Seventy-sixth Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). In the general debate, besides strongly condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, Member States stressed combating every act of terrorism.

As there is a need to have a global normative document to curb the menace of terrorism, Measures to eliminate international terrorism continues to be on the agenda of the Sixth Committee (Item 111). In this regard, progress was made at the Seventy-sixth Session which adopted a draft resolution on “the

Measures to eliminate international terrorism” with a call to the UN Member States for considering effective measures to deal with the menace of terrorism including the early conclusion of Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

Other important subjects/topics considered by the Sixth Committee at the Seventy-sixth session of the UNGA include – (i) Rule of law at the national and international level, (ii) The Scope and application of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction, (iii) Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its fifty-fourth session, (iv) United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law, (v) Report of International Law Commission on the work of its seventy-second session, (vi) Report of the Committee on relations with the host country, (vii) Criminal accountability of UN officials and experts on mission, (ix) Protection of persons in the event of disasters (xi) Crimes against humanity and (xii) Strengthening and promoting the international treaty framework.

The Sixth Committee also considered and debated the Report of the International Law Commission, which includes the following topics – Protection of the Atmosphere, Provisional

Application of Treaties, Immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction, Sea-level rise about international law, Succession of States in respect of State responsibility and General principles of law.

India actively participated in the discussions and made a statement on a few of the topics.

During the main session of the Sixth Committee of the UNGA, India delivered ten statements including on measures to eliminate international terrorism; rule of law at the national and international levels; criminal accountability of UN officials and experts on missions; the scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction; and on Reports of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, International Law Commission (ILC), UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL); Crimes against Humanity, Protection of persons in disasters and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) - at the GA Plenary.

The report of the International Law Commission (ILC) relating to the work at its seventy-second session was considered in three parts. India made statements on all three parts, which included the following topics: Protection of the Atmosphere, Provisional Application of Treaties, Immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction, Sea-level rise about

international law, Succession of States in respect of State responsibility and General principles of law.

The election of the ILC members took place at UNGA on 12 November 2021. In the said election, the Indian nominee, Dr Prof. Bimal Patel got elected as an ILC member representing India for a period of five years starting from 1 January 2013.

It is important to mention that India submitted an application to the UNGA for granting Observer Status to the International Solar Alliance (ISA). While applying to UNGA, India secured 65 ISA Member State's support who countersigned the said application. UNGA adopted the draft Resolution (agenda item 176) on "Observer status for the International Solar Alliance in the General Assembly" and granted Observer status to ISA.

International Law Weekend

This year, Canada was the chief coordinator for the meeting of Legal Advisers of Foreign Ministries of the UN Member States during the International Law Week, held on 28 – 30 October 2021 (Virtually). The Sixth Committee experts, international law academicians and UN officials also participated in the meeting. The UN Office for Legal Affairs assisted Canada in organizing this event.

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) is the core legal body of the United Nations system in the field of international trade law. A legal body with universal membership specializing in commercial law reform worldwide for over 50 years, UNCITRAL is mandated to promote the progressive harmonization and unification of the law of international trade, in particular, to codify and harmonize the current and evolving issues of international trade law at the global level. India as a Member of UNCITRAL since its inception has been participating in its Sessions and contributing to the growth of international trade law. Various working groups under UNCITRAL are:

i. The Working Group I on Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises. The Working Group has completed its work on the UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Limited Liability Enterprises and deliberated on the access to credit for MSMEs. The Division has participated in its deliberations.

ii. The Working Group II on Arbitration and Conciliation / Dispute Settlement. The Working Group discussed on Finalization of the Explanatory Note to the UNCITRAL Expedited Arbitration Rules. The Division actively participated on behalf of India.

iii. The Working Group III on Investor-State Dispute Settlement Reform. The Working Group, held formal and informal sessions to deliberate on various topics concerning reforming of Investor-State dispute settlement reforms. The Working Group continued its work on ISDS reforms, including

the multilateral advisory centre, the standing multilateral mechanism (selection and appointment of ISDS tribunal members and related matters) and the draft code of conduct for adjudicators in international investment disputes. The Division has contributed to the discussions.

iv. The Working Group IV on Electronic Commerce. The Working Group took up for its consideration the draft provisions on the use and cross-border recognition of identity management and trust services (as contained in A/CN.9/WG.IV/WP.170) and also considered a draft explanatory note to the draft provisions on the use and cross-border recognition of identity management and trust services. The Division has participated in the Session.

v. The Working Group V on Insolvency Law. The Working Group deliberated on a draft legislative guide on insolvency law for micro-and small enterprises. It also dealt with Consideration of legal issues arising from civil asset tracking and recovery in insolvency proceedings as well as the applicable law in insolvency proceedings. The Division participated in its discussions.

vi. The Working Group VI on Judicial Sale of Ships. The Working Group continued its deliberation on the draft convention on the judicial sale of ships. The Division has contributed to its discussions.

Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO)

Legal & Treaties Division represented India in the 59th Annual Session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) held in Hong Kong from 29 November – 1 December 2021. Mr Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China has inaugurated the Session.

Major achievements of the Session include the election of the new Secretary-General of AALCO. Dr. Kamalinee Pinitpuvadol from Thailand. The Session deliberated on the Work of the International Law Commission, International Law in Cyber Space, and Palestine. The Session also witnessed the establishment of the Regional Arbitration Centre in Hong Kong.

The Twenty-two Member States of AALCO made their statements in the Session. The Indian delegation participated virtually and was led by Ms Uma Sekhar, Additional Secretary and Legal Adviser, Legal and Treaties Division of the Ministry of External Affairs.

The Legal & Treaties Division also participated in the 65th AALCO Constitution Day celebration held in New Delhi on 9 December 2021. Additional Secretary and Legal Adviser, Ministry of External Affairs also delivered a special address on this occasion.

International Investment Arbitration Cases Involving India

In the Arbitration proceedings initiated against the Republic of India by foreign investors invoking various investment treaties, following major developments took place during the current year (2020 – 21):

i. Cairn Energy PLC et al. v. the Republic of India: Consequent to the Hague based Permanent Court of Arbitration seated in the Netherlands awarded 1.2 Billion USD plus interest and costs against India on 21 December 2021 under the India UK BIT, the GoI took several steps to stop the enforcement of such award against India. The Government has also taken several steps to set aside the proceedings that were passed against India.

ii. In the meanwhile, GoI has passed the Taxation Amendment Act, 2021 providing relief to the companies from the retrospective taxation measures. Consequently, Cairn has filed for the withdrawal of enforcement proceedings in light of the said Amendment (law).

iii. This Division also advised on other disputes that fall within the ambit of taxation measures similar to Cairn which include the disputes under ISDS by Vedanta and Earlyguard. Being part of the body constituted for the purpose by the competent authorities, this Division has been playing a key role by advising from an international law angle in the meetings of such bodies handling ISDS Disputes.

iv. The Division advised on Antrix Devas Disputes covering multiple jurisdictions concerning the award secured by foreign Investors Deutsche Telekom AG and c/c Devas Mauritius Limited.

v. In GPIX LLC v Republic of India, L&T Division has advised on international law issues and participates in the dispute proceedings brought about the issues of Transportation and storage under Investor-State Arbitration. GPIX LLC instituted these arbitral proceedings against the Republic of India by Notice of Arbitration dated 9 March 2020 under Article 8 of the Agreement between India and Mauritius for the Promotion and Protection of Investments dated 4 September 1998 and the 1976 UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules.

vi. In KOWEPO v Republic of India, L&T Division advised on International law issues and participated in the dispute proceedings brought under Oil and Energy sector under the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Korea on the Promotion And Protection of Investments signed on 26 February 1996 against the Republic of India.

vii. In Khaitan Holding Mauritius (Limited) v. the Republic of India, L&T Division advised on International law issues and participated in the dispute proceedings brought under the Telecommunications sector under the BIT (Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Government of the Republic of India for the Promotion and Protection of Investments 1998).

viii. In Ras Al- Khaimah (RAKIA) v. the Republic of India, L&T Division advised on various stages of the dispute brought by RAKIA against the Republic of India about the Claims arising out of the alleged non-fulfilment and subsequent cancellation of a memorandum of understanding signed in 2007 between the Government of the state of Andhra Pradesh and RAKIA. L&T Division has also participated in various proceedings of the dispute brought under India UAE BIT of 2013.

ix. L&T Division has also advised on International law issues in various other disputes relating to the Telecommunications sector and continues to participate actively in the proceedings against the Republic of India.

Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition

Legal & Treaties Division has played a major role in advising on several mutual legal assistance treaties. Following Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties and Extradition Treaties were examined:

i. Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties in criminal matters with Mozambique, Dominican Republic, Italy and Cuba.

ii. Extradition Treaties with Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Guyana, Hungary and Italy.

The Legal and Treaties Division examined several extradition requests including that of Mr Gopal Sheelum Reddy an aide of self-proclaimed God Nithyanandha and other requests relating to criminal and civil matters from a domestic and foreign jurisdiction.

Information Technology

The Legal and Treaties Division attended various sessions of the Open-Ended Working Group on Developments in the field of Information and Communications Technologies in the Context of International Security and the Group of Experts on Advancing State Responsibility in the field of ICTs in the context of international security. The reports of these working groups were adopted in the month of March and May 2021 respectively.

Investment and Trade

i. This Division has participated in several bilateral investment treaty negotiations. Major negotiations that took

place during this year include BIT negotiations with – Russia, Mongolia, UAE, European Union, Chile, Saudi Arabia, TECC, USA etc.

ii. This Division was part of the Indian delegation in negotiating the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with the UAE. This Agreement was finalised in record time.

iii. The Division rendered several legal advice on various issues relating to the trade and investment matters such as the interplay of GATT vis a vis CECAs/CPAs.

iv. L&T Division also advised on legal positions and proposals as part of various Bilateral Investment Agreements. International law implications on the text of an agreement were also provided during various Trade and Investment Agreement Negotiations.

Other Treaty Negotiations

Legal & Treaties Division actively participated in many bilateral and multilateral negotiations about various subject matters of national and global importance. Most notable among them are:

i. The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) was held in Glasgow. This Division actively participated and contributed to the said Conference.

ii. 7th Session of Inter-governmental Expert Group on Cybercrime;

iii. Joint meeting of BRICS Foreign Ministries and Space

Agencies on Draft Agreement on Cooperation on BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation.

iv. Meeting on autonomous weapons systems (under the ambit of the Convention on Conventional Weapons – Lethal and Autonomous Weapon System).

v. Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS).

vi. Expert group meetings on parentage/surrogacy project.

Treaty Practice and Online Treaty Database

One of the core functions of the Legal and Treaties Division is to facilitate the signing and implementation of treaties on behalf of India. In this regard, the Instrument of Full Power was issued to sign several such treaties. A list of Instrument of Full Powers issued during the year 2021 is at Annex-III. Similarly, signed treaties are implemented through Instrument of Ratifications, facilitated by the Legal and Treaties Division. The Division has facilitated ratification of bilateral and multilateral treaties during the year 2021. A list of Instruments of Ratification/Accession issued during the year 2021 is at Annex-II.

The Legal and Treaties Division is the depository of all the Treaties signed on behalf of India. A comprehensive list of

(non-classified) Agreements/Treaties signed by India during the year 2021 is placed at Annex-I.

Being a depository of treaties, Agreements/Treaties concluded on behalf of the Government of India with foreign counterparts are indexed and uploaded into the Indian Treaties Database which is maintained and constantly updated by the Legal & Treaties Division. The Treaty database (web link: <https://www.mea.gov.in/TreatyList.htm?1>) comprises the treaties covering the period from 1950 till 2021. Currently, there are more than 3,300 such treaties in the database which can be accessed online by the general public.

Examination/Vetting of Legal Documents

Legal & Treaties Division has examined several international law instruments including MoUs, treaties/agreements, as well as Cabinet, notes and rendered a legal opinion. The Division, inter alia examined and provided its views on treaties, agreements, MoUs in the areas including

defence co-operation, agriculture, railways, SAARC, Health, biotechnology, outer space, science and technology, BRICS (conglomeration of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Shanghai Cooperation

Organization (SCO), agreements relating to international terrorism, transnational organized crime and drug trafficking/narcotics; also agreements on confidentiality; sharing of hydrological data; gas and energy; bilateral agreements on cultural cooperation, audiovisual cooperation, road transport, trade and investment, projects to be implemented in foreign

countries, education, tourism, climate change, protection of natural resources; water resources; bio-diversity; solar alliance; ozone-depleting substances; hydrography, twinning/sister city agreements and customs cooperation agreements, etc.

Legal Opinions and Legal Research

Legal & Treaties Division rendered a legal opinion on various subject matters involving international law and domestic legal matters such as UN matters, Immunity and Privilege issues, local employees cases, human rights issues, humanitarian

law matters, international criminal law and legal assistance matters, especially the interpretation of treaties on the transfer of sentenced persons, space and air law issues, environmental matters, court cases, tender documents etc.

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POLICY PLANNING AND RESEARCH (PP&R)

The Policy Planning and Research (PP&R) Division is the nodal division of the Ministry for medium-term policy planning, and organizing public diplomacy initiatives with the strategic and academic community. It conducts in-house policy analysis for the Ministry on a regular basis on key foreign policy issues. It holds policy planning dialogues with policy planning bureaus of foreign counterparts to develop a commonality of understanding on regional and global issues.

The Division leads the Ministry's efforts in cross-cutting initiatives especially those which involve coordination with other ministries in the Government of India. It also funds various research studies on topical subjects to analyse and assess contemporary trends in international relations. The research output is utilized by the Ministry and Indian Missions and Posts abroad in formulation and execution of policies

PP&R Division supervises the functioning of the Ministry's

Library and Boundary Cell. The Division is also the administrative agency for matters pertaining to ICWA and RIS - two autonomous research bodies which function under the Ministry.

In March 2021, the work related to Nalanda University was transferred to PP&R Division. The Ministry is represented in the statutory governance of Nalanda University through participation in the Governing Board, Finance Committee, Buildings and Works Committee and other bodies.

Despite restrictions imposed by the pandemic, this year saw the Division undertaking niche policy analysis assignments and considerably enhancing the Ministry's institutional engagement with the strategic community. The Division produced a range of periodic deliverables covering the Ministry's key activities and analyzing events and developments of high significance.

Outreach to the Strategic Community

Public diplomacy outreach to the strategic and policy community is one of the core verticals of PP&R Division. During the year, it held regular and structured interactions with think tanks, research institutions, and universities. The Division supported several joint activities with these institutions through flagship conferences, seminars/webinars, Track 1.5/2 dialogues, and research projects. It maintained

regular contact with academics of Indian Universities working on areas of interest to the Ministry.

The Division supports four annual flagship conferences organized in partnership with prominent Indian think-tanks - Raisina Dialogue (in partnership with Observer Research foundation), Asian Economic Dialogue (in partnership with

Pune International Centre), Global Technology Summit (in partnership with Carnegie India) and Indian Ocean Conference (in partnership with India Foundation). These conferences are broadly themed under geopolitics, geoeconomics, geotechnology and geostrategy, respectively.

The Division also extends financial support to various other conferences on International Relations. These conferences are structured as a multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral conclaves which engage decision-makers at the level of Ministers and

high-level government officials as well as policy practitioners; leading personalities from business and industry; and members of the strategic community, media and academia.

On 24 December 2021, the PP&R Division organized the Second Atal Bihari Vajpayee Annual Memorial Lecture. The lecture was delivered by Dr. Michael Fullilove, Executive Director, Lowy Institute. EAM delivered the opening remarks on the occasion.



EAM delivered the opening remarks for the 2nd Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture in December 2021

Supporting Track 1.5/2 Dialogues and Research

The Division also supports Track 1.5/2 Dialogues. These are country-focussed, bilateral/multilateral dialogues where government officials participate along with academics and foreign think-tank partners. A list of flagship conferences, Track 1.5/2 Dialogues, and various other conferences supported by the Division since 2020 is given at Table 1.

PP&R Division also provides financial assistance to research institutions for thematic research projects. A list of such thematic research studies supported by the Ministry since 2020 is given at Table 2.

Policy Planning Dialogues

The PP&R Division has a system of engaging with the counterpart policy planning units in the foreign ministries of other countries. During the year, the possibility of conducting 'in-person' dialogues was severely affected. However, the division managed to conduct one or multiple rounds of virtual or in-person interactions with its counterparts from a large

number of partners, including Australia, BRICS, EU, Poland and Russia.

These dialogues play a critical role in identifying areas of mutual interest and avenues of cooperation with a wide range of partners.

In-house Research and Publications

The Division produced a number of research papers and policy briefs, covering foreign policy trends and international

developments. The focus of these papers ranges from immediate response options to emerging issues to medium

and long-term trends and developments in the world and India's evolving role and interests over this strategic horizon.

These papers tapped into the expertise available within the Ministry, as well as that available externally, through consultations with other relevant Departments/Ministries and think-tanks. All these analyses collectively help shape the roadmap of India's international engagements in pursuit of India's foreign policy objective of ensuring a peaceful, stable external environment and creating the most propitious

climate for India's economic growth and development. The papers were circulated within the Government as well as shared with the wider strategic community.

Throughout the year, the PP&R Division also issued a range of publications. This included comprehensive Daily Reports covering major news developments and interesting foreign policy related snippets, Monthly Think-Tank Compendium on important policy events organized by think tanks, Monthly Summary of the Cabinet and Annual Report of the Ministry.



Prime Minister of UK Boris Johnson delivered the Special Address at Global Technology Summit 2021 in December 2021

Other Administrative Functions

ICWA: The Division is the administrative division for processing the grant in aid for ICWA as well as for administrative matters pertaining to the governance of ICWA. For April-December 2021, the grant for ICWA was INR 3 crore. The Division is also responsible for tabling the annual report of ICWA in the Parliament.

RIS: The Division is the nodal division for processing the grant

in aid for RIS as well as for administrative matters pertaining to the governance of RIS. One of the matters pending implementation is strengthening the working of the ASEAN India Centre, which is administratively located within the RIS. For April-December 2021, the grant for RIS was INR 6.31 crore. The Division is also responsible for tabling the annual report of RIS in the Parliament.

Library

The Ministry's Library performs the duties of a library and also acts as a Resource and Information Centre for the use of officers and staff members at headquarters as well as Indian Missions and Posts abroad. The library currently functions at Patiala House and Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan (JNB).

The library has over one hundred thousand books, rich resource materials and a large collection of maps, microfilms and official documents. The library subscribes and maintains more than 300 periodicals / journals and newspaper titles (including on-line journals and databases).

During the year, the library completed a project to re-print "India's Bilateral Treaties and Agreements including joint declarations and communiqués" from 1947 to 2017 and it is published in 18 volumes.

The Ministry's Library was instrumental in helping Indian Missions abroad to establish Mission Libraries during the year and facilitated Missions to set up e-libraries on NIC Cloud under Embassy of India Libraries Network on a regular basis (Link: <https://eg4.nic.in/embassies/home>).

Boundary Cell

The Boundary Cell provided cartographic and technical inputs and support to Territorial Divisions on various aspects of International Boundary from time to time throughout the year.

Boundary Cell attended Inter-ministerial meetings organized by Territorial Divisions to discuss Boundary matters/ Maintenance of No Man's land and Construction/ Repairs/ Relocation/Relay of Boundary Pillars. It also participated in bilateral meetings (Joint Boundary Conference) on boundary matters between India-Bangladesh and provided relevant

inputs.

It coordinated fieldwork for India-Bangladesh and India-Bhutan International Boundary tasks with the relevant state/ central departments and security forces responsible for pillar construction.

The Boundary Cell advised DLR&S West -Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram States in finalization of field programs for Joint Inspection/maintenance of boundary pillars along India-Bangladesh IB.

Table 1

A list of flagship conferences/Track 1.5/2 Dialogues/Other Conferences supported by the Division since 2020

S.No.	Conference/Track 1.5/2 Dialogue	Partner Institute
Flagship Conferences		
1.	Raisina Dialogue	Observer Research Foundation
2.	Global Technology Summit	Carnegie India
3.	Asia Economic Dialogue	Pune International Centre
4.	Indian Ocean Conference	India Foundation
Track 1.5/2 Dialogues		
5.	India-Republic of Korea	Ananta Aspen Centre
7.	Indo-US Forum	
8.	India-Japan Track 1.5	Delhi Policy Group
9.	India-Canada Track 1.5	Gateway House
10.	India -US Track 2	Hudson Institute
11.	India-Bangladesh Conference	Jadavpur Association of International Relations (JAIR)
12.	West Asia Conference	Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA)
13.	Kolkata-Dhaka Dialogue	HP Ghosh Research Centre, Jadavpur University
Other Conferences		
14.	Dialogue on Strategic Security Threats	National Institute of Advanced Studies NIAS-CISAC
15.	Conference on India's Neighbourhood Policy	Vidya Prasarak Mandal
16.	Conference on Indo-Pacific	Madurai Kamaraj University
17.	IAAPS Conference	Indian Association for Asian and Pacific Studies
18.	Prabhav Conference	Impact Investor Council

Table 2

A list of such thematic research studies supported by the Division since 2020

S. No.	Think-tank/Research Institute	Research Study
1	Manohar Parrikar Institute of Defence Studies	Analytical and Research Studies on Pakistan
2	Manohar Parrikar Institute of Defence Studies	Analytical and Research Studies on Bangladesh
3	Association of Indian Diplomats	A quarterly journal of Foreign Policy
4	Chennai Centre for China Studies	Analytical and Research Studies on China
5	Centre for China Analysis and Strategy	Analytical and Research Studies on China

21

COUNTER TERRORISM

Terrorism is widely seen today as a global menace and universal threat. As a multi-cultural, diverse, pluralistic society committed to democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law, India recognises the grave challenges posed by terrorism. India has always been at the forefront of global efforts to counter terrorism. The issue of countering terrorism finds prominent mention in India's bilateral and multilateral meetings at all levels. India has consistently reiterated its commitment to combating terrorism globally and has strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. India has signed and ratified all the major conventions and protocols on terrorism adopted by the UN and is part of all major global initiatives in that regard.

India's counter terrorism doctrine is based on the principle recognised by the United Nations that terrorism in all its forms is a criminal activity and is not justified on any ground—be it political, religious, ethnic or social. India's call for zero tolerance to terrorism, rejection of any justification for any act of terror, delinking terror from religion and need for all countries to unite in the fight against terrorism has found greater acceptance among the international community.

In India's engagements with the international community, it has been emphasized that terrorism can only be defeated collectively and that all countries should work together for rooting out terrorist safe havens and infrastructure, disrupting terrorist networks and their financing channels, and halting cross-border movement of terrorists. Highlighting the importance of combating terrorism in a comprehensive and

sustained manner, India has stressed the need for concerted action against all terrorist groups, including Al-Qaida, ISIS, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Hizb-ulMujahideen and their affiliates and proxies.

During 2021, while speaking at an open debate in the UNSC on counter-terrorism, EAM called for greater commitment of the international community towards zero tolerance for terrorism, effective action by member states and proposed an eight-point action plan to counter terrorism, which includes - the need to summon the political will to combat terrorism; no double standards in differentiating between "good" and "bad" terrorists; no politicisation of the UN Sanctions regimes; no blocks or holds should be placed on listing requests without any reason; there must be objective enlisting and delisting of terrorists by the UN; discouraging exclusivist thinking that facilitates radicalisation; recognizing the linkage of terrorism to organized crime; supporting and strengthening anti-money laundering and counter-terror financing frameworks like the Financial Action Task Force (FATF); and strengthening multilateral counter terrorism architecture under the UN Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT).

To strengthen bilateral counter terrorism cooperation with important countries, India has established Joint Working Groups on Counter Terrorism (JWG-CT) with 26 important countries spread across the world, in addition to a JWG-CT with the European Union. India also participates in the JWG-CT meetings of BRICS and BIMSTEC. The meetings of all these Joint Working Groups are held on a regular basis. All concerned

Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government of India are represented in these meetings, presenting a whole-of-the-government approach in countering terrorism.

The JWG-CT meetings provide a forum for counter-terrorism cooperation enabling the sharing of information and experience, sharing terrorist threat assessments at the national, regional and global level, training and capacity building, strengthening of multilateral efforts in the fight against terrorism and terrorist financing, expediting mutual legal assistance requests, facilitating agency-to-agency cooperation, and emphasizing the importance of early adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) under the auspices of the UN.

In 2021 India held bilateral JWG-CT meetings with Maldives, United States of America and France. The inaugural bilateral counter-terrorism dialogue between India and Nigeria at National Security Advisers (NSA) level was held in New Delhi on 4 March 2021. A virtual meeting on the misuse of internet for terrorist purposes between the experts of India and Australia was also held on 1 September 2021.

India has also strongly advocated for strengthening multilateral efforts to fight terrorism, and strengthening the UN Counter Terrorism architecture led by United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT). India participated in the 2nd virtual Counter Terrorism Week organised by UNOCT from 21-30 June 2021. During the week, India co-organized a side event on terrorist financing threats and trends in the post Covid-19 landscape, with a particular focus on the misuse of digital space for terrorist financing purposes.

Since 2018, India has been generously contributing to support UN efforts to strengthen capacity of member states, particularly in the areas of countering financing of terrorism, and countering travel of terrorists. In May 2021, funding of USD 5,00,000 was provided to continue to support these programmes. India is a member of Advisory Board to the UN Counter Terrorism Center (UNCCT). India is also member of the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism, which was launched in June 2019 and has participated in its Ministerial meetings.

India has fully leveraged its current non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council, by sensitizing the Council on the issue of terrorism and encouraging it to send a strong message to those supporting terrorism. During India's Presidency of the UN Security Council for the month of August 2021, India spearheaded several initiatives on counter terrorism. On 19 August 2021, India organized a special Ministerial level meeting on the threat posed by the ISIL or Da'esh, highlighting the rise of ISIL's regional affiliates in several countries of Africa as well as in Afghanistan. On 29 August 2021, during India's Presidency, the Security Council adopted a resolution demanding, inter alia, that Afghan territory is not used to threaten or attack any country or to

shelter or train terrorists or to plan or finance terrorist attacks against any country.

During the 7th Review of Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (GCTS) held in June 2021, India constructively contributed to the negotiations of the strategy accentuating discussion on strengthening member states' obligations towards countering financing of terrorism, addressing use of new technologies by terrorist groups for organizing funding, recruiting cadre, and spreading propaganda and false narratives, and upholding the rights of victims of terrorism.

At the regional level, India has been actively involved in various efforts to counter terrorism. India participates in the meetings of BRICS and BIMSTEC Joint Working Groups on Counter Terrorism and their sub-groups. India hosted the sixth meeting of the BRICS Counter Terrorism Working Group (CTWG) virtually in July 2021. The main outcome of this meeting was the finalisation of the BRICS Counter Terrorism Action Plan containing specific measures to implement the BRICS Counter Terrorism Strategy adopted by BRICS Leaders in 2020. This Action Plan was adopted at the BRICS National Security Advisors meeting held on 24 August 2021 and endorsed at the 13th BRICS Summit held in September 2021.

Cooperation in Counter Terrorism is also an area of high priority in the BIMSTEC framework. India is the lead country for Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime issues in BIMSTEC and has been regularly participating in the meetings of the BIMSTEC Joint Working Group and its 6 sub-groups. India is also an active participant in the Counter Terrorism mechanism set up by regional organisations such as the Asian Regional Forum (ARF), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisations' Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (known as SCO-RATS). India has assumed the Chairmanship of SCO-RATS in September 2021. India has also been participating in the Joint anti-terrorism exercises of SCO member countries. An Indian delegation participated in the 8th ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC).

India is a member of FATF since 2010 and has been regularly participating in the FATF Plenary meetings. India is also a member of two FATF style Regional Bodies: namely the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG) and Asia Pacific Group (APG). During 2021, India, as a member of Financial Action Task Force (FATF), participated in its three Plenary meetings held virtually in February, June and October. India also participated in the FATF Asia Pacific Joint Group meetings in January, May and September 2021.

India is a founding member of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) since its launch in 2011 and regularly participates in its meetings. India participated at a senior official level in the 19th GCTF Coordinating Committee Meeting and the 11th GCTF Ministerial Plenary Meeting held virtually on 6-7 October 2021.

22

CYBER DIPLOMACY, E-GOVERNANCE & IT

Cyber Diplomacy (CD)

CD Division of the Ministry is a specialized Division which deals with international cyber governance policy formulation and developments around ICTs at bilateral, regional and multilateral fora including the United Nations. Cyber Diplomacy Division initiated actions as the nodal point for discussions on cyber security issues, data protection, cybercrime and internet governance in consultation with other Government of India stakeholders viz. National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Department of Telecommunication (DoT), etc.

India has been actively participating in and contributing to Cyber Dialogues/Conferences and Conventions to voice its views, shape global Cyber policies and strengthen its Cyber security. In keeping with its commitment to a multi-stakeholder model of cyber governance, India has been engaged in activities with the private sector, civil society and academia to shape and strategise cyber policy. The Cyber Diplomacy Division is instrumental in proposing and initiating bilateral cyber consultations with the strategic countries and to that effect the Division has Cyber Dialogue with 16 Countries, Joint Working Groups with the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, Russia etc. and engagement with regional blocks such as SCO, BRICS, ARF, EU, IBSA and others.

Bilateral Relations with Individual countries

- India-Australia Joint Working Group on Cyber Security Cooperation was held on 10 June 2021 in virtual mode. Joint Secretary (eG&IT and CD) led the delegation.
- The Fourth India-Australia Cyber Dialogue was held on 06 July 2021 and India hosted the Fourth India-France Cyber Dialogue on 13 October 2021 in virtual mode.
- Joint Working Groups with United Kingdom on Cyber Governance on 20 September 2021 and Capacity Building on 13 October 2021 were convened in virtual mode.
- India-Australia Strategic National Security Cyber Dialogue was held on 21 October 2021 in virtual mode.

Regional and Multilateral Cooperation in the Area of Cyber Issues

India virtually participated in United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's 7th session of the Intergovernmental Expert Group to conduct a Comprehensive Study on Cybercrime from 06-08 April 2021. JS (eG&IT and CD) led the Indian delegation, which comprised representatives from NSCS, MHA, CBI, L&T Division and the Ministry.

India actively took part in Association of South East Asian Nations Regional Forum (ARF) meetings on cyber issues. India participated in the third ARF inter Sessional Meeting on Security and in the use of Information and Communication Technologies during 27-28 April 2021 in virtual mode.

The Open-ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Committee is an important committee which aims to elaborate a comprehensive international convention on countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes. India participated in the Organizational Session of Ad Hoc Committee on 10-12 May 2021.

India participated in 30th Session of Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on 17-21 May 2021 in Vienna.

Indian delegation led by the Ministry participated as one of the select twenty-five countries in the 6th United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (UNGGE) for the period 2019-2021. The final session of the 6th UNGEE was held from 24-28 May 2021 in a virtual format and the Indian delegation was led by JS (eG&IT and CD). India extended its support for consensus final report to be adopted during the final session and the final report consisted of India's views and recommendations on various cyber policy matters.

India has been participating in New Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) 2021-2025 meetings which deliberates on cyber related issues. The Group held its organisational

session on 01-02 June 2021 and the Indian delegation was led by JS (eG&IT and CD).

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Group Meeting on International Information Security (IIS) was held on 15-16 June, 1 July and 12 July 2021 in virtual mode. The Indian delegation was led by Joint Secretary (eG&IT and CD). The 'Plan of Interaction of the SCO Member States on International Information Security for 2022-23 adopted during the meeting was reflective of suggestions and views expressed by India.

India organised a workshop on Digital Forensic for BRICS Countries from 3-5 August, 2021.

Seventh BRICS Working Group on Security in the use of ICTs was held on 12 August 2021 in virtual mode. The Seventh meeting adopted 'Summary of the Meeting' document on consensus basis which is the first time since the conclusion of fifth BRICS Working Group meeting on ICT.

The Third India-Russia Bilateral Interagency Consultations on Cooperation in Ensuring Security of the Use of Information and Communication Technologies for 2021-22 was held in Moscow from 7-8 September 2021.

The Third Quad Senior Cyber Officials Meeting was held on 15 September 2021 via video conference.

Despite the travel restrictions in place due to COVID pandemic, CD Division vigorously convened and participated in multiple bilateral, regional and multilateral cyber consultations in virtual and physical mode, as appropriate, and put forward constructive ideas and initiatives in the international cyber governance and ICT-related discourse with the global community.

E-Governance and IT Division

E-Governance and IT (eG&IT) Division among other tasks has been involved in design, development, implementation and maintenance of various e-Governance applications for the Ministry. eG&IT Division is also providing all Information Technology (IT) related support to the Ministry and Missions/ Posts abroad for procurement, maintenance, and upkeep of all IT infrastructure.

During the period of the report, eG&IT Division has taken several steps to implement various components of Digital India Programme in the Ministry and all Missions/ Posts abroad. Automation and networking is being harnessed as a tool to achieve synergy at all levels of functioning in the Ministry and render efficient IT services to the government officials.

The following e-governance initiatives/projects have been implemented during the period of the report, 1 April 2021 –

31 October 2021:

a) Ministry of External Affairs Digital Online Working System (MEADOWS): The MEADOWS App which was launched on 1 January 2021, envisions "minimum paper, maximum governance" approach in the day to day functioning of the Ministry. MEADOWS is an in-house app developed as a basket comprising of a number of utilities viz, APAR filing, Leave Management, Inventory Management, Bills Management, Deployment of personnel, FSB, JEB, SEB etc. During the period of the report, several user-friendly changes were made in the App which further enhanced the ease of doing official work.

b) Logistics Management System (LMS) Portal: A special portal (LMS) was made functional at a short notice during the period May-July 2021 to collect and collate the data regarding medical aid received from across the globe during the second

wave of COVID pandemic.

c) Prayas Dashboard: An in-house API was developed to fill in the data pertaining to 20 KPIs(Key Performance Indicators) of the Ministry into the Prayas Dashboard which is being monitored by the PMO.

d) DGQI 5.0 (Data Governance Quality Index): DGQI 5.0 is a special exercise of the NITI Aayog to have quality data of various Ministries which could be used for making appropriate decisions with respect to various schemes/projects of the Government of India. The eG&IT division is monitoring the inputs pertaining to 10 schemes/initiatives of the Ministry in the DGQI exercise.

e) Integrated Missions Accounting System Ver 2.0 (IMAS 2.0): IMAS 2.0 has been rolled out with effect from 05 April 2021 and as on date, a total of 60 Indian Missions/Posts are live on IMAS 2.0 app. It is expected to be completely rolled out to all the Missions/Posts by May 2022.

f) BRICS 2021 Portal: India being the Chair of the BRICS group in 2021, a special portal was developed to disseminate information about all the activities undertaken by India during BRICS 2021.

eG&IT division continues to maintain the previously developed 56 portals/websites which are essential for the efficient day to day functioning of the Ministry.

The security architecture has been reviewed in the Ministry and existing IT infrastructure has been upgraded with new generation networking and threat management devices to meet the ever-growing challenges of cyber security.

The Division from time to time, has organized a number of classes/lectures on the Fundamentals of Cyber Security, Implementation of Cyber Security Policy, etc. for the Ministry officials to increase awareness about cyber security and enable them to manage and mitigate cyber threats.

Video Conferencing

With the increasing impact of pandemic in the world, there has been a remarkable shift of meetings from physical to virtual form. The Ministry has embraced this change by adopting virtual engagements with stakeholders concerned around the world. eG&IT Division geared up the Ministry with state-of-the-art hardware and applications for running seamless video conferences using cloud based as well

as on premise video conferencing infrastructure. These platforms and infrastructure are being effectively utilised to conduct prestigious multilateral events and Summits, viz, PravasiyaBhartiyaDiwas, BRICS Summit, SCO Summit, G-20 etc.

23

CONSULAR, PASSPORT AND VISA SERVICES

CPV Division in the Ministry coordinates Consular matters & grievances, issuance of Indian visas policies and attestation/apostille of documents, issuance of Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) Cards, diplomatic and official passports.

In February 2015 as part of good governance initiatives to resolve consular grievances of Indian abroad, the Ministry launched a web portal MADAD (online Consular Services Management System). All Indian Missions and Posts abroad

as well as the Ministry's Branch Secretariats and State/ UT governments have been integrated with this portal for redressal of consular grievance. The MADAD online portal has led to qualitative improvement in handling of consular grievances, through online registration, forwarding, tracking and escalation until **their eventual resolution**.

During the year, the division has conducted various Consular dialogues, visa waiver agreements, extradition treaties, recommended OCI and e-Visas scheme etc., which are explained in detail below.

Visa- Exemption Agreements

India has signed Visa Exemption Agreements in respect of diplomatic and official/service passport holders with 120 countries. From 01 April - 31 October 2021, Visa Exemption Agreements for holders of diplomatic and official passport

were signed with People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and Republic of Gambia, Union of Comoros, Kingdom of Lesotho, Republic of Ghana and People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Relaxation on Visa & Travel restrictions

The Government of India has relaxed visa & travel restrictions for foreign tourist [for group tourism only] intending to visit India on e-Tourist visa and Regular Tourist visa w.e.f. 15

October 2021. For individual tourists the relaxation would be effective from 15 November 2021.

India Visa Su-Swagatam Mobile App

The Government of India aimed at easing travel of foreign nationals intending to visit India has developed a Mobile App named "India Visa Su-Swagatam" for visa and immigration facilitations. The App enables foreign nationals all facilities right from visa applications stage till their exit from India besides facilitating such foreign nationals to apply for extension of visa, Residential Permit, Exit Permit with FRRO/

FRO concerned if required. The App, for Android and IOS users, was launched in July 2020 as 'pilot project' for nationals of 24 countries which has been further extended to nationals of another 36 countries w.e.f October 2021. As on date, the Mobile App named "India Visa Su-Swagatam" could be used by nationals from 60 countries.

Consular Dialogue Mechanism

As part of the established mechanism for comprehensive review of consular matters with various countries, India has

so far established bilateral Consular Dialogue mechanism with 27 countries.

Extradition

The Ministry is the Central Authority for extradition matters in India. The Ministry has been actively pursuing negotiations with various countries for bilateral extradition treaties to provide a legal and institutional framework to prosecute people involved in international terrorism, financial frauds, drug-trafficking and other transnational organised crimes. It is the policy of the Government of India to conclude Extradition treaties with as many countries as possible to ensure that

fugitive criminals do not escape justice. The Ministry also facilitates negotiations for Agreements on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and in Civil & Commercial Matters and Agreements on Transfer of Sentenced Persons. To facilitate extradition of fugitive criminals, Government of India has signed Extradition Treaties with 50 countries so far. In August 2021, India has entered the Extradition Arrangement with 12 countries including New Zealand.

Consular Issues

Indian Missions/Posts render various consular services viz. attestation of various categories of documents, registration of birth and death of Indian nationals & issue of birth and death certificates, facilitating transportation of mortal remains of Indian nationals back to India, solemnization/registration of marriage of Indian nationals, consular access for Indian nationals lodged in foreign jails, serving summons of Indian courts to Indian nationals residing abroad, providing welfare assistance etc. Missions/Posts also advise, assist, and

guide the Indian community when required, and conducts Open Houses at Missions/Posts and Consular Camps at different locations to attend to grievances and provide timely assistance to Indian nationals. In Gulf countries where there are large numbers of Indian workers, our Missions and Posts have specialized Community Welfare Wings and Labour Wings. SEWA, an online consular service module launched in July 2020 is operational in 13 countries with a plan to go live in 6 other countries during November 2021.

Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) Card Scheme

Government of India launched the OCI card scheme in August 2005 aimed at connecting to India diaspora living abroad. OCI card is a lifelong visa for visiting India. The erstwhile Person of Indian Origin (PIO) card scheme, launched in the year 1999, was merged with OCI scheme in 2015.

Efforts are made by the Ministry in coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in streamlining OCI procedures including issuance/renewal processes. Over the years, Government of India has streamlined OCI policies for ease of OCI applicants which include removing jurisdictional restrictions for submission of OCI application within USA

and extending OCI card facility beyond 4th generation to Indian diaspora of Mauritius, Suriname and St. Denis, Reunion Island. Continuing with efforts, in April 2021, OCI guidelines was further relaxed thereby dispensing with mandatory requirement of re-issuance of an OCI card each-time a new passport is issued to a foreigner up to 20 years of age and once after completing 50 years of age.

Over 39.5 lakhs (approx) OCI cards have been issued since August 2005. The number of OCI cards issued during the period 01 April to 31 October 2021 is 1,26,463.

e-Visa scheme

The Government of India launched e-Visa scheme on 27 November 2014. The scheme has been implemented in completely online mode. Initially the scheme was open for e-Tourist visas for only 43 countries and entry was restricted through five airports only. Over the years, the scheme has been gradually liberalised by further including categories of visas viz e-Business visa, e-Medical visa, e-Conference and e-Medical Attendant under e-Visa scheme and also extending

the facilities to nationals of other countries. Nationals of 171 countries was eligible to avail e-Visa scheme prior to its suspension in March 2020 due to onset of COVID pandemic. Likewise, 28 Indian airports and 05 Indian Ports have been designated for providing e-Visa services. All categories of e-Visa scheme that was suspended in March 2020 in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic have now been restored for 156 countries.

Attestation/Apostille

India, since 2005, is a member of the Hague Convention of 05 October 1961 that abolished the requirement of legalisation of foreign public documents. Apostille is acceptable in all member-countries of the Convention. 42658 documents have been attested and 57014 documents have been apostilled

in online mode from April 2021 to October 2021. 198038 attestations and 222556 apostille services have been rendered in offline mode from April 2021 to October 2021. Over 7,84,887 documents have been successfully processed through e-Sanad since its launch in 2017.

Passport Service

The Passport Seva Programme (PSP) Division of the Ministry provides passport services in India and abroad. The issuance of passports has emerged as one of the most noticeable statutory and citizen-centric services rendered by the Ministry. The Ministry has been making quantitative and qualitative changes so that passports can be delivered to the citizens in a timely, transparent, more accessible, reliable manner and in a comfortable environment through streamlined processes and by a committed, trained and motivated workforce.

Indian passports (together with other travel documents such as Certificate of Identity to Stateless persons, Emergency Certificates for returnees to India, Police Clearance Certificates, Surrender Certificates) are issued by the

Ministry through the Central Passport Organization (CPO) and its all-India network of 36 Passport Offices, the CPV Division (Diplomatic and Official passports only) and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Administration. This network has been vastly expanded by adding 93 Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode and 428 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSKs) (in association with the Department of Posts). As on 30 November 2021, the total number of Passport Seva Kendras functioning in the country was 521, including PSKs and POPSKs. For Indians living abroad, passport related services are rendered through Indian Missions/Posts abroad. As of date, 176 Indian Missions/Posts have been integrated into Passport Seva Programme.

Passport Seva Programme (PSP)

The Passport Seva Programme (PSP), a Mission Mode Project, is being implemented in the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode with M/s Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) as the Service Provider. It has completed more than 09 years of its successful operation since it went 'Live' on 12 June 2012.

Passport services in India and Missions/Posts abroad

From April–November 2021, the Government of India received over 60.54 lakh passport and passport related applications in India and through its Missions/Posts abroad.

The Ministry processed approximately 50.10 lakh passport and passport related applications in India and processed more than 48.00 lakh of these during the year 2021.

The Indian Missions/Posts abroad received 10.44 lakh passport and passport-related applications and issued 9.94 lakh of these during the period April – November 2021. While,

the Government of India issued more than 57.94 lakh passport and passport related documents during the same period.

Improvements in passport service delivery

There has been noticeable improvement in passport service delivery in the country with the implementation of the PSP and continuous efforts being made by the Ministry. Quality service is being provided to the people by the PSKs, established with good amenities across the country in a PPP mode. Under this system, the applicants are required to apply for their passports online, upload relevant documents, make the payment online through debit/credit card or State Bank of India (SBI) net banking/ SBI Challan, schedule an appointment and then visit the designated PSK/ POPSK. A user-friendly portal has been made available. When an applicant visits the PSK/ POPSK, an Electronic Queue Management System (EQMS) working on the principle of First-in First-out is available at all PSKs/ POPSKs to monitor the flow of applicants. The applicants can track the status of their applications themselves through

portal and also SMS service. In the current system of passport issuance, there is no manual intervention at any stage, and

the complete process is digitally flown with re-engineered process through a single visit clearance.

mPassport Seva Mobile App

The mPassport Seva Mobile App with additional facilities to apply, pay and schedule appointments for passport services is available both in Android and iOS platforms. During the period April – November 2021, 1.34 lakh applications were filed using the mPassport Seva Mobile App. Citizens do not require access to a computer and printer to apply for passport services. The mPassport Seva App supports enhanced set of passport services such as:

- i. New User Registration
- ii. Sign In to Registered User Account
- iii. Application form filing to apply for Passport and Police Clearance Certificate (PCC)
- iv. Pay for Passport Services
- v. Appointment Scheduling
- vi. Application Availability Status
- vii. Document Advisor
- viii. Fee Calculator

Applying from anywhere in India

An applicant can now apply for passport from anywhere in India. This initiative has enabled applicants to choose the Passport Office (PO) and thus the desired PSK/POPSK under the PO where they wish to submit their application irrespective of whether the present residential address specified in the application form lies within the jurisdiction of the selected PO or not. Police verification is conducted by the Police Station in whose jurisdiction the address mentioned in the form falls and the passport will also be printed and dispatched at the same address by the PO selected for application submission by the applicant. More than 7.15 lakh applications were submitted under this scheme during the period April – November 2021.

Appointments

The Ministry released nearly 77,600 appointments per day. Securing online appointments for submission of passport applications at PSK has been simplified. The current provision is allowing applicants to choose any appointment date from the earliest five available dates (working days) for scheduling/rescheduling an appointment for passport related services. It has made the process of issuing passport easy and quick.

Volume of applications

Top five states in terms of number of passport applications received were Kerala (5,98,980), Maharashtra (5,15,012), Punjab (4,74,594), Uttar Pradesh (4,59,088) and Tamil Nadu (4,45,969), accounting for nearly 52.6% of the total

applications received (47.39 lakh) country-wide during April – November 2021.

Top five Passport Offices in terms of number of applications received in the year 2021 were Chandigarh (3,19,008), Mumbai (3,13,480), Bengaluru (2,86,389), Hyderabad (2,85,708) and Ahmedabad (2,83,404) during the same period.

Awards & Recognition

The PSP has received recognition at the highest levels in the Government, has been the subject of case studies and has won several awards, including the following conferred in the year 2020:

- i. On 28 February 2020, PSP won the Silver Stevie award in the category of Innovation in Customer Services. The award acknowledges the transformation brought in the Passport Issuance System in India.
- ii. On 28 November 2020, 'Skoch Gold Award' was conferred to Passport Seva Programme, PSP Division, the Ministry in the category of 'Response to COVID', acknowledging the timely enabling of digital ecosystem for delivery of services to citizens during the pandemic.

Outreach of passport Services

A. Passport Offices (POs)

The Ministry has taken steps to simplify the procedure for getting passports by the general public. These involve simplification of the passport rules and outreach to the people in the delivery of passport related services. The objective of the Government has been to cater to the demand for passports and to reach out to the people located far away from the Passport Offices. The list of the 36 Passport Offices is at Annexure IX

B. Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs)

Towards this end, the Ministry has opened 16 PSKs since May 2014, which includes all the States in the North East of India. There are 93 PSKs functioning in the country as on 30 November 2021. The list of these 93 PSKs is at Annexure X

C. Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSKs)

The Ministry, in association with the Department of Posts (DOP), announced an innovative initiative on 24 January 2017 to open Passport Seva Kendras at the Head Post Offices/Post Offices in the country called 'Post Office Passport Seva Kendra' (POPSK). The Ministry has functionalised 428 POPSKs till 30 November 2021 as per list at Annexure Xi

The POPSKs are functioning like the other existing PSKs. The process of issuing passports has not changed after the opening of the POPSKs. Applicants, who apply for their passports online through the passport portal, can schedule an appointment and then visit the designated POPSK to complete the formalities similar to those at the PSK necessary prior to the issue of the passport. The photographs, biometrics and the supporting documents are electronically captured at the POPSK and the applicant does not have to revisit prior to the issue of the Passport.

D. Integration of Indian Missions/ Posts abroad into the PSP

The process of integrating the Indian Missions/ Posts abroad into the PSP commenced in October 2018 and is continuing. The aim is to provide a uniform centralised passport issuance application process working on a single centralised database for the Indian citizens living abroad and seeking Passport related services. The Ministry has successfully integrated the passport issuance systems in 176 Indian Missions/Posts into the PSP system. These Missions/Posts issue more than 95% of the total passports abroad. The Ministry is working to complete the integration of remaining 16 Indian Missions/ Posts abroad at the earliest.

Police Verification

Police Verification plays an important role in the timely issuance of passports. The Ministry engages closely with the Police Departments across States/Union Territories (UTs) to speed up police verification. The all-India average for the number of days taken to complete the police verification is now 15 days. 87% of the police verifications were completed within 21 days in 2021.

Some States/UTs have consistently maintained low Police Verification processing times. For example, Himachal Pradesh completes police verification in just two days, Kerala, Odisha & Telangana in four days and Andhra in just five days. Constant and concerted efforts by the Ministry have resulted

in increasing the number of Districts switching over to the preferred District Police Headquarters (DPHQs) Verification Model. So far, 801, out of the 833 Police Districts, have adopted the new system and are working on the District model.

The Ministry has launched Android-based mPassport PoliceApp for end-to-end paperless digital flow. The app has the capability to capture the applicant's personal particulars and photograph and transmit the same electronically to concerned stakeholders. The app also captures the location coordinates of the applicant's place of residence, ensuring the authenticity of the field verification by police. 379 DPHQs are using mPassport Police App. During the period April - November 2021, a total of 22,82,096 applications have been submitted through mobile app.

Functional Enhancements/Simplification of Procedures for realizing Minimum Government Maximum Governance

- i. In order to ease the hardship to the citizens living in India and abroad, all re-issue cases up to 03 years after expiry of passport on the date of submission will be dealt on a No-PV basis.
- ii. Guidelines for PCC which inter-alia states that any change in personal particulars, i.e. change of address, spouse name, etc. necessitated the applicants to apply for a new passport first and then apply for PCC have been suitably liberalized. There is now no need for the applicant to apply for a new passport if there is change in present address and addition of spouse name for the issue of PCC.
- iii. Clarifications have been issued to all Passport Issuing Authorities in India and abroad for accepting Names of the applicants as provided by them on their documents irrespective of the apprehension of the PIA whether the name is written in abbreviated form or not.
- iv. Clarifications have also been issued to all Passport Issuing Authorities (PIAs) in India and abroad for issue of passports to Minors whose passport applications are filed by single parents. These instructions given by the Ministry will increase efficiency in passport issuance process.

Passport Seva Divas 2021

The Passport Seva Divas was celebrated on 24 June 2021 to commemorate the enactment of the Passports Act on 24 June 1967. A special event was organized by the Ministry to mark this occasion at which EAM and MoS [VM] addressed the Passport Officers through video conferencing.

In his keynote address, EAM commended the dedication and determination of all Passport Offices in rendering passport and passport related services, even in the face of adversity. He expressed his condolences to the bereaved families of the personnel of the Central Passport Organization (CPO) who lost their lives during COVID pandemic.

EAM noted that the Passport Offices should make the citizen-

centric services even more citizen-friendly and introduce further simplification of the passport rules and processes by minimizing the compliance burden on the citizens. He noted that the Ministry, in close collaboration with the Department of Posts, has strengthened the outreach of Passport services to the citizens by establishing POSPKs all across the country.

Stressing that the Ministry has leveraged the use of technology and digital systems into its functioning, including in delivering passport services, he noted that the Ministry has recently integrated the Passport Seva Programme with DigiLocker, enabling citizens to submit various documents for obtaining Passport service in a paperless mode and they are not required to carry the original documents.

MoS (VM) announced the selection of a logo and a tagline for outreach activities of Passport Seva Programme, through a competitive process, for which the Ministry received an overwhelming number of entries from citizens. In his address, MoS (VM) highlighted the efforts of all the Passport Issuing Authorities in India and abroad for working together to ensure transparent and efficient passport delivery systems for the benefit of the citizens. He also noted that a robust Grievance Redressal Mechanism, which was recognized for its efficiency in CPGRAMS, had further improved delivery of our services.

EAM formally inaugurated the POPSK in Port Blair virtually.

Passport Seva Puraskars were announced for the best performing Passport Offices and the personnel of the service provider, i.e. TCS. As Police verification is an important component of the process of issue of passport, special mention was made of the Police Departments for their efforts in providing speedy police clearances.

Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism Under the Passport Seva Project, the Ministry has put in place a strengthened Grievance Redressal system whereby a multilingual National Call Centre with a toll-free number (1800-258-1800), operating in 17 languages and on a 24 x 7 basis, has been set up to disseminate information about various passport related services, including handling of grievances and citizens feedback, which at present works on a central system platform. It handled approximately 13,000 calls per day in the year 2021 (out of which 52% were in Hindi, 26% in English and 22% in regional languages). The Passport portal has also an email-based helpdesk, where suggestions and grievances can be logged. Citizens can also monitor the status of their passport applications/grievances online through this portal.

A Public Grievance Redressal Cell (PGRC) has been established in the PSP Division under the supervision of Joint Secretary (PSP) & CPO, who is also designated as the Officer In-charge of Public Grievances of the Ministry for Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS). It deals with grievances received through telephone, e-mail and post, directly from general public and also references from various Government offices such as President's Secretariat, Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Secretariat and Central Vigilance Commission, etc. In addition, all POs handle public grievances through the CPGRAMS website of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (<https://pgportal.gov.in>) and Passport grievances, i.e. Service Request Number (SRN) received through Passport portal. Information and Facilitation Counters, Public Grievance Cell, complaint/suggestion boxes and Help Desks have been set up at strategic locations in POs and PSKs to assist applicants and to attend to grievances/ complaints expeditiously. The name, address and phone number of the Public Grievance Officer are also displayed in the POs/PSKs and on the website of the POs. There is a Public Grievance redressal mechanism in all the POs to enquire into and redress any complaints from citizens within a timeframe.

Under CPGRAMS, 14,060 grievances were received during the period 01 April to 30 November 2021 (inclusive of outstanding 1,111 of 2020) out of which 13,642 grievances were disposed of. During this period, 44,542 public grievance petitions (inclusive of 30,482 received by email, post, fax, related to grievances/inquiries and CPGRAMS as mentioned above) were received, out of which 44,124 grievances were disposed of. The latest position on the grievance, along with directions for further action, is posted on the website, which may be accessed by the public.

Passport Adalats

Passport Offices hold Passport Adalats regularly to redress the grievances of passport applicants. These Adalats have

been very useful in disposing of complex cases through direct interaction with the applicants.

Haj Pilgrims

As decided by the Haj Committee of India (constituted under Act of Parliament, No. 35 of 2002), only valid passport holders can apply for Haj. Like previous years, instructions have been issued to all Passport Issuing Authorities to accord high priority to process passport applications of prospective Haj pilgrims and ensure timely issuance of passports in such cases upon

completion of requisite documentation, police verification and other formalities by means of nominating a nodal officer, opening of facilitation counter, reserving appointment slots for such applicants and attending to requests received from such citizens in a very prompt manner.

Inspection of Passport Offices

Passport Offices as well as PSKs and POPSKs in various states are regularly inspected, with a view to optimize their procedural and operational efficiency and ability to render citizen-centric services in a satisfactory manner. PSKs in operation all over India were also inspected under the Non-

technical Service Level Agreement on a regular basis.

Right to Information Act (RTI)

Central Public Information Officer and First Appellate Authority have been appointed in every Passport Office to provide information to applicants under the RTI Act. Central Public Information Officers have also been appointed in the PSP Division. Joint Secretary (PSP) & Chief Passport Officer (CPO) is the First Appellate Authority for RTI matters related

to the PSP Division in the Ministry. From 17 June 2014, a CPIO portal has been created online in all Passport Offices. During the period April - November 2021, a total number of 3,414 online RTI applications were received, out of which 2,591 were disposed of.

Appeals (u/s 11 of the Passports Act)

The appeal against the decisions of PIAs is a statutory right conferred upon the affected persons under Section 11 of the Passports Act. Joint Secretary (PSP) & Chief Passport Officer is the Appellate Authority for these cases. In the wake of COVID pandemic, the Ministry decided to conduct appeal

hearings through video conferencing so as to obviate any avoidable delay in timely disposal of appeal petitions. During the period April-November 2021, a total of 18 appeals were heard and disposed of.

Manufacturing and Personalisation of Travel Documents

All Indian travel documents are manufactured by the India Security Press, Nashik, which is a unit under the Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited (SPMCIL). In order to improve the overall quality, functionality and security of Indian passports, various measures have been taken. Passport booklets in new design and layout have been introduced in POs in a phased manner. All POs, Headquarters and select Missions/ Posts abroad have been provided with machine readable passport printers. All PIAs issue machine-readable passports (MRPs) as per the guidelines laid-down by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

For 192 Embassies/Consulates abroad and Office of Assistant Secretary (Passport) Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Port Blair, MRPs with ghost image security feature are printed at Central Indian Passport Printing System (CIPPS) of the PSP Division, the Ministry, New Delhi. CIPPS printed 7,36,061 passports up to November 2021 (inclusive of 501 diplomatic passports and 442 official passports). 2,27,788 Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) cards were also personalized during April - November 2021 at CIPPS/OCI Cell and Missions abroad.

E-Passport

In accordance with ICAO recommendations to incorporate biometric data in the Machine-Readable Travel Documents (MRTDs), India has also decided to upgrade its existing passports and issue chip enabled e-passports to citizens

with advanced security features and better printing and paper quality. E-passport provides greater protection against fraudulent practices and tampering.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

India serves as a member of the 'Public Key Directory (PKD) Board on e-Passport' of the ICAO, which has been implementing the guidelines on MRTDs. The ICAO, in terms of Document 9303 as the central reference, has established ICAO PKD, on a cost sharing basis to promote a globally interoperable e-passport validation scheme for electronic

travel documents to improve civil aviation security. The PKD Board members are nominated by PKD participating countries and appointed by the ICAO Council. India has been a member of ICAO PKD since February 2009. India also participated at the 28th Board Meeting of the PKD Board during 27-28 October 2021 at Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Central Passport Organization

The CPO was created in 1959 as a subordinate office of the Ministry and is headed by Joint Secretary and Chief Passport Officer, who also acts as Appellate Authority under the

Passports Act 1967 and the Head of Department under the Delegation of Financial Powers Rules 1978.

As on 31 November 2021, the sanctioned strength of CPO was 2,741 and the working strength was 1,746. In addition, 15 Technical and 6 supporting staff man the Project Management Unit (PMU) of the Passport Seva Project. There are presently 39 vacancies at Group 'A' level, 553 at Group 'B' Gazetted and Non-Gazetted levels and 403 at Group 'C' level, totaling 995. The vacancies at Group 'A' level are filled up (i) Group 'A' posts on deputation in consultation with UPSC, (ii) Group 'B' (Gazetted) vacancies are being filled through promotion from feeder post and (iii) Group 'B' (non-gazetted) and Group 'C' vacancies through promotion from feeder cadre and direct recruitment/ Limited Departmental Competitive Examination (LDCE) through Staff Selection Commission (SSC). The vacancies for direct recruitment/LDCE have been indented to SSC for the vacancy years 2018, 2019 and 2020. The vacancies for the year 2021 for Direct recruit/LDCE exam will be indented to SSC when called for.

The Ministry has also deployed 347 Data Entry Operators and 51 Office Assistants against the vacant non-Gazetted posts for smooth functioning of the POs through an Outsourced Agency to bridge the gap between the sanctioned strength and the working strength of the non-Gazetted posts. The SSC

has been indented to fill the vacancies for direct recruitment posts of 59 Assistant Superintendents and 25 Junior Translation Officers. 19 officials of the CPO were considered for MACP in different grades.

In view of the 100% increase in passport applications processed by the CPO from 2010 to 2019 (Pre-COVID) through a network of 36 Passport Offices, 93 PSKs, and 428 POPSKs, a need was felt for Cadre restructuring and reviewing the cadre strength of the CPO. A proposal for the physical inspection and staffing study of the CPO by the Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of the Department of Expenditure (DoE) has been sent to the Ministry of Finance in November 2019. Now the Department of Expenditure has advised that the Administrative Ministry may review Cadres under them for which they are the Cadre Controlling Authority as per extant guidelines on the subject and proposals may be referred to the DoE after recommendation of the respective Financial Adviser and with the approval of Minister In charge. Accordingly, a Cadre Review Committee for restructuring of all Cadres of CPO is being constituted with the approval of the Competent Authority.

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OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS

OIA-I

The year continued to be very challenging with the Covid-19 pandemic ravaging the world. Due to the lock-down, several plans and targets of the Division suffered to a great extent, though efforts were made to carry on the work using online platforms wherever possible. The major developments during 2021-22 are as follows:

Assistance under Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF)

ICWF, set up in 2009, is aimed at assisting Overseas Indian nationals in times of distress in the most deserving cases on a means tested basis by providing emergency medical assistance, air passage to stranded Indians, legal assistance, boarding & lodging, assistance to Indian women facing marital issues, and transfer of mortal remains to India. The new ICWF guidelines since 1 September 2017 have provided Indian Missions/Posts abroad greater flexibility in addressing requests for assistance by Indian nationals abroad. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Missions/Posts abroad proactively helped distressed/stranded Indians from ICWF and till 31 October 2021, around INR 44.19 crores were utilized to extend assistance to more than 1,71,600 Indians. Since 2014, there are about 2,70,000 beneficiaries of the Fund till September 2021 and total expenditure on the same was INR 471 crores.

Pre-departure orientation programme (PDOT)

PDOT training being implemented by the Ministry, has been progressing at a considerable pace. Presently 31 PDOT Centres are providing training. About 1,04,000 prospective emigrants participated in PDOT as on October 2021. In April 2021, online PDOT was launched and received a very positive response.

Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY)

The Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) is a mandatory insurance scheme for all Emigration Check Required (ECR) category workers going to ECR countries. The scheme provides an insurance cover of INR 10 Lakhs in case of accidental death or permanent disability and other benefits at a nominal insurance premium of INR 275 for two years or INR 375 with three years validity. The revised scheme, operational since 1 August 2017, has been expanded to include Emigration Check Not Required (ECNR) category workers and made the settlement of claims simpler for the benefit of our workers. It is also aimed at ensuring expeditious settlement of claims. Since the launch of e-migrate portal in 2014, the Government has been issuing online Emigration Clearance (EC). Under PBBY, 36 lakh policies were issued from April 2010 till September 2021.

Migration and Mobility Partnerships

Migration and Mobility Partnerships have been an important pillar of cooperation aimed at harnessing our demographic dividend and fostering mobility of our students, academicians, researchers, professionals, businesses etc. Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) was signed with Japan on 18 January 2021 to facilitate mobility of Indian skilled workers, under the scheme of "Specialized Skilled Worker" (SSW) visa category of Japan. Two rounds of the Joint Working Group meetings were held online in February 2021 and April 2021 where issues regarding the finalisation of the MoC were discussed in detail. As part of the implementation of the program, the Japanese Government hosted a dedicated "Job Fair" for India on 22 December 2021 through a virtual platform. The event aimed at bringing together all stakeholders of the SSW program under one roof. The Government of Japan has decided to conduct qualification tests from January 2022.

India and Portugal have signed a bilateral agreement on 13 September 2021 on the recruitment of Indian workers. With the conclusion of this agreement, Portugal and India will have a formal arrangement for the recruitment of Indian workers through a G2G mechanism. The ratification process is on.

India and UK have signed the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement on 4 May 2021 and have agreed on enhanced mobility provisions for young professionals. The First India-UK Joint Working Group Meeting under MoU on Migration & Mobility Partnership was held in August 2021.

Cooperation on Labour and Manpower related issues

The Labour and Manpower Cooperation MoUs/Agreements are in place with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries viz. Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Jordan. Agreement on recruitment of domestic workers with Saudi Arabia and a Protocol on Domestic Workers annexed to the MoU with the UAE are also

in place. MoU on Cooperation on Recruitment of Domestic Workers with Kuwait was signed on 10 June 2021 during the visit of EAM to Kuwait.

The second meeting of Joint Committee of Labour and Manpower for integration of our emigrant portal to the portal of Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA), Bahrain, and the 7th Joint Working Group Meeting on Labour, Employment and the Development of manpower between India and Kuwait were held in July 2021.

Common Agenda for Migration and Mobility (CAMM)

The third Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting for Technical Project under India-EU Common Agenda for Migration and Mobility (CAMM) was held virtually on 2 July 2021. The meeting concluded with the mutual agreement on the activities to be undertaken during the next one year keeping into consideration the balanced implementation of all the four pillars of CAMM. Besides, in an effort to deliver on the CAMM commitments and deepen the cooperation between both EU and India, a Virtual Seminar on Preventing and Tackling Irregular Migration took place on the 10 June 2021.

Other engagements related to Migration

The First meeting of the Inter-Ministerial committee for Proposal for Indentured Labour Route Project (ILRP) by the Ministry of Arts and Culture, Government of Mauritius was held in July 2021. Mr. Pravind Jugnaut, Prime Minister of Mauritius and Mr. Avinash Teeluck, Minister of Arts and Culture of Mauritius participated in the event. The Minister of State gave a recorded message. India participated in the online GFMD-ADD regional consultative processes, on migration and mobility, chaired by UAE, in July 2021. India also participated in the Sixth Ministerial Consultation from 25-27 October 2021 held at Dubai led by the Minister of State.

India Centre for Migration

The India Centre for Migration (ICM) is a research think-tank of the Ministry on all matters related to international migration. The broad areas of ICM's activities include research, capacity building and assisting the Ministry on matters relating to international migration and mobility. ICM prepared a PDOT manual for Japan that was developed keeping in mind the SSW agreement signed between the Governments of India and Japan. A Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop was organised on 7 October 2021. ICM has also developed awareness generation materials on PBBY, ICWF, PDOT and SSW, which were widely disseminated with relevant stakeholders.

Since May 2020, ICM has also organised various virtual panel discussions on issues relating to international migration

and diaspora and 21 such discussions have taken place till November 2021. Apart from these, ICM has organised 3 regional consultations on skill-mapping. As part of its collaborations with international organizations, ICM is the implementation partner from the Indian side for the India-EU technical project on Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM). ICM is also collaborating with IOM on a project on "Strengthening data-informed and migrant-centered migration management frameworks in India". The project's primary objective is to contribute to improving access to labour migration opportunities for aspiring Indian migrants through strengthened migration management frameworks.

OIA-II

The Overseas Indian Affairs Division-II deals with issues relating to engagement with Indian Diaspora. Among the major Programmes / Schemes handled by the Division are PravasiBharatiya Divas Convention, PravasiBharatiya Divas Conferences (PBDC), Regional PravasiBharatiya Divas, Know India Programme (KIP), PravasiTeerthDarshanYojana (PTDY), Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC), Bharat KoJaniye (BKJ) Quiz, Non-resident Indians (NRI) marital disputes, Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD), Students issues, grievances pertaining to diaspora, any other issues pertaining to diaspora and new initiatives taken from time to time by the Government.

During the period from 1 April to 31 October 2021, the following events were organized to commemorate India @ 75 on the following themes:-

Conference on India's Diaspora focusing on Girmityas

The first ever Girmitya Conference 2021 was organised virtually on 16-17 September 2021 by India Foundation and the Ministry. Minister of State, Shri V. Muraleedharan (MoS [VM]). inaugurated the Conference. The conference's theme was 'Changing identities, shifting trends, and roles'. Participants from 18 countries deliberated on the issues, contributions, successes and tribulations of Girmityas across the world focusing on their history, identity formation, cultural preservation, and their evolving relationship with India.

Pravasiya Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Conference "Leveraging the Soft Power of India"

PBD conference on "Leveraging the Soft Power of India - Goodwill through Craft, Cuisine and Creativity" was organised on 16 October 2021 by the Ministry in collaboration with Indian Council of Cultural Relations and Diaspora Resource and Research Centre (AntarRashtriyaSahyogParishad). Diaspora experts deliberated on ways to access the growing importance of diaspora's contribution to soft power projection and making this asset more effective. MoS (VM) gave the inaugural address. Minister of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation was the Guest of Honour.

PBD Conference on "Future of Natural Resources"

A virtual PBD conference on "Future of Natural Resources (Hydrocarbons, Rare Earth Metals and Blue Economy)" was organized by the Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Earth Sciences on 29 October 2021. Minister of State, Ms. MeenakshiLekhi (MoS [ML]) inaugurated the Conference. Diaspora scientists and experts from U.S., UK, Germany, France, Norway, Australia and India deliberated on ways to secure India's energy security needs through Ocean resources.

During the period from 1 November 2021 to 31 March 2022, the following events are planned under the umbrella of

celebrating India@75 – AzadikaAmritMahotsav (AKAM)

i. "Role of Diaspora Youth in AKAM; Innovation and New Technologies"

Youth PravasiBharatiya Divas (PBD) Conference was held on 9 January 2022 from 1100 hrs to 1230 hrs (Indian Time). The Youth PBD Conference was aimed at deepening the Government's engagement with the rapidly growing population of Youth Diaspora who have created a mark in various walks of life. The Conference provides a platform for engaging the diaspora Youth with India's accomplished youth on a similar wavelength and for discussing and exploring ideas to work in different areas related to technology and innovation that will help create an immense and potent present and future power of India overseas.

ii. Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) online Quiz"

To commemorate the occasion of India @75, the Ministry organised an AKAM online Quiz for the overseas Indian/ Foreign youth to awaken the curiosity of the new generation to know more about India so that they develop an all-round understanding of India. All NRIs, PIOs and Foreigners between the age of 16 to 35 years were eligible. The registration on the portal www.akamquiz.in was opened from 1 December 2021 and it would remain open till 31 January 2022. The Quiz was held between 1-31 January 2022. The result is proposed to be announced on 21 February 2022 i.e. during the AKAM week for the Ministry.

iii. In order to engage with the growing Indian Diaspora in EU, a virtual Conference is proposed to be held by the Ministry in February 2022 on the theme "India's Diaspora Dividend in the EU" during the AKAM week of the Ministry.

Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD)

Under PCTD, OIA-II Division provides grants to Indian Missions/Posts abroad to support their initiatives aimed at strengthening ties with the Overseas Indian Community; to preserve, maintain and showcase their Indian heritage and culture. The scheme aims to nourish and strengthen the cultural bonds between India and its Diaspora. The projected outcome of the scheme is to reinforce the cultural identity of the persons of Indian origin. Grants are also provided to think-tanks and organisations in India which organise events pertaining to the overseas Indian community.

Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC)

The Government of India's SPDC was introduced in the Academic Year 2006-07 to make higher education in Indian Universities/Institutes in different fields (except Medical and related courses in India) accessible to the diaspora children and promote India as a centre for higher studies. Presently, under the Scheme, 150 scholarships are awarded to the

Children of Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs), NRIs and Indian Workers in ECR countries. It consists of grant of financial assistance to each admitted student up to an amount of USD 4000 per annum for pursuing undergraduate courses in Central Universities in India, institutions accredited 'A' grade by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and recognized by University Grant Commission (UGC), and other institutions covered under the Direct Admissions of Students Abroad (DASA) Scheme. Since, academic year 2006-07 scholarships to 1227 students have been granted. The SPDC for the Academic Year 2021-22 has already been announced on 31 May 2021 and the last date for submission of applications on SPDC portal was fixed at 30 November 2021.

Other schemes/programmes etc undertaken by the Division are as follows

Know India Programme (KIP)

Since 2003-04 the Ministry has been organizing KIP with an aim to connect diaspora youth aged between 18-30 years with their motherland and to give them an exposure to India's diverse forms of art, heritage, and culture. The Ministry has, so far, conducted 59 editions of this programme, with the participation of a total number of 2061 diaspora youth. 6 editions of KIP are scheduled for FY 2021-22 but have not been announced yet due to COVID pandemic.

Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana (PTDY)

Since 2018-19 the Ministry has been conducting Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana (PTDY) with an aim to provide the elder generation Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) in the age group of 45-65 year an opportunity to reconnect with their roots. It is a 17 days programme and conducted with the coordination of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd. (IRCTC). So far 4 editions of PTDY have been conducted with the participation of 160 PIOs. 2 editions of KIP are scheduled for FY 2021-22 but have not been announced yet due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Awareness Campaign and Media Plan

Ministry is carrying out media awareness campaign on safe and legal migration by publicising ads in Hindi and 6 regional languages i.e. Bangla, Malayalam, Punjabi, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu in newspapers, through the Bureau of Outreach and Communication (BoC) (formerly DAVP) for 12 weeks. As per recommendations of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and approval of competent authority in the Ministry, Impact Assessment Study has been conducted by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC).

State Outreach Programme - VideshSampark

The Ministry has launched State Outreach Programme under the banner "VideshSampark" in 2017, to seek cooperation in addressing issues pertaining to welfare and protection of NRIs living abroad and also to brief the State Governments about the Ministry's initiatives pertaining to engagement and welfare of the overseas Indian community and curbing illegal migration. So far, six State Outreach Programmes have already been conducted by the Ministry in the states of Telangana, Maharashtra, Kerala, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka.

Assistance to distressed NRI women largely affected by marital disputes

The Ministry/Missions also provides assistance in many ways to distressed Indian women facing marital issues. The Ministry has so far addressed 6369 complaints/grievances since 1 January 2016.

Student issues

Many issues related to Indian Students enrolled in foreign universities, in consultation with concerned territorial Division & Missions/Posts abroad, have also been addressed by this Division such as refund of fees, problem in admissions & fraud cases. Ministry also facilitated the travel of students who were stuck abroad & in India due to Covid-19.

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NEW, EMERGING AND STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGIES DIVISION

The Division on New Emerging and Strategic Technologies (NEST), started in January 2020 in MEA, has continued looking at emerging technologies which have strategic implications, assessing their foreign policy implications and assisting internal stakeholders in India in their demand driven technology pathways. NEST, MEA is part of the Working Group of the National Portal “Pravasi Bharatiya Academic and Scientific Sampark”, which is being set in place to bridge the Scientific Diaspora to India.

During the last one year, India has taken forward looking positions on language regarding collaboration in emerging technologies which has been deliberated in statements in a plurilateral or regional context and examined by NEST, the Ministry.

In keeping with its “synaptic” role, the Emerging Technologies Initiative launched in August 2020 by NEST division in partnership with the Office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India and the Science Policy Forum to crowdsource Expressions of Intent (Eols) on emerging technologies required in India has been taken forward. Selected Eols out of the overwhelming response of a 183 Eols across the principal verticals of Emerging Technologies, are

now in the process of being refined in terms of strategy and stakeholders.

India joined as a founding partner of the International Research Centre on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in March 2021, which has been established under the auspices of UNESCO.

NEST Division is also seeking to increase awareness levels on different emerging technologies through detailed action-oriented papers shared with Indian Missions abroad, relevant line Ministries, Government agencies, and state governments.

NEST Division and our Missions have, therefore, contributed to the knowledge data-base for the National Mission on AI, National Hydrogen Energy Mission, National Deep Ocean Mission, etc. It has also flagged the relevance of emerging technologies pertaining to AI, Quantum computing technologies, emerging technologies in life sciences research, data security, healthcare, agriculture sectors etc.

The NEST Newsletter started in December 2020, detailing and tracking various developments related to new and emerging technologies within India, is now a monthly circulation with steadily expanding readership.

26

PROTOCOL DIVISION

PROTOCOL – I SECTION

Protocol-I deals with incoming visits of Head of States/Head of Governments/ Vice-Presidents and Foreign Ministers, outgoing visits of President, Vice President and Prime Minister, entertainment (official lunches, dinners, and receptions on behalf of the MEA) and ceremonial functions, airport passes, access to ceremonial and reserve lounge etc.

Protocol-I Section organized 9 Virtual Summits headed by the Prime Minister from Indian side during 2021. In addition, 16

incoming visits at the level of HOS/HOG/Foreign Minister and 146 entertainment functions were handled during the period. Protocol-I Section also facilitated 1230 requests for airport passes, lounges (ceremonial and reserved) and exemption from frisking during the period.

Details of Bilateral Visits and Virtual Summits are outlined in Annexure IV and Annexure V

PROTOCOL III AND PROTOCOL SPECIAL SECTIONS

In 2021-22, Protocol-III and Protocol (Housing) Section has facilitated movement of HOMs and Diplomats during the lockdown for smooth functioning of all the Foreign Missions.

Protocol-III Section has also disseminated to all Foreign Diplomatic Missions, Honorary Consulates and International Organizations sensitizing them about the Circulars/Orders/Guidelines issued by different Ministries (pertaining to various aspects such as travel/visa restrictions, medical facilities, changing lockdown guidelines etc.) of Government of India in view of COVID-19 pandemic.

Protocol-III Section performs the following regular work:

- i. Providing Protocol facilities to Heads of Missions on their first arrival and final departure.

- ii. Arranging Credential Ceremony online and in Rashtrapati Bhawan, where incoming Heads of Missions handover their Credential papers to Hon'ble President of India.

- iii. Facilitating Heads of Mission and diplomats (wherever applicable) during Republic Day, Independence Day, Joint Session of Parliament, Swearing-in Ceremony of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Yoga Day etc.

- iv. Processing permanent Airport Entry passes every year with respect to foreign diplomatic missions/posts in India subject to reciprocity, which is determined after obtaining and scrutinizing inputs from all our missions/posts abroad.

- v. Approval for establishing new Consulates General, Deputy High Commissions, Trade Offices, Cultural Centres.
- vi. Appointment of Honorary Consuls, Consuls General, Deputy High Commissions (Head of Posts for Commonwealth countries) of foreign countries and preparing Exequaturs/Gazette Notification thereafter.
- vii. Processing approval of installation Satellite Earth Stations in foreign mission premises.
- viii. Processing approval regarding awards given by foreign countries to Indian Officials.
- ix. Appointment of Defence Attaches and defence personnel in foreign diplomatic missions. Processing for approval of creation of new diplomatic or official posts in foreign diplomatic missions.
- x. Arranging Chief Guest for National Days of foreign countries celebrated by foreign missions in India and ensuring protocol guidelines are maintained in the venue.
- xi. Forwarding messages from VVIP (President, Vice President, Prime Minister, EAM) to Heads of States and Heads of Government of foreign countries. Onward transmission of Messages from Heads of States and Heads of Government of foreign countries to President, Vice President, Prime Minister, EAM and Government of India Officials.
- xii. Handling court cases pertaining to payment related disputes between foreign diplomatic missions and Indian local staff.
- xiii. Courtesy requests by HOM/HOPs and other official work entrusted.
- xiv. Extending protocol facilitation to Head of Mission and other diplomats during Independence Day and managing the concerned enclosures in tandem with Ministry of Defence. See Annexure-VI for details

01.04.2021 to 31.10.2021

- Resident Missions: Nil
- Trade Offices: Nil
- Cultural Centre: Nil
- Consulate Generals/ Deputy High Commissions:
 1. Sri Lanka- Chennai
 2. Japan-Mumbai
 3. USA-Kolkata
 4. Bhutan-Kolkata
 5. Sri Lanka-Mumbai
 6. Bangladesh- Chennai
 7. Israel- Mumbai
 8. Singapore- Mumbai
 9. Switzerland- Bengaluru
 10. Spain- Mumbai
 11. France- Bengaluru
 12. Qatar- Mumbai
 13. France- Kolkata
 14. France- Mumbai
 15. Canada- Mumbai
 16. Canada- Bengaluru
 17. Canada- Chandigarh
- Honorary Consulates General/ Honorary Consulates:
 1. San marino- New Delhi
 2. Vietnam- Bengaluru
 3. Georgia- Kolkata
 4. Portugal- Kolkata
 5. France- Hyderabad
 6. Germany- Hyderabad
 7. Canada- Kolkata
 8. Sierra Leone- New Delhi

Month-wise list of newly created posts in Foreign Diplomatic Missions in India from 01 April, 2021 to 31 October 2021

April	2
May	3
June	6
July	4
August	2
September	4

List of Resident Missions/ Trade offices/ Consulate Generals/ Deputy High Commissions/ Honorary Consuls approved from

PROTOCOL HOUSING SECTION

Protocol Housing section is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the Hyderabad House in cooperation with the Horticulture, Civil and Electrical wings of CPWD. This includes repair and maintenance works of Electrical/Civil/Horticulture. In addition, this section also handles processing of payment to ITDC on account of their administrative, management and operational expenditure; matters relating to purchase/ sale/ allotment of land, built up property, lease etc. in respect of all diplomatic missions and international organizations in Delhi which involves communication with State Governments for land allotment, signing of perpetual lease deed etc; disputes/ court cases between landlords and diplomatic missions in

Delhi and other states; Civic issues of the Missions were taken up on priority with local agencies like NDMC, DDA, MCD, Jal Board, MTNL, Electricity Board etc; running and operation of the VVIP Receptorium at Air Force Station, Palam with the help of Military Engineering Services (MES) and CPWD and assisting the diplomatic missions regarding services like NDMC, MCD, DDA, MTNL etc. Further, for last few years, this section has also been coordinating with various stakeholders on upcoming second Diplomatic Enclave Project in Dwarka , New Delhi. A total of 85 acre land is available for allotment in Foreign Missions which require land in New Delhi to send their realistic requirement and possible land use.

27

EXTERNAL PUBLICITY & PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DIVISION

External Publicity and Public Diplomacy Division (XPD) continued with its efforts to effectively articulate India's position on key foreign policy issues in accordance with its mandate. Simultaneously, pro-active efforts to project the 'India Story' and other notable achievements of the

country to an international audience continued apace. While the disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic presented their own sets of challenges, with the creative use of virtual platforms, the Division was able to maintain the momentum of its activities during the year.

Engagement with the Media

Press Coverage

COVID continued to cast its shadow in the year 2021 affecting free movement of people between countries. This did impact frequency of visits to and from our country. However, high profile interactions did take place which were covered by XP Division and due publicity given to the events.

During the second wave of COVID in April-May 2021, which drastically affected India, wide publicity was given to the assistance received by India from countries around the world. Virtual events had also become a regular feature of interaction between countries and were covered by XP Division during the period.

Among the physical visits, Foreign Ministers of Russian Federation, Bahrain, Eritrea, France and Maldives visited India in April 2021. President-elect of 76th UNGA and Foreign Minister of Maldives and US Secretary of State visited India in July 2021. September 2021 saw the visits of Foreign Ministers of Australia (India-Australia 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue), Saudi Arabia and Colombia. The first Prime Ministerial visit post-COVID was that of Prime Minister of Denmark in October 2021. The President, Foreign and Defense Ministers of Russia visited India in December 2021 for India-Russia 2+2 and to attend the bilateral summit. President of India visited Dhaka in December 2021. Foreign Ministers of five Central Asian

countries visited India in December 2021 for the 3rd meeting of the India-Central Asian Dialogue. Due publicity was given to the events.

Prime Minister participated in India-Seychelles High-Level Virtual Event, India-Netherlands Virtual Bilateral and Leaders' Summit on Climate, which took place in April 2021. Prime Minister's participation in India-UK Virtual Bilateral Summit and India-EU Leaders Meeting followed in May 2021. 47th G7 Summit and 13th BRICS Summit were held virtually in June and September 2021 respectively at Prime Ministerial level. The 13th BRICS Summit was hosted by India. Prime Minister virtually participated in the 21st Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO and virtually addressed 6th Eastern Economic Forum held in Vladivostok in September 2021. Prime Minister participated in G20 Extraordinary Summit on Afghanistan held virtually in October 2021. Prime Minister co-chaired the 18th India-ASEAN Summit and participated in the 16th East Asia Summit in October 2021. These events too

were given extensive coverage.

Prime Minister visited Bangladesh on a bilateral visit in March 2021 and USA for the first physical Quadrilateral Summit in September 2021. Prime Minister also visited Italy and UK (Glasgow) for G20 Leaders' Summit and COP 26 in October-November 2021.

EAM visited UK & USA in May 2021, Kuwait & Kenya in June 2021, Russia and Georgia in July 2021, Tajikistan in July 2021 for SCO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting, and Iran in August 2021. He chaired India's Presidency Initiatives in the UNSC at New York in August 2021. EAM also visited Mexico, Slovenia, Croatia and Denmark in September 2021, Israel, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan and Armenia in October 2021. EAM represented India at the 20th meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government in Kazakhstan in November 2021. The 18th meeting of RIC Foreign Ministers was held virtually in November 2021. All these events were given wide publicity.

Professional Training Courses for Foreign Diplomats

XP Division had organized training module on Media and Public Diplomacy for diplomats from Afghanistan in July 2021 and for diplomats of Indian Ocean Rim countries (viz, Comoros, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles and

Sri Lanka) during October 2021. Training module was also organized for diplomats from Gambia in November 2021 and Oman in December 2021.

Digital Outreach

Social Media Platforms

MEA has been a pioneer in Government of India to embrace a robust social media presence and digital identity with a consistently growing number of followers across platforms.

- a) MEA has over 3.74 million followers on Twitter with @MEAIndia having 2.2 million followers and @IndianDiplomacy having 1.5 million followers, adding approximately 140,000 followers since last year. Mission and Posts have also continued to increase engagement with the diaspora and the local population in the host country through social media platforms. Today around 192 Indian Missions/Posts have a presence on Twitter; 186 Missions/Posts have presence on Facebook; and around 105 Missions have a presence on Instagram, with more being encouraged to join the platform. This all-round digital outreach by the Ministry has enabled faster, direct and accurate dissemination of information on Ministry's and Mission/Posts' activities to an audience not just in India but all across the world.
- b) Twitter is a critical medium for immediate dissemination of significant information for the Ministry. The Official Spokesperson's handle (@MEAIndia) and the Public Diplomacy handle (@IndianDiplomacy) saw a combined increase of around 140,000 followers over the last year. @MEAIndia is now one of the most followed handles among all Ministries of Foreign Affairs across the world. The platform is used to tweet updates on India's foreign relations. During bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral engagements, Twitter is updated on a real-time basis. Both Twitter handles use multimedia content which has increased their reach and impact.

- c) The Division manages two YouTube channels for the Ministry; MEA India channel has a total of over 125,000 subscribers, Indian Diplomacy channel has over 139,000 subscribers as of December 2021, with a combined view count of over 31 million views across both channels, an increase of more than 16% over last year.
- d) MEA has made a phenomenal increase in its followership on Instagram which is a visual-rich platform. With a growth of approximately 35% over last year, the Ministry now has a followership of approximately 706,000 followers. Its popularity is increasing among the youth, with content especially curated for that segment of the population.
- e) The Ministry's Flickr account (MEAphtogallery) continues to serve as a repository of photos for all of the Ministry's major events, in India and abroad, with a photo bank of 43,183 HD photos as of December 2021.
- f) The Ministry's SoundCloud account (MEAIndia) is a useful audio clip database for accessing audio clips of all media briefings. Video Clips of all media briefings are also uploaded on YouTube.
- g) The Ministry has also registered a significant growth in the number of followers on LinkedIn with a total of 37,980 followers over last year, an increase of about 50%.
- h) The Ministry has also been proactive in marking important occasions across social media platforms such as the 151st birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, International Day of Yoga, Ayurveda Day, Vaccination campaign, Vande Bharat Mission, Covid Cooperation, Anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai Terror Attacks, etc. Ministry has also publicized Government of India's efforts in combating the

COVID pandemic as well as India's assistance to friendly countries in their battle against the pandemic.

- i) In the wake of the pandemic this year, Ministry and its Missions/Posts have particularly leveraged the power of digital when physical gatherings have had to be avoided. It has been ensured that Indian community outreach, outreach with our interlocutors and promotion of India's

soft power continues uninterrupted even in challenging conditions.

- j) The popularity and success of the Ministry's efforts in expanding digital outreach and branding itself as a 'digitally forward' Ministry is demonstrated by the continuous growth of its followers across social media platforms.

Visual Outreach – Films And Documentaries

The XPD Division commissions' documentaries aimed at the positive projection of India's image abroad. FTP links of the documentaries commissioned by this division are shared with Indian Missions/Posts abroad for presentation and screening purposes. These documentaries are also uploaded on the Ministry's YouTube channel "Indian Diplomacy" for ease of reference and use. Non-commercial screening rights of popular Bollywood and Regional feature films are procured and shared with Indian Missions/Posts abroad through FTP links/DCPs for screening by them as well as for participation in local film festivals.

Other publicity materials are also procured and shared with Missions/Posts abroad for organizing publicity campaigns, photographic exhibitions etc. Customized sets of popular Indian Classical/Bollywood Music Cards are also procured and used as gifts/presents by the Ministry and our Missions/Posts abroad. During the year, Division commissioned Classical Fusion and Bollywood Timeless, two Ministry of External Affairs' Signature Indian music collections.

During the year, Division commissioned many short films and videos such as:

- a) Return of lost Indian antiquities from United States
- b) Maitri Diwas: India-Bangladesh Friendship
- c) Gandhi @150 celebrations abroad
- d) India's Foreign Policy People's Policy
- e) Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2019
- f) Second Edition of Khelo India Winter Games
- g) Relocation in India of Hindu & Sikh community from Afghanistan
- h) International Women's Day
- i) Vaccine Maitri
- j) Indian Foreign Service Day
- k) Series of video on J&K: Marching Ahead
- l) PM ke Sambodhan
- m) Series of short videos to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav etc.

Public Outreach

Due to disruptions caused by COVID pandemic, the commissioning of print publications had to be discontinued as per the Government of India instructions to follow austerity measures. However, the Division commissioned various e-books to showcase significant events and activities such as Sonali

Adhyay: A Golden Chapter in India-Bangladesh Relationship (showcasing Prime Minister's visit to Bangladesh); Namaste USA (showcasing Prime Minister's visit to the United States), India's Engagement with Global Partners (showcasing Prime Minister's visit to Italy & the United Kingdom).

Books and Periodicals

Book Committee

The Book Committee was established in 2003 as a public diplomacy tool to select books from several categories namely Indian Classics, Foreign Policy and Strategic Affairs, Technology and Popular Science, Hindi & Sanskrit, Art & Culture, Religion & Spirituality, Children Books and Politics & Economy for the Missions/post abroad library as well as for presentation purposes. Under the 42nd Book Committee,

233 titles were selected. Demand of 28414 Copies was received from 109 Missions/Posts for different titles. In the first phase, total expenditure to procure these books was INR 3,03,11,013/-. In the second phase, 17 Missions/Posts sent their request for 2377 copies from selected titles and an amount of INR 21,03,395/- was spent on procurement of these books.

India Perspectives

The bimonthly flagship magazine of the Ministry is now available in a digital format in 16 languages. The web version of the magazine allows customization of the content and option to download and electronically disseminate it through social media by the Missions and Posts. The magazine covers

selective themes such as partnership, life & style, innovation & institutions, economy and sports, tour & travel etc. It can be read online at www.indiaperspectives.gov.in and www.me.gov.in.

28

ADMINISTRATION, ESTABLISHMENT, GLOBAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT, AND RIGHT TO INFORMATION

Administration

The main responsibility of the Administration Division in the Ministry is to provide manpower resources both at Headquarters and in 199 Indian Missions/Posts and 3 Representative Offices. In this regard, the Division oversees cadre management exercises which involve recruitment, training, postings/transfers, deputations and career progression among others.

In addition, the Division also deals with formulation, amendments, and reforms of all the relevant rules and regulations relating to Indian personnel posted abroad and local employees serving in Indian Missions and Posts.

The Division is also responsible for new developments and functional priorities such as creation of Rapid Response

Cell (RRC) by combining the COVID Cell and Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR). Currently, there are 56 Divisions in the Ministry.

MEA Internship Policy 2021 was launched with an aim to make the programme more transparent, structured, objective, inclusive, diverse, focused and rewarding, and to take the Ministry and its work closer to the people and connect it to their everyday lives. Accordingly, a fully online application-cum-selection process based on a quota-cum-weightage system was designed and implemented to ensure participation from all States/UTs with a special focus on rural areas and districts under GoI's transformation of aspirational districts program (TADP). 60 internships are to be offered every year, of which 30%-50% will be offered to female candidates.

In Term-I 2021, 19 interns from 14 different states/UTs (including 7 from aspirational districts) have already joined the Ministry during October-November 2021 for internship durations ranging from 1-3 months.

In pursuance of the Cabinet approval in March 2018 for the opening of 18 new Missions in Africa during 2018-21, Missions in Monrovia (Liberia) and Nouakchott (Mauritania) have started functioning in May, 2021 and June, 2021 respectively. Officials have been deployed to Chad and are waiting to travel to assume charge. Preparatory administrative and establishment related measures were initiated towards setting up of new Missions in Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau and Somalia.

Following Cabinet approval to open 3 new Missions in Estonia, Paraguay and Dominican Republic in December 2020, Ambassadors have been designated and MEA personnel have been deployed, who would be assuming charge in the coming months. The Cabinet has also approved the opening of the Consulate in Addu, Maldives in May 2021 and efforts are underway to operationalize it.

In a swift response to the COVID related travel restrictions, the Ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Air India, Indian Navy and other departments and agencies, organised Vande Bharat Mission. As on 31 December 2020, more than 44.7 lakh people have been facilitated through different modes of the Vande Bharat Mission. Subsequent to the start of operations under air bubble arrangements, as on 31 October 2021, during the 14 phases of the Vande Bharat Mission completed so far, 19,529 international flights have been operated by the Air India Group to facilitate more than 22.25 lakh stranded Indians from 55 countries around the world reaching 32 airports across India. Bilateral 'air bubble' arrangements have been negotiated and made operational with 28 countries. Phase 15 of VBM has been made operational since 1 November 2021.

Vaccine Maitri is an initiative of Government of India to supply 'Made-in-India' COVID 19 vaccines to various countries across the world, while keeping in view the domestic production capacity and the requirement of the national vaccination programme. India has supplied a total 70.37 million doses of

Made in India COVID-19 vaccines have been supplied as on 5 November 2021, including more than 12.7 million doses as grant to 47 countries and UN peacekeepers and nearly 20 million doses to 47 countries under the COVAX facility.

Division is effectively utilizing e-Samiksha portal and e-office for disposal of routine administrative matters, which is in line with Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)'s initiatives to increase efficiency in decision making in Government of India. The Division has been effectively using the Government e Market Place (GeM) portal for hiring of outsourced manpower and for hiring of vendors to provide cars to the Ministry.

Division incorporated provision enabling couple officers (posted to different stations) to avail inter-station leave in lieu of their entitled mid-term Home Leave Passage. Division also revised the Crockery, Cutlery Grant (CCG), Representational Cutlery Grant (RCG) and Bed & Linen Grant (BLG). The 19th Foreign Allowance Indexation visit was carried out in August 2021 and the Foreign Allowance for all Missions/Posts abroad were revised in October 2021. The servant wages of India based service staff (IBSS) were also revised.

The current sanctioned strength of the Ministry is 4477 (Appendix VII) with around 53% of these posts being in Missions and Posts abroad. The total strength is distributed across different cadres of the Ministry such as the Indian Foreign Service (IFS), IFS General Cadre, Branch B, Stenographers Cadre, Interpreters Cadre, Legal & Treaties Cadre, among others. As part of cadre management, the Ministry augmented its manpower by recruiting personnel at various levels through Direct Recruitment (DR) and Departmental Promotions (DP) in the Recruitment Year 2020-21.

The Ministry focused due attention to training of all its cadres along with specialized modules on economic diplomacy, international law, cyber security, gender budgeting, accounting, consular and passport services, effective use of social media, etc. Special attention was paid to the development of foreign linguistic skills of officers, including at interpretation level. Over time, this has resulted in the creation of a reasonably large pool of officers with quality foreign language skills within the Service (Appendix VIII)

Establishment

In 2021, in continuation of its activities under Swachh Bharat Mission, Establishment Division joined the fight against the Covid pandemic during the second phase in April-May 2021. The Division organised oxygen cylinders, medical beds, and essential medicines. at MEA Residential complexes. The Division also ensured uninterrupted supply of face-masks/sanitizer dispensing machines and sanitizers/ acrylic plastic sheets for partition/hand wash soaps in the office premises to provide a safe workplace. It also arranged suitable space along with other logistic arrangements for organizing monthly vaccine camps in JNB.

Apart from carrying out its regular tasks and providing support

to Missions/posts abroad, the Division organised a Special Cleanliness Campaign in all MEA premises and Housing Complexes during 2-31 October 2021. To create a space of approximately 3000 sq. feet in JNB, special emphasis was on weeding out and disposal of old obsolete/unserviceable items. A short video clip was recorded by Prasar Bharati on the cleanliness of JNB as MEA headquarters on 8 November 2021.

In addition, a two-member inspection team from Quality Council of India (QCI) also visited JNB on 11 November 2021 under Special Campaign Swachhta Assessment as formulated by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public

Grievances. MEA's provision of washrooms for differently-abled personnel were adjudged one of the best practices among others.

Under the redevelopment plan of MEA Housing Complexes, Division after completion of various formalities and shifting

of occupants, handed over New External Affairs Hostel, Government of India Market to GEM Division in November 2021. Division also took possession of 50 flats purchased by the Ministry from DDA at Commonwealth Game Village, Akshardham and allotted to eligible officers.

Global Estate Management (GEM)

The Global Estate Management Division actively pursued acquisition, construction, redevelopment, and renovation of properties for Indian Missions/Posts abroad and RPOs/ICCR/POEs/Branch Secretariats in India. An initiative to augment the available residential accommodation in New Delhi for officers of MEA was taken, with a view to effectively address the existing shortfall in the availability of such accommodation and to meet enhanced future housing requirements of MEA.

Acquisition of properties was pursued in Abidjan (land for Chancery, Ambassador's Residence, and other Residences), Chittagong (land for Chancery, AHC's Residence and other Residences), Vladivostok (Chancery-cum-Staff Residences), Tel Aviv (Chancery and Cultural Centre) and Doha (plot of land for Chancery). MEA took formal possession of 50 flats in the Commonwealth Games Village Complex, New Delhi, for use as residential accommodation.

Construction projects proceeded at a fast pace despite the pandemic slowdown, and the projects nearing completion

in Khartoum (Chancery and Staff Residences), Wellington (Chancery and Residences), Brunei Dar-us-salaam (Chancery, Embassy Residence and Residences), Geneva (Chancery), Phuentsholing (Chancery and Residences) and Gole Market, New Delhi (MEA Residential Complex). The projects in Port of Spain (Cultural Centre), Bangkok (Ambassador's Residence & Residences), Islamabad (Residential Complex), Kathmandu (Chancery and Residential Complex), Luoyong Temple in China (Renovation and Installation of Art Work) and Kabul (Residences) are either completed or nearing completion.

Notable achievements on the renovation front include completion of major renovations in Yangon (Chancery), Windhoek (Chancery) and Air Force Station Palam's VVIP Receptorium. Substantial progress was made in major renovation projects in Warsaw (Embassy Residence), RPO Building in Lucknow and PO Building in Darbhanga. Major renovation works were initiated in Vienna (Embassy Residence), Rabindranath Tagore Centre in Kolkata and Jinnah House in Mumbai.

Right To Information (RTI)

During the year, the Ministry continued efforts towards full implementation of the Right to Information Act 2005. In keeping with instructions of Department of Personnel & Training (DOP&T) on suo-motu disclosure, uploading of RTI applications/appeals/responses & monthly RTI figures on public domain has been implemented. The system of online acceptance & disposal of RTI applications has been implemented in 193 Missions/Posts abroad by aligning them with the RTI web portal.

During 01 January 2021 to 20 December 2021, a total of 1666 RTI applications and 114 First Appeals seeking information under the RTI Act 2005 have been received in the Ministry and have been disposed off satisfactorily. Applications, in general, covered subjects such as foreign relations, administrative

issues, bilateral visits, Covid-19 pandemic, Vande Bharat Flights and expenditure incurred on the same.

All Central Information Commission (CIC) hearings have been attended to by the concerned Central Public Information Officers (CPIOs) and a representative of the RTI Cell. Quarterly return has been filed with CIC as required, on schedule.

In collaboration with Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), implementation of online suo moto disclosure (transparency audit) by all the CPIOs in the Ministry in a time-bound manner, as per the instructions of CIC, has been commenced.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGE POLICY

MEA has comprehensive scheme for the promotion and propagation of Hindi abroad for the implementation of the Official Language Policy of the Government of India. World Hindi Conference and Regional Hindi conference take place regularly. World Hindi Day on 10 January and Hindi Divas on 14 September, together with Hindi Pakhwada, are celebrated every year. Ministry has instituted Atal Bhashantar Yojna (ABY) for training language experts towards creating a pool of specialized interpreters.

MEA has been making consistent efforts for promoting and implementing the Official Language Policy of the Government of India in its offices at headquarters and abroad as also in its subordinate offices across India. As a result of these efforts, Hindi is now being taught in the territorial jurisdiction of more than 75 Missions and Posts.

With the objective to promote Hindi worldwide, 'World Hindi Secretariat' has been functioning in Mauritius since 2008

under a bilateral agreement between the Governments of India and Mauritius. The budget of the World Hindi Secretariat is shared equally by both the countries.

The Ministry extended financial support to Missions/Posts abroad to engage teachers to conduct Hindi classes. In addition, teaching material and books were also provided through our Missions for organizing Hindi classes.

Hindi Pakhwada organized in the Ministry saw considerable participation by officials of MEA. MoS (ML) graced the event organized to mark the Hindi Day and handed over awards to the winners of the competitions held during the Hindi Pakhwada.

As part of the Atal Bhashantar Yojna, three candidates - one each in Arabic, Chinese and Russian completed their studies in Interpretation and Translation and joined various Divisions in the Ministry.

30

FINANCE AND BUDGET

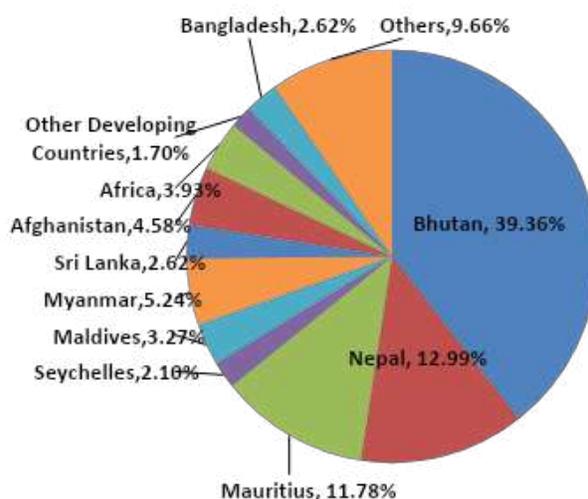
The total budget allocated to the Ministry for the Financial Year (FY) 2021-22 is Rs. 18,154.73 crores in the Budget Estimates (BE) stage. The budget's sectoral distribution for major allocations, is given below:

Sector	Allocation (In Rs. Crores)	
Technical and Economic Cooperation (TEC) with foreign countries	Grants	6754.40
	Loans	880.75
	Total TEC	7635.15
Indian Missions and Posts abroad		3240.07
Special Diplomatic Expenditure		3000.01
Passport and Emigration		1328.63
International Cooperation		1149.97
Capital Outlay on Public Works and Housing		610.00
MEA Secretariat		522.85
Assistance to Autonomous Bodies and Other Institutions		333.14
Others		334.88
Total BE for FY 2020-21		18,154.73

Development Partnership portfolio (or the Technical and Economic Cooperation) which constitutes India's Aid to various countries, continues to be the focus and priority with the largest allocation in the Ministry's budget. In FY 2021-22, of the total budget of Rs. 18,154.73 crores, the Technical and

Economic Cooperation (TEC) Heads outlay is 42.06% or Rs. 7635.15 crores, of which Rs. 6754.40 crores (37.20%) is for grant programmes and Rs. 880.75 crores (4.85 %) is for loans. The head-wise distribution of the TEC outlay in FY 2021-22 is given below:

Technical and Economic Cooperation (TEC) Heads	Allocation (In Rs. Crores)	% of Total TEC Allocation
Aid to Bangladesh	200.00	2.62%
Bhutan	Grant	2124.20
	Loan	880.75
	Total Bhutan	3004.95
Aid to Nepal	992.00	12.99%
Aid to Mauritius	900.00	11.78%
Aid to Afghanistan	350.00	4.58%
Aid to Seychelles	160.00	2.10%
Aid to Myanmar	400.00	5.24%
ITEC Programme	150.00	1.96%
Aid to African Countries	300.00	3.93%
Aid to Sri Lanka	200.00	2.62%
Chahbahar Port, Iran	100.00	1.31%
Aid to Maldives	250.00	3.27%
Aid to Other Developing Countries	130.00	1.70%
Investment Publicity & Promotion Programme	270.00	3.54%
Indo-Pacific Cooperation	40.00	0.52%
Aid to Eurasian Countries	100.00	1.31%
Multilateral Economic Relations Programme	10.20	0.13%
Aid to Latin American Countries	40.00	0.52%
Aid for Disaster Relief	20.00	0.26%
SAARC Programmes	6.00	0.08%
Aid to Mongolia	2.00	0.03%
Total	7635.15	



The bulk of the Ministry’s Development Partnership budget, comprising about 66%, is allocated to the neighbouring countries under the Government’s “Neighbourhood First” Policy, followed closely by allocation to Indian Ocean Region (20%), Extended Neighbourhood (7.2%), Africa (3.93%), Latin American countries (0.52%), among others.

Of the total budget for FY 2021-22 of Rs. 18,154.73 crores, the bifurcation of allocations between establishment heads and

non-establishments heads is 28% (Rs. 5118 crores) and 72% (Rs. 13036 crores) respectively. The Ministry has consistently maintained its expenditure on Establishment heads within 30% of its total budget.

The Ministry has been optimally utilising the funds allocated to it in the Revised Estimates (RE) stage of a financial year, as given below for the past ten FYs:

FY	BE Allocation	RE Allocation	Actual Expenditure	Utilization as % of BE	Utilization as % of RE
	In Rs. Crores; Rounded Off				
2011-12	7106	7836	7873	111 %	100 %
2012-13	9662	10062	10121	105 %	100 %
2013-14	11719	11794	11807	101 %	100 %
2014-15	14730	12620	12149	82 %	96 %
2015-16	14967	14967	14541	97 %	97 %
2016-17	14663	13426	12772	87 %	95 %
2017-18	14798	13690	13750	93 %	100 %
2018-19	15011	15582	15526	103%	99%
2019-20	17885	17372	17272	97%	99%
2020-21	17347	15000	14362	83%	96%

The Ministry has revenue receipts of Rs. 1415.17 crores till 30 September 2021 in FY 2021-22, from passport services (Rs. 963.12 crores), visa fees (Rs. 90.86 crores) and other

receipts (Rs. 361.19 crores). The revenue receipt for the last 5 financial years from FY 2017-2018 to FY 2021-2022 is given below:

Year	Heads	Amount	Percentage
2017-18	Passport	2479.08	47%
	Visa	2152.15	41%
	Others	668.38	12%
	Total	5299.61	
2018-19	Passport	2679.75	44%
	Visa	2688.9	44%
	Others	680.06	11%
	Total	6048.71	
2019-20	Passport	2522.71	49%
	Visa	1792.11	35%
	Others	856.16	17%
	Total	5170.98	

2020-21	Passport	583.56	77%
	Visa	24.85	3%
	Others	149.73	20%
	Total	758.14	
2021-22 (*figures upto 30 Sept 2021)	Passport	1407.84	73%
	Visa	145.96	8%
	Others	380.91	20%
	Total	1934.71	

In January 2020, the Ministry had 2 Paras pending from Report No.12 of 2017 and Report No. 6 of 2020 of the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG). 5 more Paras were included in C&AG's Report No.2 of 2021. The status of submission of Action Taken Notes (ATNs) for these 7 Paras is given below:

Year	C&AG Report	Total No. of Paras	Final ATNs Submitted	ATNs Under Process
2017	Report No.12 of 2017	4	4	Nil
2018	Report No.4 of 2018	5	5	Nil
2019	No Report generated by C&AG for MEA	-	-	-
2020	Report No.6 of 2020	4	3	1
2021	Report No.2 of 2021	5	2	3
Total		18	14	4

The details and status of these C&AG Paras are as below:

C&AG Report No.	Para No.	Subject	Status
6 of 2020	8.4	Incorrect adoption of rates resulting in extra cost – Nalanda University	Revised ATN is under preparation by the Ministry
2 of 2021	5.3	Irregularities in receipt and utilisation of compensation by the HCI London	Revised ATN is under preparation by the Ministry
	5.4	Grossly irregular and manipulated award and execution of work relating to the renovation of the basement at India House, London, leading to undue benefits being extended to the contractor by the HCI London	Revised ATN is under preparation by the Ministry
	5.5	Undue benefit extended to the contractor by Nalanda University, Rajgir	Draft ATN is under preparation by the Ministry

PAC Paras

Year	PAC Report No	Total No of Paras	Final ATRs Submitted	ATRs Due	Remarks
2018	PAC Report No. 112	7	7	-	Final ATRs submitted. Paras settled.
2020	PAC Report No.17	5	2	3	ATRs under preparation by the Ministry.

Details and status of Outstanding PAC paras are as under:

Lok Sabha No.	Report No.	Para No.	Subject	Status
17	17	5	Committee's Observations on Action Taken by the Ministry on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their 112 th Report (16 th Lok Sabha) on "Incorrect Adoption of Exchange Rate in Ottawa and its Consulates" as contained in C&AG Report No.11 of 2016 Chapter VII Para 7.1 <i>[The Committee notes that the Action Taken Notes were furnished by the Ministry of External Affairs after a delay of more than a year. The Committee deprecate the undue delay in submission of Action Taken Notes by the Ministry and desire that necessary instructions may be issued to ensure that replies to the Committee are henceforth submitted in time.]</i>	Draft Action Taken Report (ATR) is under preparation
		7	Committee's Observations on Action Taken by the Ministry on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their 112 th Report (16 th Lok Sabha) on "Incorrect Adoption of Exchange Rate in Ottawa and its Consulates" as contained in C&AG Report No.11 of 2016 Chapter VII Para 7.1 <i>[The Committee desire the Ministry of External Affairs (the Ministry) to furnish Action Taken Notes in respect of Observations/ Recommendations contained in Chapter I within six months of the presentation of the Report to the House.]</i>	Draft Action Taken Report (ATR) is under preparation
		22	Committee's observations on Action Taken by the Ministry on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their 112 th Report (16 th Lok Sabha) on "Incorrect Adoption of Exchange Rate in Ottawa and its Consulates" as contained in C&AG Report No.11 of 2016 Chapter VII Para 7.1 <i>[The Committee would like to be apprised of the details of the Global Passport Seva Project as well as the resultant impact on monitoring and real time reporting. The Committee would also like to know if the implementation of this project specifically addresses the concerned raised by them in earlier recommendation].</i>	Final Action Taken Report (ATR) is under preparation

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PARLIAMENT AND COORDINATION DIVISION

The responsibility of the Parliament & Coordination Division broadly consists of Parliamentary work; coordination within and outside the Ministry; admission of certain category of foreign students in Indian educational

institutions, coordination of Ministry's activities carried out under 'AzadikaAmritMahotsava' (AKAM) and monitoring as well as review of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) signed by India with foreign countries.

Parliament Section

The Parliament Section is the Ministry's interface with Parliament and the nodal point for Parliament-related work of this Ministry. The endeavour of the Ministry has been to ensure timely response to the issues raised by the Parliament, including assistance on issues related to Inter-Parliamentary Union, Parliamentary Exchange Programme, etc.

Despite the pandemic situation during the calendar year 2021, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs held 12 meetings on the following 7 subjects:

- i. COVID Pandemic: Global Response, India's Contribution and the Way Forward;
- ii. India's Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy: Prospects & Limitations;

- iii. India and Bilateral Investment Treaties;
- iv. India's Neighbourhood First Policy;
- v. Welfare of Indian Diaspora: Policies/Schemes;
- vi. Examination of Demands for Grants of Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) for the year 2021-22; and
- vii. Countering Global Terrorism at Regional and International Level.

In 2021, the first Consultative Committee Meeting on 'India's Global Strategy' and the second meeting of the Consultative Committee on 'The Quad and Indo-Pacific' were held on 16 January and 12 November, respectively, under the Chairmanship of EAM.



EAM chaired the Consultative Committee Meeting on 'The Quad and Indo-Pacific' in November 2021

During the calendar year, the Ministry complied to 15 Parliamentary Assurances, thus bringing the outstanding assurances to 6. A total of 24 matters under Special Mention / Rule 377, Zero Hour were raised. These were taken up on priority and responded on time. During the Budget, Winter and Monsoon Sessions of Parliament in the year 2021, 297 Questions were admitted and replied.

During the calendar year, Annual Reports and Annual Accounts of Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India Centre for Migration (ICM), Nalanda University were laid on the Table of both the Houses of the Parliament.

Coordination Section

The Coordination Section effectively carried out interaction among the Ministry and the other Ministries of Government of India, State Governments/Union Territories, autonomous bodies, and private institutions. The Section processed political clearances for visits abroad, sports events, conferences/seminars/exhibitions, and diplomatic military flights. A total of 1654 political clearances were issued in 2021.

This Section coordinated Ministry's responses to the Cabinet Secretariat's Portal and Ministry's participation in Prime Minister's PRAGATI videoconference on grievance redressal and review of programmes and projects.

The Section also coordinated work related to various awards

including Padma Awards, Gandhi Peace Prize, Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony and Presidential Award (International) to scholars in Sanskrit and Classical Languages.

Additionally, Coordination Division has been designated as the Nodal Point in the Ministry for commemorating AKAM at Headquarters and our Missions/Posts abroad. Indian Missions/Posts abroad commenced AKAM celebrations from 12 March 2021. Around 5000 events have been organized by Missions/Posts since 12 March till November 2021. AKAM celebrations by ICCR/Missions/Posts have seen enthusiastic participation of Indian Diaspora, Friends of India, and local Governments.



Performance organized by ICCR under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsava

The Ministry, through ICCR/Missions/Posts abroad, is playing a key role in celebration of signature events of Government of India abroad such as RashtragaanInitiative, RashtriyaEktaDiwas/Week, Post Card Campaign, Kashi

Utsav, Children: Rights, Ideas and Nutrition, Constitution Day, AmbedkarMahaparinirvanaDiwas, Good Governance Week, among others.

Monitoring Cell

The Monitoring Cell coordinates with Ministries and Departments of Government of India for regular review of MoU/Agreements signed with foreign countries from the angle of their continued relevance and status.

A total of 3240MoUs/Agreements exist, out of which3172

MoUs/Agreements have been reviewed. As on 31 December 2021, 2413 MOUs have been identified for continuation and 759 MoUs for discontinuation. A total of 665MoUs have been discontinued in 2021 and the remaining are under process for their discontinuation.

Education Cell

The Education Section of the Ministry deals with the selection, nomination and admission of foreign students from 57 friendly neighbouring and developing countries for MBBS, BDS, MD/MS, B. Arch., BE, B. Pharmacy, and Diploma courses in Engineering in various institutions in India, under the Self Financing Scheme against seats allocated to this Ministry by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Ministry of Education. Persecuted religious minority migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan based in India are also offered seats under this scheme.

During the academic year 2021-22, 72 applications were received for admission in B.E./B.Tech/B.Arch/ B.Pharmacy courses. 49 seats were allotted for engineering and pharmacy

courses and 2 seats were allotted in Diploma in Engineering course. The allocation for medical courses (MBBS & BDS) is under process.

During January-December 2021, Education Section processed following political clearances:

- i. 24 cases of political clearances in respect of foreign students for elective-training, observer ships & short/long term training,
- ii. 2430 cases of political clearances in r/o foreign students appearing in various Post Graduate entrance examinations, and
- iii. 25 cases of research visas clearances were also issued.

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CONFERENCE DIVISION

Summits/Conference Division provides all logistical arrangements to various Divisions of the Ministry in organizing meetings/events/seminar/conferences including international & multilateral involvement of foreign Ministers/delegates in India and abroad.

During the period 01 April 2021 to 31 October 2021, Summits/Conference Division provided all logistical support to organise 106 BRICS/G7/IBSA/G20 related virtual meetings and 44 other meetings at various level of participation virtually details of which are as under:

BRICS/IBSA/G7/G20 PM level Meeting	BRICS/IBSA/G7/G20 Ministerial Meetings	BRICS/IBSA/G7/G20 Official Level Meetings	Total Meetings
01	18	88	107

During the period 01 April 2021 to 31 October 2021, Summits/Conference Division provided all logistical support

to organise 44 other meetings at various level of participation virtually details of which are as under:

Prime Minister level Meeting	Ministerial Meetings	Official Level Meetings	Total Meetings
2	14	28	44

In addition, the Summits/Conference Division also acts as nodal agency for Sushma Swaraj Bhawan (SSB) (formerly Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra PBK) which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister on 02 October 2016. Since the inauguration of PBK, the President has attended 4 events (one virtually), the Vice President has attended 09 events and the Prime Minister has attended 17 events as Guest of Honour. The

Prime Minister has also chaired 08 meetings of the Council of Ministers at SSB. SSB continues to be a preferred venue for official events, seminars, conferences, conventions, workshops etc. organized by various Ministries/Departments and other government organizations. The year wise number of events held at SSB is given below:

S.No.	Period	Number of Events
1	October 2016 to March 2017	45
2	April 2017 to March 2018	144
3	April 2018 to March 2019	210
4	April 2019 to March 2020	89
5	April 2020 to March 2021	17
6	April 2021 to October 2021	151
	TOTAL	656

The organization wise total number of events held at SSB is as follows:

SN	Event organized by	October 2016 to March 2017	April 2017 to March 2018	April 2018 to March 2019	April 2019 to March 2020	April 2020 to March 2021	April 2021 to October 2021	TOTAL
1	Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)	23	69	89	23	14	107	325
2	Other Ministries/ Department	16	59	95	40	3	44	257
3	Other Govt. Organization	0	10	3	18	0	0	31
4	Others organization	6	6	23	8	0	0	43
	TOTAL	45	144	210	89	17	151	656

The upgrade at SSB to serve as India's BRICS Secretariat in 2021 and subsequently as India's G20 Summit Secretariat with a working space for nearly 300 officers will provide an

important venue for G-20 related preparatory meetings, now that India has joined the G-20 Troika.

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ARCHIVES

Archives & Record Management Division of the MEA deals with all the matters related to archives and record management. The Division is presently situated at ISIL building, Bhagwan Dass Road and C-1 Hutments, Dara Shikoh

Road. The Division is in a state of readiness to move to its new location and is looking forward to functioning normally once the compactors for holding the files are set up at the new location, and the premises made ready for occupation.

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SUSHMA SWARAJ INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN SERVICE

The Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) was established in 1986 by the Government of India, primarily to cater to the professional training needs of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers inducted directly via the UPSC every year.

During the period under review, SSIFS met the challenge of the COVID pandemic by adjusting its training mode as the year progressed both for its Indian and foreign trainees. The final phase of the six-month Induction Training Programme (ITP) of the 2020 Batch IFS OTs (Officer Trainees) was conducted in a hybrid mode. With the onset of the second wave, the week-long Mission Orientation Attachment had to be cancelled. The Officer Trainees (OTs) returned to the campus from May 2021 onwards and appeared for their assessments at the conclusion of the ITP in a physical mode. EAM graced the Valedictory Function in June 2021.

SSIFS also conducted, for the first time, training programmes for officers of the CAG's (Comptroller & Auditor General) Office, HIPA (Haryana Institute of Public Administration) and NSCS (National Security Council Secretariat) along with Defence

Attachés, in response to their requests for tailor-made programmes.

As far as the training of foreign diplomats was concerned, several familiarization programmes for diplomats of resident diplomatic missions were conducted including one for the resident Head of Missions in August 2021. Special Training Programmes for Foreign Diplomats (travelling from abroad) resumed in the physical format from July 2021 onwards with the 8th Special Course for Afghan Diplomats.

The second edition of the 'Sushma Swaraj Lectures on Introduction to India' for resident foreign diplomats, in collaboration with the think-tank India Foundation, took place in October 2021. The 3rd edition of the Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme, in collaboration with D&ISA Division, is slated to take place in the first half of 2022.

Promotion-related and posting-related training programmes for MEA personnel took place virtually during the first few months and then resumed in a physical format from August

2021 onwards. Induction Training Programmes for Personal Assistants and Stenographers and Assistant Section Officers and were conducted in November-December 2021.

I. Cadre Training Programmes for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officers:

Induction Training Programme:

24 Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officer Trainees (OTs) of the 2020 batch and two Bhutanese diplomats underwent the six-month Induction Training Programme (ITP) from 21 December 2020 – 11 June 2021. The ITP included modules on theories of international relations, foreign policy, bilateral relations with neighbouring countries and major powers, and multilateral organizations. It also included modules on finance, accounts, administration, establishment, consular, passport and visa, international law, protocol, economic & commercial diplomacy, defence diplomacy, S&T, cyber security, domestic policy, health module, tourism, hospitality and media management. Soft power and communication skills were stressed upon. For effective dissemination of knowledge to trainees, experienced civil servants, retired ambassadors, senior faculty and research fellows from various ministries, institutions and think tanks were invited as resource persons. Additionally, SSIFS also invited Ambassadors/High Commissioners of foreign countries (including the P5 countries) to interact with the IFS OTs.

Various pedagogical approaches were adopted to train the IFS OTs using state-of-the-art Information Technology (IT) tools (both offline and online). The pedagogical tools included interactive lectures, simulations, role plays, workshops, hands-on training, case studies, success stories, structured mentoring programmes, interactions between foreign and Indian diplomats, field visits and exposure through various attachments.

The OTs had a one-week attachment with the Indian Army (22-26 March 2021) to build a better perspective about border management and interaction with army officers in the field. A ten-day long Bharat Darshan tour (28 March-05 April 2021) to acquaint them better with the rich cultural diversity, heritage, and tourism potential of the country and a three-day State Attachment (07-09 April 2021) to their respective allotted states were also organised.

As part of the training programme, an online course in 'Cyber Security' (conducted by the National Forensic Sciences University, Gandhinagar) and 'Rapid Reading' course (conducted by Iris, Chicago) were also conducted during the ITP.

To mark the conclusion of the ITP of the 2020 Batch, a valedictory function was organized on 08 June 2021 which was presided over by EAM as Chief Guest. MoS (VM) also graced the occasion. EAM's Gold Medal for the Best OT of the 2020 Batch, MoS Silver Medal for esprit de corps, Ambassador Bimal Sanyal Memorial Medal for the Best Dissertation, trophies for best committee (Cultural Committee), best sportspersons and for Bhutanese diplomats were awarded on the occasion.

IFS OTs of the 2021 Batch will join SSIFS in March 2022 for their six-month Induction Training Programme.

Mid-Career Training Programme-I

Mid-Career Training Programme-I (MCTP-I) for IFS officers' of 2009 batch and few officers of the previous batches, who could not attend the previously held MCTPs, was conducted from 05-16 July 2021. The training programme consisted of a Foreign Policy Module (covering various aspects of foreign policy matters), submission of a paper on 'Strategies for promoting Trade & Investment in India from a country of their choice' and a book review on India's foreign policy.

Mid-Career Training Programme-II

A supplementary Mid-Career Training Programme-II for 08 IFS Officers of 2005 batch, who could not attend the regular MCTP-II, was conducted from 04-14 October 2021. The training programme consisted of a Foreign Policy Module covering various aspects of foreign policy matters; a Management & Diplomacy module conducted by IIM, Ahmedabad along with paper submissions which included a review of a book on foreign policy.

Other Training Programmes:

(a) Training Programme for clearing of probation and confirmation for Officers promoted to the Senior Scale of IFS from IFS(B):A Training Programme for 22 officers inducted from Grade-I of IFS Branch 'B' in the Senior Scale of IFS for clearing of probation and confirmation in the service was conducted by SSIFS through virtual mode from 31 August – 24 September 2021. This included interactive sessions on a range of issues related to India's foreign policy, diplomatic practice, engagements and outreach around the world. In addition, sessions on important domestic issues and themes, health diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, negotiation skills, gender sensitization, cyber security etc. were also conducted. The training included submission of (i) book review on any book on foreign policy, (ii) thesis on foreign policy and its presentation and (iii) political and commercial reports. As mandated, examinations were also conducted for the participants as part of the training programme.

(b) Promotion related Training Programme for Principal Private Secretaries (PPS) of the Stenographers' Cadre: A promotion-related training programme for 61 Principal Private Secretaries (PPS) of the Stenographers' Cadre was conducted by SSIFS in a hybrid mode from 05-09 April 2021.

Specialized Training Programmes:

(a) Training Programme for Defence Attachés and Officers of National Security Council Secretariat: A one-week training programme was conducted for 11 Defence Attaché-designates who have been posted to Indian Missions abroad from 27 September – 01 October 2021.

(b) Training Programme for Officers of International Training Division, Office of CAG of India: A customized two-day training programme was conducted for 14 Officers of

the International Relations Division of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India from 02-03 August 2021. Keeping in mind the growing global responsibilities of the CAG's Office like auditing of international organizations, the training at SSIFS was designed to familiarize the participants with India's foreign policy and the basic skills and tools of diplomacy.

(c) Training Programme for Haryana State Officers: A Special Training Programme on Foreign Policy for officers of Haryana State was conducted on 23 July 2021 in association with the Haryana Institute of Public Administration (HIPA). 25 officers from the Haryana State Government participated. This was the first State-specific programme organized by SSIFS in continuation of the special training programmes in Economic & Commercial Diplomacy held in January and February 2021 for IAS and other officers from States and Union Territories of India. The special training module, anchored in the spirit of paradiplomacy, focused on presenting an overview of India's foreign policy and the cooperation extended by State Governments as partners in furthering India's foreign engagements.

II. Non- Representational Grade (NRG) Training Programmes for Branch B of IFS:

During the period under review, the following training courses were organised for training of Non-Representational Grade (NRG) officials (Section Officer and below):

i. IVFRT (Immigration, Visa and Foreigners' Registration & Tracking) e-FRRO module on PAP/RAP (Protected/Restricted Areas Permit) for Missions/Posts abroad conducted online on 18 March 2021 and attended by 126 participants.

ii. Promotion-related Training Programme for Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) and Personal Assistants (PAs) from 22-26 March 2021 and attended by 122 participants.

iii. Promotion-related Training Programme for Section Officers (SOs) and Private Secretaries (PSs) conducted online from 12-23 July 2021 and attended by 87 participants.

iv. IVFRT (Immigration, Visa, Foreigners' Registration & Tracking) Training Programme conducted online from 02-03 August 2021 and attended by 64 participants.

v. Accounts Training Programme (in preparation for IMAS Training) from 05-06 August 2021 and attended by 52 participants.

vi. 80th IMAS (Integrated Mission Accounting System) Training Programme from 09-23 August 2021 and attended by 52 participants.

vii. Accounts Training Programme (in preparation for IMAS Training) from 02-03 September 2021 and attended by 50 participants.

viii. IVFRT (Immigration, Visa and Foreigners' Registration & Tracking) Training Programme from 06-09 September 2021 and attended by 49 participants.

ix. 81st IMAS (Integrated Mission Accounting System) Training Programme from 13-24 September 2021 and attended by 52 participants.

x. Quarterly Typing Test for Direct Recruit Assistant Section Officers (DR ASOs), Junior Secretariat Assistants (JSAs) and Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) on 28 October 2021 and attended by 07 participants.

xi. Induction Training Programme for Personal Assistants and Stenographers of 2017 and 2018 batches from 22 November - 03 December 2021 and attended by 53 participants.

xii. Mandatory English Stenography Test for Direct Recruit Personal Assistants and Stenographers on 09 December 2021 in which 22 Personal Assistants and 14 Stenographers appeared.

xiii. Induction Training Programme for Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) of 2017 and 2018 batches [Batch-I] from 13-24 December 2021 and attended by 50 participants.

xiv. IVFRT (Immigration, Visa and Foreigners' Registration & Tracking) Training Programme is slated to take place from 10-12 January 2022.

xv. Accounts Training Programme (in preparation for IMAS Training) is scheduled to take place from 13-14 January 2022.

xvi. 82nd IMAS (Integrated Mission Accounting System) Training Programme is scheduled to take place from 17-21 January 2022.

III. Training programmes for Foreign Diplomats

(i) 2nd Special Course for Diplomats from Vietnam

The 2nd Special Course for Diplomats from Vietnam was held virtually from 11-12 May 2021. Fifty-one diplomats from Vietnam participated in the programme. During the two-day programme, senior officers from MEA and retired Indian Ambassadors addressed the diplomats on some core aspects of Indian foreign policy and its relations with Vietnam and ASEAN.

(ii) Special Training Module for Diplomats from Dominican Republic

A Special Training Module on 'Reformed Multilateralism' for Diplomats from the Dominican Republic (DR) was held virtually on 16 June 2021. Seventy diplomats/participants from the Dominican Republic took part in the module. During the one-day programme, retired Indian Ambassadors addressed the participants on 'Reformed Multilateralism' with regard to the UN and WTO. There were special interventions in the sessions by the DR Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva and the DR Deputy Permanent Representative in New York

(iii) 1st Special Course for Diplomats from Sierra Leone

The 1st Special Course for Diplomats from Sierra Leone

was held virtually from 21 June - 02 July 2021. Thirty-five diplomats from Sierra Leone participated in the programme. The two-week programme included modules on India's foreign policy, contemporary international issues such as maritime security, multilateral diplomacy, diplomatic skills, India's economic and technological development, disaster management, health diplomacy, India-West Africa Relations including regional groupings and a special focus on India-Sierra Leone Relations. The Programme, although conducted online, received an overwhelming response from the Sierra Leonean diplomats.

(iv) 8th Special Course for Diplomats from Afghanistan

The 8th Special Course for Diplomats from Afghanistan was held from 05-17 July 2021. This course marked the return to the physical format for foreign diplomats travelling from abroad. Twenty-five diplomats from Afghanistan along with three diplomats from their Embassy in New Delhi participated in the course. The lecture sessions included modules on India's foreign policy, bilateral relations with Afghanistan, relations with neighbouring countries, key international issues, multilateral diplomacy, diplomatic and communication skills, diplomatic protocol, role of women in diplomacy, economic diplomacy, negotiation skills, international law, health diplomacy, Indian culture and cinema, opportunities in higher education in India etc. As part of their study tours, the diplomats visited Rashtrapati Bhavan, Election Commission, International Solar Alliance, audio-visual media houses. In order to experience the rich cultural heritage of India, they undertook outstation visits to Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. In Delhi, they visited the National Gallery of Modern Art and DilliHaat. The group included three women diplomats. The diplomats made an interesting country presentation on the last day of the programme highlighting the immense multi-dimensional potential of Afghanistan.

(v) 4th Familiarization Programme for Resident Foreign Diplomats

The 4th Familiarization Programme for Resident Foreign Diplomats was held from 26-30 July 2021. Twenty-five diplomats from resident diplomatic Missions from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas participated in the programme. The aim of the week-long programme was to provide a broad overview of India and its foreign policy. Senior officers from the Ministry of External Affairs addressed the diplomats on contemporary strategic issues, India's relations with the major powers and its neighbours, Indian Ocean Region, UN, economic diplomacy and initiatives, health diplomacy etc. This was the fourth in the series of Familiarization Programmes conducted by SSIFS in 2021 for resident foreign diplomats. The programmes have been lauded by the diplomatic corps for providing a foot board to India and its foreign policy.

(vi) 4th Familiarization Programme for Resident Heads of Missions

The 4th Familiarization Programme for Foreign Heads of Missions (HoMs) resident in New Delhi was held from 23-27 August 2021. Twenty-six Ambassadors/High Commissioners participated in the programme. This was the fourth edition

of this programme. In August 2018, SSIFS conducted the 1st Familiarization Programme for Resident HoMs from Latin and Caribbean countries; the 2nd Familiarization Programme for Resident HoMs from East, West & South Africa was held in February 2019 and the 3rd Familiarization Programme for Resident HoMs from Arab, Caucasian, Central Asian & North African countries was conducted in August 2019. Senior officers from the MEA addressed the HoMs on a wide variety of foreign policy issues during the week-long programme which was aimed at giving an introduction and perspective on India and its foreign policy including contemporary dimensions, challenges, strategic issues, relations with neighbouring countries and major powers, India and the UN, development partnership, economic and commercial relations and cultural diplomacy. MoS (Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh) graced the valedictory function on 27 August 2021 and interacted with the foreign resident Heads of Missions.

(vii) 1st Special Course for Diplomats from Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

The 1st Special Course for Diplomats from the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) was held from 20 September - 01 October 2021. Thirty-five diplomats from six IOR countries namely the Comoros, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles and Sri Lanka participated in the programme. The two-week Special Course encompassed modules on India's polity and foreign policy, contemporary maritime issues, challenges and strategies, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief initiatives, international framework under UNCLOS, multilateral diplomacy, economic and commercial diplomacy, diplomatic protocol and communication, negotiation skills, development partnership cooperation, climate change challenges and responses, health diplomacy, disaster management etc. The lectures were delivered by senior officials of the MEA, retired Ambassadors as well as experts from academia and think tanks. The group undertook field visits to Rashtrapati Bhavan, Election Commission, Gandhi Smriti, National Gallery of Modern Art and Akshardham Temple in New Delhi and outstation visits to Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. They also visited media houses and witnessed first-hand the dynamic electronic and print media in India. The country presentations by each of the six groups of diplomats showcased their beautiful island countries along with their potential in diverse areas.

(viii) 'Sushma Swaraj Lectures (SSL 2021) on Introduction to India' for resident foreign diplomats

SSIFS, in collaboration with the think-tank India Foundation, organized the second edition of the 'Sushma Swaraj Lectures (SSL 2021) on Introduction to India' for resident foreign diplomats from 21-22 October 2021 under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM). The first edition was organized in two parts in October and November 2020. The overarching objective of the lecture series was to introduce India to foreign diplomats resident in India. The inaugural address was delivered by Secretary (East). She described the Indian diplomatic ideals of Samman (dignity), Samvaad (dialogue), Samridhi (shared prosperity), Suraksha (regional and global security) and Sanskriti and Sabhayata (cultural

and civilizational links) which were, in turn, interlinked with India's broader political and economic goals. The Valedictory Address, on 22 October, was delivered by Mr. Ram Madhav, Member, Board of Governors, India Foundation on 'India's Global Vision'. In SSL 2021, fifty diplomats from forty-three countries took part. The programme included lectures on Indian history, polity, economy, culture and foreign policy which were delivered by eminent speakers including Members of Parliament, senior Government officials and academicians.

(ix) 2nd Special Course for Diplomats from The Gambia

The 2nd Special Course for Diplomats from The Gambia was conducted from 15 November - 26 November 2021. Thirty diplomats from The Gambia participated in the course. Prior to this course, thirty-one diplomats from The Gambia have undergone training at SSIFS in addition to twenty-five senior civil servants who underwent training at the National Centre for Good Governance, Mussoorie in 2019. The Special Course included modules on India's foreign policy, India-West Africa Relations and in particular with The Gambia, development partnership cooperation, diplomatic protocol, opportunities in higher education in India, Ayurveda etc. As part of their study tours, the diplomats undertook visits to Rashtrapati Bhavan and Election Commission. The participants also visited the India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2021 to witness first-hand the overarching 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self reliant) theme of the trade expo. The course included study tours of historical and cultural monuments in order to experience the rich cultural heritage of India.

(x) 1st Special Course for Diplomats from Oman

The 1st ever Special Course for Diplomats from Oman was held from 06 - 17 December 2021. Twenty-five diplomats from the Sultanate of Oman participated in the course. The Special Course included modules on India's foreign policy,

economy, polity, syncretic culture, India-Oman bilateral and commercial relations, energy and maritime security, the Arab world and GCC, India's relations with major powers, health diplomacy, climate change, digital empowerment, negotiation and diplomatic communication skills, sessions on Yoga and Ayurveda. They had an interactive session with Secretary (CPV & OIA). As a part of their study tours, the diplomats undertook visits to Rashtrapati Bhavan, Election Commission and media houses. The course also included study tours of historical and cultural monuments including the National Museum and Humayun's Tomb in Delhi and outstation tour of Agra and Fatehpur Sikri.

(xi) 3rd Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme from 10-28 January 2022

The 3rd Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme is scheduled to take place in the first half of 2022. International speakers from the world of disarmament affairs will be invited to address the participants of this prestigious thematic programme.

(xii) 2nd Special Course for Diplomats from Egypt

The 2nd Special Course for Diplomats from Egypt is scheduled to take place from 07-18 February 2022 with the participation of 34 diplomats.

Memoranda of Understanding (MoU)

During 2021-22, SSIFS signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with El Salvador on 17 September 2021; Senegal on 05 November 2021 and Tajikistan on 18 December 2021 taking the total number of MoUs with counterpart institutions/ Ministries of Foreign Affairs to 92.

SSIFS Campus

As a part of the continuous process of maintenance, renovation, upgradation and modernization of infrastructure and facilities at the Institute, several projects like upgradation

of hostel rooms, revival of rainwater harvesting, Video Conferencing Room (from where online courses are held) have been successfully completed.

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INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in its endeavour towards augmenting cultural relations and promoting soft power of India across the world kept buzzing with activities and made many advances. With the fading pandemic effect which brought the world to a standstill, ICCR kept its spirit high and was able to establish a rapport with the foreign students and the world through its online as well as offline activities. ICCR actively conducted several major events for the celebrations of the 75th Year of Independence of India under the flagship programme of the government "AzadiKaAmritMahotsav".

The Council works in collaboration with its 37 Indian Cultural Centers (ICCs) abroad and 18 Regional centers. Additionally, ICCR extends support to the Casa de la India in Valladolid, Spain established on 'PPP' Model (Public-Private Partnership). The activities of the ICCR are a continuation of both ongoing and regular activities as well as many new initiatives and special activities. Some of its noticeable pursuits are as under:

Scholarships:

Scholarships are an important tool to encourage foreign nationals to study and appreciate Indian arts, heritage and culture. These are also a way to create outreach, a feeling of goodwill and promote India's soft influence across the world. In the academic year 2021-22, ICCR offered 3825 scholarship slots under 23 various schemes for different courses, including Performing Arts, Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy for UG/ PG/ Ph.D. level courses in eligible Central/State Indian Universities/ Institutes. As of October 2021, a total 2393 students have given their acceptances. During the period, ICCR & its Regional Offices took special efforts to protect the interest and welfare of stranded Afghan students in India.

The Council organized an International Students Day at ICCR, Azad Bhavan on 08 December 2021 to commemorate birth anniversary of its founder President, MaulanaAbulKalam Azad, wherein students from 23 countries presented a vibrant cultural performance as part of "AzadiKaAmritMahotsav".

Chairs:

ICCR is instrumental in setting up Chairs of Indian Studies abroad on various subjects like Political Science, Philosophy, History, Sociology, Economics and Buddhist Studies, Hindi, Sanskrit, Urdu and Bengali which incorporate cultural components. ICCR has around 50 operational Chairs across the globe and is in the process of setting Chairs in Bangladesh, Turkmenistan, Thailand, West Indies, Poland, Cambodia, Germany, Mauritius, Switzerland, and Hong Kong. Establishment of Bangabandhu Chair of Bangladesh at Delhi University, the first of its kind, is a major highlight for the period under report.

The Council is in the process of signing MoUs with the following Universities for establishment of Chairs abroad during 2021-2022 to familiarize foreign students about India, its history, cultural and polity thus becoming a nucleus around which Indian Studies and Indian languages develop in academic institutions abroad:

- a. Guru Nanak Dev Ji Chair at Concordia University, Montreal, Canada (latter half of December 2021).
- b. Chair of Gulf Studies at Qatar University, Doha, Qatar (later half of December 2021).
- c. Chair of Sanskrit at Azerbaijan University of Languages, Azerbaijan (January 2022).
- d. Chair of Indian Studies at The Governors of the University of Alberta (January 2022).
- e. Chair of Indian Studies at Bath Spa University, United Kingdom (February 2022).
- f. Chair of Indian Studies at Birmingham City University, United Kingdom (February 2022).

Conference & Seminars:

In order to promote India's Soft power and enhance India's skills of cultural diplomacy and reinforce the dialogues between the civilizations, Council organizes international conferences on subjects to symbolize India's great cultural and educational efflorescence. Some of the major Conferences & Seminars organized during the period were:

- 2nd National Conference on Destination India-Making India the Preferred Hub of Education organized virtually in collaboration with University of Delhi on 15 April 2021 at ICCR.
- The 4th Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Memorial International Oration on "Insights into India's Culinary Traditions" organized on the World Culture Day on 21 May 2021.
- The "UBUNTU: International Yoga Conference- Yoga for Universal Well-being" for finding commonalities between Indian and African traditions was organized by ICCR on 21-22 June 2021. Shri Kiren Rijiju, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for AYUSH, Youth Affairs and Sports (Independent Charge) of India was the chief guest along with other eminent dignitaries.

- An international virtual webinar "Independent India@75: Democratic Traditions" was organised on the occasion of International Day of Democracy under the celebration of AzadiKaAmritMahotsav on 15 September 2021. EAM gave the Inaugural (Video) Message and eminent speakers from various nations participated in the webinar.

- An International Virtual Conference on "Leveraging the Soft Power of India-Goodwill through Craft, Cuisine and Creativity" was organized on 16 October 2021 MoS for External Affairs was the Chief Guest of the conference.

- In collaboration with International Buddhist Confederation and Nav Nalanda Mahavira, as a run up for 'Global Buddha Conference' 7 pre-conferences were conducted 3 in India at Telangana (11 October 2021), New Delhi (27-28 October 2021) and Dharmshala (1 October 2021), and 04 abroad in Japan (22 October 2021), South Korea (12 October 2021), Thailand (7 October 2021) and Cambodia (25 October 2021).

A pre-conference on the theme 'Buddhism in India' was organized on 01 November 2021 in Gangtok (Sikkim) in collaboration with International Buddhist Confederation, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara and local partner as a run-up to the Global Buddhist Conference under the framework of International Buddhist Conclave to be organized in collaboration with Ministry of Tourism that is scheduled to be held in March 2022.

ICCR supported the IGNC in bringing out a publication "Anthology on India's Soft Power Strength". ICCR supported the 6 Edition of Himalayan Echoes 2021- C.A.L.M (Creativity, Art, Literature, Mountains) one of the top literary events bringing together all Himalaya Mountain countries organized digitally in November 2021.

ICCR supported the "United Consciousness Conclave 2021" on 11, 12, 18 and 19 December 2021 organized by United Consciousness in which more than 107 countries participated.

"International Film Making Competition" in collaboration with Routes 2 Roots will be launched on 01 January 2022. This film making completion would involve short films from Indian Diaspora and Foreign Alumni of India across the globe.

International Conference on Cultural Links between India and Central Asia has been planned to be organized in India during January-March 2022. ICCR is also supporting India- Africa Summit: Agenda 2021 to be organized by Department of African Studies, Delhi University during January-March 2022.

Outgoing Cultural Delegations:

The Council showcases quality performing artiste/groups in countries across the world so that the people get to see and understand the diversity and the vibrancy of India's performing art forms.

- Recording of Play (Theatre) titled "UNLOCKED 2" - Shri Rajit Kapur, Rage Production, Maharashtra was showcased during International Theatre Festival for Youth in Taza, Morocco in May 2021.

- ICCR also participated in the India Global Week held in London on 30 June 2021 where ICCR coordinated two segments including Indology Award Ceremony and Cultural Board Interaction along with two recorder Dance productions.
- ICCR sponsored 11 members Kathak Bollywood dance troupe led by the Bollywood actor and Kathak dancer, Ms. Prachee Shah to participate in the SCO Gala Concert from 12-21 September 2021 Kathak dancers led by Prachee Shah Paandya perform at SCO's gala concert in Dushanbe Tajikistan. The mega event was graced by EAM from the Indian side and first Deputy Minister of Culture of Republic of Tajikistan, Mr. Nazaron Obid Odilzoda from the Tajik side, along with several dignitaries. Subsequently, the group travelled to Kyrgyzstan to perform at the Regional Tourism Forum from 23 September to 03 October 2021.
- For the first time, ICCR participated in the Dubai Expo 2020, a 09 member Mohiniyattam Dance group of Ms. Jayaprada Menonto from 29 September to 02 October 2021 to give cultural performances in the inaugural programme at the India Pavilion. From 12 to 16 October 2021 a 10-member folk "Karnataka Mahila Yakshagana" group led by Ms. Gauri K, from Karnataka was sent to perform on the occasion of Dussehra at the Expo.
- To participate in the 'Festival of Sufi Culture' that was held virtually at Morocco from 09-16 October 2021, a video recording of Qawwali group 'The Kashmir Music Club Cooperative Ltd. by Shri Waheed Jeelani' was shared by ICCR
- To participate in the 'International Music festival' the 8-member Classical Fusion group led by Shri Gajalla Jayant Naidu, Telangana was sent to Bahrain from 09-17 October 2021.
- To mark the occasion of India@75 as well as "Cervantino Festival" a 12 member Bollywood Bhangara group "Taka Dimi Ta" led by Shri Narendra Kumar was sent to Mexico from 23 October to 03 November 2021.
- ICCR sent a 12 member Gotipua group led by Shri Chandramani Pradhan from Orissa to participate in 'Bagamoyo International Festival' in Tanzania and also for 'the International Art and Craft Expo in Nigeria' from 27 October 2021 to 06 November 2021.
- 12 – member Bollywood group "Taka dimi Ta" led by Shri Narender Kumar from 23 October – 3 November 2021 to Mexico to participate at the Cervantino Festival and to give several other performances in nearby cities, namely, Xilitla, San Luis Potosi, Irapuato, Guanajuato, Leon, Metepec, Mexico City and Venustiano Carranza.
- 12-member Gotipua group "Baba Gorakhnath Gotipua Dance Association" led by Shri Chandramani Pradhan, Orissa participated in "Bagamoyo International Festival" in Tanzania and in the International Arts and Craft expo in Nigeria from 27 October to 06 November.
- 12-member Contemporary group "Anveshana" led by Ms. Sangeeta Sharma to Palestine to perform in "India Culture Week" which coincides with completion of 24 years

of the establishment/opening of the Diplomatic Mission of India in Palestine from 23-29 November 2021. The group also travelled to Egypt to give cultural performances in various cities, namely, Ismalia, Port Said, Cairo and Alexandria from 30 November – 08 December 2021.

- ICCR sponsored the participation of 3 eminent artistes to Helsinki, Finland to present a fusion concert with Finnish artistes, a first of its kinds, on the occasion of India Day celebrations at Helsinki on 09 December 2021 at the prestigious Finland Talo. The 03 Indian artistes were Pandit Vidyadhar Vyas, a renowned Hindustani vocalist from Gwalior gharana, Ustad Kamal Sarwar Sabri, famous sarangi maestro from Sainiagarana and Shri Gulfam Sarwar Sabri, renowned table exponent from Sainiagarana.

- The Council supported a hybrid show of Bollywood Music group "Antariksh" led by Shri Varun Rajput, Delhi on the occasion of Diwali Gala concert organized by Indian Business Chamber in Vietnam (INCHAM Hanoi) on 21 November 2021.

- ICCR sent Youtube links of Bollywood groups to EOI, Baghdad to be played at the Food festival being organized by Embassy of India, Baghdad scheduled on 30 December 2021.

- Season 2 of "Unlock the Music" is being organised from October 2021 to March 2022. ICCR in collaboration with Shri Shubhendra Rao and Vidushi Saskia Rao-de Haas who organized a series of live virtual music concerts, "Unlock the Music" from October 2020 - March 2021. ICCR had supported Season 1 in FY 2020-21 which was dedicated to Bharat Ratna Pandit Ravi Shankar Ji and conducted 6 performances by famous artists like Ustad Wasifuddin Dagar, Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Dr. Sonal Mansingh, Pandit Shubhendra Rao and Ms. Saskia Rao-de Haas, Pandit Madhup Mudgal and Pandit Ronu Majumdar had performed. In season-2 a Sarod recital by Pandit Tejendra Narayan Majumdar, on 30 October, 2021, a vocal recital by Pandit Shounak Abhisheki accompanied by Shri Durjay Bhaumik on Tabla and Shri Vinay Mishra on 27 November 2021 were organised. The next four concerts of season-2 include Cello concert by Maestro Saskia Rao, vocal recital by Vidushi Kalapini Komkali, Rudra Veena recital by Ustad Bahauddin Dagar and Santoor recital by Pandit Tarun Bhattacharya planned to be organized during January-March 2022.

Incoming Cultural Delegations:

To create international understanding through culture, the Council showcases performances by foreign cultural troupes so that the people of India get to see and appreciate cultures from across the globe thus the Incoming Cultural Delegations work has been its integral part and pertains to the promotion of foreign cultural presentations in the country.

- To mark Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman centenary Year and celebration of 50 years of diplomatic relations between India and Bangladesh, ICCR and Bangladesh High Commission organised a "Dance Performance" on 03 April 2021, in the Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi.

- An International Video Blogging Contest was

organized on the theme “My impressions of India” or “What India means to me” on 9 April 2021 to mark the occasion of Foundation Day of ICCR on 09 April 2021.

- ICCR organized a Gala cultural show under the AzadiKaAmritMahotsav on 13 August 2021 at Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi for celebration of 75 years of India's Independence, showcasing India's diversity, language, heritage, culture and potential. EAM was the Chief Guest on the occasion, and it was also attended by MoS for External Affairs and Minister of State for Culture and MoS for Education and External Affairs.

- ICCR and Republic of Guatemala, El Salvador & Costa Rica organized a Joint Musical concert by the artist from Costa Rica - Mr. Manuel Obregon and Indian Singer & Composer -SonamKalra & group on 15 September 2021 at Sushma Swaraj Bhavan (PBK), Delhi, on the occasion of the Bicentennial Anniversary celebration of Central American Countries, EAM was the chief guest on the occasion.

- ICCR and Korean Culture Centre India, Embassy of the Republic of Korea jointly arranged staging of a Musical Production “The Legend of Princess Sriratna” on 13 October 2021 at Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi.

- ICCR supported the 2nd National Tribal Dance Festival from 28-30 October 2021 at Raipur, organized by the Government of Chhattisgarh. Eminent groups from 7 countries i.e., Eswatini (Swaziland), Nigeria, Mali, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, and Uganda visited India for participation in the festival.

- A lecture demonstration and performance of Kathak by Ms. MonishaNayak prominent kathak dancer and group was arranged during the reception hosted by President, ICCR and Director General, ICCR on 25 November 2021 at “Open Air Rani Bagh” Hotel Taj Palace, in honour of young parliamentarians from various countries participating in Gen-Next Democracy Network Programme Organized by ICCR.

- A cultural programme by Melody of classical dances (Kathak, Bharatnatyam&Odissi) took place on the occasion of Centennial Celebration of Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament of India on 04 December 2021 at Convention Hall, Hotel, The Ashoka, New Delhi.

- A cultural programme was held on “MaitriDiwas” (the Day when India recognized Bangladesh in the year 1971) on 6 December 2021 at Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi. Mr. K. M. Khalid, MP, Hon'ble Minister of State for Cultural Affairs of the Government of Bangladesh and Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs and Education Government of India graced the occasion.

- A Cultural programme was organized as part of an event hosted by EAM for delegation from Central Asia on 18 December 2021 in New Delhi.

Awards:

ICCR has instituted several awards, which are conferred upon the foreign nationals for their contributions in different

fields namely; World Sanskrit Award, Distinguished Indologist Award, Distinguished Alumini Award and Gisela Bonn Award. During India Global Week on 30 June 2021 held in London, Prof. Werner Menski was conferred the Distinguished Indologist Award for the year 2018.

The Council organised a Press Conference chaired by President, ICCR on 14 September 2021 at ICCR, Azad Bhavan, where the institution of a new ICCR Award for Promotion of Buddhist Studies was announced.

Ms. Martine Metayer, Bharatnatyam Dancer, Teacher and Choreographer from France, has been selected for the Alumni Award 2020. The award giving ceremony will take place in Paris on 26 January 2022.

Dr. Riyad Mustafa Abu Shehadeh, Former Dy. Governor in Palestine, has been selected for the Alumni Award 2020. The award giving ceremony will take place in Palestine in the month of March 2022.

Visitors Programme:

H.E. Mr. Erik Solheim, former Environment and International Development Minister of Norway visited India during 19-28 April 2021 under the ICCR's Distinguished Visitors Programme (DVP).

The Council hosted the visit of H.E. Mr. Naina Andriantsitohaina, the Mayor of the Urban Municipality of Antananarivo, Madagascar to India under Distinguished Visitor Programme (DVP) from 7-15 November 2021.

The Council hosted the visits of 19- delegates from 08 countries, namely, Bhutan, Sweden, Jamaica, Tanzania, Sri Lanka, Poland, Uzbekistan and Malaysia to India under “Gen-Next Democracy Network” Programme (DVP) from 25 November to 2 December 2021.

The Council will be inviting two groups each consisting of 25 members from 7-8 countries under the “Gen Next Democracy Network Programme” in the month of February and March 2022.

The Council will host the following visits:

i. Mr. Agustin Paniker, Spain to India under Academic Visitors Programme from 24 January to 3 February 2022,

ii. Mr. Cristobal Gabarron, Spain to India under Distinguished Visitors Programme from 15-24 February 2022,

iii. Mr. Christian Escobar, Guatemala to India from 1-10 March 2022 and

iv. Prof. Eghosa E. Osaghae, Nigeria to India from 7-17 March 2022.

Exhibitions:

An exhibition titled “Kalarambh” by foreign & Indian artists at Lalit Kala Akademi in August 2021. The exhibition of artworks

of Mr. Raudyn Alfaro from Costa Rica in ICCR Art Gallery was organized by ICCR in October 2021.

An online 'Painting and Poster competition 2020-21' was organized by ICCR on the theme; 'My idea of India'. About 600 entries were received from about 40 countries and India. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize in each category will be announced during MEA's AKAM week celebrations from 22-27 February 2022.

Busts & statues:

During the period April-October 2021, ICCR has sent 42 busts and statues of Indian icons and national leaders for ceremonial installation to South Korea, Kuwait, Swaziland, Bhutan, Australia, Serbia, Spain, Germany, Seychelles, Egypt, Uzbekistan, Costa Rica, Iraq, Saudi Arabia.

In November 2021, ICCR sent two busts each of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at Mahatma Gandhi Street, Tashkent, and Samarqand State University's Centre for World Studies EOI, Tashkent, Uzbekistan respectively and another Statue of Mahatma Gandhi was sent to University of Costa Rica.

The following busts and statues are proposed to be sent during January-March 2022 for installation:

- (1) 3-bust of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at (i) Bayt al-Kikma, (ii) Bayat al-Hikma and (iii) City of Sulaymaniyah in Iraq.
- (2) 1- bust of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at CGI, Jeddah.
- (3) 5-bust of Buddha to be installed at (i) Koyasan University, (ii) Osaka University, (iii) Kyoto University, (iv) Otani University and (v) Ritsumeikan University in Japan.
- (4) 1-Statue of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at Serverni Park, EOI, Slovenia.
- (5) 1-Statue of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at Victoria Garden, CGI, Zanzibar in Tanzania.
- (6) 1-bust of Swami Vivekananda to be installed at Main

campus in Pachuca of the Autonomous University of the state of Hidalgo in Mexico.

- (7) 2-Satutue of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at Mahatma Gandhi Peace Park, Brasilia.
- (8) 1-bust of Swami Vivekananda to be installed at Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Dushanbe.
- (9) 1- Statue of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at EOI, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan.
- (10) 1-bust of RabindraNath Tagore to be installed at BacNinh International Friendship Park, Hanoi.
- (11) 1-bust of LokmanyaBalGangadharTilak to be installed at CGI Mandalay, Myanmar.
- (12) 1-Statue of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at Eternal Gandhi Museum in Houston.
- (13) 1-bust of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at Auckland, New Zealand.
- (14) 1- bust of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed at Santa Cruz, La Paz, Bolivia.

Publication:

The Hindi section of the Council publishes the Hindi bi-monthly magazine "Gagananchal", 2 issues were released during the period of report in the month of August and October 2021. The publication, "Gagananchal" was also selected for Raj BhashaKirtiPurskar for 2020-21 which was a matter of great pride for the Council.

ICCR funded publication of India-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Words of Common Origins, a joint publication of the Mission and Kyrgyz National Commission on State Language. EAM along with Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan released the above-mentioned dictionary of common words in Hindi and Kyrgyz languages on 11 October 2021.

The Council is in the process of completion of a book on India's democratic traditions which is scheduled to be released in March 2022.

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RAPID RESPONSE CELL

The new division named Rapid Response Cell (RRC) was created in July 2021 in the Ministry to take responsibilities on COVID matters, vaccines, and related issues, including liaison with other Ministries and it subsumed the COVID cell and HADR cell.

Major Developments

Vaccine Maitri: Vaccine Maitri is an initiative of Government of India to supply Made-in-India COVID vaccines to various countries across the world, while keeping in view the domestic production capacity and the requirement of the national vaccination programme. The initiative is in line with the commitment made by our Prime Minister during his speech at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2021, when he said “as the largest vaccine producing country of the world, I want to give one more assurance to the global community today. India’s vaccine production and delivery capacity will be used to help all humanity in fighting this crisis.” After the roll out of COVID Vaccine in India on 16 January 2021, India started vaccine supplies to neighbouring and partner countries from 20 January 2021 under the Vaccine Maitri initiative. In line with our Neighbourhood First policy, the supplies were first undertaken to our neighbouring countries as India’s gift. Subsequently, supplies to other countries were undertaken, both as gifts and under commercial contracts. Till 20 Dec 2021, India has supplied a

total 101 million doses of Made in India COVID vaccines to 95 countries and two UN entities (peacekeepers and health workers). This includes more than 12.7 million doses as grant to 47 countries and UN peacekeepers and nearly 33 million doses to 47 countries under the Covax facility. India is also an active member of the QUAD which is working on COVID vaccination situation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Handing over of Made in India vaccines to Bahrain

COVID related Medical Aid: India has supplied COVID related essential drugs, test kits, protection gear, etc., to over 150 countries. More than half of this supply was on a non-commercial basis. In recent months, India has supplied syringes, LMO (Liquid Medical Oxygen), Remdesivir and other critical items to the countries in neighborhood, Indo-Pacific and beyond.

(Mutual Recognition of COVID Vaccination Certificate: The COVID situation has forced countries to look for measures to ensure safe and easy travel for its citizens. In this regard, mutual recognition of COVID Vaccination Certificate would go a long way in ensuring both the safety and ease of travel for the people. Consequent upon the decision of the Union Cabinet of India to pursue mutual recognition of vaccination certificates with individual countries, agreements on mutual recognition

have been arrived at with 25 countries till 23 December 2021. Nearly 92 countries recognize India's vaccination certificate for travel purposes under their universally applicable health protocols.



Oxygen Supplies delivered by France to India

Procurement of Critical Components: During the second wave of COVID pandemic in India in 2021, the Ministry played an important role in streamlining and liaising supplies

of critical medical equipment and medicines from more than 50 countries by coordinating with other Ministries, Armed Forces, State governments and PSUs.

Oxygen Supplies delivered by France to India

COVID Related Experience Sharing: To share India's experiences with regard to management of COVID pandemic, a number of online training programmes were organized for COVID testing, clinical practices, case management, vaccine development and delivery etc. More than 1000 participants from Asian, Southeast Asian and African countries participated in these programmes. A training programme covering administrative and operational aspects was conducted on 19-20 January 2021 for immunisation managers, cold chain officers, communication officers and data managers of the partner countries, both at national and provincial levels. More than 150 experts from the neighbouring countries participated in this training programme. The Prime Minister addressed a workshop on 'COVID management: Experience, Good practices and way forward' was organized on 18 February 2021 with 10 neighbouring countries, in which Health Secretaries and technical experts from SAARC countries, Mauritius and Seychelles shared their experiences in tackling COVID pandemic.

Vande Bharat Mission: The Ministry actively played the role of moderator between the Ministry of Civil Aviation and other stake holders in India and abroad for execution of "Vande Bharat Mission", under which Indian citizens stranded abroad were repatriated in view of suspension of scheduled international air services. The mission turned out to be one of the largest logistical missions of its type ever undertaken. It facilitated the movement of more than 7 million people through COVID lockdowns and post-lockdown period since May 2020.



A gift of 50 metric tonne of food items to Djibouti as part of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief delivered by INS AIRAVAT



Handing over of Made in India vaccines to Bahrain

HADR Efforts: Indian HADR missions are complex inter-agency operations which require detailed planning and efficient execution. Towards India's commitment to fight global hunger Rapid Response Cell has facilitated procurement and delivery of 500 MT rice to Mozambique in month of December. Another food aid consignment of 500 MT out of total 2000 MT rice committed by Government of India has been sent to Timor-Leste. In order to support local production, the Ministry has sent 6 tons of vegetable seeds to Fiji worth approximately INR 6 crores.

A gift of 50 metric tonne of food items to Djibouti as part of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief delivered by INS AIRAVAT

As part of India's continuing support for the people of Afghanistan the Rapid Response Cell is in process to execute donation of 50,000 MT of wheat to Afghanistan. Supply of medicines and other essential supplies related to COVID and other chronic diseases worth INR 2.25 crore to Fiji, Mozambique and Armenia are also under consideration.

APPENDICES

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ANNEXURE I**List of Treaties, Agreements, MoUs concluded in 2021.**

Sl. No.	Title	Country	Date of Signature	Ministry
1.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA FOR CONSTRUCTION OF LALANDER (SHATOOT) DAM	Afghanistan	02/09/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
2.	TREATY ON MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM	Belgium	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
3.	MOU ON COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA AND BHUTAN IN THE AREA OF ENVIRONMENT	Bhutan	30/12/2021	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
4.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF COLUMBIA ON COOPERATION IN EXPLORATION AND USE OF OUTER SPACE FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES.	Columbia	09/06/2021	Department of Space
5.	AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA ON THE EXEMPTION OF VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR HOLDERS OF DIPLOMATIC AND OFFICIAL PASSPORTS	Dominican Republic	05/07/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
6.	MOU ON AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURAL AND FARMERS WELFARE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, GOVERNMENT OF FIJI,	Fiji	30/12/2021	Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
7.	MOU BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY AND CNRS, FRANCE	France	30/12/2021	Ministry of Science and Technology
8.	IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN HSFC AND CNES	France	30/12/2021	Department of Space
9.	AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA FOR GIFTING OF A RELIC OF ST. QUEEN KETEVAN BY THE PEOPLE OF INDIA TO THE PEOPLE OF GEORGIA	Georgia	07/08/2021	

Sl. No.	Title	Country	Date of Signature	Ministry
10.	MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN ON A BASIC FRAMEWORK FOR PARTNERSHIP FOR PROPER OPERATION OF THE SYSTEM PERTAINING TO "SPECIFIED SKILLED WORKER"	Japan	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
11.	MOC IN FIELD OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES BETWEEN MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, INDIA AND MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, JAPAN	Japan	30/12/2021	Ministry of Communications
12.	MOU BETWEEN INDIA AND KYRGYZ REPUBLIC ON HIGH IMPACT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (HICDP)	Kyrgyz Republic	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
13.	MOU BETWEEN EMBASSY OF INDIA AND MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS LAO PDR REG INDIAN GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF QUICK IMPACT PROJECTS ON CONSTRUCTION OF KIEWXANG PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILDING IN PHONTHONG DISTRICT, LUANG PRABANG PROVINCE	Lao PDR	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
14.	MOU BETWEEN EMBASSY OF INDIA AND MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS LAO PDR REG INDIAN GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF QUICK IMPACT PROJECTS ON CONSTRUCTION OF 5 ROOM DORMITORY AT LAO-INDIA ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (LIEDC)	Lao PDR	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
15.	MOU BETWEEN EMBASSY OF INDIA AND MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS LAO PDR REG INDIAN GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF QUICK IMPACT PROJECTS ON CONSTRUCTION OF NAKHENG PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILDING IN CHOMPHEH DISTRICT, LUANG PRABANG PROVINCE	Lao PDR	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
16.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TRADE OF TUR (ARHAR DAL OR PIGEON PEAS)	Malawi	30/12/2021	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

Sl. No.	Title	Country	Date of Signature	Ministry
17.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT OF MALDIVES AND HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA, MALE AND ADDU CITY COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF ADDU TOURISM ZONE (DHIGIHERE-FEYDHOO)	Maldives	02/02/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
18.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT	Maldives	30/12/2021	Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
19.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA, MALE AND MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT OF MALDIVES AND N. KENDHIKULHUDHOO ISLAND COUNCIL FOR GEYDHOSHU MAS PLANT (NEIGHBORHOOD FISH PROCESSING PLANT) IN N. KENDHIKULHUDHOO	Maldives	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
20.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES REGARDING INDIAN GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF HIGH IMPACT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS THROUGH LOCAL BODIES.	Maldives	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
21.	AGREEMENT BETWEEN MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND CIVIL AVIATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES AND THE MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA FOR AUGMENTING MARINE SAFETY, SECURITY AND ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION IN THE REGION THROUGH COOPERATION IN THE LRIT SYSTEM	Maldives	30/12/2021	Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways
22.	COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (CECPA) BETWEEN INDIA AND MAURITIUS	Mauritius	30/12/2021	Ministry of Commerce
23.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN INDIA AND MAURITIUS IN THE FIELD OF CONSUMER PROTECTION AND LEGAL METROLOGY	Mauritius	30/12/2021	Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

Sl. No.	Title	Country	Date of Signature	Ministry
24.	LETTER OF EXCHANGE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS ON SUPPORT TOWARDS CONSTRUCTION OF RENAL TRANSPLANT UNIT IN MAURITIUS	Mauritius	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
25.	LETTER OF EXCHANGE AMENDMENTS TO THE MOU ON IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS WITH GOI'S GRANT ASSISTANCE OF US\$ 353 MILLION	Mauritius	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
26.	CONVENTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MARINE AIDS TO NAVIGATION	Multilateral	09/01/2021	Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Diary
27.	MOU BETWEEN INDIA AND MYANMAR ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TRADE OF TUR AND URAD	Myanmar	30/12/2021	Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India
28.	MOU WITH GOVERNMENT OF REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA ON "THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT COMMISSION FOR BILATERAL COOPERATION	Namibia	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
29.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL REGARDING 'FINAL LOCATION SURVEY' OF THE PROPOSED BROAD GAUGE RAILWAY LINE BETWEEN RAXAUL AND KATHMANDU.	Nepal	10/07/2021	Ministry of Railways
30.	LOE TO THE INDIA-NEPAL RAIL SERVICES AGREEMENT (RSA) 2004	Nepal	30/12/2021	Ministry of Railways
31.	AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC AND THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA ON THE RECRUITMENT OF INDIA CITIZENS TO WORK IN THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC.	Portugal	30/12/2021	Ministry of Labour and Employment
32.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH	Republic Of North Macedonia	30/12/2021	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Sl. No.	Title	Country	Date of Signature	Ministry
33.	ROADMAP FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION COOPERATION BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA.	Russia	12/06/2021	Ministry of Science & Technology
34.	MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT FOR PROMOTION OF INDUSTRY AND INTERNAL TRADE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE FEDERAL SERVICE FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Russia	12/06/2021	Ministry of Commerce
35.	PROTOCOL ON INTRODUCTION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE MERCHANT SHIPPING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Russia	12/06/2021	Ministry of Shipping
36.	CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION FOR THE YEARS 2021-2024.	Russia	12/06/2021	Ministry of Culture
37.	PROTOCOL BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF STATE SUPPORT OF THE ART AND FOLK CREATIVITY OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS UNDER THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA ON THE ORGANIZATION OF CULTURE FESTIVALS BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA FOR THE YEAR 2022-2023.	Russia	12/06/2021	Ministry of External Affairs

Sl. No.	Title	Country	Date of Signature	Ministry
38.	AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION DUE TO COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF RESEARCH AND USE OF OUTER SPACE FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES AND BUILDING AND OPERATION OF LAUNCH VEHICLES AND GROUND-BASED SPACE INFRASTRUCTURE.	Russia	12/06/2021	Department of Space
39.	PROTOCOL BETWEEN GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA ON ALLOTMENT OF LAND PLOTS FOR ALLOCATION OF CONSULAR OFFICES OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND TERMS OF HOUSING THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA IN THE CITY OF VLADIVOSTOK.	Russia	12/06/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
40.	MOU ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF YOGA BETWEEN THE MORARJI DESAI NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF YOGA (MDNIY), MINISTRY OF AYUSH, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, AND THE LEADERS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE, MINISTRY OF SPORTS, SAUDI ARABIA	Saudi Arabia	30/12/2021	Ministry of Ayush
41.	PROGRAM OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL, RURAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS OF INDIA	Saudi Arabia	30/12/2021	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
42.	AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA FOR AUTHORIZING THE DEPENDENTS OF MEMBERS OF A DIPLOMATIC MISSION OR CONSULAR POST TO ENGAGE IN GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT.	Serbia	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
43.	CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME BETWEEN INDIA AND SERBIA ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF CULTURE AND ARTS	Serbia	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
44.	AGREEMENT BETWEEN SEYCHELLES AND INDIA FOR SUPPLY OF ONE FAST PATROL VESSEL TO SEYCHELLES	Seychelles	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs

Sl. No.	Title	Country	Date of Signature	Ministry
45.	MOU BETWEEN PRASAR BHARTI, INDIA AND SEYCHELLES BROADCASTING CORPORATION ON COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION ON BROADCASTING	Seychelles	30/12/2021	Prasar Bharti
46.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKMENISTAN REGARDING GRANT ASSISTANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF HIGH IMPACT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS	Turkmenistan	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
47.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ("MEA") GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND FOREIGN COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT OFFICE ("FCDO") GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM FOR THE INDIA-UK GLOBAL INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP ("GIP").	UK	05/04/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
48.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) ON MIGRATION AND MOBILITY PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND	UK	05/04/2021	Ministry of External Affairs
49.	AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND ON CUSTOMS COOPERATION AND MUTUAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE IN CUSTOMS MATTER	UK	30/12/2021	Ministry of Finance
50.	MOU BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INDIA AND DEPARTMENT FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORTS OF UK IN THE FIELD OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS/ICT	UK	30/12/2021	Ministry of Communications
51.	AGREEMENT FOR THE ELECTRONIC EXCHANGE OF POSTAL SERVICE DATA	UPU	30/12/2021	Department of Posts
52.	AGREEMENT FOR ELECTRONIC EXCHANGE OF CUSTOMS DATA	UPU	30/12/2021	Department of Posts

Sl. No.	Title	Country	Date of Signature	Ministry
53.	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CONCERNING COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES	USA	30/12/2021	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
54.	PRIME UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE TRACKED SERVICE AGREEMENT BETWEEN INDIA POST AND USPS	USA	30/12/2021	Department of Post
55.	CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN FOR THE YEARS 2021-2025.	Uzbekistan	30/12/2021	Ministry of External Affairs

ANNEXURE II

List of Ratifications issued in 2021

S. No.	Title	Country/Institution	Date of Signing the Agreement	Date of Ratification
1.	The Agreement between the New Development Bank and the Government of the Republic of India on the Hosting of the New Development Bank Indian Regional office in the Republic of India	New Development Bank	11/12/2020	12/01/2021
2.	The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica on the Exemption of Visa Requirement For Holders of Diplomatic and official Passports	Dominica	07/05/2021	15/06/2021
3.	The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Seychelles, on the short stay visa exemption for holders of diplomatic and official passport	Seychelles	24/05/2021	05/07/2021
4.	The Agreement among the Governments of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on Cooperation in the field of Mass Media	Multilateral /SCO	14/06/2019	12/08/2021
5.	Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 1987	Multilateral	15/10/2016	03/09/2021
6.	Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Belgium	Belgium	16/09/2021	10/11/2021
7.	The Agreement on Social Security between the Republic of India and the Federative Republic of Brazil	Brazil	25/01/2020	10/11/2021
8.	Extradition Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Malawi	Malawi	05/11/2018	26/02/2021
9.	The Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation	Multilateral	01/09/2021	28/12/2021*

ANNEXURE III**List of Full Powers issued in 2021**

S. No.	Title	Country/Organization	Date of issuance
1.	Protocol regarding amendment of Article 7 (Exchange of Information) of the Implementing Agreement (IA) signed between India and Japan as per Article 13 of India Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (IJCEPA), 2011.	Japan	03/02/2021
2.	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement between the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of India	Mauritius	19/02/2021
3.	Agreement between the Government the Republic of India and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on Customs Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters.	United Kingdom	11/06/2021
4.	Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation.	Multilateral	12/08/2021
5.	Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Belgium	Belgium	12/08/2021
6.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Rural Development (MORD), Government of the Republic of India and the African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO).	African-Asian Rural Development Organization	10/11/2021

ANNEXURE IV**Details of Visits by Head of State/Head of Government /Vice President/Foreign Ministers and equivalent**

Country	Dates
Visit of H.E. Mr. Sergey V. Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation	April 05-06, 2021
Visit of H.E. Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid AlZayani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain	April 06-08, 2021
Visit of H.E. Mr. Osman Saleh Mohammed, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea	April 07-12, 2021
Visit of H.E. Mr. Jean-Yves Le Drian, French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs	April 12-16, 2021
Visit of H.E Mr. Abdulla Shahid, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives	April 14-17, 2021
Visit of The Honourable Mr. Antony Blinken, Secretary of State of the United States of America	July 27-28, 2021
Visit of H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, President-elect of 76th Session of UNGA and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives	July 21-24, 2021
Visit of H.E. Mr. Esala Ruwan Weerakoon, Secretary General of SAARC and Mrs. Krishanti Weerakoon	August 08-14, 2021
Visit of H.E. Dr. Anwar Mohammad Abdulkhalilq Gargash, Diplomatic Advisor to H.H. the President of UAE	August 30, 2021
Visit of Senator The Hon Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women of Australia (2+2 dialogue)	September 10-12, 2021
Visit of H.H. Prince Faisal bin Farhad Al Saud, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	September 18-20, 2021
Visit of H.E. Mr. Nikola Selakovic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia	September 19-20, 2021
Visit of H.E. Ms. Marta Lucia Ramirez de Rincon, Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia	October 01-04, 2021
State Visit of H.E. Ms. Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark and Mr. Ro Tengberg	October 09-12, 2021
Visit of Ambassadors to Kushinagar and Sri Lankan delegation to Kushinagar and Varanasi	October 20-21, 2021

Visit of Rt Hon. Elizabeth Truss MP, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of United Kingdom	October 22-24, 2021
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Details of Outgoing Visits by President/Vice President/Prime Minister

Country	Dates
Visit of the Prime Minister to USA (Washington & New York)	September 22-26, 2021
Visit of the Prime Minister to Rome, Italy (G20 Summit) and Glasgow, UK (COP 26)	October 29-November 02, 2021

ANNEXURE V**Virtual Summits/Events in 2021**

S. No.	SUBJECT	DATE
1.	India-Seychelles Virtual Meeting	April 08, 2021
2.	India-Netherlands Virtual Meeting	April 09, 2021
3.	Leaders' Virtual Summit on Climate	April 22-23, 2021
4.	Virtual Participation in G7 Summit	June 12-13, 2021
5.	Virtual Meeting of United Nations Security Council	August 09, 2021
6.	Virtual BRICS Summit	September 09, 2021
7.	Virtual SCO Summit	September 17, 2021
8.	G20 Extraordinary Leaders' Meeting on Afghanistan	October 12, 2021
9.	Virtual 16th East Asia Summit (EAS) and 18th ASEAN - India Summit	October 27-28, 2021

ANNEXURE VI**Credential Presentation by Foreign Heads of Mission during 01 April, 2021 to 31 October 2021**

SL No.	Country	Name of Ambassador/High Commissioner	Date of Credential Presentation
1.	Colombia	H.E. Mrs. Mariana Pacheco Montes	06.07.2021
2.	Uruguay	H.E. Mr. Alberto Antonio Guani Amarilla	06.07.2021
3.	Jamaica	H.E. Mr Jason Hall	06.07.2021
4.	Armenia	H.E. Mr. Youri Babakhanyan	06.07.2021
5.	Thailand	H.E. Ms. Pattarat Hongtong	07.07.2021
6.	Romania	H.E. Mrs. Daniela Mariana Sezonov - Tane	07.07.2021
7.	Kazakhstan	H.E. Mr. Nurlan Zhalgasbayev	07.07.2021
8.	Mauritania ** (at Abu Dhabi)	H.E. Mr. Muhammad Ahmad Salem Muhammad Rarah	Agreement dated 12.05.2021
9.	Turkey	H.E. Mr. Firat Sunel	07.07.2021
10.	Apostolic Nunciature (Holy See)	H.E. Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli	18.08.2021
11.	Nigeria	H.E. Mr. Ahmed Sule	18.08.2021
12.	Austria	H.E. Mrs. Katharina Wieser	18.08.2021
13.	Republic of Korea	H.E. Mr. Chang Jae Bok	18.08.2021

ANNEXURE VII**Final Departure Status of Foreign Heads of Missions between 01 April, 2021 to 31 October 2021**

Sl. No.	Mission	Name of Head of Mission	Date of Final Departure
1.	Republic of Turkey	Mr. Sakir Ozkan Torunlar	06.05.2021
2.	Austria	Mrs. Brigitte Oeppinger-Walchshofer	06.05.2021
3.	Republic of Korea	Mr. Shin Bong Kil	01.07.2021
4.	Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	Mr. Jean Claude Kugener	20.08.2021
5.	Arab Republic of Egypt	Dr. Heba Salaheldin Elmarassi	27.08.2021
6.	Mongolia	Mr. Gonchig Ganbold	29.08.2021
7.	Slovak Republic	Ivan Lancaric	17.09.2021
8.	Nepal	Nilamber Acharya	20.10.2021
9.	Algeria	Mr. Hamza Yahia-Cherif	29.10.2021
10.	Republic of Zambia	Mrs. Judith Kangoma K. K. Kapijimpanga	15.11.2021
11.	Czech Republic	Mr. Milan Hovorka	19.11.2021
12.	Republic of Djibouti	Mr. Said Abseih Warsama	18.11.2021
13.	Burkina Faso	Mr. Amadou Traore	30.11.2021

ANNEXURE VIII

Number of IFS officers with proficiency in various languages (as on 9 November 2021)

S.No.	Language	Number of officers
1.	Amharic	1
2.	Arabic	128
3.	Bahasa Indonesia	11
4.	Bahasa Malay	2
5.	Burmese	9
6.	Chinese	93
7.	French	118
8.	German	39
9.	Hebrew	8
10.	Italian	3
11.	Japanese	28
12.	Kazakh	1
13.	Korean	8
14.	Nepalese	1
15.	Pashto	3
16.	Persian	25
17.	Polish	1
18.	Portuguese	23
19.	Russian	107
20.	Sinhalese	9
21.	Spanish	103
22.	Swahili	1
23.	Turkish	6
24.	Ukrainian	1
25.	Vietnamese	2
	Grand Total	731

ANNEXURE IX

Passport Offices – State/UT-wise

No.	Passport Office	State / Union Territory
1	PO Ahmedabad	Gujarat
2	PO Amritsar	Punjab
3	PO Bareilly	Uttar Pradesh
4	PO Bengaluru	Karnataka
5	PO Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh
6	PO Bhubaneswar	Odisha
7	PO Chandigarh	Chandigarh
8	PO Chennai	Tamil Nadu
9	PO Cochin	Kerala
10	PO Coimbatore	Tamil Nadu
11	PO Dehradun	Uttarakhand
12	PO Delhi	Delhi
13	PO Ghaziabad	Uttar Pradesh
14	PO Goa	Goa
15	PO Guwahati	Assam
16	PO Hyderabad	Telangana
17	PO Jaipur	Rajasthan
18	PO Jalandhar	Punjab
19	PO Jammu	Jammu and Kashmir
20	PO Kolkata	West Bengal
21	PO Kozhikode	Kerala
22	PO Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh
23	PO Madurai	Tamil Nadu
24	PO Mumbai	Maharashtra
25	PO Nagpur	Maharashtra
26	PO Patna	Bihar
27	PO Pune	Maharashtra
28	PO Raipur	Chhattisgarh
29	PO Ranchi	Jharkhand
30	PO Shimla	Himachal Pradesh
31	PO Srinagar	Jammu and Kashmir
32	PO Surat	Gujarat
33	PO Tiruchirappalli	Tamil Nadu
34	PO Trivandrum	Kerala
35	PO Vijayawada	Andhra Pradesh
36	PO Visakhapatnam	Andhra Pradesh

ANNEXURE X

State/UT-wise list of Passport SevaKendras (PSKs)

No.	State/UT	No. of PSKs	Location of PSKs
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4	Vijayawada, Tirupati, Visakhapatnam, Bhimavaram
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1	Itanagar
3.	Assam*	1	Guwahati
4.	Bihar	2	Patna, Darbhanga
5.	Chandigarh UT**	1	Chandigarh
6.	Chhattisgarh	1	Raipur
7.	Delhi NCT***	3	Herald House, Shalimar Place, Bhikaji Cama Place
8.	Goa	1	Panaji
9.	Gujarat	5	Ahmedabad I&II, Vadodara, Rajkot, Surat
10.	Haryana	2	Ambala, Gurgaon.
11.	Himachal Pradesh	1	Shimla
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	2	Jammu, Srinagar
13.	Jharkhand	1	Ranchi
14.	Karnataka	5	Bangalore I&II, Hubli, Mangalore, Kalaburagi
15.	Kerala	13	Thiruvananthapuram, Thiruvananthapuram (Rural), Kollam, Cochin, Ernakulam Rural, Alapuzha, Kottayam, Malappuram, Thrissur, Kozhikode I&II, Kannur I&II
16.	Madhya Pradesh	2	Bhopal, Indore
17.	Maharashtra	8	Mumbai I, II&III, Pune, Nagpur, Thane, Nashik, Solapur
18.	Manipur	1	Imphal
19.	Meghalaya	1	Shillong
20.	Mizoram	1	Aizawl
21.	Nagaland	1	Dimapur
22.	Odisha	1	Bhubaneswar
23.	Puducherry	1	Puducherry
24.	Punjab	5	Amritsar, Ludhiana, Jalandhar-I, Jalandhar-II, Hoshiarpur
25.	Rajasthan	4	Jaipur, Jodhpur, Sikar, Udaipur
26.	Sikkim	1	Gangtok
27.	Tamil Nadu	8	Chennai I, II & III, Trichy, Thanjavur, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Coimbatore
28.	Telangana	5	Hyderabad I, II & III, Nizamabad, Karimnagar

29.	Tripura	1	Agartala
30.	Uttar Pradesh	6	Lucknow, Varanasi, Kanpur, Gorakhpur, Bareilly, Ghaziabad
31.	Uttarakhand	1	Dehradun
32.	West Bengal@	3	Kolkata, Berhampore, Siliguri
	Total	93	

*RPO Guwahati covers five other North-Eastern States also at present.

**RPO Chandigarh covers parts of Punjab and Haryana.

***RPO Delhi covers parts of Haryana.

@RPO Kolkata covers Sikkim and Tripura.

ANNEXURE XI

State/UT-wise list of Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSKs)

Sl. No.	Location	State/UT	Passport Office
1	Port Blair	Andaman & Nicobar Island	Kolkata
2	Anantpur	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
3	Bapatla	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
4	Chittoor	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
5	Gudivada	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
6	Guntur	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
7	Hindupur	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
8	Kadappa	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
9	Kodur	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
10	Kurnool	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
11	Nandyal	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
12	Narasaraopet	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
13	Nellore	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
14	Ongole	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
15	Amalapuram	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
16	Eluru	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
17	Kakinada	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
18	Rajamundry	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
19	Srikakulam	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
20	Vizianagaram	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
21	Yelamanchili	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
22	Changlang	Arunachal Pradesh	Guwahati
23	Khonsa	Arunachal Pradesh	Guwahati
24	Barpeta	Assam	Guwahati
25	Dhubri	Assam	Guwahati
26	Dibrugarh	Assam	Guwahati
27	Goalpara	Assam	Guwahati
28	Golaghat	Assam	Guwahati
29	Jorhat	Assam	Guwahati
30	KarbiAnglong	Assam	Guwahati
31	Karimganj	Assam	Guwahati
32	Kokrajhar	Assam	Guwahati
33	Mangaldoi	Assam	Guwahati
34	Nawgong	Assam	Guwahati
35	North Lakhimpur	Assam	Guwahati
36	Silchar	Assam	Guwahati
37	Tezpur	Assam	Guwahati
38	Tinsukia	Assam	Guwahati
39	Arrah	Bihar	Patna

40	Aurangabad	Bihar	Patna
41	Banka	Bihar	Patna
42	Begusarai	Bihar	Patna
43	Bettiah	Bihar	Patna
44	Bhagalpur	Bihar	Patna
45	Buxar	Bihar	Patna
46	Chhapra	Bihar	Patna
47	Dalmia Nagar	Bihar	Patna
48	DalsinghSarai	Bihar	Patna
49	Ekma	Bihar	Patna
50	Forbesganj	Bihar	Patna
51	Gaya	Bihar	Patna
52	Gopalganj	Bihar	Patna
53	Hajipur	Bihar	Patna
54	Jahanabad	Bihar	Patna
55	Jamui	Bihar	Patna
56	Katihar	Bihar	Patna
57	Khagaria	Bihar	Patna
58	Kishanganj	Bihar	Patna
59	Madhubani	Bihar	Patna
60	Maner	Bihar	Patna
61	Motihari	Bihar	Patna
62	Munger	Bihar	Patna
63	Muzaffarpur	Bihar	Patna
64	Nalanda	Bihar	Patna
65	Navada	Bihar	Patna
66	Purnea	Bihar	Patna
67	Saharsa	Bihar	Patna
68	Samastipur	Bihar	Patna
69	Sasaram	Bihar	Patna
70	Sheohar	Bihar	Patna
71	Sitamarhi	Bihar	Patna
72	Siwan	Bihar	Patna
73	Bilaspur	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
74	Durg	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
75	Janjgir-Champa	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
76	Korba	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
77	Raigarh	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
78	Rajnandgaon	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
79	Surguja	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
80	Silvasa	Dadar& Nagar Haveli	Mumbai

81	Daman	Daman	Mumbai
82	JanakPuri	Delhi	Delhi
83	Mehrauli	Delhi	Delhi
84	Nehru Place	Delhi	Delhi
85	Patparganj	Delhi	Delhi
86	Yamuna Vihar	Delhi	Delhi
87	Margao	Goa	Panaji
88	Amreli	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
89	Anand	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
90	Bharuch	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
91	Bhavnagar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
92	Bhuj	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
93	Chhota Udaipur	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
94	Dahod	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
95	Gandhinagar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
96	Godhra	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
97	Jamnagar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
98	Junagadh	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
99	Kheda	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
100	Mehsana	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
101	Palanpur	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
102	Patan	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
103	Porbandar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
104	Sabarkantha	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
105	Surendranagar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
106	Veraval	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
107	Bardoli	Gujarat	Surat
108	Navsari	Gujarat	Surat
109	Rajpipla	Gujarat	Surat
110	Valsad	Gujarat	Surat
111	BhiwaniMahendragarh	Haryana	Chandigarh
112	Hisar	Haryana	Chandigarh
113	Kaithal	Haryana	Chandigarh
114	Karnal	Haryana	Chandigarh
115	Panipat	Haryana	Chandigarh
116	Sirsa	Haryana	Chandigarh
117	Yamunanagar	Haryana	Chandigarh
118	Faridabad	Haryana	Delhi
119	Narnaul	Haryana	Delhi
120	Rohtak	Haryana	Delhi
121	Sonipat	Haryana	Delhi

122	Hamirpur	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
123	Kangra	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
124	Kullu	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
125	Mandi	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
126	Palampur	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
127	Una	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
128	Kathua	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu
129	Rajouri	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu
130	Udhampur	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu
131	Anantnag	Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar
132	Baramulla	Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar
133	Leh	Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar
134	Bokaro	Jharkhand	Ranchi
135	Chaibasha	Jharkhand	Ranchi
136	Deoghar	Jharkhand	Ranchi
137	Dhanbad	Jharkhand	Ranchi
138	Dumka	Jharkhand	Ranchi
139	Giridih	Jharkhand	Ranchi
140	Gumla	Jharkhand	Ranchi
141	Hazaribagh	Jharkhand	Ranchi
142	Jamshedpur	Jharkhand	Ranchi
143	JumriTilaiya	Jharkhand	Ranchi
144	Khunti	Jharkhand	Ranchi
145	Medininagar	Jharkhand	Ranchi
146	Sahibganj	Jharkhand	Ranchi
147	Shimaria	Jharkhand	Ranchi
148	Ankola	Karnataka	Bengaluru
149	Bagalkot	Karnataka	Bengaluru
150	Belagavi	Karnataka	Bengaluru
151	Bellary	Karnataka	Bengaluru
152	Bidar	Karnataka	Bengaluru
153	Chamrajanagar	Karnataka	Bengaluru
154	Channapatna	Karnataka	Bengaluru
155	Chikkballapur	Karnataka	Bengaluru
156	Chikkodi	Karnataka	Bengaluru
157	Chitradurga	Karnataka	Bengaluru
158	Davangere	Karnataka	Bengaluru
159	Gadag	Karnataka	Bengaluru
160	Hassan	Karnataka	Bengaluru
161	Jalahalli	Karnataka	Bengaluru
162	Koppal	Karnataka	Bengaluru

163	Maddur	Karnataka	Bengaluru
164	Mysuru	Karnataka	Bengaluru
165	Raichur	Karnataka	Bengaluru
166	Robertsonpet	Karnataka	Bengaluru
167	Shivamogga	Karnataka	Bengaluru
168	Tumakuru	Karnataka	Bengaluru
169	Udupi	Karnataka	Bengaluru
170	Vijayapur	Karnataka	Bengaluru
171	Chengannur	Kerala	Cochin
172	Kattappana	Kerala	Cochin
173	Nenmara	Kerala	Cochin
174	Palakkad	Kerala	Cochin
175	Kasargod	Kerala	Kozhikode
176	Attingal	Kerala	Trivandrum
177	Pathanamthitta	Kerala	Trivandrum
178	Kavaratti	Lakshadweep	Cochin
179	Balaghat	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
180	Betul	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
181	Chhatarpur	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
182	Chhindwara	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
183	Damoh	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
184	Dewas	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
185	Dhar	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
186	Gwalior	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
187	Hoshangabad	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
188	Jabalpur	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
189	Ratlam	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
190	Rewa	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
191	Sagar	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
192	Satna	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
193	Seoni	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
194	Tikamgarh	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
195	Ujjain	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
196	Vidisha	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
197	Aurangabad	Maharashtra	Mumbai
198	Bhiwandi	Maharashtra	Mumbai
199	Bhusawal	Maharashtra	Mumbai
200	Dhule	Maharashtra	Mumbai
201	Dombivli	Maharashtra	Mumbai
202	Jalgaon	Maharashtra	Mumbai
203	Rajapur	Maharashtra	Mumbai

204	Santa Cruz	Maharashtra	Mumbai
205	Sion	Maharashtra	Mumbai
206	Vashi	Maharashtra	Mumbai
207	Vikroli	Maharashtra	Mumbai
208	Akola	Maharashtra	Nagpur
209	Amravati	Maharashtra	Nagpur
210	Bhandara	Maharashtra	Nagpur
211	Buldhana	Maharashtra	Nagpur
212	Chandrapur	Maharashtra	Nagpur
213	Gadchiroli	Maharashtra	Nagpur
214	Hingoli	Maharashtra	Nagpur
215	Katoal	Maharashtra	Nagpur
216	Wardha	Maharashtra	Nagpur
217	Yavatmal	Maharashtra	Nagpur
218	Ahmednagar	Maharashtra	Pune
219	Baramati	Maharashtra	Pune
220	Beed	Maharashtra	Pune
221	Ichalkaranji	Maharashtra	Pune
222	Jalna	Maharashtra	Pune
223	Kolhapur	Maharashtra	Pune
224	Latur	Maharashtra	Pune
225	Madha	Maharashtra	Pune
226	Nanded	Maharashtra	Pune
227	Osmanabad	Maharashtra	Pune
228	Pandharpur	Maharashtra	Pune
229	Parbhani	Maharashtra	Pune
230	PimpriChinchwad	Maharashtra	Pune
231	Sangli	Maharashtra	Pune
232	Satara	Maharashtra	Pune
233	Shirur	Maharashtra	Pune
234	Srirampur	Maharashtra	Pune
235	Kakching	Manipur	Guwahati
236	Tura	Meghalaya	Guwahati
237	Aska	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
238	Balasore	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
239	Bargarh	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
240	Baripada	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
241	Berhampur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
242	Bhadrak	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
243	Bhawanipatna	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
244	Bolangir	Odisha	Bhubaneswar

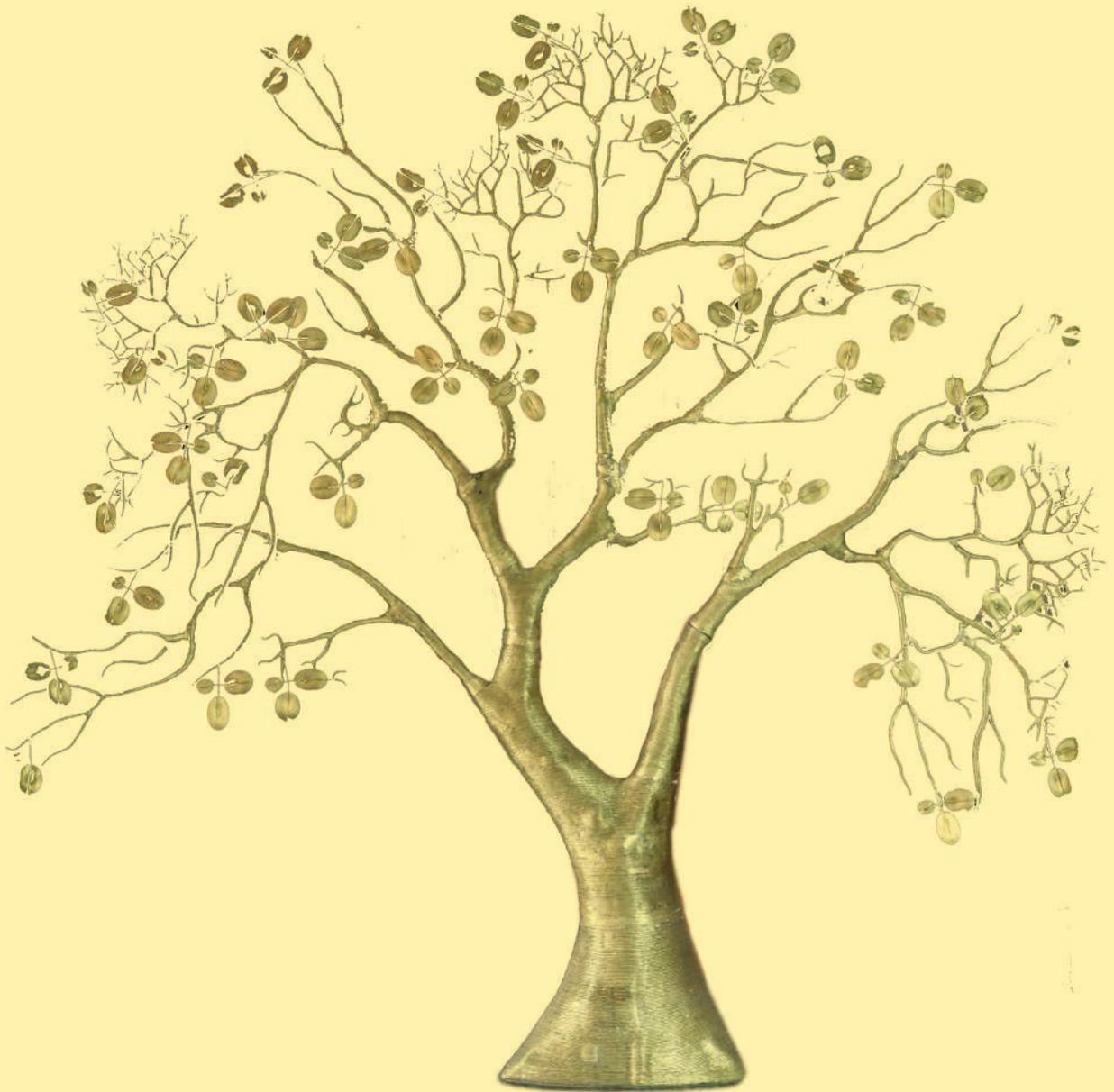
245	Cuttack	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
246	Dhenkanal	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
247	Jagatsinghpur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
248	Jajpur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
249	Kendrapara	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
250	Keonjhar	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
251	Koraput	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
252	Nabarangpur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
253	Phulbani	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
254	Puri	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
255	Rourkela	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
256	Sambalpur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
257	Karaikal	Puducherry	Tiruchirapalli
258	Ferozpur	Punjab	Amritsar
259	BasiPattana	Punjab	Chandigarh
260	Bathinda	Punjab	Chandigarh
261	Malerkotla	Punjab	Chandigarh
262	Patiala	Punjab	Chandigarh
263	Ropar	Punjab	Chandigarh
264	Moga	Punjab	Jalandhar
265	Pathankot	Punjab	Jalandhar
266	Phagwara	Punjab	Jalandhar
267	Ajmer	Rajasthan	Jaipur
268	Alwar	Rajasthan	Jaipur
269	Banswara	Rajasthan	Jaipur
270	Barmer	Rajasthan	Jaipur
271	Bharatpur	Rajasthan	Jaipur
272	Bhilwara	Rajasthan	Jaipur
273	Bikaner	Rajasthan	Jaipur
274	Chittorgarh	Rajasthan	Jaipur
275	Churu	Rajasthan	Jaipur
276	Dausa	Rajasthan	Jaipur
277	Hanumangarh	Rajasthan	Jaipur
278	Jaisalmer	Rajasthan	Jaipur
279	Jhalawar	Rajasthan	Jaipur
280	Jhunjhunu	Rajasthan	Jaipur
281	Kankroli	Rajasthan	Jaipur
282	Karauli-Dhaulpur	Rajasthan	Jaipur
283	Kota	Rajasthan	Jaipur
284	Kotputli	Rajasthan	Jaipur
285	Nagaur	Rajasthan	Jaipur

286	Pali	Rajasthan	Jaipur
287	Pratapgarh	Rajasthan	Jaipur
288	SawaiMadhopur	Rajasthan	Jaipur
289	Sirohi	Rajasthan	Jaipur
290	Sriganganagar	Rajasthan	Jaipur
291	Arani	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
292	Chennai GPO	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
293	Chidambaram	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
294	Cuddalore	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
295	Dharmapuri	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
296	Kallakurichi	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
297	Kancheepuram	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
298	Krishnagiri	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
299	Ranipet	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
300	Tiruvallur	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
301	Tiruvannamalai	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
302	Vellore	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
303	Viluppuram	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
304	Coonoor	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore
305	Erode	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore
306	Rasipuram	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore
307	Salem	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore
308	Bodineyaknur	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
309	Devakottai	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
310	Kodairoad	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
311	Nagercoil	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
312	Rajpalyam	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
313	Ramathapuram	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
314	Thoothukkudi	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
315	Virudhunagar	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
316	Perambalur	Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli
317	Karur	Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli
318	Sirkali	Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli
319	Thiruthuraiipoondi	Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli
320	Adilabad	Telangana	Hyderabad
321	Bhongir	Telangana	Hyderabad
322	Kamareddy	Telangana	Hyderabad
323	Khammam	Telangana	Hyderabad
324	Mahabubabad	Telangana	Hyderabad
325	Mancherial	Telangana	Hyderabad
326	Medak	Telangana	Hyderabad

327	Medchal	Telangana	Hyderabad
328	Mehbubnagar	Telangana	Hyderabad
329	Nalgonda	Telangana	Hyderabad
330	Siddipet	Telangana	Hyderabad
331	Vikarabad	Telangana	Hyderabad
332	Wanaparthy	Telangana	Hyderabad
333	Warangal	Telangana	Hyderabad
334	Dhramanagar	Tripura	Kolkata
335	Amroha	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
336	Badaun	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
337	Bijnaur	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
338	Moradabad	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
339	Pilibhit	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
340	Rampur	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
341	Shahjahanpur	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
342	Achnera	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
343	Agra	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
344	Aligarh	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
345	Baghpat	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
346	Bulandshahr	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
347	Hathras	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
348	Meerut	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
349	Muzaffarnagar	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
350	Noida	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
351	Saharanpur	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
352	Vrindawan	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
353	Allahabad	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
354	Ambedkar Nagar	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
355	Amethi	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
356	Ayodhya	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
357	Azamgarh	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
358	Bahraich	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
359	Ballia	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
360	Balrampur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
361	Banda	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
362	Bhadohi	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
363	Chunar	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
364	Deoria	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
365	Farrukhabad	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
366	Fatehpur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
367	Ghazipur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow

368	Gonda	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
369	Goshi (Mau)	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
370	Hamirpur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
371	Hardoi	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
372	Jaunpur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
373	Jhansi	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
374	Kheri	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
375	Maharajganj	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
376	Misrikh	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
377	Pratapgarh	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
378	Rae Bareli	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
379	Siddharth Nagar	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
380	Sitapur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
381	Sultanpur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
382	Unnao	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
383	Almora	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
384	Kathgodam	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
385	Nainital	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
386	Roorkee	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
387	Rudrapur	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
388	Srinagar	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
389	Alipurduar	West Bengal	Kolkata
390	Amta	West Bengal	Kolkata
391	Arambagh	West Bengal	Kolkata
392	Asansol	West Bengal	Kolkata
393	Ashok Nagar	West Bengal	Kolkata
394	Balurghat	West Bengal	Kolkata
395	Bangaon	West Bengal	Kolkata
396	Bankura	West Bengal	Kolkata
397	Bardhaman	West Bengal	Kolkata
398	Barrackpore	West Bengal	Kolkata
399	Basirhat	West Bengal	Kolkata
400	Beadon Street	West Bengal	Kolkata
401	Bishnupur	West Bengal	Kolkata
402	Bolpur	West Bengal	Kolkata
403	Canning Road Ferry Ghat	West Bengal	Kolkata
404	Chinsurah	West Bengal	Kolkata
405	Coochbehar	West Bengal	Kolkata
406	Darjeeling	West Bengal	Kolkata
407	Diamond Harbour	West Bengal	Kolkata
408	Dum Dum	West Bengal	Kolkata

409	Ghatal	West Bengal	Kolkata
410	Howrah	West Bengal	Kolkata
411	Jadavpur	West Bengal	Kolkata
412	Jalpaiguri	West Bengal	Kolkata
413	Jhargram	West Bengal	Kolkata
414	Jiyaganj	West Bengal	Kolkata
415	Kakdweep	West Bengal	Kolkata
416	Kanthi	West Bengal	Kolkata
417	Katwa	West Bengal	Kolkata
418	Kharagpur	West Bengal	Kolkata
419	Krishnanagar	West Bengal	Kolkata
420	Makdumpur	West Bengal	Kolkata
421	North Dinajpur	West Bengal	Kolkata
422	Purulia	West Bengal	Kolkata
423	Raghunathganj	West Bengal	Kolkata
424	Rampurhat	West Bengal	Kolkata
425	Ranaghat	West Bengal	Kolkata
426	Samsi	West Bengal	Kolkata
427	Serampore	West Bengal	Kolkata
428	Tamluk	West Bengal	Kolkata



MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

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