

## **Ministry of External Affairs**

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### **Overview of Major Achievements during the month of August 2020**

Ministry major focus in August has been Vande Bharat Mission and the repatriation of Indians stranded overseas. In August, the Vande Bharat Mission continues to repatriate stranded Indians and has so far brought over 1.3 million fellow-citizens home. During August, India also operationalised 'air bubble arrangements' with Canada, Maldives, Qatar, UAE and UK.

Minister of State (MoS) V. Muraleedharan signed an MoU on Space Cooperation with Nigeria's Minister of Space and Technology on 13 August. He also co-chaired the 1<sup>st</sup> India-Uzbekistan National Coordination Committee meeting with Uzbekistan Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade Sardor Umurzakov and reviewed the status of implementation of bilateral development projects.

On 21 August, three Indian companies – L&T, Megha Engineering and AFCONS – signed contracts for execution of USD 92.18 million water supply project in Zanzibar which has been assisted through Government's Line of Credit.

Foreign Secretary-level talks were held in Dhaka on 18-19 August to review bilateral cooperation between India and Bangladesh. In a boost for Indo-Bangladesh trade and connectivity, the first Newly Modified Goods rake carrying 118 trucks reached Benapole in Bangladesh from Uttarakhand after covering a distance of 1300 km on 24 August.

### **Diplomatic Engagements and other Interactions:**

During August, India continued its diplomatic outreach with bilateral and multilateral partners through virtual channels. Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with President of Afghanistan and Prime Ministers of Nepal and Sri Lanka and discussed issues of mutual interest.

EAM Dr. S Jaishankar had telephonic conversations with Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil, Germany, Israel, Nigeria, Oman, Sri Lanka and South Korea. EAM also

spoke with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and discussed issues of vital interest including developments in Afghanistan, South Asia and Indo-Pacific.

On 13 August, EAM in a virtual meeting with Foreign Minister of Maldives Abdulla Shahid jointly announced the commencement of regular cargo ferry service between India and Maldives. EAM also declared a USD 400 million Line of Credit and USD 100 million grant towards the implementation of the Greater Male Connectivity Project in Maldives.