

Ministry of External Affairs
Policy Planning and Research Division

Overview of Major Achievements during the Month of March 2024

High-Level Diplomatic Engagements/Interactions:

1. Hon'ble President visited Mauritius from 11-13 March as a chief guest of the Mauritian National Day celebrations. She held meetings with Mauritius President, Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition and leaders of political parties during the visit. The President was conferred with an honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law by the University of Mauritius.
2. Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay visited India from 14-18 March, his first overseas visit after assuming office in January 2024. He called on Hon'ble President and held talks with the Prime Minister, EAM, NSA and Minister of Power. Prime Minister addressed the 3rd Summit for Democracy, a virtual summit hosted by US in Seoul from 18-20 March. He paid a state visit to Bhutan on 22 and 23 March and held talks with the King of Bhutan and the Prime Minister of Bhutan. The Prime Minister was conferred the highest civilian award of Bhutan, the Order of the Druk Gyalpo by the King of Bhutan. Prime Minister met Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates on 29 March.

EAM's engagements:

3. EAM's engagements in India: EAM held bilateral talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus Sergei Alenik on 12 March; met ASEAN Special Envoy for Myanmar Alounkeo Kittikhoun on 22 March; and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba on 29 March.
4. EAM's engagements during visits: EAM visited Republic of Korea on 5 and 6 March, called on the Prime Minister of ROK Han Duck-soo and co-chaired the 10th India-ROK Joint Commission Meeting, with his counterpart Cho Tae-yul. He visited Japan from 7-9 March and called on Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida, and other senior political leaders. He held India-Japan Strategic Dialogue along with Minister of Foreign Affairs. EAM visited Singapore from 23-25 March and called on Prime Minister Lawrence Wong, Deputy Prime Minister and met the Finance Minister. He paid an official visit to Malaysia, called on the Prime Minister of Malaysia and held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the country. He visited the Philippines from 25-27 March, and called on President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., met Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Security of National Defence of the Philippines, National Security Adviser, and addressed a gathering of senior officials of the Philippines government, members of the country's defence forces and Indian community.

MOS (RRS)'s engagements:

5. MOS (RRS) participated in person and addressed the 3rd Summit for Democracy on the theme "AI/Digital Technology and Inclusive Society."

Other engagements:

6. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus held talks with Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Textiles and the Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers and Health and Family Welfare during his visit to India.
7. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba visited India on 28 and 29 March and met Deputy NSA (VM).
8. Raksha Mantri held a telephone conversation with US Secretary of Defence Llyod Austin on 18 March, and discussed a range of bilateral, regional security and defence cooperation issues, and implementation of the India-US Defence Cooperation Roadmap.
9. First India-Brazil Political and Military Dialogue was held on 14 March in New Delhi. It was co-chaired by the Additional Secretary (LAC) and Joint Secretary, Ministry of Defence from the Indian side and by the Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Rear Admiral, Ministry of Defence from the Brazilian side.
10. State Secretary to the Ministry of International Development Cooperation of Sweden visited India from 4-7 March.
11. Quad Sherpas met virtually on 26 March and deliberated on the forthcoming Quad Leaders' Summit and reviewed various deliverables across Quad Working Groups.
12. Second meeting of Eminent Persons Group on the Future Direction of BIMSTEC was held from 11-12 March in Dhaka in hybrid mode.
13. The 29th meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) was held on 27 March in Beijing. Joint Secretary (East Asia) led the Indian delegation, while Director General of the Boundary & Oceanic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs led the Chinese delegation. During the meeting, the two sides had an in-depth exchange of views on how to achieve complete disengagement and resolve the remaining issues along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Western Sector of India-China border areas.
14. Iranian ships IRIS Tonb and IRIS Booshehr visited Mumbai from 15-18 March for a goodwill visit.

15. India-US maritime security exercise 'Sea Defenders 2024' was held in Port Blair, from 6-9 March. Indian Coast Guard and US Coast Guard participated in the exercise.
16. India-US Bilateral Tri-Service HADR Amphibious Exercise 'Tiger Triumph 24' was held in India from 18-31 March with participation from navies and armies of both countries.
17. Indian Navy participated in Exercise 'Cutlass Express 2024', a multinational maritime exercise sponsored by US AFRICOM, from 26 February-8 March.
18. 20th meeting of the India-US Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and 6th India-US Designation Dialogue was organized on 4 and 5 March in Washington D.C.
19. Operation Indravati was launched by the Ministry to evacuate stranded Indians in violence-hit Haiti. On 21 March, the first batch of 12 Indian nationals was airlifted from Haiti to Dominican Republic through a coordinated effort involving close liaison with authorities from Haiti and the Dominican Republic.
20. Secretary of Ministry of Earth Sciences visited the US on 8 March and held talks with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Naval Research and the National Science Foundation to discuss India-US cooperation in the field of ocean and atmospheric spheres.
21. A resolution on the promotion of 'safe, secure and trustworthy' Artificial Intelligence systems was adopted in UNGA on 21 March in which India co-sponsored the resolution.
22. A delegation led by Margus Kolga, Director General of the Policy Planning Department of the Estonian Foreign Ministry held informal consultations with JS (PP&R) on 28 March.
23. Ministry's delegation led by JS (PAI) visited Tehran from 16-18 March, and held 5th round of negotiations on the long-term Main Contract of the Chabahar Port.
24. A delegation led by JS (WANA) visited Somalia from 4-5 March to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the situation in Mogadishu and engaged with the Government of Somalia.
25. JS (UNP) participated in the Quad Multilateral Working Group meeting in Tokyo on 26 and 27 March.
26. 20th meeting of the India-US Counter Terrorism Joint Working Group and the 6th Designations Dialogue was held in Washington DC on 5 March. The delegations were

co-led by JS (CT) and Ambassador Elizabeth Richard, Coordinator for Counterterrorism, US Department of State.

27. A delegation led by JS (Health and Family Welfare) visited US on 14 March and held discussions with the US authorities on India-US health cooperation.
28. Meetings with respect to BRICS:
 - a. 1st BRICS CGETI Meeting was held on 5 March.
 - b. BRICS Agriculture Cooperation Working Group was held on 5 March.
 - c. Expert meeting among representatives of BRICS states regarding Russian concept note on the BRICS International Investment Arbitration Centre was held on 6 March.
 - d. 1st meeting of BRICS Working Group on Information Sharing was held on 7 March.
29. Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) senior officials' meeting was held virtually on 18 March and the Indian delegation was led by JS (MER-II).
30. A 14-member CII-led delegation comprising of Indian business persons visited Brazzaville, Republic of Congo on 3 March.
31. India participated in the US-led Minerals Security Partnership Principals' Meeting held in Toronto during the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada annual convention on 3 March.
32. States division facilitated the visit of foreign dignitaries and representatives of different countries to various states in India.

Foreign Office/Ministry Consultations

33. First FOC between India and Cabo Verde was held in Praia on 18 March. It was co-chaired by Additional Secretary (Central & West Africa) from the Indian side and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation from Cabo Verde's side.
34. Second India-Cote d'Ivoire FOC was held in New Delhi on 14 March. It was co-chaired by Additional Secretary (Central & West Africa) from the Indian side and Director General of Bilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and the Ivirians Abroad of Cote d'Ivoir from the Ivorian side.
35. First FOC between India and Mauritania was held in Noukchott on 21 March, co-chaired by Additional Secretary (Central & West Africa) from the Indian side and Ambassador, Director General of Bilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Mauritania's side.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs)/ Agreements:

36. India and Bhutan signed seven MoUs during Prime Minister's visit to Thimpu:
- a. MoU on general supply of Petroleum, Oil, Lubricants (POL) and related products from India to Bhutan.
 - b. Agreement for recognition of official control exercised by Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
 - c. MoU on cooperation in the field of Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation measures.
 - d. MoU on cooperation in Sports and Youth.
 - e. MoU on cooperation concerning sharing reference standards, pharmacopoeia, vigilance and testing of medicinal products.
 - f. Joint Plan of Action on Space Cooperation.
 - g. Renewal of MoU on Peering Arrangement between National Knowledge Network of India and Druk Research and Education Network of Bhutan.
37. MoU on Protocol of Joint Economic and Trade Cooperation between the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic was signed on 12 March.
38. MoU between National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology and Egypt's Information Technology and Information Technology Institute on 12 March.
39. MoU between Fiji Sugar Corporation and the National Sugar Institute of Kanpur signed a MoU for cooperation in the fields of sugarcane processing and manpower development at the Ministry of Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry, on 19 March.
40. RBI and Bank Indonesia signed a MoU to establish a framework to promote the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions, on 7 March.
41. The Agreement on Transfer of Title of Integrated Biak Telemetry, Tracking and Command (TTC) Facilities, and Implementing Arrangement on Operation, Maintenance and Utilization of Integrated Biak TTC Facilities for Satellites and Launch Vehicles, were signed between ISRO and National Research and Innovation Agency of Indonesia on 19 March.
42. MoU on Cooperation in the fields of Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy between the Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership, India and the Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy was signed on 15 March.
43. India and Singapore signed a MoU on cooperation in the sphere of Law and Dispute Resolution on 14 March.
44. India and Thailand signed a MoU on Air Services on 15 March.

45. A MoU between India and Uganda for setting up of off-shore campus of the National Forensic Science University (NFSU) of India in Jinja.
46. MoU between US Pharmacopeia and the Indian Pharmacopeia Commission to collaborate on the production of quality pharmaceuticals was signed.
47. India and Mauritius signed:
- a. MoU between the International Financial Services Centres Authority, India and Financial Services Commission, Mauritius
 - b. MoU between the Union Public Service Commission of India and the Public Service Commission of the Republic of Mauritius
 - c. MoU between the Central Bureau of Investigation, Republic of India and the Independent Commission Against Corruption of Mauritius
 - d. Protocol amending the convention between India and Mauritius for the avoidance of Double Taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on Income and Capital Gains, and for the encouragement of mutual Trade and Investment.

Humanitarian Aid/Assistance

48. Afghanistan

India provided 1180 kgs of humanitarian assistance to Habibia School, Kabul; and 9952.2 kgs of medical assistance to Afghan hospitals.

49. Mongolia

India provided cash assistance of USD 20,000 to Mongolia's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) as humanitarian aid to support Mongolian efforts towards those affected by unusually severe winter, a phenomenon called "Dzud".

50. Guatemala

1,222 kgs of essential medicines for the treatment of Tuberculosis, epilepsy and type-II diabetes were provided by India.
