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Contents

Executive Summary	i-viii
1. India's Neighbours	1
2. South East Asia and the Pacific	23
3. East Asia	39
4. Eurasia	46
5. The Gulf , West Asia and North Africa	52
6. Africa (South of Sahara)	61
7. Europe	79
8. The Americas	95
9. United Nations and International Organisations	106
10. Multilateral Economic Relations	125
11. Technical Cooperation	131
12. Investment and Trade Promotion	133
13. Policy Planning and Research	134
14. External Publicity	135
15. Protocol	139
16. Passport, Visa and Consular Services	145
17. Administration and Establishment	148
18. Coordination	151
19. Non Resident Indians and People of Indian Origin Overseas	152
20. Foreign Service Institute	153
21. Implementation of Official Language Policy and Propagation of Hindi Abroad	155
22. Gender Issues	157
23. Cultural Relations	158
24. Indian Council of World Affairs	163
25. Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)	165
26. Library	170
27. Welfare	171

Appendices

Appendix I	Cadre strength at Headquarters and Missions/Posts abroad during 2004-2005 (including posts budgeted by Ministry of Commerce & those held in abeyance/ ex-cadred)	173
Appendix II	Recruitment made in various groups in the Ministry of External Affairs and reserved vacancies filled by Schedule Caste/Schedule Tribe/Other Backward Classes(OBC) categories from April to November 2004	174
Appendix III	Language-wise Statement of Officers (Grade - I to Junior Scale of IFS) as on 30 November 2004	174
Appendix IV	Statement showing the number of applications received and passports issued including under Tatkaal Scheme, miscellaneous applications received and services rendered as well as Revenue (including revenue under Tatkaal Scheme) and Expenditure figures of the Passport Offices from 1st January 2004 to 31December 2004	175
Appendix V	Finances of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2004-2005	176
Appendix VI	The Major Sectoral Allocations in the 2004-2005 Budget	176
Appendix VII	Principal Destinations of India's Aid Programmes	177
Appendix VIII	C & AG Report of Ministry of External Affairs	178
Appendix IX	Treaties/Conventions/Agreements Concluded or Renewed by India with other Countries during the period January 2004 to March 2005	179
Appendix X	Instruments of Full Powers Issued during the period January 2004 to December 2004	189
Appendix XI	Instruments of Ratification/Accession Issued during the Period January 2004 to December 2004	190
Appendix XII	Conferences/Seminars/Meetings/ Study projects organised/undertaken by Institutions/NGOs which were partly funded by Policy Planning & Research Division	192
Appendix XIII	Expenditure Statement for the period April 2004 - January 2005 (ITEC & SCAAP Programmes)	196
Appendix XIV	List of Institutes offering 'B' and 'C' Category Courses to Foreign Nominees under ITEC/SCAAP Schemes (2004-2005)	197
Appendix XV	Allocation and utilisation of Civilian Training Slots under ITEC and SCAAP (2004-05)	199
Appendix XVI	Military Training Slots Allotted to various Countries during the period April-November 2004 under ITEC/SAP	201
Appendix XVII	List of ITEC Experts presently stationed (November 2004)	203
Appendix XVIII	Aid for Disaster Relief	206
Appendix XIX	Gender-Related Statistics	206
Appendix XX	Seminars/Conferences/Round Tables Talks Organised by ICWA from April 2004	207
Appendix XXI	Select Conferences/Workshops/Seminars Organised by RIS	209
	Abbreviations	211

Executive Summary

There has been a healthy tradition of national consensus in the conduct of India's Foreign Policy. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government led by the Congress Party under the leadership of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, on assumption of power in May 2004, entrusted the External Affairs portfolio to Shri K. Natwar Singh, a career diplomat and veteran in the conduct of foreign policy and international relations. He is assisted by two Ministers of State, Shri E. Ahamed and Shri Rao Inderjit Singh. Shri Shyam Saran took over as Foreign Secretary from Shri Shashank on 1 August 2004.

The guiding principles of India's Foreign Policy have been founded on Panchsheel, pragmatism and pursuit of national interest. In a period of rapid and continuing change, foreign policy must be capable of responding optimally to new challenges and opportunities. It has to be an integral part of the larger effort of building the nation's capabilities through economic development, strengthening social fabric and well-being of the people and protecting India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. India's foreign policy is a forward-looking engagement with the rest of the world, based on a rigorous, realistic and contemporary assessment of the bilateral, regional and global geo-political and economic milieu.

The UPA Government accorded high priority to continuing the composite dialogue with Pakistan and further strengthening the already existing close relations with neighbouring countries and India's extended neighbourhood. Major world powers, notably the permanent members of the UN Security Council, Brazil, Egypt, Germany, Japan, Mauritius, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and ASEAN countries, engaged the Ministry's high attention. But even greater priority and attention was accorded to countries in Africa, Latin America and Small Island countries in India's bid to forge new partnerships of mutual advantage, thereby contributing towards the process of socio-economic development and building world peace.

Even though India is not a traditional donor country, nearly 1,300 crores rupees were spent in providing overseas development aid to friendly countries.

Neighbours

The logic of geography is unrelenting and proximity is the most difficult and testing among diplomatic challenges a country faces. While globalization has brought many benefits and opportunities for development and enrichment of our lives, there are also fears of losing one's identity and of being overwhelmed by the powerful and technologically advanced societies.

India is today one of the most dynamic and fastest growing economies of the world. It constitutes not only a vast and growing market, but also a competitive source of technologies and knowledge-based services. Countries across the globe are beginning to see India as an indispensable economic partner and seeking mutually rewarding economic and commercial links with its emerging economy. Should not India's neighbours also seek to share in the prospects for mutual prosperity India offers to them? Do countries in our neighbourhood envisage their own security and development in cooperation with India or in hostility to India or by seeking to isolate themselves from India against the logic of our geography?

Some neighbours have taken advantage of India's strengths and are reaping both economic and political benefits as a result. Others are not. If globalisation implies that no country can develop in an autarchic environment, is this not true even more for countries within a region? If SAARC is to evolve into an organisation relevant to the aspirations of the peoples of South Asia, then these questions will need deep reflection and honest answers.

India would like the whole of South Asia to emerge as a community of flourishing democracies. India believes that democracy would provide a more enduring and broad-based foundation for an edifice of peace and cooperation in sub-continent. Half a century of political experience in South Asia has provided a clear lesson that while expediency may yield short term advantage, it also leads to a harmful corrosion of our core values of respect for pluralism and human rights. The interests of the people of South Asia sharing a common history and destiny, requires that we remain alert to the

possible dangers we face when attempts are made to extinguish a democratic order or yield space to extremist and communal forces. While democracy remains India's abiding conviction, the importance of its neighbourhood requires that India remains engaged with whichever government is exercising authority in any country in its neighbourhood.

India is prepared to throw open its markets to all the neighbours. India is prepared to invest capital in rebuilding and upgrading cross-border infrastructure with each one of them. In a word, India is prepared to make its neighbours full stakeholders in India's economic destiny and, through such cooperation, in creating a truly vibrant and globally competitive South Asian Economic Community.

Afghanistan: Bilateral relations between India and Afghanistan attained a new level of intensity and cooperation. There were regular political interactions between the two countries. Prime Minister, in his meeting with President Karzai in New York on the sidelines of UN General Assembly, underlined India's commitment to further strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries and also reiterated India's support for the economic reconstruction effort in Afghanistan. India's present commitments add up to US \$ 400 million over the period 2002-2008, which is a substantial amount for a non-traditional donor.

Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka: India maintained close relations with Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka. India's quick response in providing relief assistance to Sri Lanka and Maldives following the tragic 26 December 2004 Tsunami devastation, has been widely recognised.

Bhutan: India's relations with Bhutan are characterised by a high level of mutual understanding, trust and confidence. The regular exchange of high level visits imparts new dynamism and momentum to our growing and mutually beneficial cooperation. His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations in January this year.

Myanmar: India's policy of constructive engagement with Myanmar continued during 2004-05. Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) of Myanmar paid a State visit to India from 24-29 October 2004. He categorically stated that Myanmar would not allow its territory to be used for insurgent activity against India. India is also working towards economic development and integration of the North Eastern states with Myanmar by developing mutually beneficial cross border

projects in the fields of roads, railways, power, science and technology, communications and information technology. Further, Myanmar is emerging as an important partner in strengthening India's energy security.

Nepal: India is deeply concerned about the political and security situation in Nepal, following the dissolution of the multi-party Government, declaration of emergency and arrest of political leaders by the King of Nepal on 1 February 2005. These developments in Nepal constitute a serious setback to the cause of democracy, which would only benefit the anti-constitutional forces. India has always believed that the challenges being faced by Nepal can be addressed effectively only on the basis of national consensus. In this context, we have called for an early revival of normal democratic processes in Nepal. On its part, India will continue to support all efforts for the restoration of political stability and economic prosperity in Nepal.

Pakistan: The Government pursued a proactive policy of constructive engagement to establish peaceful, friendly and cooperative relations with Pakistan with the larger objective of cementing a viable structure of peace and stability in South Asia. Based on the solemn commitment given by the President of Pakistan on 6 January 2004 in Islamabad not to permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism, the two countries maintained their Composite Dialogue in 2004-05. The engagement has resulted in significant achievements such as restoration of relations at the level of High Commissioners, enhanced people-to-people and institutional contacts, and increased communication links. Significantly, the Ceasefire has held since November 2003. Both countries are currently negotiating various proposals, which will enhance security, improve economic cooperation, and institutionalize bilateral contacts. The year 2004-05 also witnessed high level contacts such as meeting between Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and President General Pervez Musharraf in New York on 21 September 2004, and Pakistan PM Shaukat Aziz's visit to India from 22-23 November 2004. External Affairs Minister met the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on 5-6 September 2004 in Delhi to review the overall progress in the Composite Dialogue and made a bilateral visit to Pakistan from 15-17 February 2005, where it was agreed to commence the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar Bus Service w.e.f. 7 April 2005 and start a bus service from Amritsar to Lahore, including to religious places such as Nankana Sahib.

Iran: The year 2004-05 saw further deepening and consolidation of India-Iran ties. The increased momentum of high-level exchanges, institutional linkages between their

National Security Councils and Joint Commission Meeting were the highlights in 2004-05. The common resolve to impart a strategic character to the relationship was conceptualized and expounded in the New Delhi Declaration, signed in January 2003, which touches upon all aspects of bilateral relations as well as regional and global issues of mutual concern.

South East Asia and Pacific

India's relations with countries of South East Asia and the Pacific continued to broaden and intensify during the year. Important visitors from the region were Prime Ministers of Singapore, New Zealand and Malaysia. The Foreign Minister of Solomon Islands visited India in January 2005. External Affairs Minister attended a Special ASEAN Leaders' Summit in Jakarta in the aftermath of the Tsunami disaster. He visited Indonesia to participate in the 11th ARF Meeting and during the visit, a bilateral MoU on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism was signed with Indonesia. He also signed separate MoUs with Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam for setting up Entrepreneurship development Centres by India in the three capitals. The first of such Centres was inaugurated by External Affairs Minister in Vientiane on 27 November 2004.

East Asia

China: India continued to view bilateral relations with China in a positive spirit, seeking friendly, cooperative, good-neighbourly and mutually beneficial relations on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns and aspirations. India also maintained its commitment to the process of dialogue to resolve outstanding differences and to build a long-term constructive and cooperative relationship with China, marked by continuity, consolidation, and sustained momentum of high-level dialogue. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on 30 November 2004 on the sidelines of the 3rd India-ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Laos. Bilateral dialogue mechanism was strengthened with the introduction of the Strategic Dialogue, which was held between Foreign Secretary and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister in New Delhi on 24 January 2005. Confidence Building Measures between the two militaries were further strengthened through exchanges/interactions at various levels. India-China trade maintained its momentum of growth and crossed the US\$ 13 billion mark in 2004. A notable event during the year was the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of Panchsheel which was jointly propounded by India and China, with events organised in the capitals of both countries.

Japan: The period 2004-05 was an active year in bilateral relations between India and Japan. The momentum of exchanges between the two countries continued during the year in pursuance of the Global Partnership for the 21st Century that India and Japan jointly established in 2000 to broaden and deepen bilateral relations. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Junichiro Koizumi on the sidelines of ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Laos on 29 November 2004 during which both leaders discussed issues of mutual concern. Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi visited India from 12-14 August 2004. Both sides agreed to support each other's candidature for permanent seat in the expanded UN Security Council and closely work together towards realizing the reform of the UN Security Council.

Republic of Korea (ROK): The year 2004-05 marked the 30th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the ROK. President Mr. Roh Moo-hyun's visit to India from 4-6 October 2004 gave further impetus to bilateral relations. External Affairs Minister visited ROK from 14-16 December 2004 to co-chair the third session of the India-ROK Joint Commission.

Eurasia

India's relationship of friendship, warmth and mutual support with the countries of the Commonwealth Independent States (CIS) region was further strengthened during the year. A 'Focus CIS' programme was launched to provide a boost to economic and trade relations. High level visits were exchanged on a regular basis with the countries of the region. These were complemented by the visits of trade delegations and through participation in industrial and consumer goods exhibitions. Indian cultural festivals and media exchanges have further enhanced the scope of India's relations with the region.

Indo-Russian relations are a matter of considerable importance to both the countries. This year witnessed a concerted effort by both the sides to transform cooperation from a declaratory stage to a constructive phase. The visit by President Vladimir V Putin to India from 3-5 December 2004 for the fifth India-Russia Annual Summit provided an occasion for both the countries to review the state of their bilateral relations, discuss regional and international issues of mutual concern and to provide a bilateral focus on energy, IT, banking and other areas of high technology.

The third trilateral meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Russia, China and India was held on 21 October 2004 at Almaty on the sidelines of the CICA Foreign Ministers'

Meeting. They exchanged views on issues of regional and international interest, and agreed to explore the possibility of trilateral economic cooperation.

Europe

India's engagement with the individual countries in Europe and the European Union continued to grow during the year. Interactions were marked by regular exchanges of visits, including at the highest level, demonstrating a mutual desire to deepen and diversify bilateral relations. India shared a strategic relationship with France, Germany and UK and growing ties with a number of other countries in Europe, aimed at promoting more intensive bilateral cooperation over a wide range of areas. The 5th India-EU Summit, held at The Hague in November 2004, was a landmark in India's relations with the EU, for it launched the India-EU Strategic Partnership in recognition of India's growing stature as a major regional and global player. Interactions with individual member countries in Europe reflected a shared understanding on various international issues. On the debate of the UN reforms, India was able to garner significant support from several EU Member States. India and Germany, in a strategic move, agreed to support each other's candidature in an expanded UNSC.

Economic considerations continue to underpin India's strong ties with countries in Europe. EU Member States' desire to enter into bilateral agreements/MoUs for enhanced S&T cooperation in niche areas of technology, demonstrate the growing recognition of India's potential in this area. The civil society dialogue with the major European countries, represented by the different Eminent Persons Group, contributed to strengthening the multi-faceted relationship.

India has traditionally enjoyed friendly and substantive relations with 29 countries of the Europe-II Division, created in the Ministry in March 2004. The year under review saw epochal changes in the eco-political geometry of the region. On 2 April 2004 seven East European countries, viz. Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). A month later, the European Union was enlarged to take ten more Member States. By the year-end, the EU decided that Bulgaria and Romania were on track to join the body in 2007/2008. The EU also decided to commence accession negotiations with Croatia and Turkey. The EU being our largest trading partner and source of investment, the ongoing changes have direct implications for India. The Ministry has encouraged and fostered high-level political interactions and increased economic cooperation with all the countries.

Gulf Countries

The year 2004-05 witnessed significant developments in India's relations with the Gulf countries including the visit by External Affairs Minister to Oman and UAE in December 2004, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister to India in August 2004, Minister of State Shri E. Ahamed to Saudi Arabia (June & November 2004), Bahrain (August 2004), Qatar (October 2004), Oman (November 2004) and Yemen & Kuwait (February 2005). Signing of the Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation between India and GCC is a landmark development. President of India visited Abu Dhabi in November 2004 to condole the death of President Sheikh Zayed. The Conference of Heads of Mission in West Asia was held in Dubai under the Chairmanship of External Affairs Minister to give a fresh direction and thrust to our diplomatic efforts in the region. India participated in the Iraq Donors Conference in Doha (May 2004) Tokyo (October 2004). Three Indian nationals, who were held hostage by an Iraqi militant group in July 2004, were released unharmed after sustained diplomatic efforts. Extradition Treaties were signed with Kuwait and Oman. The GCC countries extended broad support to India's candidature for Permanent Membership of the Security Council.

West Asia and North Africa

India's relationship with West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region received further boost during the year. High level visits included visits of Moroccan Prime Minister and Israeli Vice Prime Minister to India. The visit of Moroccan PM was the first high level visit from the Arab world to India since June 2005. A high-level delegation including a Cabinet Minister led by External Affairs Minister attended the funeral of President Arafat at Cairo on 12 November 2004. Economic relations between India and WANA region showed a substantial growth, particularly with Libya and Israel. India has entered the hydrocarbon sector in Sudan, Libya, Egypt and Syria through acquisition of stakes in oil exploration and gas distribution. Mr. Mahmoud Abbas was elected as the new President of the Palestinian National Authority following the demise of President Yasser Arafat. A significant development was the resumption of the peace dialogue between the Israel and Palestinian leadership at Sharm Al Sheikh Summit on 8 February 2005. India has appointed Special Envoy to the West Asia and Middle East Peace Process.

East and Southern Africa

India's relations with the East and Southern African countries strengthened during the year. President of Zanzibar visited India in March 2004. India's Vice President visited South

Africa to participate in their 10th Freedom Day in April 2004. Rashtrapatiiji visited Tanzania and South Africa in September 2004. He had the rare honour of addressing the Pan-African Parliament, the first non-African Head of State to do so.

India participated in various peacekeeping operations in Africa such as Burundi, Ivory Coast, DRC, etc. which had been suffering from civil war, ethnic violence, etc. A large contingent from the Indian army forms part of the UN Force, which is keeping peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The present commander of this force (UNMEE – United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea) is a senior army officer from India.

There is universal recognition in Africa that India has now become a major power in every sense of the word. This is why most countries of Africa have enthusiastically endorsed India's candidature for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. The Indian communities in various African countries have, in recent years, proved themselves as a valuable bridge strengthening the relationship between India and their countries of residence.

West Africa

India continued to enjoy cordial links with the countries of West Africa. Indian Diplomatic Missions in West Africa were strengthened and decision has also been taken to reopen the Indian Embassy in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. The region holds great promise for India's energy security and the Ministry took the initiative in exploring possibilities to access the oil and petroleum sector in this region, particularly in Angola, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Mauritania and Equatorial Guinea. India also established its close cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and High Commissioner of India to Nigeria was made the Permanent Representative accredited to the ECOWAS. Technical assistance and development aid continued with food aid being given to Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea. Anti-HIV drugs were also sent to countries in this region. The President of Nigeria paid a transit visit to India in November 2004 and had meeting with Prime Minister. The launch of the new initiative TEAM-9, a techno-economic cooperation venture between India and eight countries of West Africa, was a major initiative aimed at demonstrating the special focus that India was putting on Africa in general and West Africa in particular.

Americas

USA: India and US continued their intensive engagement as reflected in the frequency and intensity of bilateral

contacts and dialogue. Both sides showed strong commitment to engage across the wide spectrum of their relationship that included strategic and security issues, defence, counter-terrorism, counter-proliferation, science and technology, health, trade, space, energy and environment.

The Prime Minister had a meeting with President Bush on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York on 17 September 2004. The Joint Statement "US-India Partnership: Cooperation & Trust" issued after the meeting laid out the future directions of our relationship and noted that "bilateral relations had never been as close as they were at present". The meeting served to underline its strategic dimension including our commitment to combating WMD proliferation, terrorism and enhancing global security. The leaders noted that the implementation of first phase of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) marked the beginning of a new era of cooperation and trust. Emphasis was also laid on advancing economic cooperation in multilateral institutions including WTO's Doha Development Agenda, and through bilateral mechanisms including the India-US Economic Dialogue and the High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG).

High-level engagement at the political level continued through the year. External Affairs Minister's visit to Washington DC in June 2004 and his meetings subsequently with his US counterpart Secretary of State Colin Powell on the sidelines of ARF on 1-2 July 2004 and again in January 2005 in the aftermath of Tsunami, both held in Jakarta, served to establish and consolidate political level contacts between the two countries after the formation of new Government in India. On the US side, then Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, visited New Delhi on 13-14 July 2004; US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visited India on 8-9 December 2004.

Canada: The Prime Minister of Canada Mr. Paul Martin visited India on 17-18 January 2005. In a Joint Statement the two leaders agreed on the initiatives to strengthen and enhance the architecture of India-Canada partnership and contribute to global challenges more effectively. The two Prime Ministers agreed that India and Canada should enhance their dialogues on international, regional and global strategic issues. Both leaders also recognized a multilateral initiative for regional warning and natural disaster preparedness as a priority. India and Canada continued to actively promote bilateral trade and investment during the year.

Latin American Countries (LAC)

The level of engagement of the Government of India with the Latin American region continued to strengthen and deepen in 2004. The thrust of policy towards the region is to strengthen and widen the existing relationship, setting up a mechanism for political dialogue and cooperation, and enhancing trade and commerce. Framework agreements are established with the regional groupings such as with the MERCOSUR group of countries, Political Dialogue and Cooperation mechanism with the CAN (Andean Community), a standing Joint Commission on consultation, cooperation and coordination with CARICOM and mechanism of political consultations with the Central American Group of countries (SICA).

United Nations and DISA

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the 59th session of the UN General Assembly and in his address, reaffirmed India's commitment to multilateralism. Prime Minister emphasized the need to reform the United Nations system including through expansion of the Security Council, in both permanent and non-permanent categories, to make it a truly representative body. India is presently one of the leading troop contributors to the UN peacekeeping operations.

India's commitment to non-discriminatory and universal nuclear disarmament and the global elimination of all Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) continued to be reflected in its policy pronouncements and diplomatic initiatives. The country's stand on issues related to disarmament and international security in various multilateral and regional forums was premised on India's national security interests and its tradition of close engagement with the international community to promote cooperative efforts at addressing these challenges.

Bilateral dialogues with key countries continued to be pursued this year and harmonisation of India's national imperatives and security obligations with international concerns on non-proliferation and disarmament also progressed steadily. On the regional level, India's participation in the confidence and security building process and structure under the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) acquired greater momentum. Regular contacts were maintained with key international and non-governmental organisations active in the field of disarmament with a view to disseminating India's perspectives on disarmament issues.

Multilateral Economic Relations

In pursuance of the priority attached to India's 'Look East' policy, the Government continued efforts to forge new links and enhance economic cooperation with countries of South-east and East Asia, a geographically contiguous, rapidly growing and dynamic region with which India shares deep-rooted cultural and civilizational ties. The 1st ever BIMSTEC Summit was held in Bangkok on 30-31 July 2004. The 3rd India-ASEAN Summit was held in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 29-30 November 2004 during which the landmark "India ASEAN Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity" document was signed. The first India-ASEAN Motor Car Rally, starting from Guwahati in India and concluding at Batam island in Indonesia from 23 November-11 December 2004 after travelling through eight ASEAN countries, was a resounding success.

IBSA: India is cooperating closely with Brazil and South Africa, both bilaterally as well as within the framework of the India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) initiative. IBSA provides a unique forum for trilateral cooperation among the three countries.

Investment and Trade Promotion

The Ministry attaches top priority to economic diplomacy in view of the need to protect and promote India's economic and commercial interests abroad in this era of globalization and to face the challenges and exploit the opportunities thrown up by the fast integrating world economy. This includes promotion of trade, two-way foreign investments, exports and increased engagement with regional groupings. Greater emphasis is now laid on economic and commercial part of our relations with friendly countries, particularly the developing ones. The Ministry also believes in a close partnership between Government and business and industry in the pursuit of investment and export promotion goals, and general economic cooperation.

Policy Planning & Research

The Ministry maintained close interaction with several academic and non-governmental organizations and provided financial assistance for holding seminars and undertaking research studies on matters of foreign policy interest. External Affairs Minister has also constituted a Foreign Policy Advisory Group and regular meetings were held to understand and evaluate foreign policy options on emerging major external issues of interest to India. Foreign Policy dialogue was held with China in Beijing on 7 November 2004 and Canada in New Delhi on 28 February 2005.

External Publicity

On External Publicity front, the Ministry continued to express India's perspective on various foreign policy issues with emphasis on clear articulation of the foreign policy direction of the UPA Government since its assumption of office in May 2004. India's intensive engagement with major powers, neighbours and traditional friends naturally received high publicity. The Ministry played a major role in keeping the media abreast of all developments on the external front and notably during the hostage crisis in Iraq and on India's Tsunami relief efforts. The work of the media delegations was facilitated during incoming and outgoing VVIP visits. The Ministry also commissioned several documentaries in consonance with India's foreign policy priorities, brought out the monthly magazine "India Perspectives" and other special publications on important issues and events besides maintaining an active website www.meaindia.nic.in

Protocol

The Ministry remained fully engaged with the growing number of incoming and outgoing high-level visits, conferences, credential ceremonies, official entertainment and other multifarious functions. The Ministry's ability to handle a large number of visits of foreign dignitaries also contributed to India's enhanced international image and profile. Streamlining of protocol norms and standards continued to be a matter of priority.

Consular, Passport & Visa Services

The consular, passport and visa services rendered by the Ministry are its public interface in India and abroad. All the 30 passport offices in India are computerized and issued machine printed and machine-readable passports. As part of the decentralization scheme, approximately 400 district passport cells (DPCs) have been opened in 25 States at district level. This has helped in decongestion of passport offices. The innovative 'Tatkal' scheme for out of turn issue of passports at an extra fee has helped to meet the growing demand for issuance of passports in cases of urgency. Tele-enquiry system is available in 22 passport offices and a touch-screen enquiry kiosk has been introduced in Passport Office, Bangalore on pilot basis. All Missions and posts abroad continued to efficiently meet the Consular needs of overseas Indians. Bilateral agreements with several countries were signed in order to provide a legal and institutional framework to combat organized crime, international terrorism and drug trafficking and growing international dimensions of financial crimes.

Coordination

Coordination Division is the nodal point of the Ministry for all work relating to Parliament and for examination of proposals for clearance of foreign tours of Ministers and legislators of the Union and State Government, and Government officials. This Division also handles clearance for holding international conferences and international sports events in India; participation by Indian sports persons in overseas events; as well as diplomatic clearance for all non-scheduled flights. Observance of Anti-Terrorism Day, Sadbhavana Diwas and Quami Ekta Week/Diwas and processing of recommendations for grant of Padma Awards in respect of nominations of foreign citizens were undertaken. Coordination Division also administers the self-financing scheme for admission of foreign students in selected professional courses in India.

Foreign Service Institute (FSI)

The Foreign Service Institute continued its endeavour to train foreign diplomats apart from training IFS Probationers and other Ministry of External Affairs officials. Three Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) and two Advanced Courses on Asia for Foreign Diplomats (ACAAD) and a Special Course for Palestinian Diplomats (SCPD), were conducted by the Institute during the year. A Special Course for Canadian Diplomats is to be conducted from 21-24 March 2005. The Virtual Campus of FSI, set up in consultation with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) to impart Mid-Career Training to serving Indian diplomats, was inaugurated by the External Affairs Minister on 27 July 2004. The Institute also conducted a two-week residential mid-career Module on Foreign Policy, Security, Economic and Regional Issues for serving Indian diplomats who have completed 18-20 years of service. MoU for Cooperation with Foreign Service Institutes of Bulgaria, Venezuela and Afghanistan were signed during the year.

Administration

Ministry made optimum utilization of available resources in order to ensure its efficient functioning, both at Headquarters and in the 162 Indian Missions/Posts abroad. In order to have adequate number of qualified personnel manning the Ministry and also to provide adequate promotional avenues to officers/staff, Cadre Reviews of IFS and IFS 'B' were completed during the year. The 4th Cadre Review of IFS was aimed at having sufficient number of officers, both at senior and junior levels. The first ever Cadre Review of IFS (B) was implemented to streamline the much needed support staff, as well as to provide relief from

stagnation in promotions at various grades. The Ministry also continued with new steps to make the best use of technological resources. As part of a seamless e-governance project, measures like development of a Personnel Information System (PIS), name-based and designation-based e-mail IDs, creation of on-line databases, etc. were carried out.

Consistent with the Government's policy of promotion and propagation of Hindi, the Ministry has been making special efforts to support use of Hindi language. All important documents like bilateral treaties, MoUs, Credentials, Speeches of President and Prime Minister, Annual Report of the Ministry and replies to Parliament Questions were issued bilingually. Most Missions/Posts abroad are now enabled to entertain correspondence in Hindi. 43 students from 18 countries were admitted in the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. A Regional Hindi Conference was organized in Romania for propagation of Hindi abroad. A high-level Committee under Minister of State was set up to promote introduction of Hindi as a language in the UN. A Hindi Fortnight was organized in the Ministry in September 2004. Hindi forms an integral part of the Foreign Service Institute's training programmes.

Since its very inception, the Indian Foreign Service has been open to women. The Ministry stays committed to ensuring gender equality in all spheres of its functioning and provides equal opportunities to women officers to take up challenging and prestigious assignments. Women officers are occupying positions of prominence, both at Headquarters and Missions/Posts abroad.

Cultural Relations

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), established in the year 1950, has been functioning as the autonomous cultural wing of the Ministry of External Affairs for furthering the objectives and mandate of India's foreign policy. ICCR's "cultural diplomacy" plays a significant role in strengthening bilateral cultural relations among the nations. ICCR's activities also contribute to creating awareness about India and its rich cultural heritage among the people of other countries. The ICCR fulfils its objectives through activities undertaken by the Indian Cultural Centres and Chairs of Indian Studies abroad, scholarship schemes for overseas students, publications, organizing events of performing/non-performing arts in India and abroad, etc. The Council has nine regional offices in different States of India.

Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA)

In consonance with the objectives of the Indian Council of World Affairs Act, 2001, ICWA carried on its various activities by organizing special addresses, seminars and meetings on important world affairs. Amongst the dignitaries who delivered special address at Sapru House during the year include H.E. Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Senegal; H.E. Mr. Jorge Heine, Ambassador of Chile; H.H. Prince Radu of Hohenzollern-Veringen, Romania; H.E. Mr. Yasakuni Enoki, Ambassador of Japan and H.E. Mr. Heimo Richter, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany. A major International Seminar to commemorate 50 years of 'Panchsheel' was addressed by the External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh and attended by several foreign dignitaries. Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, addressed an International Seminar on 'Emerging Trends in Indo-African Relations'. Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs, addressed the seminar on Security and Political Situation in Iraq. The 3rd Africa Day Lecture was delivered on 2 June 2004 by Foreign Secretary Shri Shashank. A panel discussion on the Report of the UNSG's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change was held on 30 December 2004 with Shri Shyam Saran, Foreign Secretary, delivering the keynote address.

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

RIS is as an autonomous policy think-tank funded by the Ministry. During the year 2004-05, RIS conducted policy research on international economic issues and provided analytical support in preparation for major Summit meetings and other important negotiations. RIS lent its support in preparations for the ASEAN-India Summit, BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting, NAM Ministerial Meeting, SAARC Ministerial Meeting, UNCTAD XI, the ongoing WTO negotiations, and the bilateral joint study groups on comprehensive economic dialogue with China, South Korea, and various FTA negotiations, among others. It held policy dialogue on the relevance and the way forward for an Asian Economic Community in Tokyo, in collaboration with leading policy think-tanks in Asia, and has networked with policy think-tanks in other countries to bring policy coherence and capacity-building on international economic issues and development cooperation.



India has always accorded priority to relations with its neighbours and maintained close ties with them. Institutional mechanisms with all these countries were reinvigorated and cooperation expanded in diverse areas to mutual benefit. High-level exchanges reflecting the friendship and increasing understanding of each other's interest and common goals were intensified. A significant development in the case of Sri Lanka and Maldives was India's quick response to their request for relief assistance following the tragic Tsunami devastation on 26 December 2004. Although India itself was under pressure in dealing with its own devastation caused by Tsunami, but it acted swiftly. India dispatched immediately, on the 26th itself, relief supplies, medical teams and assistance to Sri Lanka and Maldives by air and sea, which helped in providing succour to the victims. The Indian teams have since been working in the relief operations by providing medical aid, food, water, clothing, prevention of outbreak of epidemic and assisting in rehabilitation projects for the displaced. India's assistance has been widely appreciated in these countries as well as internationally.

India continued to provide development assistance to a large number of projects in each of the neighbouring countries that showcased its expertise in information technology, human resource development, infrastructure engineering (roads and waterways) railways, etc. Cultural and educational exchanges with neighbours grew and India continued to host an increasing number of students for higher studies and training.

Afghanistan

India and Afghanistan have long history of friendship and cultural affinity. Bilateral relations between the two countries have attained a new level of intensity and cooperation. There were regular political interactions between the two countries. India has continued and built further upon its economic and financial assistance for Afghanistan's rehabilitation and reconstruction process.

Prime Minister called on President Karzai on 21

September 2004 in New York, during his visit to New York for the UN General Assembly. The two leaders discussed bilateral issues, including Indian assistance to Afghanistan's reconstruction as well as the presidential elections in Afghanistan. Prime Minister underlined India's commitment to further strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries and also reiterated India's support for the economic reconstruction effort in Afghanistan. Expressing appreciation for India's contribution to Afghanistan's economic reconstruction and rehabilitation, President Karzai sought India's continued cooperation in every sphere, including rebuilding of state institutions.

Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan paid an official visit to India from 31 August – 3 September 2004. Apart from delegation level talks with the External Affairs Minister, Dr. Abdullah called on Prime Minister and National Security Adviser. An MoU on Mutual Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Institute of Diplomacy of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Afghanistan was signed during the visit. Under the MoU Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs will assist the Institute of Diplomacy of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Afghanistan in training and building expertise of the diplomatic cadre of Afghanistan.

The National Security Adviser (late) J. N. Dixit paid a visit to Kabul on 19 October 2004. He called on President Karzai, Vice-President & Defence Minister Marshal Fahim and Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah. Earlier, to establish contact with the new government, Afghanistan National Security Adviser, Dr. Zalmi Rasool visited Delhi on 30 May 2004. He called on External Affairs Minister and National Security Adviser.

India has continued with its assistance programmes/projects for the economic reconstruction of Afghanistan. India's present commitments add up to US \$ 400 million over the period 2002-2008, which is a substantial amount for a non-traditional donor. The break up of the commitment is as under:

- India had announced an assistance of US\$ 100 million for Afghanistan at Tokyo Donors Conference in January 2002. Of this assistance, US\$ 88.11 million have been operationalised/committed till date on various projects.
- India has announced food assistance of 1 million tons of wheat (equivalent to US\$ 100 million) to Afghanistan. A part of this assistance is being converted into high protein biscuits for school feeding programme in Afghanistan and supplied through World Food Programme. The first tranche of 9526 tons of biscuits against 85517 metric tons of wheat was sent to Afghanistan from November 2002 to June 2003. The delivery of the second tranche of 7496 metric tons of biscuits against 76521 metric tons of wheat was carried out from December 2003 to August 2004. The delivery of the 3rd tranche of 18,000 metric tons of biscuits against 1,28,856 metric tons of wheat has commenced from November 2004. As a result of the programme, around one million Afghan school children are receiving a package of 100 gms of biscuits every day.
- The Government approved Rs. 377.47 crore (approx. US\$ 84 million) for upgradation/reconstruction of the road from Zaranj to Delaram in Afghanistan. Work on the project has commenced.
- The Cabinet approved the proposal for reconstruction and completion of Salma Dam Power Project in Herat province in Afghanistan at an estimated cost of Rs. 351.87 crore (approx. US\$76.7 at July 2004 exchange rate).
- The Government of India has offered to fund the construction of a new Parliament building in Afghanistan.
- India is contributing US \$ 200,000 per annum to the World Bank managed Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund.

Some of the important projects operationalised during the period 2004-05 are as follows:

- i) Reconstruction/upgradation of Zaranj-Delaram road (218 kms) at an estimated cost of Rs. 377.47 crore. The project will be executed by Border Roads Organization. Apart from being a sign of our commitment to assist Afghanistan in infrastructure reconstruction, the project would also address the transit problem that Indian exporter face in sending goods to Afghanistan.

- ii) Reconstruction and completion of Salma Dam Power Project in Herat province in Afghanistan at an estimated cost of Rs. 351.87 crore. The Project involves construction of a 107.5 m high earth and rock fill dam to divert water for power generation, with a total installed capacity of 52 MW. Water and Power Consultancy Services (India) Ltd. (WAPCOS) will implement the project.
- iii) Under food assistance of 1 million tons of wheat, the delivery of the 3rd tranche of 18,000 tons of biscuits against 1,28,856 metric tons of wheat has commenced from November 2004.
- iv) Around 69 tons of medical stores were supplied to Indian Medical Missions at Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Shibergan, Herat and Kandahar.
- v) Essential medical equipments were supplied for rehabilitation and modernization of Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health.
- vi) Eight paramedics from Afghanistan were provided training at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital for a period of three months from 19 May 2004 to 18 August 2004.
- vii) Two doctors from Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health attended training in areas of their specialization at All India Institute of Medical Sciences from 15 July 2004 to 13 October 2004.
- viii) In-service training was provided to 20 teachers from the Afghan Ministry of Education at Sanskriti School, New Delhi from 15 July 2004 to 6 October 2004.
- ix) In-service training was provided to twenty Afghan teachers from the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan by Delhi Public School Society from 5 February to 5 May 2004.
- x) As part of the projects on revamping/ restoration of information set up in Afghanistan, Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Ltd completed the work on setting up of a modern Offset Printing Machine along with DTP Facility and setting up of TV Satellite uplink at Kabul and downlink facility at 10 stations. Work is underway on setting up of a new 100 kw SW transmitter in Kabul and restoration/ augmentation of TV hardware in Jalalabad and Nangarhar Province.
- xi) 50,000 indelible ink marker pens were provided to Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB),

responsible for Afghanistan's voter registration programme and conduct of elections, for use in the presidential elections. Mysore Paints & Varnish Ltd., a Government of Karnataka Undertaking supplied the indelible ink, which is the sole supplier of indelible ink to Election Commission of India.

- xii) Five bank officers have been deputed to assist the restructuring of Afghanistan's Milli Bank.
- xiii) Central Warehousing Corporation commenced the work on the construction of a cold storage of 5000-ton capacity in Kandahar.
- xiv) Of 105 utility vehicles/equipments (water tankers, rear drop tippers, dump trucks, bulldozers, motor graders and garbage tippers) provided to the Kabul Municipality, 94 vehicles/equipments have been handed over to the Afghan authorities.

The developments in Afghanistan since the Bonn Agreement of December 2001 can be assessed positively. The successful conclusion of the presidential elections was a historic milestone in Afghanistan's history. However, the process of peace and stabilization in Afghanistan is still fragile. Taliban, Al Qaeda and Hizb-e-Islami elements, with support from outside, continue to pose a threat to peace and security. This has been compounded by the continued increase in the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs that could undermine the political and economic reconstruction of Afghanistan and has potentially dangerous repercussions for the region and beyond.

Bangladesh

India has very deep historical, cultural and social affiliations with Bangladesh. The institutional mechanisms that govern various aspects of our bilateral ties have diversified in recent years.

The year was marked by high level political visits from Bangladesh. Foreign Minister of Bangladesh (BDFM) Mr. M. Morshed Khan visited India as the special envoy of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh (BDPM) from 31 May – 4 June 2004 to congratulate the new government upon assuming charge. The visit provided an opportunity to discuss issues related to security and other matters of bilateral concern. BDFM also visited India from 31 October to 2 November 2004 as the special envoy of BDPM to invite Indian Prime Minister for the 13th South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) summit to be held at Dhaka in January 2004. Both sides reiterated their commitment to enhance as well as sustain

the momentum imparted to cooperative bilateral relations initiated in recent years.

The Commerce Minister of Bangladesh Air vice Marshal Altaf Hossain Chowdhury visited India from 16-18 November 2004 at the invitation of the Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry. During the visit, he met External Affairs Minister besides his meetings with the CII and FICCI. He also addressed a seminar jointly organised by FICCI and the Minister of Commerce and Industry. The visit provided an opportunity to discuss several economic issues between the two countries.

The Finance Minister of Bangladesh Saifur Rehman was in India for the CII Economic Summit in December 2004. He called on PM and held talks with his counterpart, Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram.

The Home Secretary level talks were also held in Dhaka after a gap of nearly four years. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the entire gamut of issues related to the land boundary, security, border management and other consular and visa related issues. During the talks, Bangladesh agreed to provide double entry and exit visas to Indian citizens transiting through any international airport and/or land port.

The seventh meeting of the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Committee of experts (JCE), chaired by the Water Resources Secretaries of the two countries was held in Dhaka in September 2004. The meeting considered the report of the Joint Technical Group (JTG) set up to discuss technical issues for the sharing of waters of the Teesta river.

Institutional dialogue on key issues related to border management continued through the biannual DG level talks between the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR). Several operational and field level issues to increase cooperation and confidence building measures were discussed. Other issues like coordinated patrolling to tackle cross border crimes and peaceful border management were also discussed.

Pursuant to a proposal offered during the 6th Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meeting in July 2003, the GOI has sponsored 250 Bangladeshi teachers in computer training in New Delhi under the *Aid to Bangladesh Programme*. The programme was conducted by Tata Infotech and involved 6 weeks of training for the candidates selected by the Bangladesh government.

It was also during the 6th JEC meeting that discussions

were held on a possible new line of credit to Bangladesh. Presently negotiations are on to discuss the terms and conditions and modalities of the proposed \$150 million EXIM bank credit line to Bangladesh for funding infrastructure related projects in the rail and road sectors.

Following the severe floods in Bangladesh in 2004, Government of India has granted a flood relief assistance of Rs.100 crores for Bangladesh. This amount would be utilized by the Government of Bangladesh to procure food grains, medical supplies and building material from India. An MoU was signed between the two countries in New Delhi in February 2005 specifying the modalities for using this amount.

Bhutan

As close friends and neighbours, India's relations with Bhutan are characterized by mutual understanding, trust, confidence and multifaceted cooperation in a wide range of areas for the mutual benefit of the people of the two countries.

This relationship is sustained and enhanced by the exchange of regular visits, including at the highest level. During the year 2004, His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations 2005. Three Memoranda of Understanding were signed during the visit. These relate to (i) Preparation of feasibility studies for establishment of railway linkages between bordering towns of India and Bhutan; (ii) Preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for two hydro-electric Projects in Bhutan and (iii) Cooperation in Agriculture and allied sectors. The delegation accompanying the King included the Crown Prince and the Foreign Minister of Bhutan. His Majesty the King of Bhutan had earlier visited India from 24-29 November 2004. Her Majesty Ashi Sangay Choden Wangchuck, youngest of the four Queens of Bhutan, also visited India from 6-21 February 2005.

Other dignitaries from Bhutan who visited India during the current year include Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Foreign Minister, Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup, Agriculture Minister, Lyonpo Thinley Gyamtsho, Education Minister and Dasho Ugen Dorji, Speaker of National Assembly.

From India Shri K. Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister and Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Bhutan in October 2004.

Development cooperation with Bhutan, particularly in the hydropower sector, continued satisfactorily. The

construction of 1020 MW Tala project is progressing well. DPR on Punatsangchu Phase – I is expected to be completed in first quarter of 2006 and DPRs on two more projects (Punatsangchu Phase – II and Mangdechhu Projects) would be initiated shortly.

The Government of India assistance package to 9th Plan of Bhutan was also reviewed during the visit of the King of Bhutan in January 2005 and an additional Rs. 280 crores towards Development subsidy was pledged.

Other important developments during the current year include the signing of (i) an MoU on Project Implementation Mechanism. The Project Implementation mechanism would streamline monitoring of GOI assisted Projects under implementation in Bhutan and also simplify the procedures for making financial releases to the Projects (ii) a Protocol for repayment of Government of India loan extended to Kurichhu Project. The project, completed at a cost of Rs. 560 crore, had a 40 percent loan component, which is now being repaid by the Royal Government of Bhutan.

To mitigate the problem of floods in both countries, a Joint Group of Experts on Flood Management was constituted in August 2004. The Group will assess the probable causes and effects of the recurring floods and erosions in the southern foothills of Bhutan and adjoining plains of India. Two meetings of the Group have already been held.

India and Bhutan have also strengthened cooperation in the field of security and border management in the aftermath of the successful military action taken by the Royal Bhutan Army in December 2003-January 2004 against Indian Insurgent Groups. An India-Bhutan Group on Border Security and Management that was established in March 2004 has made several practical recommendations relating to training, exchange of information and better cross-border coordination between the security and administrative authorities of the two countries, which are being implemented.

China

India is committed to developing a long-term constructive and cooperative partnership with China on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, mutual respect and sensitivity for each other's concerns and equality. Cooperation between India and China is not only conducive to their socio-economic development and prosperity, but also to strengthening multi-polarity in the world and enhancing the positive factors of globalisation.



Republic Day celebrations along Rajpath in New Delhi on 26 January 2005.



His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuk of Bhutan speaking at Banquet Dinner hosted in his honour by President of India. He was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi on 26 January 2005. Also seen in the picture, to his right, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and to his left, former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Continuity and consolidation during the year marked India-China relations. The exchange of high level visits and discussions imparted continuity in direction and provided for diversification of the relationship into newer areas of cooperation. The period saw an intensification of exchanges at the functional levels.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met Premier Wen Jiabao in Vientiane, Laos in November 2004 on the margins of the 10th ASEAN Summit. The two leaders noted that India-China relations enjoyed a good momentum and had wide-ranging discussions on the nature and direction of the relationship. They highlighted the importance of further expanding economic and trade relations. The two leaders also reviewed the discussions between the Special Representatives of the two countries on the boundary question. Premier Wen Jiabao is expected to visit India in 2005.

External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh met Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing on the sidelines of international conferences, on four occasions, during which he had discussions on bilateral relations, and regional and international issues.

A number of high-level dignitaries from China visited India, including Politburo Members He Guoqiang and Liu Qi, and State Councillors Tang Jiaxuan and Chen Zhili. From the Indian side, high level visits included those by former President Shri K.R. Narayanan, Minister of Labour Shri Sis Ram Ola, former National Security Adviser late Shri J.N. Dixit and then Chief of Army Staff Gen. N.C. Viji.

During Chinese State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan's visit to India in October 2004, he held substantive discussions with the External Affairs Minister and called on the Prime Minister. India and China reaffirmed desire to take a long term and strategic perspective of their bilateral relations, seize the opportunity provided by the current state of relationship and maintain its momentum. They agreed to continuously expand and develop further areas of cooperation, while seeking fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solutions to outstanding issues, including the boundary question. During the visit, State Councillor Tang conveyed that China supports a bigger role for India in the international community, including in the United Nations Security Council.

The Special Representatives of India and China, who are tasked to explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship the framework of a boundary

settlement, held two rounds of discussions viz. in July 2004 at New Delhi and in November 2004 at Beijing. Their discussions were frank, constructive and detailed.

A notable event during the year was the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Panchsheel. A number of events were held both in New Delhi and Beijing to mark the occasion. Chinese Peoples' Institute of Foreign Affairs (CPIFA) organised a commemorative seminar in Beijing in June 2004 at which former President Shri K.R. Narayanan was a keynote speaker. To mark the event, both sides issued special postal covers. Subsequently, in November 2004, the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) hosted a Panchsheel Seminar in New Delhi, which was addressed by External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh and a commemorative volume on Panchsheel was released on the occasion.

During the visit of Chinese State Councillor Chen Zhili, who is in-charge of Science & Technology, Education and Culture, she had discussions with Minister of State for Science & Technology and Ocean Development Shri Kapil Sibal. It was also decided to set up a Steering Committee, at the level of Ministers, to provide overall direction and guidance to India-China cooperation in the area of science & technology. Education Minister Zhou Ji, who was part of this delegation, held discussions with the Minister of Human Resource Development. The period saw continued exchanges between the two countries in the area of science and technology under the existing agreements.

Other exchanges during the year included the visits of Chairman of the Xinjiang province of China in October 2004 and Governor of Henan province in August-September 2004. Both the visits were under the Distinguished Visitors' Programme wherein important decision/opinion makers are invited to India.

Intensification of economic, trade, tourism and cultural links was discussed during these visits. As part of the programme for exchanges between Communist Party of China (CPC's International Liaison Department) and Chief Ministers of India, Politburo Member Liu Qi visited India in November 2004 at the invitation of the Chief Minister of Delhi. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh visited China from 30 January- 4 February 2005. Six Indian political parties were represented at the third International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAP) hosted by the CPC in September 2004. Functional exchanges and dialogue has been initiated between pairs of Indian and

Chinese organisations such as Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) and Central Party School (CPS), ICSSR and Zhejiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences, and Planning Commission and National Development & Reform Commission. These exchanges serve the purpose of not only broad basing the relationship, but also providing forums for exchange of views including on policies, challenges and development experiences.

Apart from the above exchanges, the bilateral dialogue mechanism between the two countries continued to provide a systemic means of facilitating enhancement and implementation of existing initiatives and identifying newer ones. In addition to the meetings of the Special Representatives on the Boundary Question, there were, during the year, consultations between the Foreign Ministries and the second round of the Policy Planning Dialogue. The first round of Strategic Dialogue at the level of Foreign Secretary Shri Shyam Saran and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei was held on 24 January 2005. The Dialogue focussed, inter alia, on issues of global political and strategic importance.

The year witnessed continued growth in India-China trade. From a bilateral trade volume of US\$ 338 million in 1992, the trade volume touched US\$ 7.6 billion in 2003. For 2004, the trade volume, as per the Chinese statistics, reached US\$ 13.6 billion, an increase of 79 per cent over 2003. India's exports to China stood at US \$ 7.67 billion (year-on-year growth of 80.4 per cent) while India's imports from China stood at US \$ 5.93 billion (year-on-year growth of 77.2 per cent). The main exports from India to China were iron ore, iron & steel, plastics, precious stones (mostly diamonds), cotton yarn and organic and inorganic chemicals. The main imports to India from China were electrical and other machinery, organic & inorganic chemicals, mineral fuel, silk yarn, manmade filaments etc. Indian exports to China that have shown rapid growth rate this year are iron ore, cotton yarn, inorganic chemicals and machinery products. Efforts to further promote and strengthen economic and trade cooperation continued during the year. Promotional activities were undertaken. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in cooperation with the Embassy of India organised its second 'Made in India' show in Beijing in December 2004 to showcase the strengths and versatility of the Indian industry. Events were organised to promote Indian mangoes and tea. Similarly, China was the partner country at the India International Trade Fair held in November 2004 in which more than 80 Chinese

companies participated. The momentum of exchange of trade and business delegations during the year continued to pick up.

The India-China Joint Study Group (JSG), which is tasked to examine the potential complementarities and draw up a programme for the development of comprehensive trade and economic cooperation between the two countries, continued its work and three meetings of the JSG were held during the year. The report of the JSG, giving recommendations to the two governments, is expected to be completed in March 2005.

The momentum of bilateral defence exchanges was maintained with the visit of Chief of Army Staff (COAS) to China from 22-29 December 2004. This was a visit by an Indian COAS to China after ten years. The COAS called on Chinese Vice President Zeng Qinghong and Defence Minister Gen. Cao Guangchun, and had extensive interaction with the Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA). Both the sides expressed satisfaction that peace and tranquility is being maintained in India-China border areas. There was also consensus on further enhancing military exchanges and cooperation at different levels.

Cooperation in facing non-traditional threats, particularly against international terrorism was also discussed. PLA's Chief of General Staff accepted COAS's invitation to visit India to carry forward the cooperation between the two militaries. COAS's visit was an important element of the expanding military contacts between India and China, as part of the overall development of bilateral relations.

As part of the confidence building measures, interactions were organised between the border personnel of the two countries, including joint mountaineering expedition on the Chinese side and sports event on the Indian side. Border personnel meetings and flag meetings, which are an important part of the confidence building measures, were organised including during national days and important festivals. An Air Force training delegation visited China in March-April 2004 and another Indian delegation visited China in September 2004 to witness Peoples Liberation Army's Iron Fist Exercise. From the Chinese side, delegations from Academy of Military Science and the National Defence University visited India. A delegation led by Xinjiang Military Commander visited India from 31 January to 5 February 2005.

The Chinese side provided data and information through diplomatic channels and border flag meetings, on the

artificial lake created on Parechu river in Tibet Autonomous Region of China as a result of landslides, which posed a threat to downstream areas in Himachal Pradesh. Two rounds of technical level talks were held in Lhasa and Beijing in September and December 2004 respectively to discuss ways for a controlled removal of the blockage before the next rainy season. Mechanism for exchange of information on potential disaster situations in Tibet Autonomous Region of China likely to have downstream impact in India and further sharing of hydrological data for some common rivers were also discussed.

Cultural exchanges under the executive programme 2003-05 (of the India-China Cultural Exchange Programme) continued during the year. As part of the commemorative activities for the 50th anniversary of Panchsheel, cultural programmes were organised and a joint exhibition of Indian and Chinese postage stamps held. Exchange of students between India and China continued under the bilateral Education Exchange Programme (EEP) signed in June 2003. Presently, there are 22 Indian EEP scholars in China and 21 Chinese EEP scholars in India. The Centre for Indian Studies of Beijing University, inaugurated during then Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee's visit to China in June 2003, expanded its activities including organization of academic seminars in its own premises and in association with other universities in China. The first awardee of Tan Yunshan, which is given to the best final year Hindi student of the Centre, visited India in November 2004. Discussions continued on the modalities for the establishment of Cultural Centres of each country in the other.

The Embassy of India, Beijing issued 15,359 visas in 2004 representing an increase of nearly 37 per cent over the previous year. Consulate General of Shanghai issued a total of 7,785 visas in 2004 which represents an increase of 110 per cent over the previous year.

Functional Exchanges

- Indian delegations led by Shri R.K. Singh, Joint Secretary, Central Relief Commissioner and Shri S.K. Chattopadhyay, Joint Secretary (Disaster Management), MHA visited Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and Beijing in September and December 2004 respectively to discuss cooperation in water resources including the problem as a result of formation of an artificial lake as a result of landslide on Parechu river.

- A five-member delegation led by Shri A.K. Jain, Joint Secretary (Police) from the Ministry of Home Affairs visited China in August 2004 for interaction with Peoples' Armed Police (PAP). A PAP delegation led by Maj. Gen Wang Jianping, Deputy Chief of Staff of CPAPF visited India in January 2005. Discussions included exploring cooperation in training and in combating terrorism.
- Central Party School (CPS) of the CPC sent a delegation led by Prof. Li Xingshan to India in October 2004 to study India's agricultural economy and social security systems. The delegation, inter alia, interacted with the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA).
- An IIPA delegation involving 53 members of the Advanced Professional Programme visited China in December 2004 and had exchanges on experiences in the field of development, administrative reform, governance and training.
- A Chinese delegation visited India in October 2004 for consultations on Climate Change prior to the meeting of COP-10.
- A seven-member delegation led by Vice Minister Zhou Keren and members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chinese Peoples' Political Consultative Conference visited India from 4-11 January 2005.
- A delegation led by Zhang Xiaoqiang, Vice Chairman, National Development & Reform Commission, (NDRC) visited India from 4-10 January 2005 to participate in the Roundtable Conference titled "Regional Cooperation – Key to Energy Security" organised by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas in New Delhi.
- Mr. Cui Huilie, Senior Adviser to the Labour Minister led a five-member delegation to India from 24-29 October 2004. The delegation held discussions with the Indian Labour Ministry.
- Director General, State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH) of China, Mr. Shan Jixiang, visited India in July-August 2004 to hold discussions for a large scale Indian exhibition in China and further strengthen cooperation between Archaeological Survey of India and SACH.
- Vice Minister of State Council, Information Office Mr. Wang Guoqing visited India in November 2004

and held discussions with Secretary (I&B) to enhance interaction in audio-visual and print media sector.

- Vice Minister Meng Xiaosi who was part of State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan's delegation to India (October 2004) held discussions with Secretary (Culture) to further intensify cultural exchanges.
- A delegation led by Dr. P. Nag, Surveyor General of India from Department of Science & Technology visited China in July 2004 and had meetings with officials of the Ministry of Science & Technology (MOST), Chinese Academy of Science (CAS), National Natural Science Foundation of China (NNSFC) and State Administration of Foreign Experts' Affairs (SAFEA). In the Joint Working Group meeting with Ministry of Science & Technology, 16 projects were agreed to under various programmes covering the period 2004-06.
- The third Joint Working Group between Indian Meteorological Department and China Meteorological Administration met in New Delhi in November 2004 to discuss further cooperation under the MoU between the two organisations and suggested a number of joint programmes and a work plan for 2005-07.
- India-China seminar on Genome Informatics in October-November 2004 in Hang Zhou was organised by Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) of CSIR and Beijing Genomics Institute (BGI). An MoU for cooperation was signed in August 2004 in Beijing.
- Bilateral technical level air services talks were held from 25-26 January 2005 in Beijing

Hong Kong

The period saw an expansion in the India-Hong Kong bilateral trade. According to HKSAR statistics, Hong Kong – India bilateral trade reached US \$ 5.43 billion in 2004 (an increase of 20.3 per cent over 2003) with Indian exports reaching US \$ 3.53 billion (an increase of 24 per cent) and Hong Kong exports reaching US \$ 1.89 billion (representing an increase of 14 per cent).

A 14-member Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker Shri Somnath Chatterjee visited Hong Kong from 6-7 November 2004 and met prominent members of the Indian community. Minister for Information & Broadcasting Shri Jaipal Reddy visited Hong Kong from

13-14 October 2004 to discuss with the film industry representatives issues relating to prevention of sales of pirated VCDs/DVDs, licencing for duplication of VCDs/DVDs and the legislations enacted by Hong Kong government in this regard. Minister for State for Overseas Indian Affairs Shri Jagdish Tytler visited Hong Kong from 27-28 September 2004 in the context of the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas.

The third round of negotiations on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters was held in November 2004 and the two sides initialled a draft agreement. A delegation from the Ministry of Civil Aviation visited Hong Kong from 27-28 January 2005 for bilateral air services consultations. The number of visas issued by Consulate General of Hong Kong during the period January-December 2004 was 23,719, an increase of 153 per cent over corresponding period last year.

Iran

India and Iran enjoy historical ties. The year 2004 saw continued co-operation between India and Iran in the field of energy security, transit routes in the region, cooperation on Afghanistan and its reconstruction and increasing bilateral trade and commercial relations, which imparted a strategic dimension to bilateral relations.

High Level Political Exchanges

After the formation of the new Government in India in May 2004, Iranian President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami talked to Prime Minister over telephone. Foreign Minister Dr. Kharrazi visited New Delhi on 25-26 July 2004. During the visit, he called on Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and National Security Adviser. Dr. Kharrazi paid a second visit to India in February 2005.

Security and Strategic Consultations

India and Iran have both stressed upon the need for a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan free from external interference. They have also agreed to join hands in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. India, Iran and Afghanistan have expressed their support to the development of alternative access routes to Afghanistan through the Chahbahar port of Iran via Melak-Zaranj-Delaram road stretch in Afghanistan. India has commenced the road construction project in Afghanistan for which Iran has assured support in the form of visa facilitation, sourcing of raw material from Iran, port and transit facilities etc.

Iranian Foreign Minister Dr Kharrazi and External Affairs

Minister remained in regular touch, including through telephonic discussions, over the evolving situation in Iraq.

During Dr Kharrazi's visit to India in July 2004, the two sides reviewed progress in bilateral cooperation in different areas and situation in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The two sides also held regular security and strategic consultations through the established mechanisms of interaction between their National Security Councils. During his visit to Iran in October 2004, National Security Adviser Late Shri J. N. Dixit held discussions on bilateral issues and situation in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Cooperation in the Hydrocarbons Sector

Energy security is an important area in India-Iran bilateral relations. Following the visit of President Khatami and signing of the MoU on cooperation in the hydrocarbons sector, India and Iran have taken several steps to broaden their cooperation in this field. The two sides have constituted a Joint Working Group (JWG) on cooperation in hydrocarbons sector. As per the discussions held by the JWG, India and Iran agreed to work towards longterm purchase of LNG by India from Iran. It was also agreed that Indian oil companies would participate in oil exploration fields in Iran on competitive basis.

Technical discussions between the two sides on these aspects of cooperation are continuing. Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar visited Iran from 5-6 December 2004. He met Iranian Petroleum Minister Dr. Bijan Zanganeh to discuss further cooperation in this area.

India is committed to ensure a cost-effective, long term and secure mode of transfer of Iranian gas to India. The India-Iran Joint Committee on transfer of Iranian gas to India is entrusted with examining all aspects of this issue. The two sides have set up a technical sub-committee led by GAIL and NIOC from the two sides to commission studies on the offshore and onshore routes.

Maldives

The India-Maldives relations continued to be close and friendly during the year 2004-2005. The warmth of these relations was kept up through regular meetings/exchanges of visits.

The External Affairs Minister met Mr. Fathulla Jameel, Foreign Minister of Maldives on July 2004 at Islamabad on the sidelines of the SAARC Council of Ministers Meetings and in January 2005 in Jakarta on the sidelines

of ASEAN meeting on Tsunami Relief. Foreign Secretary paid a visit to Maldives from 18-19 October 2004. During this visit, Foreign Secretary held detailed discussion on the bilateral relations between the two countries and other areas of regional and international interests. Foreign Secretary also called on President Gayoom of Maldives.

The process of economic and technical co-operation continued on a satisfactory note. An expert team from the National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property (NRLCCP), Lucknow, visited Maldives in May 2004 to work on the conservation of Dharumavantha Rasgefaanu Mosque.

Due to public protests, which started on the 12-13 August 2004, the Government of Maldives declared a state of national emergency in Male and its surrounding areas on 13 August 2004. The President of Maldives deputed Mr. Ahmed Abdullah, the then Minister of Health to India as his Special Envoy to brief the Government of India on the developments in the Maldives. Mr. Abdullah met External Affairs Minister on 25 July 2004 and handed over a personal letter from President Gayoom of Maldives addressed to the Prime Minister. The state of national emergency was lifted on 10 October 2004.

In a significant bilateral move, Maldives opened a resident High Commission in New Delhi and appointed Mr. Abdul Sattar Adam as its first resident High Commissioner to India. He presented his credentials to the President of India on 30 November 2004.

Another important bilateral development was in the wake of recent Tsunami disaster. At the request of Maldivian Government, Indian ships, planes and helicopters with relief material, medical teams and specialized personnel were rushed to Maldives on 27 December 2004. Our personnel went ashore and helped to provide essential services, medical relief and assisted in search and rescue operations, transporting relief materials, repairing and restoring generators and communications. Prime Minister informed President Gayoom that Government of India has decided to earmark Rs. 5 crores for assisting in the programme of relief and rehabilitation for Maldives.

Myanmar

India-Myanmar relations are rooted in shared historical, cultural and religious ties. Both countries share a long land border (over 1600 kms) and a maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. Four northeastern states viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram border



*The forecourts of Rashtrapati Bhawan where the heads of State/Government are accorded ceremonial reception on arrival.
(Photo: C.M. Bhandari)*



The visiting Chairman of State Peace and Development Council of Myanmar Senior General Than Shwe being received by the President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh on 24 October 2004.

Myanmar. A large body of population of Indian origin (estimated at 2.5 million) lives in Myanmar. Geo-strategic factors make it important for India and Myanmar to have a close relationship. India-Myanmar relations are reflective of the two countries' common desire to cooperate with each other in order to promote peace and tranquillity along their border, to achieve sustained economic development and to foster people-to-people interaction. Recent years have seen a steady growth of exchanges, resulting in the deepening and widening of bilateral ties.

India's policy of constructive engagement with Myanmar further strengthened during 2004 with exchanges at the highest level. Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), paid a State visit to India from 24-29 October 2004 at the invitation of the President. He was accompanied by a high-powered delegation including Lt-Gen. Thein Sein, Secretary-1 of SPDC, Lt-Gen. Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Quarter Master General and Chairman, Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC) and eight Cabinet Ministers including Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Industry, Energy, Rail Transportation, Communications, Science & Technology, Health and Religious Affairs. The visit was historic in nature, being the first Head of State level visit from Myanmar in 24 years and the first Head of State - Head of Government level interaction between the two countries in 17 years.

During his visit, Senior General Than Shwe met with President and Vice President and held wide ranging talks with Prime Minister on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest and concern. Chairman, SPDC categorically stated that Myanmar would not allow its territory to be used for hostile activity against India. A Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in the field of Non-traditional Security Issues was signed between the two countries. Both sides also expressed great interest in furthering co-operation in the fields of infrastructure projects and energy. An MoU on the Tamanthi Hydroelectric Project on Chindwin River in Myanmar was signed. The two sides also initialled a Cultural Exchange Programme for 2004-2006. In the Joint Statement released at the end of the visit, the Myanmar Government expressed full support for India's bid for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

Five bilateral meetings took place at ministerial level between External Affairs Minister and Myanmar's Minister of Foreign Affairs, U. Nyan Win; Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Kamal Nath and Myanmar's

Minister for Industry- I, U. Aung Thaung; Minister for Railways, Shri Laloo Prasad Yadav and Myanmar's Minister for Rail Transportation, Major General Aung Min, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Shri Dayanidhi Maran and Myanmar's Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs, Brig.Gen. Thein Zaw; and Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology, Shri Kapil Sibal and Myanmar's Minister for S&T, U Thaung. The visit was very successful and generated much goodwill in the Myanmar leadership towards India.

Other important high-level exchanges during the year included the visit by Myanmar's Foreign Minister U. Win Aung to India on 24 July 2004, during which he called on Prime Minister. In his meeting with External Affairs Minister, the two sides discussed the Indian-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway project, enhancement of bilateral trade to US\$1 billion by 2006 and co-operation in the energy sector. The two Ministers had earlier met on the margins of the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference/ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in Jakarta in early July where they signed an MoU on setting up of an Entrepreneurship Development Centre (EDC) in Yangon. Dr. San Lwin, Associate Professor, Yangon Institute of Economics has been selected as Director and five Myanmar officials as trainers for the proposed EDC. The Deputy Foreign Minister of Myanmar, U Kyaw Thu attended the Third India-ASEAN Business Summit held in New Delhi on 19 October and in Chennai on 20-21 October 2004.

Myanmar's Minister for Rail Transportation, Maj-Gen. Aung Min also led a 6-member delegation to India from 26 July-3 August 2004. During the visit, Myanmar and India signed an MoU for upgrading the Yangon-Mandalay Trunk Line. Under the MoU, Government of India has made available a Line of Credit of US\$56.36 million to the Government of the Union of Myanmar for purchasing rolling stock as well as upgrading workshops, tracks and communications and signalling systems.

Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas paid a visit to Myanmar from 11-14 January 2005 to discuss co-operation in the energy sector. During the visit, a bilateral MoU on cooperation between India and Myanmar in the Hydrocarbon Sector was signed. In addition, the Petroleum Ministers of India, Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed to explore construction of a gas pipeline from Myanmar to India via Bangladesh.

Myanmar also hosted the annual Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and Myanmar on 3 - 5 October 2004. Shri Shyam Saran, Foreign Secretary led the Indian delegation and U. Kyaw Thu, Deputy Foreign Minister headed the Myanmar side. A comprehensive review of India- Myanmar relations was carried out during the meeting. During his visit, Foreign Secretary called on Prime Minister H.E. Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt as well as on the Ministers for Home Affairs, Education and Science & Technology. The tenth National Level Meeting between the two countries was held simultaneously in New Delhi from 4-7 October 2004. The delegations were led by the respective Home Secretaries. Discussions covered security related matters, drug trafficking, issues related to the free movement regime, border trade and banking arrangements.

On the economic front, India remains committed to achieving the target set by the Joint Trade Committee of increasing bilateral trade to US\$1 billion by 2006. In fact, bilateral trade between the two countries has expanded significantly over the last few years. During 2003-04, Myanmar's exports to India amounted to US\$361.38 million and its imports from India were US\$108.85 million. An Agreement on setting up of a Joint Task Force to make recommendations for enhancing bilateral trade was also signed between the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) in February 2004. The Task Force's report was released during Senior General Than Shwe's visit to India and its recommendations are under consideration.

An important plank of India's policy has been to work towards economic development and integration of Northeast India with Western Myanmar by implementing mutually beneficial cross-border projects. These include projects in the field of roads, railways, power, science and technology, communications and information technology. The National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Ltd. is carrying out pre-feasibility study on the Tamanthi Hydroelectric Power Project. Myanmar is also emerging as a partner in strengthening our energy security. ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) and GAIL have acquired 20 per cent and 10 per cent participating interest in the A-I block off the Rakhine coast of Myanmar. OVL has also succeeded in securing participation in the A-III Block.

India-Myanmar cooperation in science and technology has also deepened and diversified during the year. A joint

project on installation of tidal gauges in coastal Myanmar fructified in April 2004. Cooperation in the fields of communications & information technology has also expanded. Following the first meeting of the India-Myanmar Joint Working Group on Communication & Information Technology in January 2004, a Letter of Understanding on cooperation in the Telecom Sector was signed between Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) and Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications, Government of the Union of Myanmar on 27 July 2004 in Yangon. The EXIM Bank of India and Foreign Trade Bank of Myanmar signed an Agreement in October 2004 to extend a special line of credit of US\$7 million for commissioning CorDECT WLL based basic telephone and internet networks in Yangon and Mandalay. The project also includes installation of an Optical Fibre Cable between the border towns of Moreh (India) and Tamu (Myanmar). India has also announced a grant of US\$ 3 million to set up two e-learning centres in Yangon and Mandalay and for conducting an e-governance project.

The first-ever India-ASEAN Car Rally, which was flagged off at Guwahati on November 22 by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, transited through Myanmar between 24 and 28 November 2004. The Rally received extensive coverage in Myanmar media. A ten-member high-level delegation from Myanmar led by Lt-Gen. Ye Myint, Member, State Peace & Development Council and comprising Brig-Gen. Thura Aye Myint, Minister of Sports and Maj-Gen. Tha Aye, Commander, North-West Command went to Guwahati to participate in the flag-off ceremony. To coincide with the Rally, a Seminar on 'India-Myanmar Trade and Economic Cooperation' was jointly organized by Embassy of India, Yangon, Consulate General of India, Mandalay, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry (UMFCCI) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Mandalay on 25 November 2004. Shri Santosh Mohan Dev, Minister of State for Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises (Independent Charge), Government of India visited Yangon and Mandalay in connection with the Seminar. From Myanmar side, Brig-Gen. Tin Naing Thein, Minister of Commerce addressed the Seminar.

As regards HRD cooperation, about 200 candidates from Myanmar are expected to undergo training in India in 2004-05 under various programmes such as TCS of Colombo Plan, ITEC and GCCS of ICCR. The bilateral linkage between the Press Trust of India (PTI) and

Myanmar News Agency (MNA) has also been working well. MNA has been regularly using news feeds from PTI, which are published in Government dailies such as 'The New Light of Myanmar' and other local language newspapers.

On the cultural front, Indian films, particularly from Bollywood, are extremely popular in Myanmar. After a gap of about 20 years, Embassy of India in Yangon, in collaboration with the Ministry of Information of the Government of Myanmar, organized an Indian Film Week in Yangon from 18-24 August 2004 and in Mandalay from 1-5 September 2004. The festival attracted huge crowds and received considerable media coverage. Besides, a Qawaali group of Nizami brothers visited Myanmar from 20-24 December 2004 and performed at various venues including Bahadur Shah Zafar Mazaar to the delight and appreciation of large gatherings.

Defence co-operation has also continued on a sound footing through the mechanism of bi-annual border liaison meetings of the army. A series of high-level exchanges took place during the year including the visits to Myanmar by Lt Gen J S Verma, GOC-in-C Eastern Command from 21-24 September 2004 and by Air Chief Marshal S. Krishnaswamy, Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of Air Staff on from 15-19 November 2004.

Nepal

The political and security situation in Nepal is a cause for serious concern. On 1 February 2005, the multi-party Government led by Prime Minister Sher Bahdur Deuba was dissolved by the King of Nepal. An emergency has been declared and fundamental rights suspended. Political leaders, media personnel, intellectuals, human rights activists and student leaders are under house arrest/detention. There is strict censorship on both print and electronic media.

Meanwhile, the security situation in Nepal continues to deteriorate. The Maoists have expanded their reach and presence throughout Nepal. They have demonstrated their ability to disrupt life in the major towns including in the Kathmandu valley at will. Growth of Maoist insurgency in Nepal is a matter of serious concern to India because of its adverse fall-out for India due to the open and unregulated border as well as the links between Nepal's Maoists and the Indian Naxalite groups.

The developments in Nepal constitute a serious setback to the cause of democracy, which would only benefit the

anti-constitutional forces and undermine both democracy as well as the institution of monarchy. India has always believed that the challenges being faced by Nepal can be addressed effectively only on the basis of national consensus. In this context, India has called for a return to democratic processes at the earliest. India has also called for immediate release of all arrested political leaders, media personnel, intellectuals and human rights activists who should be allowed to exercise their Constitutional rights. On its part, India will continue to support all efforts for the restoration of political stability and economic prosperity in Nepal.

Bilateral Cooperation

During the year, bilateral relations proceeded satisfactorily, particularly in the period before dismissal of the multi-party Government and imposition of emergency in Nepal. Nepal was the first country that External Affairs Minister visited after assumption of charge, reflecting the priority that India attached to further development of relations with Nepal. The then Prime Minister of Nepal H. E. Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba paid a very fruitful and productive visit to India from 8-12 September 2004. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Rao Inderjit Singh visited Nepal from 29 November 1 December 2004. In addition, regular consultations across a broad spectrum of issues were held through existing bilateral mechanisms.

A comprehensive review of bilateral issues was undertaken during the visit of Prime Minister of Nepal to India. In addition, several important bilateral meetings were held including the Home Secretary-level Talks (19-20 January 2005), Joint Working Group on Border Management (17-18 January 2005), Meetings of India-Nepal Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues, Joint Committee on Water Resources (7-8 October 2004), the Joint Group of Experts Meeting on the Pancheshwar Project (6 October 2004), Secretary-level Telecommunication Coordination Meeting 1-2 (November 2004) and Joint Secretary-level Trade Talks (1-2 November 2004). As a result, significant progress was achieved on several bilateral issues.

During the year, the following documents were concluded: (i) MoU on Cooperation in the field of Weather Forecasting; (ii) Agreement on Cooperation in the fields of Culture and Sports; (iii) MoU between Indian Oil Corporation and Nepal Oil Corporation for Construction of an Oil Pipeline; (iv) Bilateral Cooperation Agreement between Bureau of Indian Standards and Nepal Bureau of Standards and Metrology; and (v) Rail Services

Agreement (facilitating commencement of rail service between India and Nepal in July 2004).

In order to streamline security related cooperation between India and Nepal, a network of bilateral institutional mechanisms has been evolved, comprising Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues, Home Secretary level talks and Joint Working Group on Border Management, which have proved to be very effective in addressing mutual security concerns. Recognising that the growth of Maoist insurgency in Nepal is a shared security concern, we have provided assistance as required by Nepal to deal with it. Measures have been taken to enhance co-operation with Nepal for effective border management and intelligence sharing. Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) personnel have been deployed along the Indo-Nepal border with a view to ensure peace and security along the border and prevent unfriendly elements from exploiting the open border for cross border subversive activities. Discussions were also concluded on bilateral Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and an updated Extradition Treaty which would strengthen the institutional legal arrangements between India and Nepal for effectively combating crime and terrorism.

A comprehensive review of India-Nepal cooperation in the field of water resources was undertaken in a series of meetings of bilateral institutional mechanisms in September-October 2004. The two sides worked out a definitive road map to move forward on various projects. The Joint Committee on Water Resources would also be finalising a comprehensive strategy for flood management and control, including measures that can be implemented in the short to medium term.

India continued to contribute to the development efforts of the Government of Nepal by undertaking various development projects in the areas of infrastructure, health, rural and community development, education, etc. During the year, a major aid-project for laying of optical fiber cable network along the East-West Highway was completed. A number of small grassroot level projects in the areas of health, education and community development were also executed.

With a view to facilitate trade and transit and strengthen security, Government of India has taken up several new projects to improve border infrastructure along the India-Nepal border. These projects include development of border check-posts, improvement of road infrastructure in the Nepalese Terai to strengthen connectivity of towns

and villages with the East West Highway, improvement in the roads and highways on the Indian side of the border which connect to the towns in Nepal and bringing broad-gauge railway connectivity to Nepalese towns in the Terai from the nearest points in India where broad-gauge already exists. The Indian Consulate in Birgunj has started functioning.

Government of India offers annually more than 1000 scholarships to Nepalese students in various courses. During the year, a new scholarship scheme, Dr. Homi J. Bhabha Scholarship Scheme, was operationalised under which 5 M. Tech. scholarships would be awarded to meritorious Nepalese students every year for studying in India. In addition, a number of Nepalese students also come to India to study at their own expense.

Pakistan

India is committed to the establishment of peaceful, friendly and co-operative relations with Pakistan. In pursuance of this goal, the Government has, from time to time, taken a number of policy initiatives. The year 2004-05 witnessed the commencement of a serious, sustained and comprehensive dialogue with Pakistan. Building upon the tremendous goodwill that was demonstrated by the people in both countries, the Government pursued a proactive policy of constructive engagement with Pakistan with the objective of cementing a durable structure of peace and stability in South Asia.

Based on the solemn and categorical commitment given by the President of Pakistan on 6 January 2004 not to permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner, the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries met in February 2004 to commence the Composite Dialogue. The talks signalled the unfolding of a substantive dialogue process, including initial interactions between Border Security Force (BSF) and Pakistan Rangers on 24-27 March 2004 and the Narcotics Control authorities of the two countries on 15-16 June 2004. Issues related to border management and combating smuggling and drug trafficking were discussed, and the two sides agreed to continue to cooperate to mutual advantage, including through sharing of operational intelligence.

Expert level meeting on Nuclear CBMs (19-20 June 2004)

During the February 2004 meeting between the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan, India suggested an

expert level dialogue on Nuclear Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). These talks, held on 19-20 June 2004 in New Delhi, resulted in agreements on establishing a “hotline” between the two Foreign Secretaries, upgrading, dedicating and securing the communication link between the DGMOs, and working towards an agreement on the pre-notification of the flight-testing of missiles.

Foreign Secretary level talks (27-28 June 2004)

During the Foreign Secretary level talks on 27-28 June 2004 on Peace and Security and Jammu & Kashmir, views were exchanged on carrying the process forward in an atmosphere free from terrorism and violence. India proposed a comprehensive framework of CBMs. It was, inter alia, agreed to immediately restore the strength of the respective High Commissions to the original level of 110; to immediately release all apprehended fishermen in each other’s custody and put in place a mechanism for the return of unintentionally transgressing fishermen and their boats from high seas without apprehending them; and to initiate steps for early release of civilian prisoners. It was also agreed in principle to re-establish the Consulates General in Karachi and Mumbai. The two Foreign Secretaries had a detailed exchange of views on Jammu and Kashmir and agreed to continue with a sustained and meaningful dialogue in order to find a peaceful, negotiated and amicable solution to the issue.

The Composite Dialogue (July-August 2004)

Talks on the remaining six subjects of the Composite Dialogue, namely, Siachen, Sir Creek, Tulbul Navigation Project, Economic and Commercial Cooperation, Terrorism and Drug Trafficking, and Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in various fields, were held in the last week of July and first half of August.

During discussions at the level of Secretaries (Culture) on “Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in Various Fields” in New Delhi, on 3-4 August 2004 India made wide-ranging proposals for promoting friendly exchanges and cooperation in the fields of art, culture, archaeology, education, science and technology, youth affairs and sports, and media and tourism. Views were also exchanged on liberalizing the visa regime and expanding the scope of the 1974 bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines by increasing the number of pilgrims and shrines on both sides. Both sides agreed to address the humanitarian issues concerning civilian prisoners and fishermen in each other’s custody. The Commerce Secretaries of the two countries met in Islamabad on 11-12 August 2004 to hold

discussions on the subject of Economic and Commercial Cooperation. India made wide ranging proposals on trade promotion, transit, new trade routes, cooperation in the fields of agriculture, petroleum and natural gas, banking, information technology, telecommunications, postal services, civil aviation, shipping and capital market.

On 5-6 August 2004 the Defence Secretaries of the two countries met in New Delhi for discussions on the Siachen issue within the framework of the Composite Dialogue. The two sides exchanged views, and a separate meeting was also held between the military experts to discuss modalities for disengagement and redeployment of troops. It was agreed to continue discussions with a view to resolving the issue in a peaceful manner. During the talks on Terrorism and Drug Trafficking on 10-11 August 2004 in Islamabad, both sides reaffirmed their determination to combat terrorism and emphasized the need for complete elimination of the menace. It was also agreed to work towards an MoU to institutionalize cooperation between Narcotics Control Authorities of the two countries, and to designate nodal officials in their respective High Commissions to liaise on drug control issues.

Review of the Composite Dialogue (4-6 September 2004)

External Affairs Minister met the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on 5-6 September 2004 to review the overall progress in the Composite Dialogue. A one-day meeting between the two Foreign Secretaries preceded it.

The two Ministers agreed on a series of technical talks on various subjects, including expert level meetings on Conventional and Nuclear CBMs, inter alia, to discuss the draft agreement on advance notification of missile tests; meeting between railway authorities on the operationalisation of the Munnabao - Khokhrapar rail link; meeting between Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and Pakistan Rangers; meeting between Narcotics Control Authorities, meeting between the Indian Coast Guards and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency to discuss an MoU on establishing communication links between them; and a meeting on all issues related to commencement of a bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad.

It was also agreed to establish a Committee of Experts to consider issues related to trade; a Joint Survey of the boundary pillars in the horizontal segment of the international boundary in the Sir Creek area; addition of a new category of tourist visa in the visa regime between the two countries, and promotion of group tourism; setting



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh receiving a memento from President Musharraf during their meeting in New York on 24 September 2004. External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh (to the right of PM) and Foreign Minister Kasuri (to PM's left) look on.



Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan, Shri Shyam Saran and Mr. Riaz Khokhar, during their meeting in New Delhi on 4 September 2004.

up of a mechanism to deal with the issue of civilian prisoners and fishermen to further measures for facilitation of visits to religious shrines, and upkeep of historical sites; implementation of the outcome of the August 2004 meeting of Defence Secretaries; and enhanced interaction and exchanges among the respective Foreign Offices.

Technical level talks (December 2004)

Technical level talks on various subjects, as agreed during the meeting between the two Foreign Ministers in September 2004 were held in the first half of December.

These included the following:

- A technical level meeting between the railway authorities of the two countries was held at Islamabad on 2-3 December 2004 to discuss the operationalisation of a rail link between Munnabao and Khokrapar. Both sides agreed to an early establishment of the proposed link. It was also agreed by the two sides to continue with discussions and to initiate necessary steps in the interim, to undertake specific activities including laying of railway tracks and other related infrastructure required to operationalise the rail link.
- On 3-4 December 2004 the two sides had a preliminary exchange of views on the MoU for the establishment of a communication link between the Indian Coast Guards and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency. It was agreed to continue with the discussions.
- The first meeting between India and Pakistan on all issues related to the commencement of the bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad was held in New Delhi on 7-8 December 2004. Both sides reiterated their commitment towards an early establishment of the proposed link and exchanged ideas on all aspects related to its operationalisation. The two sides agreed to meet again to continue the discussions.
- The Narcotics Control Authorities of India and Pakistan met on 13-14 December 2004 in New Delhi. The two sides positively engaged with each other on issues related to drug trafficking, and on enhancing bilateral cooperation through exchange of information and operational intelligence. MoU on drug related matter was also exchanged between the two sides.
- A technical level meeting on carrying out the Joint

Survey of the Boundary pillars in the Horizontal segment of the International Boundary in the Sir Creek area was held on 14-15 December 2004 in Islamabad. The two sides agreed to commence the Joint Survey of the Boundary Pillars from 3 January 2004. The survey took note of the existing pillars. A joint computation of the coordinates of these pillars was carried out from 8-12 February 2005 and the joint report would be submitted to the respective governments.

- Separate meetings on Nuclear and Conventional CBMs were held on 14-15 December 2004 in Islamabad. The two sides discussed various proposals in these fields. Understandings were reached on upgrading the link between DGMOs, and establishing hotline between the two Foreign Secretaries.
- Further, the technical level meetings on various subjects are expected to be held between January and June 2005. The meeting of the Joint Study Group on trade matters headed by Commerce Secretaries has taken place on 22-23 February 2005.

New Round of the Composite Dialogue

The Foreign Secretaries of the two countries met in Islamabad on 27-28 December 2004 to initiate the next round of the Composite Dialogue. They had discussions on the overall progress in bilateral relations, and on Peace and Security including CBM, and Jammu and Kashmir. A schedule of meetings on the other six subjects in the Composite Dialogue was worked out. On the issue of Peace and Security including CBMs, building upon the existing contacts between DGMOs, the two Foreign Secretaries agreed to promote regular contacts at local level at designated places and explore further CBMs along the international boundary and the LoC. On Jammu and Kashmir, India suggested five places along the International Boundary and the LOC where members of the divided families from the two sides could come and meet under a joint security arrangement.

High-level Political Contacts

The process of engagement with Pakistan has been taken forward through high-level political contacts and visits. External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh had several interactions with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan. During his visit to Islamabad on 19 - 23 July 2004 for the SAARC Ministerial Council Meeting, he held discussions with his Pakistani counterpart, and called on the President and

the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Earlier, the two Foreign Ministers met in Qingdao on 21 June 2004 and in Jakarta on 2 July 2004 during the course of multilateral events.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met President Pervez Musharraf in New York on 24 September 2004. It was the first meeting at the highest level after the formation of the new Government in India. Prime Minister emphasised that the dialogue process was based on President Musharraf's assurance on terrorism as contained in the Joint Press Statement of 6 January 2004.

The two leaders reiterated their commitment to continue the bilateral dialogue to restore normalcy and cooperation, and also agreed to look at the possibility of a gas pipeline in the larger context of expanding trade and economic relations between the two countries. On J&K, PM conveyed India's willingness to explore all options, short of redrawing of boundaries, or a second partition of the country.

The visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Shaukat Aziz, on 23-24 November 2004 in his capacity as the Chairperson of SAARC facilitated further forward movement in bilateral relations. Although SAARC was the occasion for the visit, there was also an exchange of views on bilateral issues. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh underlined the importance of Pakistan fulfilling, in letter and spirit, its commitment on cross-border terrorism. He also reiterated India's determination to address all issues on the bilateral agenda, in a serious and purposeful manner.

As agreed during the Foreign Secretary level talks during 27-28 December 2004 in Islamabad, the contacts at political level have continued. External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh visited Pakistan from 15-17 February 2005 where an agreement to start the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service from 7 April 2005 and to start a bus service from Amritsar to Lahore and religious places such as Nankana Sahib was reached. It was agreed to initiate discussions on reducing risks of nuclear accidents or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and preventing incidents at sea and to look at a gas pipeline through Pakistan subject to satisfaction of India's security concerns and assured supplies.

People to people exchanges- Visa liberalisation measures

The overwhelming desire of the people for peaceful and normal interaction found expression in the increased

people-to-people exchanges, including among Parliamentarians, journalists, jurists, sportspersons, artistes, businessmen, etc. The Speaker of the Pakistan National Assembly led a Parliamentary delegation to India from 18-23 December 2004 at the invitation of Speaker, Lok Sabha, and the Chief Election Commissioner of Pakistan visited India at the invitation of his Indian counterpart from 29 November to 5 December 2004.

In order to further facilitate people-to-people contact and to provide a fillip to the present process in India-Pakistan relations, the Government, on 18 September 2004, announced unilateral measures to liberalize visa regime for Pakistan nationals, including accredited journalists with minimum 3 years accreditation with national or international media of repute; academicians and professors, Vice Chancellors and those coming on the invitation of reputed/eminant universities and institutions; medical doctors, if accompanying patients for treatment at leading/reputed hospitals in India; all Pakistan nationals above the age of 65 years. It was also decided to grant permission to Pakistan nationals to visit upto twelve places during each visit, and to liberalize the issue of visas for participation in conferences.

In December 2004, the Government took the unilateral decision to grant visas to senior citizens (above 65 years), children (below 12 years), and members of pre-vetted groups from Pakistan on arrival at Wagah Border. In addition, the Government also decided to allow admission to students from Pakistan in technical institutions in India, on a case-by-case basis.

Exchange of visits by pilgrim groups

The year witnessed a number of visits by pilgrim groups on both sides. This included the visits by Indian pilgrim groups on the occasion of Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev in June, Barsi of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in June, birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev in November, and Kataraj and Hayat Pitafi in November 2004. Similarly, groups of Pakistani pilgrims undertook visits to Kalyar Sharief, Ajmer Sharif, and Sirhind Sharif in India.

In addition, India allowed Pakistani pilgrims to visit places outside the bilateral protocol of 1974, including 400 pilgrims to Khandoor Sahib in April 2004, 1000 pilgrims to Golden Temple at Amritsar in August - September 2004 for "Prakash Utsav"; 12 pilgrims from Pakistan to Charar-e-Sharief in J&K from 26-31 October 2004; 250 pilgrims to Fatehgarh Sahib in December 2004 for 300th 'Shahidi

Divas'; and a visit of a 2000 strong group from Ahmediya community to Qadian (Punjab) on 26-28 December 2004.

In keeping with the desire of the people, India made a number of proposals to Pakistan for addition of new shrines to the 1974 Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines, and to increase the size of pilgrim groups visiting on various occasions as well as sending additional groups on occasions outside the Protocol. It was also proposed to start a bus service between Amritsar and religious places in and around Lahore. The two sides agreed to allow visits by pilgrim groups to Gurudwara Darbar Sahib (at Kartarpur) and Dera Baba Bhuman Shah Shrine at Okara in Pakistan, Shadani Darbar at Raipur (Madhya Pradesh) and Shrine of Hazrat Boo Ali Shah Qalandar (at Panipat, Haryana) in India.

Issues related to Civilian Prisoners and Fishermen

The humanitarian issues related to prisoners and fishermen are high on the agenda of the Government. The issue of early release and repatriation of about 900 Indian civilian prisoners, 54 Prisoners of War, and 974 fishermen, presently in Pakistan's custody, was taken up consistently with Pakistan at all levels. The matter was also raised during the visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan to New Delhi in November. As a result of continuous efforts, Pakistan released 266 Indian fishermen on 6 January 2005. Pakistan has on 17 January 2005 provided consular access for 40 civilian prisoners and six fishermen who were imprisoned in Quetta, Gwadar and Mach Jails. Pakistan provided consular access to another 701 fishermen and 9 civilian prisoners from 8-12 February 2005 and has indicated that it would be providing consular access to all fishermen in its custody in February 2005. India provided consular access to 135 Pakistani civilian prisoners and released as many as 58. Besides, 108 Pakistani fishermen (out of a total of 140) were provided consular access.

During the Foreign Secretary level talks in December 2004, it was inter-alia agreed that:

- Immediate notification would be provided to the respective High Commissions through the Foreign Ministries of arrested Pakistani/Indian nationals;
- Consular access would be provided within three months of apprehension;
- Repatriation would be done immediately after completion of sentence and nationality verification;

- A mechanism would be introduced for early repatriation, without sentencing of inadvertent crossers;
- A similar mechanism would be established for early release, without sentencing of those under 16 apprehended by either side.

Status of Cross Border Terrorism

The ceasefire of 25 November 2003 along the International Boundary, Line of Control and the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL), continues to hold. While there has been some decline in the level of infiltration in the recent past, Pakistan has so far not taken any significant action to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism, such as communications links, launching pads, and training camps. The Government is monitoring the situation closely and continues to emphasize upon Pakistan the criticality of the fulfilment of its commitment on terrorism.

Relations have been restored at the level of High Commissioners, transport and communication links have resumed, a series of technical level and Composite Dialogue related meetings have been held on schedule, and people to people contact has been sustained and has given further energy to the process. The two Foreign Secretaries have already chalked out a calendar of meetings for the year 2005. The Government intends to continue with the present process of building confidence, enhancing cooperation and dialogue in an atmosphere free from terror and violence.

Sri Lanka

The current year saw further consolidation in India-Sri Lanka relations with high-level visits, expansion of trade, increased Indian investments in Sri Lanka, and augmentation of defense linkages. The President, Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition and Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka all visited India during this period in order to exchange views on bilateral issues and other areas of mutual interest and to work towards further intensification of bilateral relations. The close political understanding between the two countries and the importance accorded to bilateral relations is reflected by the endorsement of India's candidature for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

Parliamentary elections were held in Sri Lanka in April 2004 and a new government under the leadership of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa assumed office. Prime Minister Rajapaksa chose India as the first destination of

his visit abroad in July 2004. Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar had earlier visited India on 28-29 April 2004. President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga visited India from 4-7 November 2004 and Leader of Opposition Ranil Wickremesinghe was in India from 11-14 October 2004.

The Sri Lankan leaders also briefed India on developments in the peace process in Sri Lanka. India reiterated its support for the process of seeking a comprehensive, negotiated settlement acceptable to all communities of Sri Lanka, which should reflect the pluralistic nature of Sri Lankan society, within the framework of a united Sri Lanka and consistent with democracy and respect for individual rights. India maintains an abiding interest in the security of Sri Lanka and remains committed to its unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity. India favours the early resumption of negotiations pertaining to the peace process. Any interim arrangement on administration should be an integral part of an enduring final settlement that maintains the unity and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka and ensures the safety, well-being and prosperity of the people.

The Sri Lanka peace process is currently stalled. The LTTE withheld participation in the peace process from April 2003. Subsequently, it proposed creation of an Interim Self-Governing Authority (IGSA) for the Northern and Eastern areas, which is clearly outside the present constitution of Sri Lanka. The LTTE, on its part, is refusing to state unambiguously that it is committed to a unified Sri Lanka. A new dimension to the peace process was added in 2004 as a result of rebellion by LTTE's prominent eastern military commander Karuna, which added to the bloody internecine conflict and assassinations.

The existing understandings between India and Sri Lanka on the humane treatment and early release of fishermen who stray across maritime boundary lines continued to be implemented. It has been decided to constitute a Joint Working Group to deal with this issue. The Joint Working Group would meet frequently to deal with issues relating to straying fishermen, work out modalities for prevention of use of force against them and the early release of confiscated boats, and explore possibilities of working towards bilateral arrangements for licensed fishing. A memorandum of understanding on fisheries that will institutionalize cooperation in the fisheries sector between the two countries is also under consideration. Some of the salient features of this memorandum are consideration

of licensed fishing, cooperation in enhanced surveillance to minimize the problems of incursions of trawlers from both sides and cooperation in preservation of ecology and conservation of marine fisheries in the Palk Straits.

A large number of Sri Lankan soldiers, sailors and airmen are being trained in Indian defense establishments. About 2100 slots in various defense institutions in India are expected to be utilized by Sri Lankan armed forces personnel in the current year. A bilateral Defense Cooperation Agreement and the memorandum of understanding on the Rehabilitation of the Airfield in Palaly are under consideration.

Bilateral economic ties saw further intensification during this period. In addition to expansion of trade and an increase in investments, efforts were made to deepen and widen the framework of trade by upgrading the Free Trade Agreement into a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement by including trade in services and investments. Two rounds of talks at the level of Commerce Secretary on the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement were held in August 2004 and February 2005.

India is today the fourth largest foreign direct investor in Sri Lanka (after Singapore, UK and Australia). Although historical inflows have been low, there has been an rapid increase after the Free Trade Agreement became operational. A major attraction for Indian investors has been the ability to re-export to India while benefiting from lower tariffs on raw materials in Sri Lanka. Belying the erstwhile trend, India was the biggest FDI investor in Sri Lanka in 2002 and 2003.

Sri Lanka Board of Investment as of August 2004 had given approvals to 147 projects with total FDI of US\$ 450 million. Figures of actual inflows are not available but it is estimated that 50 per cent of Indian investment in SAARC countries is in Sri Lanka. A major power project involving setting-up of a 300 MW coal or LNG driven power plant by the National Thermal Power Corporation and Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd is under consideration.

The Government of India has extended a number of credit lines to Sri Lanka. Two of them are currently operational. These are a US \$100 million line of credit for capital goods, consumer durables, consultancy services and food items and a US \$31 million line of credit for supply of 300,000 tonnes of wheat to Sri Lanka. In addition a US \$150 million line of credit has been offered to the Sri Lankan

government for purchase of petroleum products as has been another US \$100 million line of credit for rural infrastructure projects. Thus a total of about US \$381 million (approx. Rs 1700 crores) is being made available to Sri Lankan Government through lines of credit.

The Government of India is in the process of executing development projects in Sri Lanka worth about Rs 70 crores and has made additional commitments worth approximately US\$ 87 million. The projects that are being implemented or are being considered include the construction of a general hospital, grant towards construction of a Cancer Hospital, projects to strengthen educational and vocational training systems, conduct of

1500 cataract operations and rural development projects.

Following the devastating tsunami on 26 December 2004, on the request of Sri Lankan Government, massive Indian relief operation involving naval ships and helicopters got underway in Sri Lanka. The Indian naval ships with medical teams, aircrafts, vessels provided immediate assistance in search, rescue, transport, damage assessment operations, salvage and debris clearance in the harbours of Galle, Trincomalee and other areas. The fact that Indian relief was the first to arrive has been acknowledged by President Kumaratunga and Foreign Minister Kadirgamar among others.



Building on tremendous historical and cultural linkages with the South-east Asia region, India continued to pursue closer relations with South East Asia as envisioned in its Look East Policy. India's Look East Policy has been extended to Phase II, beyond South East Asia to the Pacific region. Regular exchange of high level visits at bilateral level and interactions at regional and multilateral fora have contributed to a higher degree of comfort and familiarity among the leaders, which in turn helped in imparting fresh dynamism in India's relations with these countries. The high point in India's contacts with the region was the visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Vientiane, Lao PDR to attend the third India-ASEAN Summit from 29-30 November 2004. From the other end, Prime Minister of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong was the first Head of Government to be received by the UPA government. The Prime Ministers of New Zealand and Malaysia visited India during the year. Visit of New Zealand Prime Minister took place after nearly two decades and visit of Malaysian Prime Minister was of the longest duration as compared to his visits to other countries. On the margins of third India-ASEAN Summit, Prime Minister had bilateral meetings with President of Indonesia H.E. Mr. Sushilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Prime Minister of Australia H.E. John Howard and Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore. The Foreign Ministers of India and ASEAN met for the first time before the summit. At the Summit, "India-ASEAN Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity" was signed. External Affairs Minister attended a Special ASEAN Leaders' Summit in the aftermath of the Earthquake and Tsunami hosted by the Indonesian President in Jakarta on 6 January 2005. Third India – ASEAN Business Summit was held in New Delhi on 19 October and in Chennai on 20-21 October 2004 witnessed impressive participation from all the ASEAN countries. India-ASEAN car rally was flagged by Prime Minister at Guwahati on 22 November 2004 and by ASEAN leaders at Vientiane on 29 November 2004. The year saw fresh contacts with the leadership of South East Asian countries, which witnessed change of power i.e. Indonesia,

Malaysia and Singapore. A number of ministerial visits that took place during this period also helped in further consolidation of India's relations with the region.

As far as the Pacific region is concerned, India participated for the second time in the Post Forum Dialogue meetings with the PIF, in Samoa in August 2004. India reiterated its intention to assist in the development of the Pacific Island economies through economic and technical cooperation. India's bilateral relations with countries of this region saw further consolidation and growth. India continues to attach due importance to countries of South East Asia and Pacific region as envisioned in our "Look East Policy" I & II".

Australia

India-Australia bilateral relations continued to develop and grow into a strong partnership. The Coalition victory in the Federal Parliament and return of Prime Minister John Howard of Australia ensured continuity and added strength to the efforts made in enhancing the bilateral relations between India and Australia.

Exchange of Ministerial visits from India to Australia and from Australia to India continued during this period. Shri PM. Sayeed, Minister for Power, visited Australia from 6 to 10 September 2004 to participate in the 19th World Energy Congress held at Sydney. Shri Jagdish Tytler, Minister (Independent Charge) for Overseas Indian Affairs visited Australia from 26 October to 1 November 2004 to meet the Indian community in Australia and also to promote the 3rd Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in Mumbai in January 2005. A delegation of Members of Parliament, which included Smt. Pratibha Singh, MP; Smt. Krishna Tirath, MP; Smt. Jayaben Thakkar, MP; and Dr. (Smt.) Chandrakala Pandey, MP visited Canberra to attend the 2nd Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference on 29-30 June 2004. Election Commissioner Shri B.B. Tandon visited Australia from 3-10 October 2004 to observe the Australian federal elections. From Australia, the Premier of Queensland, Mr. Peter Beattie, visited India in September with a business

delegation. The Trade Office of the Queensland Government was inaugurated by him in Bangalore during his visit. The Premier of South Australia, Mr. Mike Rann, visited India with a business delegation in October. Ms. Martha Thompson, Minister for Information and Communication Technology and Small Business of the State Government of Victoria, visited India in October. The Premier of New South Wales, Mr. Bob Carr, visited India in November with a large business delegation. India-Australia trade relations continued to grow during the year. The visits of the Premiers of Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia to India with large business delegations focused on promoting trade and economic relations between India and Australia. The State Bank of India's branch office was inaugurated on 21 April 2004. Indian companies' investment in Australia increased during the year. Deepak Fertilizers and Petrochemicals Corporation Ltd. started a joint venture and ONGC Videsh Ltd. was awarded a prospective block for oil and gas exploration in Western Australia. Prominent Australian banks launched special investment funds for India. In the field of agriculture, an important breakthrough was made by starting annual consultations on plant quarantine issues which would promote import and export of agricultural products between the two countries.

Cooperation in the field of Defence continued to be active during the year. Australian Navy, Army and the Air Force Chiefs visited India during the year. Naval ships visit was another aspect of growing cooperation between the two defence services.

Brunei Darussalam

Bilateral relations with Brunei Darussalam continued to be cordial and friendly. Important areas of interactions were political, commercial, science and technology and sports issues.

Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma, Additional Secretary (IO) in the Ministry visited Brunei from 5-7 May 2004 as the Special Envoy of the External Affairs Minister and held an audience with Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Foreign Minister of Brunei on 6 May 2004 on ARF related issues. A team of four scientists from the Indian Space Research Organization successfully monitored the launching of the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) from its TTC Centre in Brunei Darussalam on 20 September 2004. The Centre was set up under an agreement signed in August 1997 in the space field between the

Governments of India and Brunei Darussalam. Pehin Haji Awang Mohd Ali, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brunei, led a delegation of four members to attend the Third India-ASEAN Business Summit held in New Delhi on 19 October and in Chennai on 20-21 October 2004.

Three teams consisting of 4 members each took part in the First India-ASEAN Motor Car Rally 2004 from Guwahati to Batam (Indonesia).

Cambodia

Bilateral relations between India and Cambodia continued to grow and diversify during the year 2004-05. Shri R.M. Abhyankar, Secretary (ANA) visited Cambodia on 6 May 2004 and called on the Foreign Minister for bilateral discussions.

In part utilization of the Government of India credit line of US\$10 million, Indian companies supplied 240 irrigation pumps worth about US\$5 million to the Cambodian Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology. The balance is to be used for West Barai Irrigation Project. Shri D. Datta, Chairman & Managing Director, WAPCOS (India) Ltd. visited Cambodia from 17-19 November 2004 for discussions with Cambodian authorities, regarding modalities for implementation phase of the Project.

Ms. Ranjana Gauhar, an internationally acclaimed Odissi dancer, visited Cambodia from 16-27 April 2004 with a 5-member group for filming a documentary "Nectar in Stone", sponsored by XP Division, MEA. Ms. Gauhar called on the Cambodian Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, H.R.H. Princess Norodom Buppha Devi. As part of the filming, she gave a dance performance in front of the famous Angkor Wat Temple along with a Cambodian Apsara dancer. The Indian Embassy in collaboration with the Cambodian Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, organized a music and dance programme on 19 April 2004 comprising Odissi dance by Ms. Gauhar, and dance programme by Cambodian artistes.

Under the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Programme, the Government of India has decided to set up the Cambodia-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre (CIEDC) in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. A delegation led by Dr. Dinesh Awasthi, Director of the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad, visited Phnom Penh from 7-11 June 2004 to conduct Entrepreneurship Appreciation Workshop and selection of Director/Trainers and other key officials for the CIEDC.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh with the President of Afghanistan Mr. Hamid Karzai in New Delhi on 24 February 2005.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh meets the Prime Minister of Australia Mr. John Howard on the sidelines of ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Laos on 29 November 2004.

A team of two professors from the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, visited Phnom Penh for the Basic English Language and Communications Skills Course for the Officials of the Government of Cambodia from 28 June to 23 July 2004. This was an India-Singapore joint effort under the 'Initiative for ASEAN Integration' (IAI) programme.

During his visit to Cambodia in November 2002, the Prime Minister had announced providing seed money of US\$1 million for setting up a Museum of Traditional Asian Textiles at Siem Reap under the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Programme. Cambodian government has allotted a 1-acre plot for the Museum at a prime location in Siem Reap. The project is being coordinated by APSARA Authority of Cambodia and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

The Prime Minister, during his visit to Cambodia in April 2002, announced gifting of 5 MIE IT Kiosks to Cambodia. During the year 2004, NIIT Ltd. established five kiosks in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Takeo, and Kandal. These are running satisfactorily and have evoked positive response in the schools and the public.

A Cambodian delegation led by Mr. Lay Prohas, Minister of Tourism, visited India to attend the Third India-ASEAN Business Summit from 19-21 October 2004. A three-member Indian delegation visited Cambodia from 26-29 October 2004 to attend the First ARF Inter-Sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures.

Shri L.L.Mehrotra, Vice-President of the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Simla and former Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs & Special Envoy of the UNSG to Cambodia, visited Cambodia from 14-18 November 2004 to participate in the 7th Socio-Cultural Research Congress on Cambodia at the Royal University of Phnom Penh and delivered a lecture on 'United Nations' Contribution to Peace, Democracy and Stability in Cambodia'. He called on His Majesty Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, Father-King of Cambodia; H.E. Mr. Chea Sim, President of the Senate; H.E. Mr. Heng Samrin, Ist Vice-President of the National Assembly; H.E. Mr. Sar Kheng & H.R.H. Prince Norodom Sirivudh, Deputy Prime Ministers and Co-Ministers of Interior; H.E. Mr. Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister-in-Charge of the Council of Ministers and H.E. Mr. Hor Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation.

The 1st India-ASEAN Car Rally crossed Cambodia from

4-7 December 2004. The Rally received ceremonial welcome and send-off by the Cambodian dignitaries. The highlight of the Rally's programme in Cambodia was the India-ASEAN Tourism Evening followed by dinner, organized by the Cambodian Ministry of Tourism. The function was presided over by H.R.H. Prince Norodom Ranariddh, President of the National Assembly and addressed by H.E. Mr Tea Banh, Deputy Prime Minister and Co-Minister of National Defence and H.E. Mr. Lay Prohas, Minister of Tourism. The participants of the Rally were treated to an extravagant cultural show, which included several dances choreographed by H.R.H Princess Buppha Devi.

H.E. Dr. Thong Khon, Secretary of State, Ministry of Tourism visited India from 20-23 November 2004 to participate in the inauguration ceremonies for the Indo-ASEAN Car Rally at Guwahati on 22 November 2004.

Khmer version of Ramayana by C.Rajagopalachari (translated into Khmer by Dr. Thon Hin) was released in Phnom Penh on 16 December 2004 by H.R.H. Samdech Norodom Sirivudh, Deputy Prime Minister and Co-Minister of Interior, Royal Government of Cambodia. Shri C, Babu Rajeev, Additional Secretary & Director General, Archeological Survey of India (ASI) visited Cambodia from 15-18 December 2004 to participate in the UNESCO-ICC Plenary Session and for discussions regarding ASI's Ta Prohm Restoration Project at Siem Reap.

Fiji

Indo-Fijian bilateral relations have grown steadily as a result of several on going initiatives and high level visits. The GOI sent a Sugar Technology Mission to assist in restructuring Fiji's ailing sugar industry and is considering a line of credit at favorable terms to Fiji Sugar Corporation to outsource machinery/services from India for the modernization of 4 sugar mills. 34 Fijian nominees have been deputed for academic/specialised training programmes under various scholarship schemes of the Government of India. The assistance rendered by India is being widely acknowledged. The Government of India has reopened its Cultural Center in Suva alongwith a sub center in Lautaka. The Cultural centers in Fiji will act as regional centers for promoting cultural goodwill and understanding in the region. India has decided to depute three artists for a period of one year to this Cultural Center.

Several high level visits took place between India and Fiji after a gap of several years, which led to a better

understanding between the two countries. Visits from India included a 2-member Parliamentary delegation to attend a Commonwealth Ministerial meeting on Women's affairs in May, visit of a 6-member Parliamentary delegation to attend Asia-Pacific Parliamentarians Conference on Environment and Development in August and the visit of Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Overseas Indian Affairs in November to promote PBD 2005.

A 7-member Fijian ITC Partnership Development Mission visited India in August to obtain technical assistance for the development of IT industry. Commander of the Fiji Armed Forces visited India in September to attend Pacific Armies Management Seminar.

Indonesia

India's relations with Indonesia, the largest country in South-east Asia and a strategically important neighbour with which we share a maritime boundary, continued to broaden and intensify during the year. These relations are underpinned by India's shared values as Asia's largest pluralistic democracies, with a mutual stake in each other's success and prosperity.

As in India, 2004 was an election year in Indonesia. Well organized and peaceful Parliamentary and Presidential elections were held in Indonesia from April-September 2004, marking a major step forward in the consolidation of Indonesia's transition to democracy. As a long-standing democracy, India welcomed the smooth democratic transition to a new leadership in Indonesia. Both President and Prime Minister facilitated H.E. Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who assumed the office of the President of Indonesia on 20 October 2004 and expressed the desire to foster even closer relations with Indonesia based on our common values and challenges.

The tradition of annual summit level interaction established in 2000 was maintained, with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Indonesian President Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono meeting in Vientiane on the margins of the Third India-ASEAN Summit on 28 November 2004. India's relations with ASEAN have progressed steadily during Indonesia's Chairmanship of this regional grouping in 2003-04, culminating in the signing of an ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity document on 30 November 2004.

External Affairs Minister attended the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting held in Jakarta from 30 June to 2

July 2004. During his bilateral meeting with his Indonesian counterpart Dr. N. Hassan Wirajuda on the sidelines of the ARF on 2 July 2004, bilateral relations were comprehensively reviewed. External Affairs Minister invited the Indonesian Foreign Minister to pay a visit to New Delhi for the next meeting of the bilateral Joint Commission, which is expected to be held in early 2005.

In the aftermath of the unprecedented Tsunami natural disaster on 26 December 2004 which devastated coastal areas of northern Sumatra, President, Vice President, Prime Minister, Speaker of the Lok Sabha and External Affairs Minister addressed messages of sympathy to their counterparts in Indonesia. As part of its region-wide assistance to neighbours struck by the Tsunami, India provided US\$ 1 million worth of emergency relief supplies to Indonesia. Two Indian Naval ships, INS Nirupak and INS Khukri, were deployed off the coast of western Aceh which was completely devastated by the Tsunami. Medical teams from INS Nirupak treated victims of the disaster both on-board and at an on-shore camp for three weeks, while INS Khukri disembarked and distributed 35 tonnes of emergency relief supplies. The Indian relief mission was fully coordinated with the Indonesian authorities and military (TNI).

External Affairs Minister attended a Special ASEAN Leaders' Summit on the Aftermath of the Earthquake and Tsunami hosted by the Indonesian President in Jakarta on 6 January 2005. He outlined the well coordinated and intensive relief efforts undertaken in the disaster struck areas of India as well as our commitment to assist our neighbours, including Indonesia, with disaster relief. External Affairs Minister called on the Indonesian President on 7 January 2005. President Yudhoyono conveyed appreciation for India's prompt disaster relief assistance and reiterated his commitment to building multi-sectoral ties with India.

A bilateral MoU on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism was concluded with Indonesia on 2 July 2004. The JWG established under this MoU will report to the bilateral Joint Commission. Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Kamal Nath attended the Third India-ASEAN Economic Consultation Meeting held in Jakarta on 5 September 2004. During the bilateral meeting with his Indonesian counterpart, both sides agreed to work closely to give further impetus to bilateral trade, economic and investment relations.

An Indonesian Business delegation attended the Third

India-ASEAN Business Summit held in Delhi/Chennai from 19-21 October 2004. Sectoral and functional cooperation between India and Indonesia in the areas of defence, science and technology, technical cooperation and culture were significantly enhanced during the year.

A delegation of the National Defence College (NDC) visited Indonesia from 16-21 May 2004. The delegation called on the Indonesian FM, TNI Chief, Secretary General of Defence and the Governor of NDC's Indonesian counterpart, LAMHANNAS. The Fourth bi-annual Indonesia-India Coordinated Joint Naval Patrol was conducted during the month of September 2004. Eight Indian Naval Ships paid goodwill visits to Indonesian ports from May-November 2004. These visits provided the opportunity to develop closer contacts between our respective Navies as well as the carrying out of passing exercises between them. Two-way exchanges between the Indian Armed Forces and the TNI in the area of military training continued during the year. Fourteen TNI officers are expected to undergo military training in India under the ITEC-I scheme during 2004-05.

Indian assistance to Indonesia in the critical area of human resource development under ITEC, Colombo Plan and GCSS Scholarship Schemes was enhanced during the year, with a total of 78 training slots being provided under ITEC, 38 under Colombo Plan and 20 under the GCSS Themes. These slots were fully utilized.

Work on a Vocational Training Centre for the Construction Sector in Jakarta, a Rs. 3.08-crore ITEC Project, was undertaken by the implementing agency NSIC during the year. The Centre will be ready for commissioning by early 2005.

Cooperation in Space Research and Development for peaceful purposes is an important component of our bilateral S&T cooperation. ISRO and its Indonesian counterpart LAPAN jointly operate a Space Telemetry, Tracking and Command Ground Station (Biak TT&C-I) for Satellites and Geostationary Launch Vehicles at Biak in the Indonesian Province of Papua. The physical and technological infrastructure at this important facility was expanded and a second Ground Station (Biak TT&C - II) established during the year with an US\$ 875,000 investment from ISRO.

A branch of JNICC, Jakarta was opened in Bali in October 2004 marking a significant step forward in the expansion of our cultural presence in Indonesia. In conjunction with ICCR, Indian Mission continued to enhance the activities

of JNICC and broaden our cultural interaction with a country with which India shares historical affinities.

Bilateral trade between India and Indonesia recorded impressive growth to exceed US\$ 3 bn during 2004. Public Sector company IRCON secured a US\$ 10 mn contract for a toll road segment in Indonesia during the year and explored business opportunities in the areas of railway rehabilitation and the leasing of locomotives.

Lao PDR

The highlight of the year under review was the third India-ASEAN Summit held in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 29-30 November 2004. This meeting coincided with the 10th ASEAN Summit, 2nd ASEAN Business and Investment Summit and the first ever India-ASEAN Car Rally.

In the margins of the India-ASEAN Summit, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India met Lao President H.E. Khamtay Siphandone on 29 November 2004 and discussed bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest. Earlier, on 28 November 2004, PM met his Laos counterpart Prime Minister H.E Bounhang Vorachit, who among other things reiterated his country's support to India's candidature for a permanent seat on the expanded UNSC. Lao-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre was jointly inaugurated by External Affairs Minister and Lao Education Minister on 27 November 2004. The Centre will spearhead entrepreneurship development in Lao PDR and be a centre of excellence for facilitating creation of viable and competitive new enterprises and strengthening of the existing ones.

Lao-India IT Centre was also jointly inaugurated by External Affairs Minister from Indian side and Prof. Dr. Bountiem Phissamay, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and the President of Science Technology and Environment Agency, from the Lao side on 28 November 2004. This landmark project will go a long way in contributing to the strengthening of digital opportunities for economic growth, poverty reduction, employment generation, sustainable use of resources, etc.

First India-ASEAN Car Rally was ceremonially flagged off from Vientiane by Indian PM and PM of Lao PDR on 30 November 2004.

Lao PDR, as the Country Coordinator for India in the ASEAN since July 2003 for a period of three years played an active role in India's greater integration with this regional organisation. Laos also assumed the Chairmanship of ASEAN w.e.f 1 July 2004. As the



H. E. Bounnhang Vorachith, Prime Minister of Lao PDR & Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India flagging of the car rally from Vientiane on 30 November, 2004. Leaders of ASEAN Countries are also seen in the photograph.



H.E. Bounnhang Vorachith, Prime Minister of Lao PDR and Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India flagging off the Car Rally from Vientiane on 30 November 2004. Leaders of ASEAN countries are also seen in the photograph.

incoming Chairman of the 38th ASEAN Standing Committee, Lao DPM and Foreign Minister H.E. Somsavat Lengsavad highlighted India's accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.

An Indian company has signed a supply contract with the Electricity Company of Laos for construction of 115kv transmission line. The supply would be financed through a Government of India line of credit for US\$10 million. India is also considering the construction of a Speciality Hospital in Vientiane. A feasibility report on the project has been completed by the HSCC (India) Limited in September 2004. The proposed Speciality Hospital would further strengthen the traditional and historic bonds and enhance people-to-people contacts.

Malaysia

India's relations with Malaysia were further strengthened and broadened during the year. Highlight of the year was an official visit by Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (PMB) to India from 19-23 December 2004. PMB was accompanied by five senior Ministers, a number of senior officials and a large high profile business delegation. During the visit, PMB called on the President and Vice President and had one-to-one, restricted and delegation level talks with Prime Minister.

He had separate meetings with External Affairs Minister, Minister of Finance, Minister of Home Affairs, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance. Three agreements were signed in the presence of two Prime Ministers, namely, an agreement to set up a Joint Venture between the Antrix Corporation and MEASAT International for joint marketing of satellite capacity; a Letter of Intent signed by MEASAT for procurement, launch and putting into orbit of MEASAT-4 satellite from the Antrix Corporation; and a Concession Agreement for the development, construction, operation and maintenance of Hyderabad airport between the Civil Aviation Ministry and a Consortium which included the Malaysian Airports Berhad Holding (MABH). Twelve Business-to-Business agreements were signed in presence of PMB at India-Malaysia Business Forum, jointly organized by FICCI and CII in New Delhi. The Jamia Millia Islamia University conferred an honorary doctorate on PMB on 21 December 2004. PMB also visited Bangalore where he addressed a business meeting organized by CII and visited the campuses of Biocon, Infosys, HAL and Indian Institute of Science. Enhancing

economic ties was a key focus of PMB's visit. In response to Malaysia's suggestion for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and Malaysia, Prime Minister proposed the establishment of a Joint Study Group to examine the feasibility of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA). Both countries identified Information Technology, Bio-technology, Pharmaceuticals, Education, Health Care, Tourism and other services as the areas where "Smart Partnerships" could be formed.

The bilateral cooperation in the infrastructural sector especially in road construction, seaports, airports and power continued to strengthen following many high level visits. Mr. S. Samy Vellu, Minister of Works of Malaysia visited India four times during the year. During the visits, he met External Affairs Minister, Finance Minister, Minister of Road Transport, Highways and Shipping and Minister of Statistics and Programme Implementation and led a 160 member delegation comprising senior political leaders, businessmen, journalists, etc. to the Third Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, which was held at Mumbai on 7-9 January 2005. Mr. Mustapa Mohamed, Minister in Prime Minister's Department of Malaysia attended the First Ministerial Round Table Conference on Regional Cooperation in Oil and Gas Economy held in New Delhi on 6 January 2005. Malaysian delegation to the 3rd India-ASEAN Business Summit held at New Delhi and Chennai on 18-20 October 2004 was the largest from any ASEAN country as in the earlier two Summits. At Chennai, the delegation was led by Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Mohd Rustam, the Chief Minister of Malacca. A parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Speaker of Dewan Rakyat (House of Commons) of Malaysia Datuk Lim Si Cheng and consisting of Secretary of Parliament of Malaysia and six other officials visited India from 3-8 November 2004 to study the management and procedures of Parliament in India.

The Minister of Power, Shri P.M. Sayeed visited Malaysia on 11-12 September 2004 and called on the Malaysian Minister of Works, Mr. S. Samy Vellu. To promote participation of a large number of delegates from Malaysia in the 3rd Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in Mumbai on 7-9 January 2005, the Minister of State for Overseas Indian Affairs, Shri Jagdish Tytler visited Kuala Lumpur from 24-26 September 2004.

Malaysia is poised to become the largest trading partner of India among the ASEAN countries with a total two-way bilateral trade of US\$ 4.2 billion in 2004-2005. During

April to October 2004, exports from India grew at 98 per cent reaching US\$ 727 million as against US\$ 367 million in the corresponding period of 2003. During the same period, Indian imports from Malaysia recorded a growth of 20% reaching US\$ 1751 million in 2004 as compared to US\$ 1463 in 2003.

India and Malaysia had shown understanding and cooperation by supporting each other's candidates in various multilateral institutions and fora. Defence relations strengthened during the period with high level official visits from both sides. From India, Deputy Chief of Army Lt. Gen. P.P.S. Bhandari visited Malaysia from 12-16 April 2004 for the Defence Services Asia Exhibition 2004 and from the Malaysian side, the Chief of Royal Malaysian Navy, Admiral Datuk Mohd Anwar bin Hj Mohd Nor visited India from 6-9 September 2004. Two Indian Coast Guard Ships CGS SAGAR and CGS VIVEK visited Malaysia from 9-13 April 2004 and in reciprocity, two Malaysian ship KD LEKIU and KD KASTURI visited Mumbai from 8-12 September 2004.

A number of ICCR sponsored cultural programmes by Kuchipudi dance group led by Mr. Veeranal Jayarama Rao and Mrs. Banasri Rao, and Bharatanatyam group led by Ms. Geeta Chandran were organized in Kuala Lumpur as well as in other places. Ms. Sujata Chaudhry participated in the 10th Kuala Lumpur Poetry Reading under the sponsorship of the ICCR.

Under the Amnesty Scheme declared by Malaysia from 29 October, nearly 4000 illegal Indian nationals left Malaysia till November 2004 mostly with the help of High Commission of India in Kuala Lumpur.

New Zealand

Prime Minister Helen Clark paid official visit to India from 16-20 October 2004. During the visit, she held wide-ranging discussions on international and bilateral issues. She also visited Bangalore, Mumbai and Agra. Shri Jagdish Tytler, Minister of State for Overseas Indians visited New Zealand from 3-6 November 2004 in connection with the Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas 2005 and met the members of the Indian community.

Papua New Guinea

India's relations with Papua New Guinea (PNG) have been steadily growing. PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu continue to support India's candidature to various International Organizations, including (i) India's election to the Executive Council of the International Maritime

Organization, held recently with the conclusion of 23rd Assembly Session of the IMO in London; and (ii) India's election to the UN Economic and Social Council for the term 2005-07 during the 59th General Assembly Session in New York on 28 October 2004.

India offered 17 slots under the Government of India's ITEC/SFTC/Colombo Plan/Foreign Service Institute programmes to Papua New Guinea during the year 2004-05. The courses utilized related to the fields of Statistics, Journalism, Office Technology & Internet Applications, Auditing in IT Environment, Networking Design, Small Enterprise Financing, Urban Development, Information Technology, Entrepreneurship Development, Maintenance Engineering & Management, Food Processing Enterprises for Women, Tourism and Hospitality Management, Small Scale Industries, Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats etc.

Pacific Island Forum

The 35th meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum was held in Apia (Samoa) on 5-7 August 2004. India attended the 16th Post-Forum Dialogue Partners meeting for the second time on 9 August 2004.

India has significantly enhanced training slots to PIF countries. Under India's ITEC/SFTC/Colombo/FSI training programmes, 17 slots have been allotted to Papua New Guinea, 13 to Solomon Islands and 10 to Vanuatu in the year 2004-2005. A team of experts was sent in May-June 2004 to a few PIF countries namely, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu to carry out 'needs assessment' and along the way, hold consultations in Australia and New Zealand. As a follow up to the visit, a work plan is being prepared in consultation with different departments of the government of India which will be involved in the implementation.

India is also considering undertaking research on Kava, a regional drink of the Pacific region. This exercise has the potential for a long term positive impact on the indigenous population of the Pacific region in terms of poverty reduction.

In response to a request from Government of Nauru for assistance in repairing and updating their computer system used for office operations of the Bank of Nauru, the treasury, pay roll, government accounts, land and survey, phosphate corporation, etc, the Government of India deputed a computer engineer from (CMC Ltd.) Bangalore in June 2004. The expert got the system back into

operation and also suggested ways for improving the system.

Philippines

Relations between India and the Philippines acquired greater depth in political and economic arenas. External Affairs Minister, Shri Natwar Singh, and the Philippine Secretary, Foreign Affairs, Alberto G. Romulo, held a bilateral meeting on the margins of the 3rd ASEAN-India Business Summit at Vientiane in November 2004.

The expanding defence interaction between the two countries got a further boost with the visit of five Indian naval ships of the Eastern Fleet to Manila from 29 October – 1 November 2004.

During the first ten months of 2004, bilateral trade was US\$285 million, with exports from India being US\$207 million and imports from Philippines US\$78 million.

In a breakthrough in commercial relations, an MoU between PHARMEXCIL and the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC) was signed on 6 November 2004 in Mumbai, paving the way for substantial growth of exports of Indian medicines to the Philippines. The MoU was signed during the visit of a Philippine delegation to Mumbai, led by Roberto Pagdanganan, Chairman of the PITC to attend the INDIA-CHEM 2004. A Philippine business delegation led by the Chairman of the Philippine-India Business Council visited India on 19-21 October 2004 to participate in the 3rd India-ASEAN Business Summit held in Delhi and Chennai.

The Minister of State for Agriculture, Shri Kanti Lal Bhuria, led a delegation to Manila to participate in the International Rice Festival and International Rice Forum held on 27-29 November 2004. In an indication of the growing popularity of ITEC and Colombo Plan Training Programmes, 62 training slots out of 68 have been utilised so far.

Singapore

The period of the report witnessed further strengthening and expansion of India-Singapore bilateral relations marked by exchange of high-level visits of VIPs. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh sent a message of felicitation to Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, on assuming the post of the third Prime Minister of Singapore on 12 August 2004. Shri K. Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister sent a congratulatory message to Mr. George Yeo, newly appointed Foreign Minister of Singapore. High Level

contacts between the two countries were maintained during the period of the report.

Mr. Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of Singapore visited India from 8-11 July 2004. He was accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Law, Prof. S. Jayakumar and Minister of Trade and Industry Mr. George Yeo. During the visit, PM Goh called on Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, President and Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Vice President of India. He also met Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, President of the Congress Party, Shri K. Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister, Shri Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Shri L.K. Advani, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. Prime Minister Goh was conferred by the President of India with the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for 2003.

Shri K. Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister visited Singapore on 3 July 2004. During his visit, he called on Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew and Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (Presently Prime Minister).

Shri Jagdish Tytler, Minister of State for Overseas Indian Affairs visited Singapore from 22-24 September 2004 for promoting Pravasi Bhartiya Divas 2005 held in Mumbai. During his visit, he met Dr. Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Minister for Education, Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports and Senior Minister of State for Trade & Industry and Dr. Balaji Sadasivan, Senior Minister of State Information, Communications and the Arts and Health. He also addressed an Indian community function organized by the Institute of South Asian Studies.

Shri S. Jaipal Reddy, Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Culture visited Singapore from 18-20 October 2004. During the visit, he held talks with his counterpart, Dr. Lee Boon Yang, Minister of Information, Communications and the Arts on enhancing bilateral cooperation in the fields of culture, information and broadcasting. He also met Mr. S. Jayakumar, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Law. The 4th Executive Programme on Cooperation in the fields of Arts, Heritage, Archives and Library between India and Singapore was signed by Shri Alok Prasad, High Commissioner of India and Dr. Tan Chin Nam, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts on 19 October 2004. Shri Kamal Nath, Minister for Commerce and Industry accompanied by Shri S.N. Menon, Commerce Secretary



The visiting Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi calls on the Vice President Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, 19-23 December 2004.



Prime Minister of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong seen with President, Vice President and Prime Minister of India on 9 July 2004 before receiving Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for 2003. Shrimati Najma Heptulla, President of ICCR is also present.

visited Singapore from 10-12 November 2004. During his visit, he met his counterpart Mr. Lim Hng Kiang, Trade and Industry Minister of Singapore. The two sides exchanged views on the bilateral trade and investment matters, regional developments and reviewed progress of the ongoing discussions on the bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement.

Shri Narendra Modi, Chief Minister of Gujarat led a 13-member business delegation to Singapore from 27-30 November 2004 in connection with the Global Investment Summit 11-14 January 2005 to be held at Ahmedabad. During the visit, he met Singapore's Acting Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports & Senior Minister of State for Trade Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan. The delegation had meetings with Temasek Holdings, Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Shri Modi also addressed a seminar on: "Making Inroads into Gujarat: Opportunities and Strategies" organized by Institute of South Asian Studies and Network India.

Singapore Minister for Trade and Industry Lim Hng Kiang led a 25-member business delegation to the Third India-ASEAN Business Summit held in New Delhi on 19 October 2004. During the visit, Mr. Lim met with Shri Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister for Communications and IT Shri Dayanidhi Maran.

Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, Dr. Tony Tan visited India from 24 October to 2 November 2004. During the visit, he met Shri Arjun Singh, Minister of Human Resource Development, Shri K. Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for Defence and Shri Shivraj Patil, Minister of Home Affairs. He delivered a lecture on "National Security after 9/11: Singapore's perspective" at the Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi.

Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani, Dean, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy of Singapore participated at the International Seminar on "50 Years of Panchsheel: Towards a New International Order based on Genuine Multilateralism" Organised by the Indian Council of World Affairs in New Delhi on 18 November 2004.

A delegation led by the Home Minister of Singapore, Mr. Wong Kan Seng called on the Home Minister Shri Shivraj Patil on 22 November 2004 and discussed bilateral security-related issues between the two countries. Mr.

Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Education Minister, Singapore led delegation to the 3rd Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held at Mumbai from 7-9 January 2005. At the session, he delivered address on "India- A Hub for Globalization".

The sixth round of Foreign Office Consultations were held in Singapore on 4 November 2004. Shri Rajiv Sikri, Secretary (East) led the Indian delegation. During the visit he called on Mr. George Yeo, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Foreign Secretary Shri Shashank visited Singapore on 29-30 April 2004. During his visit, he met Mr. Tan Chin Tiong, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and exchanged views on bilateral, regional and international matters. He addressed a seminar at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies titled "Emerging Asia: India's Foreign Policy perspective".

Since the signing of Declaration of Intent on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in April 2003, ten rounds of discussions led by the Commerce Secretaries of two countries were held alternatively in New Delhi and Singapore.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) continued in sending CEOs Mission to Singapore. CEOs Mission led by Shri Anand Mahindra, President, CII, visited Singapore on 15-16 April 2004. During the visit, the delegation called on H.E. Mr. S.R. Nathan, President, Mr. Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Lee Boon Yang, Minister of Information, Communications and the Arts, Dr. Balaji Sadasivan, Minister of State for Health and Transport and Mr. Raymond Lim, Minister of State for Trade and Industry.

Shri Tarun Das, Chief Mentor of CII was presented with PBM award for his contribution in promoting India-Singapore relations by the Singapore Government on 4 November 2004. He is the first Indian national to receive such an honour from the Government of Singapore.

The India Calling 2004 Asia-Pacific Business Summit was organized in Singapore from 9-10 July 2004 by the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Mumbai in collaboration with Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This was the first ever such Summit of the IMC held outside India and attracted over 600 participants.

The Federation of Indian Export Organisation (FIEO) organised the visit of two Indian delegations in the field of healthcare (19-20 August 2004) and a multi-product

(23-25 September 2004). A 34 member strong Singapore business delegation led by Mr. M. Rajaram, Chairman, Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Mr. Kwek Leng Joo, President, Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry attended the “Partnership Summit 2005” organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry in Kolkata from 12-14 January 2005.

Defence relations continued to strengthen between the two countries. Shri Ajay Prasad, Defence Secretary led the Indian delegation at Asian Security Conference, “Shangri-La dialogue” held in Singapore from 4-6 June 2004.

The Singapore Chief of Navy (CNV), RADM Ronnie Tay visited India from 27-30 September 2004. During the visit, he paid a courtesy call on the Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Air Staff and Chief of Naval Staff. Chief of Air Force Major-General Lim Kim Choon visited India from 24 - 29 October 2004. He also visited the SINDEX exercise between the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) and the Indian Air Force (IAF) at Gwalior. The exercise was the first-ever bilateral exercise between the two air forces.

Three ships of the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy, INS Ranvir, INS Udaygiri and INS Kora visited Singapore on 17-18 May 2004.

5th International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards were held in Singapore on 22 May 2004. The event was attended by leading Indian film stars. President H.E. Mr. S.R. Nathan of Singapore was the Guest of Honour at the function.

An ICCR sponsored culture troupe from Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra, New Delhi performed their famous Ram Lila in ballet form as part of a major conference and exhibition portraying the widespread influence of the Ramayana in Southeast Asian countries on 14 September 2004. President H.E. Mr. S.R. Nathan attended the performance.

The ‘1st India - ASEAN Car Rally’ reached Singapore on its penultimate leg on 10 December 2004. The rally was welcomed by Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong and a high-level delegation which came from India.

Solomon Islands

The Foreign Minister of Solomon Islands Mr. Laurie Chan visited India from 17 to 18 January 2005. This was the first ever visit at the level of Foreign Minister from

Solomon Islands. During the visit, the visiting Minister had meetings with the External Affairs Minister, Minister for Human Resource Development, Minister of State for Information Technology and Minister of Commerce and Industry. The visiting Minister had preliminary discussions on possibilities of increasing cooperation with India in diverse areas.

Thailand

India’s relationship with Thailand continued to further deepen and widen in all important spheres with the exchange of high level visits and strengthening of economic & trade links. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising External Affairs Minister, Minister of Commerce & Industry, and the National Security Advisor attended the BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok from 29-31 July 2004. India offered to host a Ministerial Conference on Energy Cooperation in 2005; convene a working group to discuss counter terrorism measures and host a round table/workshop of Tourism Ministers and the travel industry. India also agreed to host the second BIMSTEC Summit in 2006. PM, along with other leaders, had an audience with His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. On the sidelines, PM had substantive discussions with Thai PM Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra on a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues of common concern. Both the Prime Ministers welcomed the swift progress in the negotiations for implementing the early harvest scheme under the framework agreement for establishing a free trade area between India and Thailand.

The Thai Foreign Minister Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai visited Delhi in June 2004 to establish contact with the new government and again in November 2004 to participate in the Hindustan Times Conference on “India and the World” in New Delhi. During these visits, he had extensive discussions on bilateral relations and cooperation in the regional and global context. External Affairs Minister, during his transit visit to Bangkok on 15-16 October 2004, met Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai to review bilateral relations. Both Foreign Ministers also met in New York in September 2004 on the sidelines of the UNGA and in Kazakhstan in October 2004 on the sidelines of the CICA meeting. External Affairs Minister called on the Thai PM in June 2004 on the sidelines of the ACD meeting in Qingdao. Other important high-level visits from India to Thailand included those of (i) Shri Dayanidhi Maran, Minister of C&IT in July 2004 to attend the APT Ministerial Conference on Broadband and ICT

development; (ii) Dr. Anbumani Ramadoss, Minister of Health & Family Welfare in July 2004 to attend the 2nd Asia-Pacific Meeting on HIV/AIDS and the XV International AIDS Conference; (iii) Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of UPA, addressed the closing session of the XV International AIDS Conference on 16 July at Bangkok. On the margins, she called on Thai PM Thaksin Shinawatra, and Thai FM Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai called on her; (iv) Shri Mata Prasad Pandey, Speaker of the UP Assembly in August 2004 for a study tour; (v) Dr. Shakeel Ahmed, Minister of State (ICT) to attend the 4th ASEAN Telecommunications and IT Ministers' Meeting in August; and (vi) Shri N.N. Meena, Minister of State (Environment & Forests) in November 2004 to participate in the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Some important visits from Thailand to India were: (i) High-level delegation led by Governor of Phuket Province, Mr. Udomsak Uswarangkura to Port Blair in June 2004 for discussing linkages including trade & investment, tourism etc.; (ii) Mr. Korn Thapparansi, Minister of Science & Technology to Chennai and Bangalore in July 2004 and again in November 2004 with a group of 100 students to participate in the Infosys 20-week IT Training Camp at Mysore; (iii) Dr. Pranpreet Bahiddha-Nukara, Vice-Minister of Commerce in July 2004 for discussions with India's Commerce and Industry Minister to finalize details of products to be included in the Early Harvest Scheme (E.H.S) list under the India-Thailand FTA, and again on 16 December 2004 when an MoU was signed between the FICCI & FTI; (iv) Mr. Uthai Pimchaichon, Speaker of the House of Representatives in July 2004 led a 10-member delegation and met the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and called on the President and the Vice-President; (v) Mr. Wattana Muangsook, Minister of Commerce led a high-level delegation in August 2004 and met Shri Kamal Nath, Minister of C&I for signing the protocol to implement the E.H.S under the FTA; (vi) Mr. Anutin Charvirakural, Dy. Minister of Commerce for attending the third India-ASEAN Business Summit in New Delhi and Chennai in October 2004; (vii) Princess Chulabhorn Mahidol in November 2004 to attend an International Conference on Chemistry Biology Interface at Delhi University, and (viii) Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn in February 2005 on an official visit at the invitation of Vice President. As part of her programme, Princess Maha Chakri also visited States of Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Sikkim and Goa. She inaugurated the Thai temple at Kushinagar.

The third Joint Working Group Meeting on Security was

held in Thailand from 31 August-1 September 2004 and covered various aspects of security cooperation. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Rajiv Sikri, Secretary (East) and the Thai delegation by Gen. Winai Phattiyakul, Secretary General of the Thai National Security Council.

The second Joint Working Group Meeting on Space cooperation was held in Bangalore from 20-22 October 2004 to identify further areas of cooperation. A 10-member group of Scientists from Thailand underwent training at a course at the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS), Dehra Dun, from 27 November to 31 December 2004.

Bilateral cooperation in defence further strengthened with exchange of high-level visits. Lt. Gen. Vicha Techwanich, Director General of Royal Thai Army, Ordnance Department, led a team to the Defence Expo-2004 in New Delhi in February 2004. The practice of offering one vacancy each in the National Defence College and Defence Services Staff College to the Thai Armed Forces every year continued. Two Indian Coast Guard ships visited Bangkok Port on a goodwill visit in March-April 2004 and two Indian Naval ships paid a goodwill visit to Phuket Port in October 2004.

Bilateral trade has continued to grow and Thailand has emerged as an important partner in the region. Indian exports to Thailand in the first 11 months of 2004 reached a figure of US\$1066 million whereas, India's imports from Thailand for the same period amounted to US\$828 million. The highlight of the year was the conclusion of negotiations and signing of the Protocol on the Early Harvest Scheme (EHS) under the Framework Agreement for Bilateral Free Trade Area, covering 82 items of interest to both sides, which came into effect from 1 September 2004.

Important economic and trade promotion activities in which India participated in Thailand were: (i) Bangkok International Gift Fair in April 2004; (ii) the Conference on Competitiveness: Challenges and opportunities for Asian Countries in July 2004 - DG, CSIR accompanied by prominent Indian businessmen participated; (iii) a Buyer-Seller Meeting by Engineering Export Promotion Council in July 2004; (iv) Made in India Show by CII in August 2004, jointly inaugurated by Thai Minister of Commerce and Shri EVKS Elangovan, Minister of State (C&I); (v) Bangkok Gems and Jewellery Fair in September 2004; (vi) CII sponsored participation at hospital management Asia 2004 Conference in October 2004; and (vii) visit of a delegation from Indian Machine Tools

Manufacturers Association for market development in November 2004.

Besides, a large number of individual commercial delegations exchanged visits for promoting trade and investment ties.

The traditional cultural ties continued to grow. Important events included: (i) Kuchipudi dance by Guru Jayarama Rao in August 2004; (ii) Photo exhibition entitled "The Path of Compassion" in September 2004; and (iii) Indian classical music by Dr. Leelavati Adsule in September 2004. India offered 119 scholarships to Thai nationals under the various schemes.

The first ever India-ASEAN Car Rally which was flagged off by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at Guwahati on 22 November 2004, travelled through Thailand on its first leg from Mae Sai to Nong Khai (28-30 November 2004). It completed its second leg from Aranya Prathet to Sadao through Bangkok, where it was flagged off by the Thai Deputy Prime Minister Suwat Liptapanlop, in December 2004, before terminating at Batam, Indonesia. Three teams (including one media team) from Thailand participated. HRH Princess Chulabhorn Mahidol, on behalf of His Majesty the King of Thailand, planted seven of the forty Sal Saplings gifted by India, at the Buddha Manthan Park on 25 December 2004.

Ambassador L.K. Ponappa, on completion of her tenure, left Bangkok on 24 December 2004. The Thai Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, amongst others, hosted separate farewell lunches for Ambassador. India's new Ambassador to Thailand Shri Vivek Katju took charge of his post in February 2005.

Timor-Leste

India's cordial relations with the new nation of Timor-Leste continued to develop during the year. In addition to the provision of ITEC training and GCSS Scholarships, an IT Capacity Building Project was identified for implementation under ITEC. A detailed feasibility study for this project was conducted by an NIC team in Timor-Leste in November 2004. The project, which is likely to be taken up next year, was greatly welcomed by the Government of Timor-Leste.

Vietnam

External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh visited Hanoi from 16-18 October 2004 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Prime Minister Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's visit to Hanoi in October 1954 after the liberation

of Hanoi from French occupation and his meeting with President Ho Chi Minh on 17 October 1954. Institute of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam, organised a seminar on this occasion, which was addressed by External Affairs Minister and Foreign Minister of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien. The same day Vietnam Union of Friendship Organisations (VUFO) organised a cultural function to mark the event, which was attended by the two Foreign Ministers, Minister of Science & Technology Mr. Hoang Van Phong, in his capacity as the President of Vietnam-India Friendship Association (VIFA), and Mr. Pham The Duyet, President Vietnam Fatherland Front. External Affairs Minister also called on Vietnam Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Phan Van Khai and the legendary General Vo Nguyen Giap.

External Affairs Minister also co-chaired the 12th Meeting of the India-Vietnam Joint Commission on 18 October 2004 with Foreign Minister Mr. Nien. The Joint Commission Meeting was preceded by Senior Officials' Meeting on 15 October 2004, led by Smt. S. Tripathy, Additional Secretary (PP & CPV) from the Indian side and Dr. Do Ngoc Son, Asst Minister and Director General, Asia II Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the Vietnam side. The two sides also signed a Plan of Action for 2004-2006 for implementing the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Cooperation Framework between India and Vietnam signed in May 2003 during the visit of the General Secretary of Communist Party of Vietnam to India.

Minister of State for Tourism, Smt. Renuka Chowdhury visited Vietnam from 11-14 June 2004 to attend the Ministerial Conference on Cultural Tourism and Poverty Alleviation in Hue, organised by World Tourism Organisation. She also met the Chairperson of Vietnam National Administration of Tourism Madam Vo Thi Thang to discuss promotion of tourism between India and Vietnam.

Madam Vo Thi Thang visited India from 16-21 October 2004 to attend the Regional Tourism Fair in New Delhi. She also represented Vietnam at the 3rd India-ASEAN Business Summit.

Minister of State for Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, Kumari Selja visited Vietnam from 19 to 22 December 2004 to attend the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations for Peace and Sustainable Development. She delivered the keynote speech at the inaugural session of the Conference.

Secretary (ANA) Shri R.M. Abhyankar visited Vietnam on 4-5 May 2004 as a special envoy of External Affairs Minister and called on the Vietnamese Foreign Minister. The 2nd Foreign Office Consultations between India and Vietnam were held in New Delhi on 5 August 2004. The Vietnamese side was led by Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Le Cong Phung, and the Indian side by Special Secretary (East), Shri Rajiv Sikri.

A 12-member delegation from the Office of National Assembly of Vietnam, led by Madam Tran Thi Tam Dan, Chairperson of the Committee for Culture, Education, Youth and Children Affairs visited India from 3-9 July 2004. The delegation called on the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha and officials in the relevant Ministries.

A delegation led by Mr. Trang A. Pao, a Member of the National Assembly and Chairman of its Council for Ethnic Minorities paid a visit to India from 13-19 December 2004. The delegation called on the Hon'ble Speaker of Lok Sabha during their visit.

Gen. Pham Van Tra, Minister for National Defence of Vietnam, accompanied by a high-level delegation, visited India from 3-7 March 2005.

Three Indian naval ships namely, INS Ranvijay, INS Sukanya and INS Kirch commanded by Rear Admiral S.K. Damle, FOC Eastern Fleet, paid a goodwill visit to Ho Chi Minh City in November 2004. Vice Admiral O.P. Bansal, FOC-in-C, Eastern Naval Command, also visited Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City at the same time and met Deputy Minister of Defence and Chief of the General Staff of Vietnam People's Army, Senior Lt. General Phung Quang Thanh.

A 15-member delegation from the National Defence College led by AVM A.K. Tiwary, VSM visited Vietnam in May 2004.

All 20 scholarships allocated to Vietnam under CEP/GCSS are likely to be utilised. Under ITEC, the allocation of 110 slots to Vietnam is also likely to be utilized fully. Amongst the important cultural promotion and publicity related activities during the year were: (i) introduction of Vietnamese version of "India-Perspectives" by the Embassy in Hanoi; (ii) visit of an 8-member Sattriya Dance group led by Shri P.P. Bora from 10-18 June 2004 to participate in the biennial Hue Festival 2004; and (iii) publication of tourism brochure in local language by CGI, Ho Chi Minh in April.

Indian exports to Vietnam for January-November 2004 reached US\$518.09 million registering an increase of over 30 per cent vis-à-vis the corresponding period in 2003. The major items were animal feed (Soya bean meal), drugs and pharmaceuticals, plastics, steel, textile and garment accessories etc. Important trade promotional activities during the year included: (i) visit to Hanoi by a 10-member delegation from Basic Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals & Cosmetics Export Promotion Council (CHEMEXCIL) in February 2004; (ii) organization of a Catalogue Show at the prestigious Vietnam International Industrial Fair 2004 in October-November 2004; (iii) Catalogue-based participation at Vietnam International Agriculture Fair; (iv) ITPO sponsored visit of eight Indian companies to represent at the 14th Vietnam International Trade Fair (VIETNAM EXPO 2004) in April 2004; (v) Vietnam's participation at 24th India International Trade Fair 2004 in New Delhi in November 2004; (vi) visit of a six-member CII delegation to HCM City from 10-13 December 2004; (vii) Participation by a six-member delegation from PLEXCONCIL in the Vietnam International Industry Fair at Hanoi from 1- 4 December 2004.

A 3-member delegation led by Shri S.S. Kapur, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce visited Hue on 31 July 2004 to attend the 5th ASEAN-Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM) – India consultations.

A Book entitled "India-Vietnam Relations: First to Twenty First Century" written by Shri Geetesh Sharma, President of Indo-Vietnam Solidarity Committee, Kolkata was introduced at a Press Conference on 1 December 2004 which was organised at the premises of the CGI, HCM City.

The 1st India-ASEAN Car Rally passed through Vietnam from 1 - 4 December 2004. The main cities covered by the Rally were Hue, Nha Trang, Ho Chi Minh City. The Government of Vietnam and the provincial authorities of Vietnam extended warm hospitality and made elaborate arrangements for the conduct of the Rally. Government of Vietnam allowed the right-hand drive vehicles to enter the country as a special case.

A 15-member NCC delegation visited Vietnam from 10-14 December 2004. During their stay, they visited Youth Cultural House, Cu Chi tunnels and War Remnants Museum in HCM City and had interaction with Vietnamese youth organizations.



Japan

India values its close, cooperative and friendly relations with Japan. The Global Partnership for the 21st Century that India and Japan jointly established in August 2000 contributes not only towards broadening and deepening of our bilateral relations but also for the stability and prosperity of Asia and the world. Global Partnership also involves the two countries jointly addressing various issues of global concern. There is a shared recognition in both countries of their common cultural heritage, commitment to democratic ideals, economic complementarities and strategic convergences. These commonalities between the two countries have provided a resilient foundation for multifaceted relationship of cooperation. The period 2004-05 was an active year in bilateral relations between India and Japan. The momentum of exchanges between the two countries was continued during this year in pursuance of our continuing efforts to consolidate the Global Partnership.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Junichiro Koizumi on the sidelines of ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Laos on 29 November 2004 during which both leaders discussed issues of mutual concern. Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Speaker of the Lok Sabha led a delegation of members of both Houses of Parliament to Japan from 31 October – 5 November 2004 at the invitation of the Speaker of the Lower House of the Japanese Diet and the President of the Upper House. During the visit, the Speaker called on the Emperor, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister of Japan and held discussions with the Presiding Officers of the two Houses of the Japanese Diet.

Former President Shri K.R. Narayanan visited Japan from 18-24 October 2004 at the invitation of the Friendship Exchange Council (FEC). During his visit, the former President and Shrimati Narayanan addressed the FEC and called on the Presiding Officers of the two Houses, the Foreign Minister and Prince and Princess Akishino of the Japanese Imperial Family. Minister of Communication &

Information Technology Shri Dayanidhi Maran visited Japan from 17-19 January 2005. During the visit, he held discussions with Minister for Internal Affairs and Communication of Japan Mr. Taro Aso on strengthening cooperation in fields of Information and Communication Technology. Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office Shri Prithvi Raj Chavan visited Japan from 24-26 November 2004 to attend the third round of the Indo-Japan Dialogue on Ocean Security.

Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi visited India from 12-14 August 2004. During the visit, she held talks with the External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh on strengthening the Global Partnership between the two countries as well as on other issues. Both sides agreed to support each other's candidature for a permanent seat in the expanded UN Security Council and closely work together towards realising the reform of the UN Security Council. It was also agreed to establish a Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and initiate DG level dialogue on UN reforms. Ms. Kawaguchi also called on Prime Minister and National Security Adviser.

Minister of Economy, Trade & Industry (METI) of Japan Mr. Shoichi Nakagawa visited India from 22-30 August 2004. During his visit, he called on Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and held discussions with the Ministers for Commerce & Industry and Finance. He again visited India to attend the first Round Table on Energy Security held in New Delhi on 6 January 2005. During the visit, Mr. Nakagawa held discussions with Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar and Minister for Commerce & Industry Shri Kamal Nath. Finance Minister of Japan Mr. Sadakazu Tanigaki visited India from 12-14 January 2005. During the visit, Mr. Tanigaki called on Prime Minister and held discussions with Minister for Finance Shri P. Chidambaram and Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia. Mr. Heizo Takenaka, Minister for Economic and Fiscal Policy visited India from 12-13 January 2005. During the visit, Mr. Takenaka met Minister of Finance Shri P. Chidambaram and Deputy Chairman,

Planning Commission Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia. Senior Vice Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Mr. Takayoshi Tsuneda visited India from 11-13 January 2005 and met Minister of State for Agriculture Shri Kantilal Bhuria.

Other visits from India during the year included those of Governor of Uttaranchal Shri Sudarshan Agarwal from 20-26 May 2004; Speaker of Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly Shri Mata Prasad Pandey from 28-29 August 2004 for pre-conference study tour before attending 50th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference at Canada; Speaker of Rajasthan Legislative Assembly Smt. Sumitra Singh from 15-17 September 2004 for post-conference study tour after attending 50th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference at Canada and Minister for Transport & Power of Government of NCT of Delhi Shri Harun Yusuf from 17-22 October 2004 to attend the 11th World Congress on ITS at Nagoya, Aiichi.

Other visits from Japan to India during the year included the visits of Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Japan Mr. Shogo Arai from 15-19 July 2004, Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Asian Population & Development Association Mr. Shin Sakurai from 20-22 July 2004, and Member of Parliament from the Democratic Party of Japan Mr. Kazuo Inoue from 22-27 September 2004.

The XI round of Foreign Office Consultations with Japan were held in New Delhi on 22 December 2004 during which both sides discussed bilateral relations as well as regional and global issues.

India-Japan Science Council Meeting was held in Tokyo on 28-29 January 2005. Regular defence exchanges between the two countries continued to take place during the year. General NC Vij, Chief of Army Staff visited Tokyo on 25 and 26 March 2004 and met Chief of Staff, Japan Ground Self Defence Force. A National Defence College delegation led by Air Vice Marshal AK Tiwari, visited Japan in May 2004. Vice Admiral Sureesh Mehta, Director Coast Guard and Commandant KPS Raghuvanshi visited Japan to attend the meeting of Heads of Coast Guard Agencies of Asia from 16-19 June 2004. Air Chief Marshal S Krishnaswamy, Chief of Air Staff visited Japan from 20-24 July 2004 on goodwill visit. This was the first ever official visit by an Indian Air Chief to Japan. Air Marshal SK Malik, Vice Chief of the Air Staff attended Air Chiefs Conference in Japan (ACCJ) from 23-26 September 2004.

Vice Admiral Sangram Singh Byce, visited Tokyo from 11-13 October 2004 to attend the Chiefs of Defence Conference. Three Indian Naval Ships Ranjtt, Ranvijay and Jyoti under the Command of Rear Admiral Sunil K Damle, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet, visited Tokyo on goodwill visit from 22-24 October 2004. A USI delegation visited Tokyo to attend 2nd Tokyo-New Delhi "Peace in Asia" International Exchange Conference from 24-28 October 2004.

Mr. Takemasa Moriya, Administrative Vice Minister of the Japan Defence Agency visited India from 23-27 May 2004. A Japan Coast Guard delegation led by Vice Commandant Kenji Ishii and one Japan Coast Guard Ship visited Mumbai from 2-5 November 2004 for taking part in a joint exercise with the Indian Coast Guard.

India-Japan Mixed Cultural Commission meeting was held in Tokyo on 9 February 2005. During the year our Embassy in Tokyo organised several cultural events and exhibitions including performances of a Kathakali troupe, a Kuchipudi troupe and a Rajasthani troupe sent by ICCR. The Embassy also supported organization of several Indian exhibitions, concerts and classical dance performances hosted by Japanese organizations. The Embassy also organised a fortnight long exhibition titled 'Path of Compassion', featuring photographs of Buddhist sites and art heritage by Benoy K. Behl at Otani University from 7-25 September 2004. The inauguration of the exhibition was preceded by a conference on "Buddhist heritage".

The total India-Japan bilateral trade in the 2003-04 was US \$ 4.35 billion with exports to Japan being US \$ 1.71 billion and imports from Japan being US \$ 2.64 billion. There was a growth of 18 per cent in India-Japan bilateral trade during 2003-04 as compared to the corresponding period of last year. Cumulative foreign direct investment inflows from Japan during 1991-2004 (net of ADRs/GDRs) was US \$ 1.86 billion, excluding FDI inflows received for acquisition of existing shares (up to 1999), RBI's-NRI Schemes, stock swapped & advance pending issue of shares.

Functional Exchanges:

From India to Japan:

- Dr. Harsh K. Gupta, Secretary, Department of Ocean Development, New Delhi, from 22-24 April 2004, to attend Nippon Foundation's First Meeting of Research Task Force on National Ocean Policies held in Tokyo.
- Shri K.N. Agarwal, Member Secretary and Secretary



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh meets the Prime Minister of China Mr. Wen Jiabao on the sidelines of ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Laos on 29 November 2004.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh meets the Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Junichiro Koizumi on the sidelines of ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Laos on 29 November 2004.

to Government of India, Law Commission and Dr. K.N. Chaturvedi, Member Secretary, Law Commission visited Japan from 19-22 May 2004 to attend 1st ACD Workshop in Tokyo.

- Dr. Prodipto Ghosh, Secretary (Environment & Forests) visited Japan from 14-16 September 2004, to attend Informal Meeting on Further Actions Against Climate Change, jointly organized by Governments of Japan and Brazil.
- Dr. M.G.K. Menon, M.N. Shah Distinguished Fellow, The National Academy of Sciences, from 21 to 23 September 2004, to attend Seminar on 'Dialogue between Civilizations, Science, Technology and Civilization' in Tokyo.
- Shri Rajiv Sikri, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs visited Tokyo from 13-14 October 2004 and participated in Third Donors Conference on International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq.
- A delegation led by Chairman Railway Board visited Japan from 8-11 November 2004 to attend the International High Speed Railway Conference.
- A CII delegation headed by its President visited Japan from 14-18 November 2004 to participate in Science & Technology Society Forum and hold business meetings with Japanese business organizations.
- Shri A.K. Rastogi, Secretary (BM), Ministry of Home Affairs visited Kobe, Japan from 18-22 January 2005 to attend the UN Conference on disaster reduction.
- The Embassy of India in Tokyo issued 29,272 visas (out of which 5,645 were business visas and 13,150 tourist visas), granted 397 fresh passports, 22 emergency certificates and rendered consular services to 964 Indian nationals during the period 1 April – 31 October 2004.

Republic of Korea (ROK)

There was steady progress in India-ROK relations with regular exchange of high level visits, increasing economic and commercial links and interaction between the two countries in the international fora.

The year 2004-05 marked the 30th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Republic of Korea. The traditional friendship between

the two countries has been developing during these years on the strong foundations of commitment to democratic ideals and the shared desire to consolidate and diversify their exchanges. The year 2004-05 was also significant in that the two sides agreed to establish a "Long-term Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity" with the aim of fully utilizing the substantial potential and opportunities for deepening mutually beneficial cooperation, taking advantage of their economic complementarities and political convergences. President of Republic of Korea (ROK) Mr. Roh Moo-hyun visited India from 4-6 October 2004. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation including four Ministers (Foreign Affairs and Trade; Commerce, Industry and Energy; Information and Communication; and Trade) and his National Security Advisor. During the visit, President Roh met President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and held discussions with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh on a wide range of bilateral, multilateral and global issues. A Joint Statement was issued during the visit outlining a broad vision of the bilateral relationship. An Extradition Treaty and a Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters were also signed during the visit. Both sides also agreed to further promote their exchanges and interaction in the defence field.

President Roh was also accompanied by a large business delegation including CEOs of major Korean companies, thus, signifying the economic aspect of the visit. During the discussions, it was decided to step up efforts to take bilateral economic partnership to a higher level taking advantage of complementarities in economies and synergies in trade, investment and high-tech areas. Both sides agreed to set a target of US \$ 10 billion for bilateral trade by 2008. It was also agreed to set up a Joint Study Group composed of government officials, economists and representatives of business community to take a comprehensive view of the bilateral linkages in trade, investment and services.

ROK Vice Minister of Commerce, Industry and Energy Mr. Chow Hwan-eik visited India to attend the Round Table on Energy Security held in New Delhi on 6 January 2005.

A Parliamentary delegation from ROK led by Mr. Park Hee-tae, Vice Speaker, National Assembly of the ROK visited India from 30 January – 2 February 2005.

External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh met ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Mr. Ban Ki-moon

on the margins of the Third Ministerial Meeting of the ACD held in Qingdao, China on 21 June 2004 and again on the margins of the 11th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN Regional Forum held in Jakarta from 1-2 July 2004.

External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh visited ROK from 14-16 December 2004 to co-chair the third session of the India-ROK Joint Commission held in Seoul on 15 December 2004. The two sides discussed bilateral relations, regional and global issues during the meeting.

Both sides reiterated the importance of maintaining close and regular consultations so as to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in various areas. Both sides reiterated their desire to promote cooperation in various areas including, inter alia, infrastructure, information and communication technology, petrochemicals, textiles, oil and gas field development, automobiles, shipbuilding, iron and steel, pharmaceuticals and agriculture. The two sides also agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in international affairs and reiterated their commitment to continue the fight against terrorism. The Cultural Exchange Programme between India and ROK for the period 2004-07 was also signed during the visit. During his visit, External Affairs Minister also called on the ROK President Mr. Roh Moo-hyun and Speaker of the ROK National Assembly Mr. Kim Won-ki.

Minister of Shipping, Highways and Road Transport Shri T.R. Balu visited ROK from 19-22 January 2005. During the visit, Shri Balu held bilateral discussions with ROK Minister of Commerce, Industry & Energy Mr. Hee Beom Lee. Shri Balu also attended the naming ceremony of MT "Desh Ujala" being built by Hyundai Heavy Industries for Shipping Corporation of India. Foreign Office level consultations at the level of Director General in the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Joint Secretary, East Asia, Ministry of External Affairs were held in Seoul on 12 April 2004. A meeting of the Senior Officials of the Ministerial level Joint Trade Committee was held in New Delhi on 19-20 August 2004. The first Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue between India and ROK was held in New Delhi on 20 January 2005.

The first meeting of the India-ROK Joint Study Group was held in New Delhi on 27-28 January 2005. The ROK side was led by Mr. Jong-Ki Hong, Deputy Minister for Trade while Commerce Secretary led the Indian side. The total bilateral trade between India and ROK in 2003-04 was US \$ 3.2 billion with exports to ROK being US \$

0.76 billion and imports being US \$ 2.45 billion. ROK's investment approvals in India are close to US \$ 3 billion.

Actual inflow from ROK for the period 1991-2004 has been US \$ 657.0 million. The Korea Trade Investment Promotion Agency opened its third office in India in Mumbai in June 2004.

Tatas became the first Indian company to invest in South Korea. They invested US \$ 120 million by acquiring Daewoo Commercial Vehicles at Gunsan in South Korea in March 2004. As part of the celebrations of the 30th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the ROK, CII sent an 11-member SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) Mission to Seoul from 8 to 10 August 2004. The Mission had meetings with the Federation of Korean Industry, Korea International Trade Association, Incheon Chamber of Commerce & Industries and Korea Federation of Small & Medium Business (KFSB). CII also signed an MoU for cooperation with KFSB.

The Sixth India-ROK Cultural Committee Meeting was held on 13 May 2004 in New Delhi which finalised and initialled the Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) for the years from 2004 to 2007. A team of performing artists from India participated in the Gangneung International Folklore Festival in June 2004. Indian cultural troupes participated in the Gwacheon Hanmadong Festival from 14 - 19 September 2004.

The President of Korean Institute of Science and Technology visited IIT, Mumbai and IIS, Bangalore on 17 and 18 May 2004 to discuss possibility of cooperation in exchange of research personnel, exchange of technical information and promotion of joint research.

The preparatory meeting of the India-ROK Joint Working Group for bilateral cooperation in Information and Communication Technology sector was held in New Delhi on 13 December 2004.

Functional Exchanges

From India to Republic of Korea:

- Justice Brijesh Kumar, Judge, Supreme Court visited ROK from 10-15 April 2004 at the invitation of Justice and Minister of the Court Administration of Supreme Court of Korea.
- Smt. Rathi Vinay Jha, Secretary, Department of Tourism visited ROK from 17-21 April 2004 to attend 53rd Annual Conference and Board of Directors Meeting of PATA.

- Shri P.I. Suvrathun, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Personnel visited ROK from 13-19 July 2004 to attend meetings of IIAS, Council of Administration and Executive Committee and 26th International Congress of Administrative Sciences.
- Dr. L.M. Singhvi, Chairman of the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora visited ROK from 23-27 July 2004 to deliver keynote address at an International Conference.
- Shri Justice D.P. Wadhwa, Chairperson, Mr. Vinod Vaish, Member, Telecom Disputes and Appellate Tribunal from 6-11 September 2004 and Shri Pradeep Baijal, Chairman, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India from 7-11 September 2004 visited ROK to attend Regional Telecommunication Forum and Exhibition for the Asia-Pacific Region, International Telecommunications Union Telecom Asia- 2004.
- Justice A.S. Anand, Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission visited ROK from 11-18 September 2004 to attend the 9th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions.
- Shri Rakesh Kumar, Director General, Indian Council for Cultural Relations visited ROK from 20-22 September 2004.
- Shri K.K. Chakraborty, Member Secretary, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts and DG, National Museum visited ROK from 29 September – 5 October 2004 to participate in the Triennial 20th General Conference and 21st General Assembly of International Council of Museums.
- Shri P.K. Mahanta, Member, Assam Legislative Assembly visited ROK from 2-5 October 2004 to attend Summit of World Leaders and World Peace.
- Shri S.C. Tripathi, Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas visited ROK from 8-9 December 2004 to attend the naming ceremony of LNG Carrier under construction at Daewoo Ship Building & Marine Engineering Company, ROK.
- A delegation led by Dr. Subhash Pani, Chief Secretary, Government of Orissa visited ROK from 27-31 December 2004 to have discussions in connection with the proposed integrated steel plant to be set up by POSCO of ROK in the State of Orissa.
- The total number of visas issued by Embassy of India

in Seoul during the year 2004 was 43,230. During the period 1-24 January 2005 the number of visas issued was 4,285.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

During 2004-05, India and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) continued to enjoy cordial relations based on cooperation and mutual benefit. India decided to supply 1000 MT of rice to DPRK to mark the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries, which was formally handed over to DPRK on 29 July 2004. In April 2004, India donated 100,000 injections of Dexamethasone to DPRK as humanitarian aid.

India has been providing assistance to DPRK in training under Ministry's ITEC programme. From 2004-05, the ITEC slots have been increased from five to ten. During the year, the ICCR sponsored a 14-member Bhangra/Giddha dance group for the 22 April Spring Friendship Art Festival in Pyongyang. India also participated in the 9th Pyongyang Film Festival of Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries held in Pyongyang from 12-20 September 2004. Three Indian feature films were screened in the Festival.

A five-member DPRK delegation led by Mr. Hwang Pyong Jun, Vice Chairman of the Central Committee of the Korean Buddhists Federation visited India for the International Conclave on Buddhism and Spiritual Tourism from 17-19 February 2004.

The Embassy of India in Pyongyang issued 96 visas during the period from 1 April – 31 October 2004.

Mongolia

The traditionally warm and friendly relations between India and Mongolia were strengthened during the year. The two countries continued to implement the agreements and understandings reached during the visit of the then Mongolian Prime Minister to India from 14-20 January 2004.

The first round of consultations between the National Security Councils of the two countries took place in New Delhi from 11-12 October 2004 with the Executive Secretary of the Mongolian National Security Council, Dr. Durgerjav Gotov leading a delegation to India. Similarly, the first ever India-Mongolia joint military exercises were held in Mongolia from 11-15 October 2004 for which a contingent of Indian military personnel visited Mongolia.

The year also saw the first trade exhibition from India organised in Ulaanbaatar from 30 August – 3 September 2004 in which several Indian companies participated. To coincide with the occasion, conferences were organised in areas such information technology, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology and Indian cultural performances held.

A major academic conference on India-Mongolia relations was held in Ulaanbaatar in May 2004 in which several eminent Mongolian scholars and scholars from India participated. The conference highlighted the various facets of India-Mongolia relations. Another conference on 'Indo-Mongolian Literary Links' was organised at the National University of Mongolia on 17 January 2005 in which several eminent scholars from Mongolia presented papers. Coinciding with this conference, an exhibition of Indo- Mongolian literary books was held at the Mongolian State Library.

The activities of the Indian Cultural Centre were strengthened during the year with the introduction of classes on yoga and meditation. A marathon race dedicated to India-Mongolia friendship was organised to

coincide with India's Independence Day celebrations on 15 August 2004 in which 250 participants took part.

Mongolia reiterated its support for India's candidature to the Permanent Membership of the UN Security Council. State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. R Altangerel in his address at the UN General Assembly on 27 September 2004 stated that his government supports the legitimate aspirations of such countries like India, Japan and Germany which are willing and able to shoulder greater responsibility in pursuit of international peace, security and development. Consultations between the Foreign Offices of the two countries were held in Ulaanbaatar in April 2004.

Measures were taken during the year to implement cooperation projects in the areas of information technology, agriculture and culture. India and Mongolia will complete 50 years of diplomatic relations in December 2005. On 24 December 2004 the two countries launched celebrations for 50 years of diplomatic relations which will be undertaken by organisation of various events/ activities through the year.



Russia

Relations with the strategic near neighbourhood of Eurasia continued apace and deepened further during the year.

Indo-Russian relations are a matter of priority for both the sides. The year 2004-2005 witnessed a concerted effort to broaden and step up cooperation.

The 2nd session of Indo-Russian JWG on Combating International Terrorism was held in New Delhi on 8 April 2004. It attached special importance to strengthening bilateral mechanisms, in particular for exchange of information and sharing of experience in fight against international terrorism and strengthening cooperation in curbing the sources of financing of terrorism and the trafficking in Narcotics.

External Affairs Minister met the Russian Foreign Minister Mr. Sergei Lavrov on 1 July 2004 in Jakarta. Issues of regional and international concern, including the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan, were discussed. Expressing satisfaction over the current status of India-Russia bilateral relations, they emphasized the prospects of further development of economic, scientific and technological ties. They also discussed intensifying cooperation in the fields of energy and space.

Mr. V.I. Trubnikov, the First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation was appointed as the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to India. Shri. Kanwal Sibal, former Foreign Secretary was appointed as the Ambassador of India to the Russian Federation.

India congratulated the Russian Government for the successful conduct of the Presidential elections in Chechnya on 29 August 2004. Mr. Alu Alkhanov secured 73.48 per cent of the votes and was declared as the President of the Chechen Republic. The period under review witnessed a series of terrorist attacks in Russia. 10 people were killed and 51 injured in a suspected Chechen terrorist attack in Moscow on 31 August 2004. India condemned this act of terror and supported Russia's efforts

in fighting terrorism. India also conveyed its condolences to the Russian Government over air-crashes involving two Russian aircrafts on 24 August 2004.

India resolutely condemned the terrorist attack in which a school was seized in Beslan by Chechen terrorists from 1-3 September 2004. This resulted in approximately 350 deaths, including of children. Rastrapatiji and PM sent messages of condolences to President Putin. PM also held a telephonic conversation with President Putin on 5 September 2004. External Affairs Minister signed the condolence book on 6 September 2004 at the Russian Embassy in Delhi. The Government of India announced medical assistance in aid of the victims of the Beslan tragedy through supplies of Indian medicines worth US\$ 50,000.

External Affairs Minister met Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Mr. Sergei Lavrov on 22 September 2004 on the sidelines of the 59th UN General Assembly. They discussed a number of issues of bilateral, regional and international concern. The Foreign Minister of Russian Federation Mr. Sergei Lavrov visited India from 8-10 October 2004. During his visit, he called on PM and held meetings with External Affairs Minister and Raksha Mantri. The discussions focused on a wide-range of issues of bilateral, regional and international concern. Both sides underlined the importance of enhancing trade and economic cooperation, and agreed to identify and address all issues that were impeding the full realization of potential in bilateral relations. Foreign Minister Lavrov also addressed a business interactive session organized by CII on 9 October 2004.

The third trilateral meeting between the Foreign Ministers of India, Russia and China was held on 21 October 2004 at Almaty on the sidelines of the CICA Foreign Ministers' meeting. The Foreign Ministers exchanged views on issues of international and regional importance, including the role of UN in restoration of peace and civilian order in Iraq and the issue of fight against international terrorism. They also agreed to explore possibilities of trilateral economic cooperation.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh meets President Vladimir Putin of Russia, in New Delhi, 3-5 December 2004.



*Springs Season color rioid at the Mughal Gardens on the rear Court of Rashtrapati Bhawan.
(Photo: C. M. Bhandari)*

The 10th session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC) was held in New Delhi from 18-19 November 2004. The Russian side was led by Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Mr. Alexander Zhukov and the Indian side was led by External Affairs Minister Shri. K. Natwar Singh. Mr. Zhukov called on the President of India and met the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Commerce and Industry. Following the meeting, a Protocol was signed between the two co-chairmen.

Some of the important decisions taken during the Inter-Governmental Commission include, Indian assistance in the establishment of software parks in Russia, cooperation between Russian company Sudoimport and Magnum International Trading for construction of auxiliary fleet ships in India and the development of the Indo-Russian Joint Venture Company to produce Titanium Dioxide in Orissa.

Both the sides identified Energy, IT, Banking, Communications, Bio-Technology as new areas of growth. Special emphasis will be given in expanding cooperation in thermal, hydro and nuclear energy for power production. Both the countries also supported development of cooperation between India and Russia with the purpose of participation of Indian and Russian companies in new Oil and Gas fields in Russia and third countries.

Agreement was also reached to hold the 'Days of Indian Culture' in Russia in September – October 2005 and develop cultural cooperation within the framework of Exchange Programme of 'Days of the cities Moscow and Delhi' in 2005-2006.

With a view to put a sharper focus on issues of mutual interest it was also decided to reduce the number of Working Groups and Sub Groups of the Inter-Governmental Commission from 23 to 5.

The Defence Minister of the Russian Federation Mr. Sergei Ivanov visited India from 30 November to 1 December 2004 in connection with the 4th session of the Indo-Russian Joint Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation.

At the invitation of PM, H.E Mr. Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation visited India on 3-5 December 2004 for the fifth India-Russia Annual Summit. During the visit, a total of 11 documents were signed. They

include the Joint Declaration signed by the President of Russian Federation and Prime Minister of India and four Inter-governmental agreements covering the areas of Space, Consular and Regional cooperation. The Joint Declaration emphasizes the strategic partnership between India and Russia and notes the transformation in the global environment in the recent past. It stresses the need for a new international architecture based on a multi-polar world. A substantial and new emphasis on economic relations including the field of energy, IT and banking has been made. Six MoUs in Banking and Energy sectors were signed during the visit. In pursuance of the mutual desire to encourage practical areas of cooperation, the first Indo-Russian Round Table Seminar on IT was held in Bangalore on 3-4 December 2004 and the first Indo-Russian Seminar on Energy was held in New Delhi on 15 January 2005.

The first meeting of the Indo-Russian Group on draft Inter-Governmental Agreement on Reciprocal Protection of Intellectual Rights relating to Military-Technical Cooperation was held in New Delhi on 18-19 January 2005. The Third Meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group (JWG) on Combating International Terrorism was held in Moscow on 19-20 January 2005. Both the sides reiterated that cooperation in combating international terrorism constitutes an important part of the strategic partnership between the two countries and exchanged views on the measures taken by both countries domestically as well as in the international arena to strengthen the war against terrorism. In order to give a practical orientation to the cooperation in this field, both the sides also agreed for targeted discussion on suppression of financing of terrorism in the near future.

The Indo-Russian foreign office consultation on Strategic Stability was held in New Delhi on 27 January 2005. Both sides exchanged views on issues of disarmament and prevention of proliferation of WMDs.

The Indo-Russian Agreement on visa-free travel by the holders of diplomatic and official passports signed during President Putin's visit to India on 3 December 2004 came into force from 15 February 2005.

CIS

India's relationship with the countries of the region received a further boost during this period. High-level visits were exchanged on a regular basis. These were complemented by industrial and consumer goods exhibitions, besides visits of trade delegations. India's

economic relations are therefore showing a continuing positive trend.

Cultural relations and media exchanges have further broadened the scope of India's relations with the region. As part of 'Festival of India' programme in three Central Asian countries, a painting exhibition – 'Amrita Shergil revisited' by contemporary women painters was held in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. A seminar on India and Central Asia was organized in Tashkent on 16 August 2004. A fashion show showcasing traditions of Indian jewellery and costumes by royal princes was held in Tashkent (20-21 August 2004) and in Almaty (25-26 August 2004).

Kazakhstan

Relations with Kazakhstan continued to be warm and friendly during the period. Minister of External Affairs visited Almaty on 21-22 October 2004 to participate in the CICA Foreign Ministers' Meeting. During his visit, Minister of External Affairs called on the President of Kazakhstan and held meeting with the Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan. Issues of mutual interest including cooperation in oil and gas and IT sectors came up for discussions.

The Kazakh Industry and Trade Minister Mr. Adilbek Zhaksybekov visited India from 15-18 September 2004. He was accompanied by a 15-member delegation representing different Kazakh ministries. The Kazakh Minister had meetings with Raksha Mantri, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of Communications and IT. A MoU on IT cooperation was signed during the visit. The Kazakh Minister paid a visit to Bangalore to witness developments in India's IT sector.

The 3rd meeting of the Indo-Kazakh Joint Business Council was held in Almaty on 6 September 2004. While FICCI participated from the Indian side, the Kazakh Chamber of Commerce & Industry represented Kazakhstan.

Under the Focus-CIS programme, Engineering Export promotion Council (EEPC) organized INDIATECH-2004 in Almaty on 3-6 September 2004 in collaboration with the Kazakh chamber of Commerce & Industry and KITEX 2004 showcasing engineering products from 66 Indian companies.

A 4-member delegation headed by the Deputy Minister of Justice of Kazakhstan visited India on 28-30 October to have discussions on an Agreement between India and Kazakhstan on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and

Commercial Matters. The Kazakh delegation had discussions with the Indian side headed by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice.

Kazakh poet A. Nilibayev was given the Padma Shri award by the President of India on 30 June 2004 for his translation of the Mahabharata into Kazakh language.

Shri E.V.K.S. Elangovan, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry visited Kazakhstan from 12-14 January 2005. More than 50 businessmen accompanied the Minister. The business delegation comprised representatives from FICCI, CII, EEPC, Pharmaceutical Export Council and Chemical Export Council. The Minister of State inaugurated the Kazakh-India Buyer Seller Meet and addressed the Kazakhstan-India business Forum in Almaty on 13 January 2005. The business delegation held one-to-one business meetings with Kazakh companies in the fields of chemicals & allied products, pharmaceuticals, engineering, textile & IT sector. Minister of State also held wide-ranging discussions with the prominent business chambers in Almaty. Two Joint Venture Agreements between Indian and Kazakh companies in the fields of construction material and specialized batteries were signed during the visit.

The fifth meeting of the Indo-Kazakh Joint Commission was held in Astana, Kazakhstan on 17-18 February 2005. The Indian side was led by the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar and the Kazakh side was led by Mr. Vladimir Shkolnik, Minister of Energy and Mineral resources of Kazakhstan. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar also held meetings with the Kazakh Prime Minister, Mr. Daniel Akhmetov, Minister of Economy and Trade, Mr. K. Kelimbetov and the Minister of Transport and Communications, Mr. K. Nagmanov. Discussions focused on issues of economic and trade relations.

Kyrgyzstan

India's relations with Kyrgyzstan continue to be friendly. Exchanges at the cultural and business level took place regularly. The 4th session of Indo-Kyrgyz JBC was held in Bishkek on 7-8 September 2004. From the Indian side, FICCI and the Kyrgyz Chamber of Commerce and Industry from the Kyrgyz side participated in the JBC.

In July 2004, a FIEO delegation comprising of Indian companies having interest in the areas of agro products, tea, exports of jewellery, gold and diamond mining, cotton processing, etc. visited Kyrgyzstan and had meetings with high level officials in the Kyrgyz Government and various agencies.

Tajikistan

Indo-Tajik bilateral relations continued to deepen during the period under review. A delegation comprising of Secretary (ANA) and Joint Secretary (Eurasia) visited Tajikistan on 7-9 May 2004. The delegation met Tajik President, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister. Under India's aid programme 10 city transport buses were gifted to the city of Dushanbe. A US \$ 8.37 million grant extended to Government of Tajikistan was waived off. A project under India's aid programme to set up a fruit processing plant in Dushanbe was completed and handed-over to Government of Tajikistan in January 2005.

Colonel General Sherali Khairulloevich Khairulloev, Defence Minister of Tajikistan visited India from 20-27 January 2005.

Uzbekistan

Indo-Uzbek relations were marked by traditional warmth during the period. The Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan visited India on 29-30 October 2004, during which he called on the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Lok Sabha. The Uzbek Foreign Minister had a meeting with External Affairs Minister. During the visit, a Memorandum of Understanding on establishing an Indo-Uzbek Centre for Information Technology was signed.

Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed visited Uzbekistan on 1-4 October 2004 for the Birth Centenary Celebrations of Late Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri in Uzbekistan. During his visit, Shri Ahamed met the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan. He visited the Shastri School in Tashkent and handed over a cheque of US\$ 25000 for restoration and repair of the school. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed delivered a speech at the Tashkent University of World Diplomacy and Economy.

In July 2004, a FIEO delegation comprising of Indian companies having interest in the areas of silk, cotton processing, agro products, tea, exports of jewellery, gold and diamond mining, etc. visited Uzbekistan and had meetings with high level officials in the Uzbek Government and various agencies.

A 13-member FICCI delegation visited Tashkent on 9-10 September 2004 to participate in the 2nd Joint Business Council held on 9 September 2004. The delegation met Deputy Minister of Health, Deputy Chairman of Agency for Foreign Economic Relations, officials of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other commercial organizations.

Shri E.V.K.S. Elangovan, Minister of State for Commerce & Industry visited Uzbekistan from 8 to 12 January 2005 as the co-chairman of the 5th Session of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation between India and Uzbekistan. The Uzbek Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Mirabror Usmanov co-chaired the meeting from the Uzbek side. The Joint Commission Meeting (held in Tashkent on 11 January) reviewed bilateral cooperation in trade, economic, scientific and technological fields between India and Uzbekistan. Areas identified for cooperation are transportation, construction, information technology, consultancy, food processing, textiles, pharmaceuticals, mining, joint ventures, culture and human resources. A protocol between the two sides was signed at the end of the meeting.

A Buyer-Seller Meet was jointly inaugurated by the Minister of State for Commerce & Industry Shri E.V.K.S. Elangovan and Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Mr. Mirabror Usmanov in which Uzbek businessmen and senior local government officials participated.

A Conference of Heads of Indian Missions / Commercial Representatives of CIS countries was held on 10 January 2005 in Tashkent.

Ukraine

The fourth meeting of the Joint Committee on Science and Technology between India and Ukraine was held in New Delhi on 1 April 2004.

An exhibition 'Enterprise India 2004' was held by CII in Kyiv (8-11 July) More than 30 companies representing small and medium enterprises in the fields of automobile parts, bicycles, and tools, artificial jewellery and cosmetics, etc. took part in the exhibition.

EEPC held a Buyer-Seller Meet (BSM) in association with the Ukrainian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Kyiv in June 2004. More than 10 engineering firms were represented from India in the BSM.

Azerbaijan

M/s Infosys Ltd. was awarded a US\$ 900,000 contract for providing banking software in respect of automation of one of the banks in Azerbaijan.

Dr. Leyla Aliyeva, President of Centre for National and International Studies in Baku visited India from 22-26 August 2004. During her visit, she delivered a series of

lectures on Caucasus affairs at JNU, Jamia Milia Islamia and the Centre for Caucasian Studies, Chandigarh.

Armenia

JS (Eurasia) visited Armenia on 3-4 May 2004 for Foreign Office Consultations. During the visit, JS (Eurasia) met Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Science & Education, Deputy Minister of Finance & Economy, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Deputy Minister of Culture & Youth Affairs.

Georgia

JS (Eurasia) visited Georgia on 15-17 December 2004. He held meetings with the Prime Minister of Georgia, Speaker of the Georgian Parliament, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Deputy Minister of Economic Development of Georgia. Discussions focused on issues of mutual concern.

Belarus

Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Ocean Development led the Indian delegation to Minsk during the first week of November 2004 to participate in the 3rd session of the India-Belarus Joint Committee for Science & Technology Cooperation. Besides meetings with the Chairman of the Belarusian State Committee for Science & Technology, he called on the Prime Minister of Belarus, President of Belarusian Academy of Sciences and other senior officials of Belarus. He also addressed an Indo-Belarus Scientific Seminar and visited a number of leading R&D Institutions in Minsk.

Prime Minister of Belarus Mr. Sergei Sidorski made a transit stop-over in New Delhi on 7 November 2004 enroute to Vietnam. The Belarusian Prime Minister was received by Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of State for Science & Technology and Ocean Development. Shri Sibal was accompanied by Secretary, DST, JS [Eurasia] and other Indian officials.

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5 The Gulf, West Asia and North Africa

Gulf Countries

The year 2004-2005 has been a period of important exchange of visits and signing of agreements between India and the Gulf countries. As far as Gulf Division is concerned, the year 2004 was hectic particularly due to major developments in Iraq.

Iraq

India welcomed UN Security Council Resolution 1546 as a first step in the evolution of political process in Iraq. Prime Minister sent greetings to the Interim Prime Minister of Iraq, Iyad Allawi and reiterated India's commitment to assist Iraqi people in their rehabilitation efforts. External Affairs Minister wrote to the Iraqi counterpart, Hoshiyaar Zibari, welcoming the formation of the Interim Government and offering to play a role by India in the reconstruction activities. India was an active participant in the Iraq Donor Conferences held in Doha (May 2004), Tokyo (October 2004). India distributed milk powder worth dollar 1.1 million for Iraqi children through WFP. The number of training slots for Iraqi officials under the ITEC programme was increased from 75 to 125 per annum. The number of scholarships for higher education for Iraqi students was increased from 30 to 50. One of the most challenging and delicate problems appeared when a militant group in Iraq kidnapped three Indian truck drivers along with four other foreign nationals on 21 July 2004. After vigorous efforts, the Government succeeded in getting the captives released on 2 September. Later, the Government, as a temporary measure, issued an advisory against travel of Indian nationals to Iraq. The emigration control on travel to Iraq was further tightened. India also offered to train 30 Iraqi election officers in India.

United Arab Emirates

India continues to strengthen its extensive and mutually beneficial relationship with UAE. President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, accompanied by Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed, visited UAE on 3 November 2004 to offer condolences to the ruling family and the UAE leadership. External Affairs Minister visited

Abu Dhabi and Dubai (27 & 28 December 2004). In Abu Dhabi (27 December), the Minister handed to Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of UAE, an invitation to visit India from the Hon'ble President and held detailed discussions with Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs on political, strategic, military and economic cooperation and regional issues. UAE announced support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. In Dubai, the Minister held discussions with Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Defence Minister of UAE on strengthening economic links between India and Dubai. The Minister also addressed the Conference of Indian Heads of Missions from 15 countries in the region. Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs participated in the Heads of Missions Conference and External Affairs Minister's meeting with Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum. UAE continues to be the major destination for Indian exports. India participated in the IDEXPO-2005. There has been regular exchange of trade delegations between the two countries, including participation of major trade exhibitions.

Bahrain

Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Bahrain from 19-21 August 2004 to attend the World Malayalee Conference. The first round of Foreign Office Consultations between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries at Secretary level was held in New Delhi from 16-19 November 2004. Mr. Abdulnabi Al Sho'ala, Minister of State in the Office of Prime Minister of Bahrain led a 25-member delegation of the Society for Training and Development to India from 22 November to attend the 33rd International Federation of Training and Development Organization World Exhibition in New Delhi. Shri Jagdish Tytler, Minister of State for Overseas Indian Affairs paid an official visit to Bahrain on 24 November 2004 for promotion of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in Mumbai from 7-9 January 2005. Two ships of the

Indian Navy – INS Delhi and INS Kulish – made goodwill visit to Bahrain from 22-26 September 2004. External Affairs Minister's scheduled visit to Bahrain on 29 December 2004 had to be postponed due to the developments in the wake of the Tsunami devastation which necessitated his presence in India.

Doha

Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Qatar from 15-16 September 2004 and met H.E. Ahmad bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Qatar. Apart from various bilateral, international and regional issues, he highlighted the new thrust being given to India's traditional relations with West Asia. The 4th World Travel and Tourism Summit held in Doha from 1-3 May 2004 and Shri N.K. Singh, Member, Planning Commission and Shri Lalit Suri, MP made a presentation on India as an international tourist destination.

Qatar

Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Qatar from 15-16 September 2004 and held discussions with Ahmad bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, on bilateral matters. Apart from discussions on various bilateral, international and regional issues, Shri Ahamed highlighted the new thrust being given to India's traditional relations with West Asia. Shri N.K. Singh, Member, Planning Commission and Shri Lalit Suri, MP visited Qatar for participation in the 4th World Travel and Tourism Summit held in Doha from 1-3 May 2004. Qatar has emerged as a major supplier of LNG to India. Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy & Industry of Qatar, H.E. Abdullah bins Hamad Al-Attiyah, paid an official visit to India from 6 to 9 January 2005. During the visit he attended the Round Table conference on "Regional Cooperation: Key to Energy Security" held in New Delhi on 6 January. Thereafter he paid a two-day visit to Kerala where he unveiled a model of Petronet's proposed LNG terminal at Kochi, which is expected to receive LNG supplies from Qatar from 2008 onwards.

Oman

External Affairs Minister visited Muscat (25-26 December 2004). He was received by Sultan Qaboos bin Said to whom he handed a letter from PM. The discussions with Sultan dealt with bilateral, regional and international issues. External Affairs Minister also held discussions with

the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Heritage and Culture, Oil & Gas, Defence and Commerce & Industry. Oman announced its support to India's candidature for Permanent Membership of the Security Council. Both the countries agreed to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of India's diplomatic presence in Oman in a befitting manner in 2005. Commencement of production by the \$1 billion India-Oman Fertilizer Factory in February/March 2005 and associated events were also discussed. An important outcome of the visit was the signing of the long pending Extradition Treaty by External Affairs Minister and the Omani Foreign Minister adding a new dimension to the security relationship between the two countries. External Affairs Minister also signed an Agreement on Cooperation in Audit between the two countries and laid the foundation stone for the Embassy building.

Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Oman from 4-7 November 2004 and met the Ministers Responsible for Foreign Affairs, Heritage & Culture, Commerce & Industry and the Manpower of Oman. Shri Jagdish Tytler, Minister of State for Overseas Indian Affairs visited Muscat 28-30 November 2004 for promotion of the 3rd Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and met the Manpower Minister of Oman to discuss issues of concern regarding Indian workers in Oman.

Shri Rajiv Sikri, Secretary(East) visited Muscat from 12-14 February 2005 for the 3rd Session of the Strategic Consultative Group. He called on Minister of Foreign Affairs, Commerce & Industry and Oil & Gas. The 50th anniversary of Indo-Oman diplomatic relations was formally launched on 13 February 2005 in Muscat, when letters of greetings and felicitations on the occasion between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries were exchanged.

Lt General Ahmed Al Nabhani, Chief of Staff of Oman's Armed Forces visited India from 18-23 May 2004. A group of officers from the National Defence College of India visited Muscat for a week long study tour. Vice Admiral Madanjit Singh, Flag Officer Commanding in Chief, Western Naval Command of India visited Oman from 12-15 September 2004. Indian Naval Ships INS Talwar and INS Pralaya and submarine INS Sindhuraj also visited Muscat port at the same time. India's Ocean Research Vessel, Sagar Kanya, visited Muscat (12-14 September), as part of a tri-nation Arabian Sea research cruise with scientists drawn from India, United States of America and Sultanate of Oman.

Saudi Arabia

The year witnessed interactions between the two countries at political and official levels. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed visited Jeddah from 13-16 June 2004 and from 9-10 November 2004 in connection with Haj arrangements. He signed the Agreement for Haj 2005 on 15 June 2004. Under the Agreement, 127,000 Indian Muslims would perform the Haj 2005. On 13 June he called on King Fahd and handed a letter from the Prime Minister of India. Shri Soli J. Sorabjee, Attorney General of India visited Saudi Arabia from 4-6 April 2004 to participate in the Symposium on "Judiciary and Laws in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" organized by the Ministry of Justice.

Shri R.M. Abhyankar, Secretary (ANA) accompanied by JS (Gulf) visited Saudi Arabia from 8-12 April 2004. During the visit he had extensive consultations with Mr. Ismail Shoura, Permanent Under Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also met Dr. Nizar Obeid Madani, Assistant Foreign Minister and Dr. Ahmed Al-Salem, Deputy Minister of Interior. The Saudi Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Ali Al Naimi visited India to attend the one-day Minister-level First Round Table Conference on "Regional Cooperation: Key to Energy Security" held in New Delhi on 6 January 2005. India participated in the Counter-Terrorism International Conference held in Riyadh from 5-8 February 2005. India was placed as a lead country in Group IV dealing with defeating and breaking up terrorism organizations and formations.

The bilateral trade between India and Saudi Arabia continued to grow at a healthy pace during year 2003-04 and registered an annual increase of 19.41 per cent during the period. India and Saudi Arabia concluded a Bilateral Accession Agreement on Saudi Arabia's accession to the WTO on 16 June 2004 in Geneva. The Agreement included agreed tariff schedules on items of export interest for India in the Saudi Arabian market as well as Saudi Arabia's market access commitments in services sectors of interest to India. In order to enhance the interaction in the cultural sphere, a 10-member percussion troupe led by Keshab Chowdhury, sponsored by ICCR visited Saudi Arabia from 27-31 May 2004 and performed both in Riyadh and Jeddah. A 24-Hour Helpline for the Indian expatriate community in Saudi Arabia was established in Indian Mission in Riyadh.

Kuwait

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait Sheikh (Dr.)

Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah visited India from 24-26 August 2004 and met the President, Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Extradition Treaty, Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, MoU for Establishment of Indo-Kuwait Strategic Consultative Group and GCC-India Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation were signed during the visit. Shri Jagdish Tytler, Minister of State for Overseas Indian Affairs, visited Kuwait from 25-27 November 2004 to promote Pravasi Bhartiya Divas, 2005. Dr. Yousef Hamad Al-Ebraheem, Advisor to Prime Minister of Kuwait, led the Kuwaiti delegation to the Round Table Discussion on "Regional Cooperation: Key to Energy Security" held in New Delhi on 6 January 2005.

Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State visited Kuwait from 21-22 February 2005 and delivered to Prime Minister of Kuwait an invitation from the Prime Minister to visit India. Shri Ahamed also called on Foreign Minister and Acting Speaker of the Kuwaiti Parliament and addressed the Indian community.

Special Kuwait Cell

The Special Kuwait Cell (SKC) was set up in 1991 for paying compensation to Indian citizens who suffered losses in life and property during the Gulf War of 1990-91. This compensation is being paid by the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), Geneva and the money comes from the revenue of sale of Iraqi oil under the "Oil for food programme" set up by the UN Security Council Resolution 692 (1991) for giving compensation to victims of Gulf War 1990-91. The disbursement of compensation money received from UNCC is being done through four nationalised banks designated for the purpose i.e. Central Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank, Syndicate Bank, Union Bank of India.

The scrutiny of claim applications and deciding the quantum of payment in each case and the timing of the payment (or to reject a claim altogether) lies totally in the domain of UNCC. Under Article 40(4) of the Provisional Rules for Claims Procedure adopted by the UNCC Governing Council, the decisions of UNCC are final and not subject to review or appeal on substantive, procedural or any other grounds.

Between 1 April 2004 and 15 January 2005 the UNCC has transferred US\$ 14,141,354.01 for approximately 1,350 claims in the individual claims category. The money received in the previous year which remained undistributed for various reasons, continued to be distributed during

this period. A total of US\$ 14,632,823.71 was disbursed to 1,635 claimants by the four designated banks. The break-up is given below:

Category	No. of Claims	Amount Paid (US \$)
A	924	240,551.21
B	Nil	Nil
C	631	2,527,660.94
D	76	11,864,611.56
Total	1,635	14,632,823.71

Yemen

Foreign Office Consultations between the two countries were held in New Delhi from 3 to 5 January 2005. The leader of the Yemeni delegation Mr. Hussein Taher Bin Yahya, Secretary of Foreign Affairs for Arab, African and Asian Affairs held discussions with Shri Rajiv Sikri, Secretary (East) on a wide range of bilateral issues and reviewed regional and international developments. He called on Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs and delivered a letter from the Yemeni Foreign Minister addressed to External Affairs Minister to visit Yemen. The 5th Session of the Indo-Yemen Joint Committee for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation was held in Sana'a from 15 to 17 January 2005. Shri Rajiv Sikri, Secretary (East) led the Indian delegation. Discussions dealt with Economic Cooperation, Commerce, Investment, Energy, Consular Matters, Culture, Education, Tourism, Health and Technical & Scientific Cooperation. Shri Sikri called on the Foreign Minister and delivered a letter from External Affairs Minister. He also met Minister of Commerce & Industry and Prime Minister of Yemen.

Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Yemen from 19-20 February and held discussions with the Foreign Minister and called on Prime Minister and the President.

Haj

Significant changes for Haj arrangements during the year included the Government's decision on 20 October 2004 to increase the number of Haj pilgrims going through the Haj Committee of India from 72,000 to 82,000 and to remove the restrictions introduced during Haj 2004 restoring status quo ante for availing of subsidized airfares for Haj 2005. A total of about 127,000 pilgrims from India

performed Haj in 2005 including 80,772 under the arrangements made by the Haj Committee and the rest through Private Tour Operators.

The Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed, visited Saudi Arabia from 13-16 June 2004 at the invitation of the Saudi Haj Minister Mr. Iyad bin Amin Madani and signed the Agreement for Haj-2005. The Minister of State for External Affairs also called on the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd ibn Abdel Aziz in Jeddah on 13 June 2004 and handed over a letter from Prime Minister of India.

Shri K. Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister inaugurated All India Annual Haj Conference in New Delhi on 27 October 2004. The Conference, which was held after a gap of two years, was attended by members of Central and State Haj Committees, Members of Parliament, religious scholars and Government officials. The Conference was also significant as it was the first annual Haj Conference to take place after the new Haj Committee Act has come into force and the new Haj Committee was constituted.

Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Saudi Arabia from 8-11 November 2004 to review the ongoing arrangements for Haj 2005. During the visit, he met with Mr. Iyad Bin Amin Madani, Saudi Minister of Haj, Mr. Eissa Rawais, Saudi Deputy Minister for Umrh Affairs and Mr. Adnan Katib, Chairman of the South Asian Moassassah - the Saudi agency responsible for making logistical arrangements for Indian pilgrims - and discussed with them the various arrangements being put in place for Indian pilgrims for Haj 2005. Minister of State for External Affairs and Secretary (East) visited Saudi Arabia in December 2004 and reviewed arrangements for Haj 2005.

For Haj 2005, three new embarkation points viz. Aurangabad, Guwahati and Patna (in place of Gaya) were added during Haj 2005 thus bringing the total number of embarkation points to 15. For the first time, nearly 21,000 pilgrims flew directly to Madinah from three embarkation points in India i.e. Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Calicut.

Information Technology was utilized increasingly to monitor and track pilgrims' location and movement. Three Internet Cafes were provided for exclusive use of Hajjis in Makkah. In Makkah, all 9-branch offices apart from the main office had computerized databases which provided immediate information about the places of stay and arrival/departure schedule of every pilgrim. The

number of deputationists from Central and State Government to Saudi Arabia for assisting the Haj pilgrims was increased by 15%.

A 34-member Indian Haj Goodwill delegation led by Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Urban Development, visited Saudi Arabia from 16 January to 3 February 2005. During the visit, the Leader of the Indian Delegation met with the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Fahd ibn Abdel Aziz and the Saudi Haj Minister.

The Ministry continued the system of registration of Private Tour Operators, which had commenced from Haj 2003 onwards, for Haj 2005 as well with a view to ensuring better services by private tour operators for the pilgrims.

India – GCC

The India-GCC Political Dialogue, attended by the GCC Foreign Ministers and External Affairs Minister took place on the sidelines of UNGA in New York on 27 September 2004. India and GCC signed a Framework Agreement for Economic Cooperation at New Delhi on 25 August 2004. GCC Secretary-General visited New Delhi for the purpose. The GCC-India agreement was signed by Dr. Muhammad Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait and Mr. Abdul Rahman bin Hamad Al Attiyah, Secretary General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) with Shri Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce and Industry. The GCC Secretary General also held discussions with External Affairs Minister Shri Natwar Singh and Tourism Minister Smt. Renuka Choudhary during the visit. The first official-level meeting between India and GCC under the Framework Agreement for the Economic Cooperation was held in New Delhi on 19 November 2004.

WEST ASIA AND NORTH AFRICA

Algeria

Relations with Algeria continued to be warm and close. Exploratory visits at official and businessmen level were undertaken to promote economic and commercial relations. The 1st meeting of the Joint Committee set up in the field of Small and Medium Enterprises was held from 21-26 November 2004 in New Delhi. A four-member delegation from ONGC (Videsh) Limited visited Algeria from 5-8 December 2004 to study technical data of the blocks for oil/gas exploration being offered by the Algerian authorities under the Sixth Licensing Round. Algeria has

availed of 5 slots under ITEC and 4 additional slots are expected to be utilized in the CFY. The Chief of Air Staff, Algerian Air Force visited India from 20-26 February 2005.

Djibouti

Indo-Djibouti bilateral relations continued to be warm and friendly during the year. The Government of Djibouti is keen in enhancing its relations with India and has decided to open an Embassy in New Delhi and has designated its Ambassador to India. Djibouti has also decided to open a consulate in Mumbai and nominated Mr. Idriss Sababn as its Consul General.

Djibouti continued to support India's candidature for various posts in the international organizations. ITEC slots for Djibouti have been increased from 2 in 2003- 2004 to 10 for the year 2004-2005.

Egypt

Bilateral relations remained friendly. During the current year there were two Ministerial visits from Egypt. Egyptian Minister of Investment, Dr. Mahmoud Mohie EI Din participated for the first time in the India Economic Summit in New Delhi in December 2004 to woo Indian investors. Likewise, Egyptian Minister of Tourism, Mr. Ahmed Al-Maghraby launched a road show in India in December to attract more Indian tourists, whose numbers have been growing at over 30 per cent annually (around 45,000 in 2004).

Egypt remained one of the important commercial and economic partners of India in the WANA region during 2004. For the first time, investments were made in the Egyptian hydrocarbon sector with the Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) picking up small equity and management stakes, in two gas distribution projects in Cairo and Al Fayum. GAIL also acquired a 15 per cent equity share in NATGAS, a new Egyptian company. With Egypt likely to emerge among the top 10 producers and exporters of gas, our efforts to deepen meaningful cooperation have increased. Indian Minister of Petroleum flagged our interest in partnering with Egypt in establishing a new product pipeline from Mediterranean to the Red Sea. We continue to buy limited amounts of crude oil and petroleum products from Egypt, valued at nearly US \$ 350 million annually. HDFC assisted in setting up Egypt Housing Development Corporation (EHDC) by taking up 10 per cent equity share and providing technical assistance. Former UNSG Boutros Ghali opened the South Centre Meetings in India in February 2005.

Israel

Bilateral relations with Israel continued to develop in diverse areas. Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Industry, Trade and Labour Ehud Olmert visited India from 6-9 December 2004. During the visit, he met with External Affairs Minister, Commerce and Industry Minister, Finance Minister, Communication and Information Technology Minister, Agriculture Minister and Minister of State for Science & Technology. A Letter of Intent for early finalization and signing of MoU on Industrial Research and Development Initiative between India and Israel was signed. Comptroller and Auditor General, Chief of Air Staff and Chairman of ISRO were the visitors from Indian side to Israel during the financial year 2004-05. The 8th round of India-Israel Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on 16 November 2004, during which progress on the entire gamut of bilateral relations was reviewed. The Israeli delegation called on the External Affairs Minister. The India-Israel Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter-Terrorism held its fourth meeting in India from 30 November – 2 December 2004, back-to-back with the first round of bilateral consultations on disarmament issues. The India-Israel agreement on visa-free travel for diplomatic and official passport holders came into effect from 20 October 2004.

Between January-October 2004, according to Israeli trade statistics, bilateral trade crossed US\$ 2.144 billion, a growth of over 25 per cent compared to the same period in 2003. It was higher than the record trade in full 2003. The sixth meeting of the India-Israel Joint Committee on Science and Technology was held in Israel in July 2004. Both sides inter alia agreed to pursue joint projects particularly in the areas of nano-technology, biotechnology and advanced materials. The third meeting of the India-Israel Joint Working Group on Defense Cooperation was held in Israel from 21-23 December 2004. It was co-chaired by Defense Secretary from the Indian side and the Director General of the Ministry of Defense Amos Yaron from the Israeli side.

On the Israeli “Disengagement plan”, the India-EU Joint Statement of 8 November 2004 stated that “Israeli intention to withdraw from all Gaza settlements and parts of the West Bank can constitute a step towards achieving the two State solution and had the possibility of restarting progress on the roadmap, provided that it takes place in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions and in the context of the roadmap, that it is a step towards a two

state solution, that it does not involve a transfer of settlement activity to the West Bank, that there is an organized and negotiated handover of responsibility to the Palestinian Authority, and that Israel facilitates rehabilitation and reconstruction in Gaza. The proposed withdrawal should be properly coordinated with the international community so as to ensure that an orderly situation in Gaza results, which would permit the maintenance of security as well as rehabilitation and reconstruction”. India reaffirmed that “a just, peaceful and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict can only be achieved through political negotiations between the parties with the active support of the international community. Such a comprehensive solution must also include Syria and Lebanon”. In July 2004, India voted in favour of the UNGA resolution calling on Israel to comply with the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the West Bank “Separation fence” that the construction of the separation fence by Israel was contrary to international law.

Commerce Secretary visited Israel on 13-14 February 2005 to co-chair a meeting of the India-Israel Joint Study Group on a proposed bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement.

Jordan

India and Jordan continued to have cordial and friendly relations during the period. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed visited Jordan from 16-18 June 2004. He called on the Regent Prince Faisal and discussed bilateral relations and highlighted the policy of the new Congress-led Government to give a new thrust to India’s relations with Arab countries. The Minister also handed over an invitation from President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to King Abdullah to visit India at an early date. Minister of Labour Amjad Majali paid an official visit to India from 27 September to 1 October 2004. During talks with his counterpart Shri Sis Ram Ola, Mr. Majali stressed the Kingdom’s desire to benefit from Indian experience in the field of Labour, Vocational Training and Social Insurance. A joint invitation from the Chairman of Rajya Sabha and Speaker of Lok Sabha has been extended to H.E. Mr. Abdulhadi Majali, Speaker (President) of the House of Deputies to visit India along with a Jordanian parliamentary delegation.

Over the years, the trade between the two countries has grown rapidly. Although the balance of trade has been in favour of Jordan, during the last few years, Indian exports

have also shown encouraging progress. Last year, India exported to Jordan JD141 million worth of goods including spices, tea, sesame, meat and motor vehicles and spare parts. According to latest figures, Indian imports from Jordan during January-August 2004 was US \$ 144 million while, Indian exports to Jordan was US \$ 101 during the same period.

Lebanon

Bilateral relations with Lebanon continued to be cordial and friendly. A French Major General Alain Pellegrini took over charge in February 2004 from Major General Lalit Mohan Tewari of Madras Regiment who served as Force Commander of UNIFIL for the period 2001-2003. The 6th Battalion of the Indian Armed Forces i.e. 10th Garhwal completed its tenure in October 2004 and was replaced by 15 Assam Regiment.

There was some improvement in Indo-Lebanese economic relations with the visit of some Indian business delegations which included delegation from Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council in February 2004, delegation from the National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd. (NTPC) in October 2004 and a delegation from Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) in November 2004.

Libya

Bilateral relations in the economic and commercial fields made significant progress during the current year. Lifting of UN, US and EU sanctions present greater opportunities and increased competition from other countries to Indian companies. Hydrocarbon and Power sector, along with Pharmaceuticals, Automobiles, Software and IT education are the focus areas which have tremendous potential for our companies. Indian companies are executing \$ 600 million worth of projects currently. In the power sector, BHEL is currently executing Rs 1200 crore contract for setting up a 600 MW power plant. ONGC already has a presence in Libya. In the new Exploration and Production Sharing Agreement Round (EPSA-IV) of National Oil Corporation, Libya, a total of 15 oil blocks were offered and IOC won a block in January 2005 in the present round.

National Supply Corporation lifted the ban on Indian commodities in the month of July 2004. The ban was in place since 2000. The trade figures are expected to go up manifold during the current year. As per available trade figures, Indian exports for the initial two months (April-May) stood at Rs 48.11 Crores (Approximately US \$ 10.7

million). This is in comparison with previous year's exports (2003-04) which stood at Rs. 86.60 Crores (18.73 \$ million).

Minister of State (C&I) Shri E.V.K.S. Elangovan visited Libya to take part in 9th Session of Indo-Libya Joint Commission (ILJC) from 20-22 November 2004. The major sectors discussed during the visit included hydrocarbon, power, shipping, civil aviation, telecommunication, education, healthcare and investment. Apart from Joint Commission discussions, Minister of State (C&I) also took opportunity to call on Prime Minister, Minister for Economy & Trade, Energy Minister, Minister for Manpower, Training & Employment and a host of other dignitaries. Two composite delegations in Hydrocarbon and Power sector visited Libya from 11-15 June 2004. Two delegations from Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industries (FICCI) and Indian Electrical & Electronics Manufacturers Association (IEEMA) visited Libya in the month of July 2004.

On political front point, Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs & Urban Development visited Tripoli from 27-29 November 2004. During his stay, the Minister (PA & UD) met with Mr. Shahoumi, Chairman (Foreign Affairs Committee) of the General Peoples Congress (Parliament), FM Shalgam, Minister for Manpower and Training Mr. Matoug Mohammed Matoug. The visiting Minister also called on the Libyan leader Col. Gaddafi.

Morocco

Relations between India and Morocco continued to grow and strengthen in all areas culminating in Moroccan Prime Minister Driss Jettou's visit to India from 6-9 December 2004. He was accompanied by a large delegation, which included 7 Ministers, 25 high-ranking officials and 20 representatives of the media and 20 businessmen. Mr. Jettou met our President, Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister. During the visit, Agreements were signed between the two countries in the areas of Energy and Power, Civil Aviation and Agricultural Research. The third meeting of the Indo-Morocco Joint Economic Council, comprising businessmen from both sides was also held on the sidelines. The visit of the Prime Minister and his high-level delegation could serve as the launching pad for an even closer relationship. A 14-member Indian delegation representing various sectors of industry and commerce participated in the 35th World Congress of International Chamber of Commerce at Marrakech in June 2004.

At the invitation of Speaker of Lok Sabha and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha to the leaders of both the Houses of Moroccan Parliament, Mr. Abdelouahed Radi, Speaker of the Moroccan House of Representatives (Lower House) is expected to lead a 5-member Parliamentary delegation to New Delhi later this year.

Palestine

Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Palestine from 17-19 September 2004. His visit allowed for an appreciation of the ground situation and for talks with late President Arafat and other Palestinian leadership. During the visit, Minister of State for External Affairs formally handed over medicines and TATA Safari vehicles worth Rs. 2 crore as donation to the Palestinian National Authority. A special course for 10 Palestinian diplomats has been organized by Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry from 22 November to 17 December 2004.

Following the death of President Arafat on 11 November 2004 India stated that he “was a towering and highly respected international personality who fought selflessly and courageously, at great personal sacrifice, for the Palestinian cause and an independent homeland for the Palestinian people, to which he dedicated his whole life. He enjoyed great respect and admiration among the people and leaders of India, and will always be remembered as a sincere and steadfast friend of India.”. External Affairs Minister led a multi-party delegation to Cairo for the funeral ceremony of President Arafat. Condolence messages were sent from President, PM and External Affairs Minister to their counterparts in the Palestinian National Authority. Parliament adopted a long obituary honouring President Arafat.

After the sad demise of President Arafat, India’s commitment to the Palestinian cause was reaffirmed in PM’s message issued on 29 November 2004 on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people.

As a mark of support to the cause of democracy in Palestine and as the world’s largest democracy, India sent, at the invitation of the Palestinian National Authority, a team of Election Observers to observe the Palestinian residential elections in January 2005. India welcomed Mr Mahmoud Abbas as the new President of the Palestinian National Authority. India welcomed the resumption of the Israel-Palestine peace process and issued a statement on 10 February 2005 which stated:

“The Summit in Sharm-el Sheikh on 8 February 2005 and the significant meeting between the leaders of Israel and Palestine after a gap of about four years is an important step in the resumption of the Israel-Palestine peace process and deserves the support of the international community. We have noted the encouraging statements of both leaders. However, a number of important issues remain to be addressed. India has consistently urged an end to violence from all sides. We look forward to further progress in the peace process that would bring about a just and peaceful solution within a reasonable time frame, leading to a sovereign, independent State of Palestine with well-defined and secured borders, living at peace with the State of Israel”.

Sudan

The year 2004-05 witnessed a substantial activity in the field of bilateral economic & commercial relations. A “Technical Agreement” for setting up solar photovoltaic (SPV) module manufacturing plant, near Khartoum in Sudan between Central Electronics Limited (CEL), India and the Sudanese Ministry of Science & Technology was signed in June 2004. In July 2004 Telecommunications Consultants of India Limited (TCIL) prepared a feasibility study for “Sudan Electronic City.” ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) has, in addition to its 25 per cent stakes in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC), acquired 26 per cent and 24.5 per cent stakes in Blocks 5A and 5B respectively from OMV of Austria at a total cost of US\$ 115 million in May 2004. Apart from OVL’s stakes in Sudanese oil blocks, OVL was awarded the project for construction of products pipeline from Khartoum Refinery to Port Sudan on 1 July 2004. India is also negotiating for upgrading of a refinery in Port Sudan. In response to the Sudanese government’s request for India’s help for the people in Darfur, GOI granted 20,000 tons of wheat as humanitarian assistance for the people of Darfur. Sudan is a major beneficiary under the ITEC Programme and it has been allocated 60 slots during 2004-05.

At the invitation of Honourable Home Minister, Sudan’s Minister of Interior, H.E. Maj-Gen (Eng.) Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein visited India from 24-29 January 2005. Secretary General of Sudanese Ministry of Energy and Mining, H.E. Dr. Omer Mohamad Khair, visited Delhi to attend Petrotech between 15 and 19 January 2005. The fourth round of FOCs between India and Sudan were held on 10 February 2005 at New Delhi.

Syria

Bilateral relations further strengthened during the year building on the Prime Minister's visit in November 2003. President Assad in principle accepted an invitation to visit India.

The first meeting of the Joint Working Group on the Small and Medium Sector was held in New Delhi in November. Bilateral trade (highly skewed in India's favour), recorded steady growth and stood at 205 Million US\$ in 2003-04 showing a growth of 66 per cent over 2002-03. A number of Indian companies participated in various Government tenders. ONGC (Videsh) along with an American Company IPR signed an exploration contract with the Syrian Government for exploration and development of oil in Block No.24 in northeastern part of Syria. ABB India bagged another contract worth 30 million US\$ in December 2004 for supply of substation. A team from DMRC (Delhi Metro Rail Corporation) led by its MD.

Shri E. Sreedharan visited Syria for a feasibility study of Metro project in Damascus which will be funded from

the the credit line of 25 million US\$ which was announced by the former Prime Minister last year. The India-Syria Joint Hydrocarbon committee meeting was held in New Delhi on 14 February 2005.

Tunisia

Bilateral relations between India and Tunisia remained cordial during this period. Tunisia has been supportive of India's candidatures in various international fora. Prospects of bilateral business have been explored and are beginning to fructify with major Tunisian investment in fertilizer sector in India and substantial increase in Indian trade to Tunisia. A Six Member delegation of Indian Electrical & Electronics Manufacturers Association (IEEMA) visited Tunisia and held fruitful discussions with their Tunisian counterparts. There is great scope for Indian supply in telecommunications industries. The second meeting of the Indo-Tunisian JWG on Drugs & Pharmaceuticals was held in Tunisia in 2005 and will further consolidate Indian exports of medicines and allied items to Tunisia and the region.



East and Southern Africa

India's relations with the African countries have strengthened during the year. African States remember with gratitude the assistance extended by India to them during their struggle against colonialism and apartheid. During recent years, India's ties with these countries have much expanded in economic and commercial arenas. India has sizeable two-way trade with most of the African countries. There is recognition that Indian goods, whether consumer or capital, are amongst the best in the world and price-wise unbeatable. There is immense appreciation and admiration for the Indian technology. It is widely felt that India can be of great help to the African continent as it marches towards progress and development.

Reflecting the closeness of relations between India and Africa, President of Zanzibar visited India in March. President of Nigeria paid a brief visit to India in November 2004. India's Vice President visited South Africa to participate in their 10th Freedom Day in the last week of April. Foreign Ministers of Comoros, Lesotho, Mauritius, Senegal and Burkina Faso had visited India during the last 2-3 months.

Indian President paid a visit to Tanzania and South Africa in September 2004. During his visit the President had the rare honour of addressing the Pan-African Parliament. He was the first non-African Head of State to do so. Smt. Sonia Gandhi, President of the Congress Party, visited Mauritius during the last week of November 2004. PM is scheduled to visit Mauritius shortly.

It would be evident from this exchange of visits at the highest level between India and Africa that both the sides are extremely keen to further build and strengthen the relationship between them. It is a testimony to the fact that both India and Africa well realize that they have much to offer to each other and are natural partners in their common struggle against backwardness and poverty.

During the last year a number of credit lines have been extended to the countries of this region. One may specially

mention here the credit line of US\$200 million extended to NEPAD. Recently India extended credit lines to Mozambique, Kenya, Lesotho, Senegal, Angola, etc. Earlier it was decided to provide eight countries of West Africa with a credit line of 500 million dollars and this is generally known as the TEAM-9 Initiative. A high-level meeting of representatives of these countries (which included four Foreign Ministers) was recently held in India to further discuss the modalities of utilization of this credit line.

The highlights of India's cooperation with Africa include building an International Convention Centre in Mauritius at a cost of US\$15 million. Half of this amount will be paid as grant while the other half is in the form of credits. Recently construction of the Cybercity was completed there and this was entirely financed through Indian credit line. There are a number of other projects under consideration for which suitable credit lines will be provided to Mauritius. India is assisting Mauritius in several areas and its excellent economic and political ties are underpinned by close people-to-people contacts. It may be noted that no less than 58 per cent of the Mauritian population is of Indian origin.

India is cooperating closely with South Africa, both bilaterally as well as within the framework of IBSA dialogue. The IBSA is looked upon as a model of cooperation in the developing world and has evoked much interest and admiration among other countries. India is also considering joint ventures with South Africa in other African countries in the field of mineral extraction, oil/gas exploration, etc. A joint forum between captains of industry belonging to India and South Africa was formed recently. It is headed by Mr. Ratan Tata, from Indian side while on the South African side it is headed by Mr. Patrice Motsepe, who is the head of a big corporation in that country. It is hoped that the formation of this forum will lead to increase in economic interaction between India and South Africa and especially would encourage formation of joint ventures in key areas. There are thus excellent prospects for expansion of our bilateral ties with South Africa in economic and commercial arenas.

Special mention must be made about the announcement made by Indian President during his recent visit to South Africa. President declared that India would provide technical assistance and expertise for establishing a fiber optic and electronic connectivity between all the countries of Africa. This is a highly ambitious project and would enable the African states to adopt modern technologies and methods of communication. It is hoped that such a linkage would give a major boost to the development of Africa in the fields of education, health, etc. and they would be able to implement schemes based on e-medicine, e-governance, e-education, etc.

There is no doubt that the relations between India and Africa are at a major turning point now. There is a widespread feeling in Africa that it was India which stood by them while they were struggling to secure their independence and it is India again which is standing by them as they are now engaged in a new struggle against the legacy of the colonial era represented by poverty, backwardness and lack of infrastructure. Perhaps what Africa feels for India can best be expressed with a quote from a speech recently made by the Prime Minister of Mauritius in their Parliament.

“I also think that we are blessed. We will never stop saying ‘thank you’ to India. In every difficult situation, India is there. We want to get the ICT sector off the ground, India is there! We have a problem to host a huge UN Conference on AIDS, India is there! And here, when we want to take a further step in consolidating, modernizing democracy, once again, India is there. We are benefiting from this accumulated experience in the largest democracy in the world – India. That is why I say that we are not just *chanceux*; we are blessed. What sign of maturity, what lesson in democracy this huge subcontinent India has just given. For the first time, electronic voting machines were used for a general election in one go across this huge subcontinent. And surprise, those who thought they would win, lost! Mr. Speaker, Sir, again, this is a sign of maturity! Not the slightest challenge! Fantastic! They have devised a superb piece of electronic machinery; they have used it and there is not the slightest challenge. What a lesson! And we stand to benefit from all this, Mr. Speaker, Sir.”

In the field of manpower training under ITEC and similar schemes, India has been providing training in a wide range of fields to countries of Africa since the early 1960s. It is a tribute to the high quality of training, which is imparted under the ITEC that there is much competition to be

selected for the courses being offered under its aegis. Keeping in view the overriding need for Africa for trained manpower the Government of India has over the years greatly expanded the scope of the ITEC and the number of seats allotted to Africa has shown a steady increase over the years.

Mention must be made here of the sterling role played by India’s defence forces while participating in peacekeeping operations in various countries of Africa such as Burundi, Ivory Coast, DRC, etc. which had been suffering from civil war, ethnic violence, etc. A large contingent from the Indian army forms part of the UN Force, which is keeping peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The present commander of this force (UNMEE – United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea) is a senior army officer from India. African countries highly appreciate the vital contribution, which India is thus making to restoration of stability and peace in various parts of this continent. Indian defence personnel participating in these operations have everywhere distinguished themselves by the professionalism as well as by their humane approach, thus demonstrating to the common man in Africa that India is genuinely concerned about the problems being faced by the people of Africa.

There is universal recognition in Africa that India has now become a major power in every sense of the word. This is why most countries of Africa have enthusiastically endorsed India’s candidature for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Indian communities in various African countries have, in recent years, proved themselves as a valuable bridge strengthening the relationship between India and their countries of residence. These communities mostly consist of PIOs whose great-grandfathers had migrated to Africa from India in the 19th century. In most African countries, members of the Indian community are generally engaged in trade and they usually account for a large percentage of the retail trade in the country concerned. The earlier image of a greedy and rapacious Indian trader who exploited the local people and reaped huge profits has now almost become a thing of the past. It also needs to be noted that members of the Indian community in Africa have started to invest in local industries and they thus have been proving that their links and attachment first and foremost is with the country of their residence in Africa. It is also gratifying that many members of the Indian community have become members of Parliament in different African States. One can safely say that the Indian Diaspora in Africa has finally come of

age and while retaining their Indian culture and identity have managed to merge themselves with the mainstream society in Africa in the most harmonious manner.

India looks to the future and there is no doubt that immense opportunities for cooperation exist between India and Africa. Indian technology and capital aided by its skilled manpower are best suited to enable Africa to exploit its natural resources in a manner mutually beneficial both to the people of India as well as of Africa. A brief account of developments in these countries is as follows:

Botswana

Deep cordiality and mutual benefit mark the bilateral relations between India and Botswana during the year. Botswana extended support on a number of issues and voted for India at international elections, and cooperated with India on a wide range of issues. A delegation of top officials of the Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA) visited India to seek new investors in May 2004. Chairman & Managing Director of Telecommunication Consultants India Ltd. (TCIL), Shri G.D. Gaiha, visited Botswana in July 2004. He met Minister of Science, Communications and Technology Boyce Sebetela and senior officials in the Ministry as well as those of Botswana Telecommunications Corporation (BTC) and postal department. A group of eleven Indian businessmen including representatives of M/s. Larsen & Toubro (Kolkata) and Tata Infotech, visited Botswana in July 2004 at the invitation of Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA). A 9-member delegation sponsored by EEPC visited Botswana in August 2004 and discussed export prospects. Lt.Gen. L.M. Fisher, Commander of Botswana Defence Force (BDF) visited India in August 2004 at the personal invitation of Gen. N.C. Vij, Chief of Army Staff. According to the Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority, India was the largest investor in Botswana with 31 per cent of all investments since 2002. India's export to Botswana also increased by 54 per cent during the year.

Burundi

The relations between the two countries remained friendly.

Comoros

The Foreign Minister of the Union of Comoros H.E. Mr. Souef Mohamed El-Amine paid an official visit to India from 23-27 August 2004 at the invitation of External

Affairs Minister. During his visit, the first ever bilateral, high-level visit from either side, India and Comoros agreed on strengthening cooperation in a wide variety of fields. At the 59th session of the UNGA Comoros supported India's candidature for permanent membership of the Security Council and for ECOSOC.

Eritrea

No high level visit took place during the period under reference. However, when Ambassador met President and several Cabinet Ministers, they impressed upon the urgent need of opening a Diplomatic representation at the earliest. Around 1500 Indian Teachers/Doctors/ Experts are working in Eritrea in different Departments/Sectors. Indian contingent comprising 1400 defence personnel is the largest component of United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). Action is being taken to appoint an Hony. Consul General in Eritrea.

Ethiopia

India and Ethiopia continued to enjoy warm and friendly relations during the period and it was further strengthened especially in the areas of capacity building and human resource development. This has been acknowledged by the Government of Ethiopia in its annual performance report, which says that a good result has been achieved in the training of health extension workers and this has been possible because of training the trainers by using the services of professionals from India. The India and Ethiopia bilateral trade also continued to increase. However, the balance of trade remained heavily in favour of India. Ethiopia has also supported India's candidature for various posts in International Organizations. India also continued to contribute peacekeeping troops to the United Nations Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). No VVIP visit took place from either side during the period. However, there have been a few visits at official level. The most notable was the visit of the Speaker of the Ethiopian House of Federation, Dr. Mulatu Teshome to India. He, along with the Presidents (Chief Ministers) of Two Federal States of Ethiopia, Amhara and Tigray, visited India from 25 October to 2 November 2004. A German NGO, GTZ, sponsored the visit. During the visit Dr. Teshome and his delegation met the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Home Minister of India, Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission and Chief Minister of Rajasthan. In addition the UNDP, Ethiopia organized a study tour of 15-member delegation to Rajasthan in September 2004. The delegation also comprised President

(Chief Ministers) of three Federal States of Ethiopia, Benishangul-Gomuz, Afar and Gambella.

India participated in the 5th Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Executive Council and the 3rd African Union (AU) Summit of the Heads of State and Government held in Addis Ababa in July 2004. The period also witnessed growing cooperation between the police forces of India and Ethiopia. A two-member Indian Police delegation comprising Shri Sarabjit Singh, Director General, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), New Delhi and Dr. M.S. Rao, Director-cum-Chief Forensic Scientist, Directorate of Forensic Science, visited Ethiopia from 5-11 April 2004. The visit was followed by a number of police trainers' delegations. These visits have enhanced cooperation between the police forces of the two friendly countries. 15 Ethiopian were trained in India under ITEC during the period in various fields like advance networking technology, software development, advance course in multimedia and web design, audit of social sectors and international programme in banking and finance.

The National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) of India and the Federal Micro and Small Enterprises Development Agency (FeMSEDA) of Ethiopia entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on micro and small industries development on 12 July 2004. The MoU provides for organized micro and small industries growth in Ethiopia by formulating developmental schemes and identifying projects to generate employment and self-employment. The IRCON International Limited was awarded a contract worth US\$ 31 million for construction of 120 km gravel road in Ethiopia in June 2004 against tough international bidding. This was the first road construction project awarded to an Indian company in Ethiopia. An Indian Company, KEC International Limited was awarded a contract worth US\$ 40 million for construction of 132 KV Power Transmission Project in September 2004. The Northern India Textile Research Association (NITRA) won a consultancy service contract for setting up a Textile & Garment Industry Support Institute. The Water and Power Consultancy Services (India) Limited (WAPCOS), which has been doing projects in water sector in Ethiopia for past many years, was also awarded four more projects in September 2004. A two-day Indian Education Fair was organized in Addis Ababa on 10 and 11 June 2004 by the UGC and FICCI. The fair was a part of the Promotion of Indian Higher Education Abroad (PIHEAD) programme of UGC.

Sixteen Indian Universities and affiliated colleges/institutes participated in the fair and it attracted hundreds of students from Ethiopia and of other nationalities who were interested in pursuing study in India.

Kenya

As in line with the Government of India policy to promote Indian higher education in countries abroad, FICCI and UGC organized jointly 'India Education Fair' on 12 – 13 June 2004 in which 18 Indian Universities and 9 Vice Chancellors including JNU, BHU, Symbiosis Pune etc. participated.

Mr. Kapil Sibal, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ministry of Science & Technology visited Kenya from 14-18 June 2004 to attend the board meeting on International AIDS Vaccine Initiative. He met the Kenyan Minister for Education, Science & Technology, Prof. George Saitoti and proposed the signing of an agreement on Science & Technology between Kenya and India. This proposal was accepted in principle. In August 2004 the Kenyan Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. Chirau Ali Mwakwere extended an invitation to India's External Affairs Minister to visit Kenya which was accepted in principle. Kenyan Minister of Justice, Mr. Kiraitu Murungi during his transit visit to India met the Minister of Justice and told the Press that India should be a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council. Shri Jagdish Tytler, Minister of State for Overseas Indian Affairs visited Nairobi from 15-17 November 2004 to promote Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2005. Kumari Selja, Minister of State for Urban Employment & Poverty Alleviation visited Nairobi from 28 September - 3 October 2004 to attend Inter-Regional Conference on Urban-Rural Linkages.

The Nairobi Summit on a Mine-free World, which was the First Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their Destruction, was held at Nairobi, Kenya from 29 November to 3 December 2004. India participated in the Review Conference as an Observer.

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan accompanied by his sons, Amaan Ali and Ayaan Ali and tabla player Ustad Shafaat Ahmed Khan performed in Nairobi on 26 June and in Mombasa on 27 June 2004.

Lesotho

A delegation led by Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lesotho visited India from 1-7 August



Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat greets Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs, at the West Bank town of Ramallah on 17 September 2004.



President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam meets President Thabo Mbeki during his visit to the Republic of South Africa, 14-18 September 2004.

2004 to finalize the establishment of Lesotho High Commission in New Delhi. The High Commission is expected to be functional in the coming months. Shri B.S. Minhas, Secretary, Ministry of Small Scale Industries of India visited Lesotho on 9-10 October 2004. The two governments signed an MoU for cooperation in the field of small-scale industries during this visit. A three-member ministerial delegation from Lesotho led by their Foreign Minister visited India from 10-16 October 2004. The main purpose was to finalize the signing of the US\$ 5 million Line of Credit Agreement between Government of Lesotho and Export Import Bank of India. Lesotho government intends to use this credit line largely to upgrade the agricultural infrastructure in their country. The food aid of 5000 Metric tonnes each of rice and wheat promised during the visit of the Prime Minister of Lesotho to India last year was delivered in June 2004. This gesture of solidarity was deeply appreciated by the Government of Lesotho.

Madagascar

At the 59th session of the UNGA, Madagascar supported our candidature for permanent membership of the Security Council and voted in favour of our ECOSOC candidature. A visit to India by the Foreign Minister of Madagascar Gen. Marcel Ranjeva is being scheduled in the first half of 2005.

On 30 November 2004 a consignment of medical equipment valued at approximately Rs. 21 lakhs were handed over to the Minister of health & Family Planning of Madagascar as a gift from the Government of India.

Malawi

The new Indian High Commissioner presented his credentials to the President of Malawi on 12 October 2004. During this meeting, the Malawian President expressed his interest in further strengthening political, economic and technological cooperation with India. The Malawian Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, Mr. John Bright Khumbo Chirwa visited India from 12-19 November 2004. During his stay in New Delhi, he visited the ITPO trade fair and discussed the prospects of setting up small and medium enterprises in Malawi by utilizing locally available resources. Several Malawian students availed of the ITEC/SCAAP scholarships given by India to study in our training institutions.

Mauritius

Addressing the UN General Assembly on 28 September,

the Mauritian Foreign Minister Jaya Krishna Cuttaree emphasised that UN member countries needed to show a greater commitment towards a reformed UN Security Council based on wider representation, and reiterated that India 'fully deserves' to have the status of a Permanent Member on the Security Council. Mr. Jaya Krishna Cuttaree visited India from 4 to 9 November 2004 to apprise the Indian leadership about his candidature for the post of WTO Director General and sought India's support for the same. He had meetings with the Indian leadership, and discussed topical and bilateral matters.

Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance, paid a highly successful visit to Mauritius on 29-30 November 2004. The main event on her schedule was the inauguration of the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre in Mauritius, which has been set up with Indian assistance. She also had meetings with President of Mauritius, Sir Anerood Jugnauth; the Prime Minister, Hon'ble Paul Raymond Berenger, who also hosted a banquet in her honour; and the leader of Opposition in Mauritius, Dr. Navin Ramgoolam. Minister of State for Overseas Indian Affairs, Shri Jagdish Tytler visited Mauritius in November 2004. He addressed a meeting of Indian PIO organisations and invited them to attend the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas held in January 2005. On 4 October 2004 aircrafts from the Indian Air Force took part in an Air Show over the Mon Choisy beach of Mauritius, in collaboration with helicopters and aircrafts from the Mauritius Coast Guard and the Mauritian Special Mobile Force. The Air Show, organised in order to demonstrate the high-performance machines to the Mauritian public, saw an unprecedented turnout of over a 100,000 persons. The Prime Minister of Mauritius, other ministers, and members of the diplomatic corps also viewed the air show.

The Joint Study Group created for the formalisation of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) between Mauritius and India finalised its report in November 2004. There were significant developments related to tourist traffic and air connectivity between India and Mauritius in September 2004. The Mauritian Tourism Minister Anil Gayan also visited in India, in an effort to promote the tourist appeal of Mauritius. To woo the Indian tourists, the Government of Mauritius announced a new relaxed visa regime under which tourists from India would not be required to obtain visas for a period of stay not exceeding 15 days, provided they could show sufficient funds on arrival to finance their

stay. In a major acknowledgment of the potential of this sector, the Government of Mauritius decided to grant "Fifth Freedom" rights to Air India on the South Africa sector, which would permit the Indian flag carrier to embark and disembark passengers and goods while transiting through Mauritius on the India-South Africa routes. Air Mauritius also signed an agreement with Sahara Airlines of India for using the Indian company's domestic network for onward journeys by Air Mauritius passengers. The agreement increased the reach of Air Mauritius to 22 cities in the Indian subcontinent.

Mozambique

The already close ties existing with Mozambique strengthened further during the year. The 1st meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) constituted under the MoU for cooperation in Labour met in Maputo during 12-16 April 2004. The Indian delegation led by Dr. P.D. Shenoy, Secretary (Labour), held extensive discussions with the Mozambican Minister of Labour and other high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Labour. The Indian side agreed to provide training facilities to Mozambican instructors in the areas of employment & vocational training, social security and labour statistics.

Under the HIPC initiative, the Government of India has written off all outstanding government-to-government debts to Mozambique. EXIM Bank of India and the Mozambican authorities signed an agreement for the utilization of the credit line of US\$ 20 million offered by India to Mozambique during the visit of President Chissano to India in May 2003. During the visit of a UNIDO-sponsored delegation of Asia-Pacific entrepreneurs, comprising Indian businesspersons representing various groups, the CII signed a cooperation agreement with the Mozambican chamber of Commerce and Industry. The consortium of RITES and IRCON Ltd. was awarded the concession for the rehabilitation and management of the 600 km. Beira Railway System, which constitutes the lifeline for the entire Zambezi Valley and vital access to the Indian Ocean to the landlocked countries West of Mozambique. The Concession Agreement was signed by the Government of Mozambique and the consortium of RITES and IRCON Ltd. and the CFM, the Mozambican Railway Authority, on 5 October 2004, in the presence of President Chissano and a large number of members of cabinet.

On the request of the Government of Mozambique, India deployed two Indian Navy ships, namely, INS Sujata and

INS Savitri, in Mozambican waters during the period 30 May to 27 June 2004. The two ships provided coastal security during the World Economic Forum's Africa Economic Summit from 2-4 June 2004 and the 4th ACP Summit from 23-24 June 2004. Apart from conducting sea sorties and coastal patrol, the two ships imparted training to Mozambican navy personnel during the period. The Mozambican Defence Minister conveyed his gratitude to India for contributing to strengthening the capacity of protection and inspection in the Mozambican seacoast during the two international events. In response to the request of the Mozambican government, India has increased the number of SCAAP slots for Mozambique from 15 to 20 with effect from 2004-5. India also accepted the nomination of 9 Mozambican students for degree courses in agricultural science. Training facilities extended by India are highly appreciated by the Mozambican authorities.

Namibia

The bilateral relations between India and Namibia continue to be very friendly and are characterised by mutual appreciation of a strong tradition of cooperation before and after Namibian independence in 1990. Namibia has been consistently supporting India in the UN and other international organisations, including prestigious candidatures for them. It has supported India's claim for Permanent Membership of the Security Council. Shri S. Krishnan, Senior Deputy Director, Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoori, visited Namibia from 12-18 April 2004 under the ITEC programme to advise Government of Namibia on setting up of a Civil Services' Institute in Namibia.

India's donation of 5000 tons of rice, announced by our Prime Minister during the State Visit of the President of Namibia to India in February 2003, was formally handed over to the Namibian Government on 3 May 2004. A six-member delegation from Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India visited Namibia from 20-23 June 2004. The visit was at the invitation of the Namibian Minister of Mines and Energy. Apart from visits by individual businessmen, a six-member business delegation from CII visited Namibia from 4-7 July 2004 under the UNIDO programme of the Africa Asia Investment and Trade Promotion Centre. Shri S. Ramasundaram, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, led an official delegation to Namibia to hold negotiations with SACU to agree on a framework which would serve as a basis for negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement between

India and SACU. Both parties agreed on a framework agreement to be negotiated in two phases. A photographic exhibition titled "My Land My People", sponsored by ICCR was organised in Windhoek, Namibia from 21-28 October 2004.

Mr. Peter Shivute, Chief Justice of Namibia visited India from 10-12 December 2004 to attend International Conference of Chief Justices in Lucknow. Namibia being a nascent democracy has also drawn upon the provisions of the Indian constitution. Foreign Office Consultations between Namibia and India are scheduled in the third week of February 2005.

Swapo swept the Parliamentary elections winning 74% of the seats. It's Presidential candidate Mr. Hifikepunye Pohamba was also elected convincingly.

Document relating to extension of validity of Work Plan on Agriculture under the cooperation between India and Namibia in the field of agricultural research and training up to 31 December 2005 was signed on 11 November 2004.

India's assistance in the vital area of human resource development has been appreciated by the Namibian leadership. During the current financial year 13 Namibian candidates have already availed themselves of the facility of training under the scholarship schemes of SCAAP/ITEC. 13 candidates have already been approved for training during the current year. ICCR scholarships have been availed of by six Namibian students.

Rwanda

The relations between the two countries remained friendly. Rwanda is soon going to open their Embassy in New Delhi with resident Ambassador. Draft of a cultural Exchange Programme has been finalised and would be signed soon. Rwanda appointed Lt. Gen. Kayumba Nyamwasa as their first Resident Ambassador to India.

Seychelles

Erstwhile Vice-President James Alix Michel took over as the third President of Seychelles on 14 April 2004 marking the end of President Rene's 27-year tenure. Joseph Belmont was appointed as the new Vice President. India donated HIV/Aids antiretroviral drugs worth US \$ 50,000 to Seychelles during the year. An Education delegation from Seychelles visited India (May-June) to identify various educational institutions for sending Seychellois students for higher education to India. Indian Defence

personnel and the local SPDF conducted for the second time a 10 day joint military exercise 'Black Parrot' from 8 to 18 November 2004, focusing on anti-coup and anti-terrorism actions. Seychelles supported India in various international fora like, election to the council of ICAO, re-election of the Indian candidate to UN Advisory Committee on Administration and Budgetary Questions, ECOSOC for 2005-07 term, election to UPU and agreed to vote against the likely resolution by Pakistan on 'Universal Realization of the rights of peoples to Self-determination' in 59th UNGA.

The second instalment of HIV/Aids antiretroviral drugs is handed over to Health Minister of Seychelles on 7 January.

An Indian Patrol Boat will be gifted to Seychelles in the 3rd week of February 2005. Five containers of cement and other construction material along with a team of engineers from Indian Navy are being sent to Seychelles to repair bridges and roads damaged by Tsunami.

South Africa

The process of consolidation of the strategic partnership between India and South Africa relations gathered further momentum in the course of the current year. Dialogue at the highest political level between the two countries was maintained with the visit of the President of India Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to South Africa from 14-18 September 2004. This was the first visit by an Indian President to South Africa and marked a milestone in the bilateral relationship. The two Presidents exchanged views regarding the excellent state of bilateral relations, India Brazil South Africa Forum and issues of regional as well as global importance. An MoU on Cooperation in Information and Communications Technology was signed during the visit. The President addressed the Pan African Parliament, the first non-African head of state to do so. The President also visited Durban, where he was accorded a civic reception. The President of South Africa and the Prime Minister of India had bilateral discussions on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York in September 2004. The South African Foreign Minister and External Affairs Minister also had a meeting. The Vice President of India Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat visited South Africa from 26 April to 2 May 2004 to attend the inauguration of the second term of President Thabo Mbeki as well as to join the celebrations to mark a decade of democracy in South Africa. India's high level presence at the function was a testimony to the closeness of bilateral relations.

Trade and Industry Minister of South Africa Mr. Mandisi Mpahlwa visited New Delhi from 5-7 December 2004 for the India Economic Summit. He also held bilateral discussions with the Commerce and industry Minister.

Other important outgoing ministerial visits included that of Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Rao Inderjit Singh to attend the XIVth NAM Ministerial Conference and the IInd AASROC (Asian African Sub-Regional Organisations' Conference) from 19-20 August 2004. He called on the President and the Foreign Minister. Minister of State for Defence Shri B.K. Handique visited South Africa from 21-25 September at the head of the large delegation which participated in the African Aero Defence Exhibition held in Pretoria. He met the Defence Minister. In November, Minister of State for Overseas Indians Shri Jagdish Tytler visited South Africa, *inter alia*, to promote participation in the third Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

External Affairs Minister of India is scheduled to visit South Africa in March 2005 for the second trilateral IBSA Ministerial Joint Commission. South Africa is the partner country in the International Engineering Trade Fair being held in February 2005.

From the South African side, the most significant visit was that of a combined delegation comprising Minister in the Presidency Dr. Essop Pahad, Minister of Communications Ms. Matsepe Cassaburri and Minister for Public Service and Administration, Ms. G.J. Fraser-Moleketi to India from 6-11 September 2004. The significant outcomes of the visit include a programme for bilateral cooperation in development of public services and training. The South African Deputy Minister for Science and Technology of Mr. Derek Hanekom, visited India for a meeting of IBSA ministers of S&T in October. The South African Minister for Industry and Trade Mr. Mpahlwa visited India from December 6 to 7 for the World Economic Forum meeting and held bilateral discussions with his counterpart. Apart from the National level, many provinces of South Africa also sent delegations to India to study different aspects of cooperation.

Besides the above significant political exchanges, there were active contacts at the level of senior officials from both sides. Notable amongst these was the meeting of the India-South Africa Commercial Alliance on 25 October 2004. The Indian delegation was led by Commerce Secretary Shri S.N. Menon. He also met the Commercial Representatives based in Southern Africa.

Earlier, Shri B.S. Minhas, Secretary, Ministry of Small Scale Industries visited South Africa from 2-8 September 2004. Another significant development was the first meeting of the India-South Africa CEOs' Forum on October 25. President Thabo Mbeki met the Indian delegation and welcomed the Forum's determination to bring together the private sectors of India and South Africa in an innovative manner so as to leverage the complementary strengths of the two countries to produce globally products and services.

Defence cooperation continued to strengthen at the political as well as operational levels. Noteworthy developments included the visit of INS Tabar to Cape Town in July 2004, which successfully projected Indian Navy's professional and technologically advanced image. The Indian Air Force and the South African Air Force conducted a joint Air Defence Exercise Golden Eagle in September 2004 for which the IAF deployed six Mirages. This was the first deployment of IAF Aircraft on such a scale in a joint exercise in South Africa.

There were active cultural exchanges during the year with a number of music/dance groups visiting South Africa under the aegis of ICCR. A renowned Indian theatre group also visited Africa for the first time. The Indian Experience 2004 was held in Cape Town for the second time from 31 October to 7 November 2004. The event included a Fashion Show, Food Festival, a Folk Dance Performance, a torch light procession to celebrate Diwali, as well as participation by Indian companies in a trade fair, thereby projecting the multiple facets of India's culture. It was a resounding success with the audience urging that it should be made an annual event, which should extend to other cities in South Africa as well.

Swaziland

Our Mission in Maputo continued to maintain close contacts with the Swazi authorities and the Indian community in that country.

Tanzania

Friendly bilateral relations between Tanzania and India got further boosted with the State Visit of President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam to Dar-es-Salaam and Zanzibar from 11-14 September 2004. This was the first visit of the President of India after a gap of 15 years. During the visit two important bilateral agreements on IT and writing off of Tanzania's debt were signed. Tanzania has openly supported India's candidature for permanent membership

in the UNSC. India supported Tanzanian's candidature to the non-permanent Security Council seat at the UNSC. India donated 5,000 tonnes of wheat and 5,000 tonnes of rice on 4 June to Tanzania to overcome its drought and food deficit situation. Tanzania has been one of the largest beneficiaries under ITEC programme. Tanzanian students have been coming to India in large numbers to pursue higher education. In order to help them, an education fair was organized on 7-8 June in Dar-es-Salaam in which 25 Indian universities and other academic institutions of higher learning participated. Cultural ties between Tanzania and India saw a new dimension by the recital of an 8-member Qawwali troupe, led by Delhi's Qawwal Ghulam Qadir Niyazi during April. This was followed by 6-member Kathak troupe during May led by Abhimanyu Lal. In the field of economy, after a break of 33 years, Bank of Baroda (Tanzania) Ltd. opened its branch in Dar-es-Salaam on 13 October 2004 to cater to the large Indian diaspora as well as business houses and local native Tanzanians.

Uganda

Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement was signed with the Government of Uganda on 30 April 2004 in Kampala. Gerald Ssendaula, Ugandan Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the High Commissioner of India on behalf of Government of India signed the Convention. Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of State for Science and Technology and Ocean Development visited Kampala from 16 to 17 June 2004 to attend the Board Meeting of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI). He met Ms. Namuyangu Janat Byakatonda, Minister of State for Industry and Technology, and senior officials of the Ministry and Uganda National Council for Science & Technology, on 17 June. Shri Kapil Sibal proposed the signing of an agreement on Science & Technology between Uganda and India. This proposal was accepted in principle. Government of India donated on 5 July 2004 medicines worth Rs.16,69,747 (approx. US \$ 38,000) to the internally displaced persons of north Uganda. A delegation from the Government of Gujarat led by Shri Indravijaysinh Jadeja, Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Road & Building, Capital Project, Urban Development & Urban Housing, visited Uganda from 21 to 24 November 2004 with the aim to seek investment by NRIs in Uganda in Gujarat and their participation in Global Investor Summit 2005.

Prof. Peter Kasenene, Minister of State for Finance,

Planning, and Economic Development (in charge of privatisation) visited India with a 9-member delegation from 20 to 25 November 2004. He called on the Honourable Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Somnath Chatterjee and held discussions with MPLADS Committee of Parliament apart from visiting various developmental sites.

Zambia

India's relations with Zambia continued to expand during this period. India donated anti-retroviral drugs worth one hundred thousand dollars; a consignment of these medicines was formally handed over by Indian High Commissioner to the Zambian Health Minister on 8 April 2004. The Government of India decided to write off the outstanding dues of about \$3 million representing the principal and interest owed on credit line given to Zambia by India in 1979 after the latter joined the Highly Indebted Countries Initiative (HIPC). The waiver agreement was signed by the Finance Minister of Zambia and Indian High Commissioner on 9 July 2004. The presiding officers of the Indian Parliament invited the Speaker of the Zambian National Assembly to visit India with a delegation of parliamentarians. The invitation was accepted and the visit is likely to take place in the first half of 2005. Foreign Office Consultations between India and Zambia were held on 27-28 February 2005.

India's economic presence in Zambia continued to bolster with new investments made by the Indian companies and award of contracts to them. The Zambian government selected M/s Vedanta Resources, the parent company of M/s Sterlite Industries of India as the majority equity partner for the revival of Zambia's biggest Konkola copper mines. Another Indian company, M/s Kamani Engineering Corporation won a contract worth \$ 11 million for setting up a power transmission line between the bordering towns of Zambia and Namibia. Mr. Ratan Tata, Chairman of the Tata Group visited Lusaka and called on the Zambian President on 26 October 2004 and agreed to consider making new investments in the mining, power generation and transmission, tourism and automobile sectors. The Tata Group invested US\$ 8 million in the renovation of Taj Pamodji hotel in Lusaka, a joint venture between the group and the Government of Zambia. A two member team comprising the senior officials of M/s Water and Power Consultancy Services India Ltd. (WAPCOS) visited Zambia from 15-17 August 2004 to discuss the modalities of India's cooperation with the COMESA Secretariat in the irrigation sector.

Zimbabwe

India's friendly and cordial relations with Zimbabwe consolidated during the year, even though the Zimbabwe's economy continued on a downslide. Zimbabwe extended support to India at the multilateral fora by supporting India's candidature at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). India had supported Zimbabwe at the UN Commission on Human Rights and in the Third Committee of UN. Besides, the bilateral relations in other areas including trade and culture have expanded in comparison to the previous year.

A trade delegation led by Mrs. E. Ndlovu, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of Zimbabwe, visited India in July for interaction with Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). The delegation included the Chairman of the Export Processing Zones Authority (EPZA). The visit generated considerable interest among Indian businesses and this encouraged a return visit by a delegation from Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) of India, which visited Zimbabwe in August. The 9-member EEPC delegation held a business seminar in Harare and was able to discuss business deals in various sectors including agricultural machinery, tractors, textile machinery, automobiles & automobile parts, agro-processing machinery, etc. The bilateral interaction was also enriched by the visit in August of Shujaat Hussein Khan, the sitar maestro, and his accompanying artistes, who gave a scintillating performance at the prestigious Harare International Conference Centre. The cultural canvas of India was further extended in Zimbabwe through a Photographic Exhibition curated by the renowned photographer Raghu Rai. The exhibition was on display at National Art Gallery, Harare from 8-24 September 2004.

For the first time in Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front's (ZANU-PF) history, a woman became the second Vice-President of the party and later on sworn in as the second Vice President of the country.

WEST AFRICA

India enjoys cordial links with the countries of West Africa. However, to foster greater cooperation and to forge closer linkages with the countries of this region the Ministry created a new division for West Africa. The creation of the new division helped in providing greater impetus to India's growing relations with the countries of this region.

The launch of the new initiative TEAM-9, a techno-economic cooperation venture between India and eight countries of West Africa, was a major effort aimed at demonstrating the special focus that India was putting on Africa in general and West Africa in particular. Indian Missions in West Africa were strengthened and Ministry took a decision to re-open the Indian Embassy in DR Congo.

The region holds great promise for India's energy security and the Ministry took the initiative in exploring possibilities to access the oil and petroleum sector in this region, particularly in Angola, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Mauritania and Equatorial Guinea.

The Ministry also took the lead in devising suitable financial mechanisms, which would underpin the expansion of our economic cooperation with Africa. In this regard various lines of credit were extended to the countries of West Africa. Trade and economic exchanges, which were limited, grew rapidly and Indian companies were encouraged to establish their presence in West Africa.

India also established its close cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Ambassador of India to Nigeria was made the Permanent Representative accredited to the ECOWAS. Technical Assistance and development aid continued with food aid given to Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea. Anti-HIV drugs were also sent to countries in this region. To help combat the locust infestation in the Sahelian countries in West Africa, India donated large amount of pesticides. Similarly, mosquito nets were provided to the Republic of Congo.

Angola

Bilateral relations between Angola and India have continued to be warm and friendly. With the cessation of a prolonged civil war in Angola in April 2002 and its consolidation during the last 2 years, there have been an increased number of visits by businessmen from India to Angola, thus enhancing economic and commercial ties.

India's exports to Angola during 2002-2003 were of US\$ 37.31 million while during the period 2003-2004, exports increased to US\$ 70.55 million, i.e., an increase of 89.10%.

RITES Limited would be implementing the Angolan Railway Rehabilitation Project in Huila province in Angola very soon. An MoU to this effect was signed on 24 June 2004. This project is being supported by a line of

credit of US\$ 40 million extended by the Government of India to the Government of Angola.

India has also extended a credit line of US\$ 5 million for promotion of Indian exports. A prominent Indian company would be supplying agricultural equipment to the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Angola against this line of credit. The Angolan Minister of Agriculture visited India in February 2004 with a view to sourcing additional irrigation pumps and other equipment from India.

Telecommunications Consultants of India Limited (TCIL) signed a composite MoU, comprising five possible areas for cooperation in telecommunications sectors, with Angola's Ministry of Telecommunications on 24 September 2004 in Luanda.

State Bank of India would be opening its Representative Office in Luanda soon.

Mr. Jorge Valentim, Minister for Hotels and Tourism of Angola, visited India from 5-11 July 2004. During his visit, he attended the 73rd Session of the Consultative Council of the World Tourism Organization and a Seminar on International Control of Tourism in Hyderabad. He also met senior officials of ONGC Videsh Limited.

Angola is increasingly utilizing the training slots being offered under Indian Technical Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme offered by Ministry of External Affairs. Recently, President, REA (one of the Angolan Chambers of Commerce and Industry) attended a course conducted by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in New Delhi from 4-10 October 2004.

With bilateral cooperation ever rising, the number of Indian professionals coming to Angola is also on the increase. The Indian community in Angola numbers nearly 200. While some work in Angolan oilfields, others deal in business and trade. On 13 November 2004, the Indian community in Luanda formed Indian Association of Angola.

Benin

Benin's Foreign Ministry reiterated its commitment to establish an Embassy in New Delhi. Benin, an elected member of the UN Security Council, has been expressing its desire to enhance bilateral relations with India and has been recognizing India's leadership role in South-South cooperation as well as in appropriate technology.

Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso sees India as an important partner for their development in the areas of information technology and communications, infrastructure development, development of small and medium enterprises, mining, pharmaceuticals, agriculture and some other sectors.

The delegated Minister for Regional Cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso, Mr. T. Jean de Dieu Somda, visited India from 29 February to 2 March 2004 to attend the TEAM-9 Ministerial Meeting. A list of projects for financing under the TEAM-9 initiative has also been sent to the Ministry for approval.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Co-operation of Burkina Faso, Mr. Youssouf Ouedraogo visited India in July 2004 to discuss bilateral and other issues of mutual interest. Burkina Faso has also expressed interest in availing of the proposed GOI initiative of providing a separate Credit (US \$ 1.5 billion) for Sub-Saharan African countries for importing ARV (anti-retroviral) drugs for HIV/AIDS, general pharmaceuticals, medical equipments, and training from India.

In September 2004, this mission arranged the visit of India's Special Envoy, Shri Salman Khurshid to Burkina Faso to attend the African Union's Extra-ordinary Summit, which was being held in Ouagadougou. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation Mr. Youssouf Ouedraogo met with Shri Salman Khurshid to discuss bilateral issues of mutual interest. Shri Khurshid also met the President of the National Assembly (and former Prime Minister) Mr. Roch-Marc Christian Kaboré. Mission also organized meetings with leaders of delegations of some 25 African countries to obtain support for India's candidature for the UN ECOSOC, which culminated in wide support by African countries and contributed to India's success in ECOSOC elections.

A delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Co-operation of Burkina Faso, led by Director (Asia Pacific & Caribbean), Mr. Piabie Firmin Gregoire N'DO visited the High Commission of India, Accra, on 22 March 2004 to discuss bilateral issues including their request for the visit of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso to India, TEAM-9 cooperation, the possibilities of training of Burkina Faso personnel in areas of diplomacy, IT, defence, journalism, etc., and holding of the Third Session of the Joint Commission in Ouagadougou.

Both total trade and exports from India to Burkina Faso have increased significantly in 2003-04, and estimates for 2004-05 indicate that this very positive trend will continue for 2004-05. The positive trend in bilateral trade and India's exports to Burkina Faso will continue in 2004-05 with total trade reaching an estimated US\$ 50 million.

Cape Verde

Indian naval ship INS-Tabar visited Mindelo, Cape Verde from 26-29 May 2004 on its maiden voyage. This was the first visit to Cape Verde by any Indian naval ship. The Cape Verde authorities helped in providing the necessary logistical support and in organizing the necessary meetings.

Central African Republic(CAR)

Bilateral relations between India and the Central African Republic have been stagnating since 1998. The former Ambassador (desig.) to the CAR was not able to present his credentials. Also, it is almost three years now and the Agreement in respect of the present Ambassador (design.) has not been conveyed by the CAR authorities. As such, no forward movement in bilateral relations has taken place and there are no significant developments to report. One of the reasons for the above mentioned lack of response from CAR is the internal situation in the country following the coup d'etat in March 2003, in which President Felix Patasse was ousted by a former army chief of CAR, General Francoise Bozize.

Chad

The TEAM-9 initiative launched in March 2004 in New Delhi was received with enthusiasm in Chad. Joint Secretary (West Africa) Shri E. Barwa visited N'djamena in April 2004 to follow up on the initiative, and held discussions with the Deputy Prime Minister of Chad as well as various Chadian government officials. During the course of the year, various officials in the nodal ministries were identified who are looking into specific projects under the initiative.

5000 tons of rice earlier donated to Chad by India reached during the course of the year. It was well appreciated by the authorities, especially with the influx of refugees from across the Darfur region of Sudan.

Cote D' Ivoire

Despite the difficult situation arising out of the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire, the Indian Mission kept on functioning. Relations between the two countries were further strengthened when for the first time, Cote d' Ivoire opened

its Embassy in India. The Cote d' Ivoire's first Ambassador, Mr. Bleu Laine presented his credentials on 29 September 2004.

A delegation from Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) of Cote d' Ivoire headed by Mr. Camille Hogueie, the Chairman, visited India from 5 September to 11 September 2004. The delegation conveyed that they need India's help, particularly, its expertise and experience in registration of people for elections and electronic voting machines etc. The CEI signed two MoUs – one with the Election Commission of India for cooperation in electoral matters and second with CMC Ltd. for supply and services for holding IT enabled elections in Cote d' Ivoire.

India donated 100,000 US\$ worth of anti-retroviral medicines to Cote d'Ivoire.

Cote d'Ivoire has been regularly availing the scholarships under the ITEC programme. During the year, twenty-nine ITEC scholarships were availed of by Cote d'Ivoire.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Relations with DR Congo grew rapidly this year following the appointment of the DRC Ambassador to India. Ministry also took a decision to re-open the Indian Embassy in Kinshasa. This will be implemented soon once the financial and manpower requirements are allocated.

Trade and economic relations continued to rise with various Indian companies visiting the DRC to do business in pharmaceuticals, machinery, diamonds, ores and minerals etc. The population of the Indian community in DRC has grown substantially.

India has one of its largest contingents abroad in the DR Congo and has committed more than 3250 troops, 10 helicopters, Hospital, Communication Unit etc. to the UN Peacekeeping Force in DR Congo.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DRC, Mr. Ramazani Baya visited India from 2-4 February 2005. He called on Shri Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister, where wide-ranging discussions were held in a friendly and cordial atmosphere and both sides exchanged views on various bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. Mr. Baya had a meeting with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and with the Associated Chambers of Commerce (ASSOCHAM), where he met a cross-section of the Indian business community and invited them to participate in the opportunities offered by DR Congo.

India agreed to consider extending the scope of ongoing cooperation under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme. The Congolese side requested for an increase in the number of ITEC slots and scholarships being extended by India. India agreed to consider the request favourably.

To further strengthen the economic cooperation and to provide a juridical framework for increased interaction, both sides agreed to initiate work towards the signature of a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement and a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement.

The Congolese side requested for a bilateral line of credit of US\$ 50 million to help finance projects in the agriculture, pharmaceuticals, urban transport, infrastructure, mining and minerals sector. India agreed to consider the request favourably and requested the Congolese side to prepare proposals for specific projects of mutual interest.

Equatorial Guinea

Relations with Equatorial Guinea grew steadily. Economic co-operation, which was negligible before, has been on the rise. There are a large number of Indians working in the oil sector and other fields in Equatorial Guinea.

The TEAM-9 initiative was received with enthusiasm in Equatorial Guinea. Joint Secretary (West Africa) Shri E. Barwa visited Malabo in April 2004 to follow up on the initiative, and held discussions with various government officials. He was received by the President Col. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo who welcomed the initiative. The President asked for India's help in setting up of hydroelectric power stations, water management and treatment plants, development of small scale industries etc.

Representatives of Indian companies have started visiting Equatorial Guinea to identify projects and to establish business links.

Ghana

Subsequent to the visit of Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor, President of the Republic of Ghana to India in 2002 and the meeting between the then Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee and Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor on the sidelines of CHOGM meeting in Abuja (Nigeria) in December 2003, Indo-Ghana bilateral relations, which had received a huge boost by these events, have continued their strong upward trend and increased to unprecedented

levels in all spheres. Some of the major developments are summarized below together with agreements signed during the year.

The India-Ghana Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT which was set up with India's assistance is now fully operational and is doing exceedingly well showcasing India's capabilities in the IT sector in Ghana. Prospects for its serving the needs of other ECOWAS countries are very good.

To facilitate bilateral trade, two Lines of Credit (LOCs) were agreed for Ghana. The first signed EXIM Bank line of credit of \$15 million for a rural electrification project became effective, and disbursements are expected to commence soon. A second US \$27 million EXIM LOC, which was announced by the then PM at the above-mentioned meeting in Abuja, has been approved and is in the process of being implemented. These LOCs will help finance projects with poverty alleviation objectives in various sectors including rural electrification, purchase of tractors for the President's Special Initiative on agriculture and purchase of buses for transportation sector.

Senior Minister, Mr. J. H. Mensah, of Ghana visited India from 1-2 March 2004 to participate in the inaugural meeting of TEAM-9. List of projects for financing under TEAM-9 have been sent to Ministry. They include projects in the power, agriculture, railways and industrial sectors.

Indians are now the second largest foreign investor in the private sector in Ghana and the Indian private sector is continuing to steadily increase its presence in Ghana. A number of Indian professionals are also working in the country. Some of the Indian companies, which have stationed their representatives in Ghana, are NIIT & APTECH (Software companies), TATA, Telco, Maruti, Dr. Reddy's Lab, Core Care Health India etc. About 500 TATA vehicles have been purchased by Ghana. There are a number of Indian companies, especially in pharmaceutical sector, which have posted their country managers here. Indian pharmaceutical products now account for about 50% of the Ghana's drugs and pharmaceutical imports. Among public sector companies, TCIL of India was awarded a US \$50 million contract by Ghana Telecommunications Co. for installation of Copper Access Network and a \$10 million contract for pay phones.

Under its policy of South-South cooperation, India continued to offer training courses to Ghanaian civil

servants under the ITEC/SCAAP programme. Between April and November 2004, 50 Ghanaians had undertaken training in various areas, from the 60 training slots for this year. The mission has requested an additional 25 slots this year, as human resource development is a key objective of the Ghanaian government's developmental programmes. The five available long-term scholarships under the Cultural Exchange Programme and Commonwealth Scholarship Programme have been awarded and are being utilized by Ghanaian students for undergoing higher studies in Indian universities.

The number of high-level government and private sector delegations visiting India and Ghana has increased considerably in 2004-05. These include ministers, public-sector organizations, business delegations, senior government officers, Export Promotion Councils, MPs, etc.

Economic and commercial relations between Ghana have shown a dramatic increase. This trend in India's bilateral trade with Ghana, which shows significant increase in trade and India's exports (up 65% in 2003-04), is expected to continue in 2004-05. Exports to Ghana are estimated to increase by 62% and the total trade is projected to increase by 59% in 2004-05. To a large extent, these strong results may be attributable to the aggressive trade promotion and commercial initiative that were undertaken by the Indian Mission. Indian companies are also increasingly bidding on large international tenders financed by World Bank, etc., and are being assisted by the Indian Mission in this regard.

Some initiatives of strategic importance for India are underway. In the petroleum sector, an MoU has been signed between ONGC (Videsh) and the Ghana National Petroleum Company for co-operation in petroleum exploration, development and production. In downstream petroleum activities, a dialogue is underway between Indian Oil Corporation and Ghana Oil Company for co-operation. Efforts are underway for the supply of Manganese from Ghana for the steel industry in India. A prospective investment by Gems & Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India in diamond mining in Ghana is under consideration. State Bank of India is in the process of opening a branch in Accra.

Guinea

Relations with Guinea have remained cordial. As part of its efforts at establishing closer links, Guinea has appointed their new Honorary Consul in India. India donated 1000

tonnes of rice to Guinea. In addition, anti-retroviral medicines worth US\$100,000 were also donated.

Guinea-Bissau

Relations with Guinea-Bissau have grown particularly since they have become part of the new initiative TEAM-9. Bissau Guinean Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Jose Joao Silva Monteiro visited India on 1 March 2004 to participate in the inaugural TEAM-9 meeting.

Economic co-operation is on the rise and various Indian companies visited Guinea-Bissau to explore business opportunities. A few projects have been signed. Guinea-Bissau availed of one ITEC slot for participating in the 36th PCFD conducted by FSI.

Mali

Relations with Mali have been on the upswing particularly after they formed part of the new initiative TEAM-9. Malian Foreign Minister Lassana Traore visited India from 1-2 March 2004 to participate in the inaugural meeting of TEAM-9. Mali has expressed interest in soliciting Indian investments in raw cotton production and processing and setting up of mini cement plants. Mali is also interested in setting up a tractor assembly unit under the TEAM-9 mechanism. In this connection they have requested for an Indian expert to undertake a feasibility study for a tractor assembly plant in Mali. HMT (I) has agreed to undertake this study.

Mauritania

A high-level Petroleum India International (PII) delegation led by Ambassador visited Mauritania to hold discussions on rehabilitation and operation of the SOMIR refinery in Nouadhibou, supply of explosives to National Iron Ore Mining Company (SNIM) and to explore oil exploration prospects in Mauritania. The delegation had an audience with President Maouya Sidi Ould Ahmed Taya, and called on the Minister for Hydraulics and Energy, Mr. Saad Bouch Kamara and the Minister for Mines and Industry, Mr. Zeidane Ould Hmeida. Mauritania Government has also expressed interest in training of its professionals in the petroleum sector in India.

Mauritania has availed of two ITEC slots for IT training. The Director General of Mauritanian Water Board has been invited on a study visit to India.

Niger

Political relations between India and Niger are cordial.

There have been no important visits between the two countries in 2003-04. On 26 November 2004, the President of Niger has sent a communication to Indian Prime Minister regarding Niger's interest in availing of NEPAD financing for some of its development projects. Niger has also expressed its desire to be part of the TEAM-9 initiative.

Trade relations have been growing. Some TATA buses and mini-buses have been purchased by International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) office in Niamey.

Samples of paddy have been provided to the Government of Niger. An agreement between ICAR of India and National Agronomic Research Institute of Niger (INRAN) in the field of agricultural research has been finalized but the response of the Niger Government to the text provided by us is awaited.

Nigeria

India continued developing its excellent bilateral relations with Nigeria in the year 2004-05. The visit of President Olusegun Obasanjo, who is also the current Chairman of the African Union and the Chairperson of CHOGM, to New Delhi on 2-3 November 2004, gave further impetus to India-Nigeria relations. President Obasanjo exchanged views with the Indian Prime Minister on bilateral relations, peace and security in Africa and also reform of the United Nations. He said that India is a natural candidate for the Permanent Membership of UN Security Council. The Nigerian President expressed appreciation for Indian Government's assistance given to Nigerian Machine Tools. He also appreciated India's initiatives under New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) under which India would provide credit lines of US \$ 200 million to African countries. President Obasanjo assured that Nigeria would provide more crude oil directly to India. He invited Indian companies to participate in bids for oil exploration and production, and to participate in power generation and LPG. Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance also met with President Obasanjo.

Meanwhile, the agreement signed in 2001 for the revival of Nigerian Machine Tools (NMT) under the Government of India grant of US\$ 5 million, proceeded well with all the machinery supplied by HMT (I) reaching NMT during the course of the year. Joint Secretary (MER) from Ministry of External Affairs visited Nigeria in April 2004 for review

of the progress. On its part, Nigeria released a part of the counterpart funding and further progress is ongoing.

An Indian delegation led by Shri M.S. Srinivasan, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and comprising senior executives of Indian Oil Corporation visited Nigeria from 11-13 August 2004 and held discussions regarding renewal of the term contract for the supply of 40,000 bpd of crude oil.

On 10 September 2004, the Indian Oil Corporation signed a MoU with Edo State in Nigeria for setting up an oil refinery. This refinery is expected to have a capacity of about 9 million tonnes per year and the final investment is likely to be of the order of US\$ 1.5 billion. Further talks between the Edo State representatives and IOC were held in New Delhi from 29-30 November 2004.

On the defence side, a team from India's National Defence College consisting of 14 officers visited Nigeria on a study tour from 17 to 21 May 2004 while 15 Nigerian Armed Forces officers underwent training in various defence training institutes in India over the year.

Republic of Congo

To establish closer links, India appointed its first Honorary Consul General of India to the Republic of Congo.

The Government of Congo has requested for India's assistance in health sector, environment and forests. India is donating 200,000 mosquito nets as part of its Aid to Africa scheme. The Republic of Congo utilizes the Indian ITEC slots actively.

An ROC defence delegation visited New Delhi from 29 July to 4 August 2004 and during the discussions with our Ministry of Defence, handed over a list of ROC's defence requirements. India has agreed to consider the request.

Republic of Gabon

The momentum of bilateral relations between India and Gabon is growing. The appointment of a Consul General of India to Gabon in year 2003 and the subsequent appointment of a Gabonese Honorary Consul in India have helped in greater interaction.

Government of Gabon has sought India's assistance in the development of their health and small/medium scale industrial sectors and deputation of Indian professionals to Gabon. Gabon is increasingly utilizing ITEC slots.

Sao Tome and Principe (STP)

Relations with STP remained cordial. During an official visit to Sao Tome and Principe in June 2004, Ambassador of India met Ministers of Natural Resources and Environment, Health, Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries and discussed matters of bilateral interest. STP dignitaries showed keen interest in strengthening political, economic and commercial relations with India. ITEC slots are being increasingly utilized by STP.

Senegal

Foreign Minister Mr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio visited India from 8-11 September 2004. Minister Gadio called on the External Affairs Minister, Shri Natwar Singh as well as on Shri P. Chidambaram, Minister for Finance, Shri Dayanidhi Maran, Minister of Communications and IT and Shri J.N. Dixit, National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) organized a business meeting for Minister Gadio. He also addressed a conference at the Indian Council of World Affairs on NEPAD, TEAM-9 and cooperation between India and Africa. In the Joint Statement, issued at the end of the visit, it was agreed that Senegal would host the second session of the bilateral Joint Commission Meeting in January 2005. In order to further strengthen the economic cooperation, the two sides agreed to take necessary steps towards signing the Bilateral Investment Promotion & Protection Agreement and Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. India agreed to offer Senegal a line of credit of US\$ 18 million for acquisition of 350 buses from India. This has since been implemented. It was also agreed that India would assist in the establishment of a tractor assembly plant in Senegal as part of the US \$15 million credit line already offered to Senegal for acquiring tractors and other agricultural equipment from India. Mr. Gadio visited India again in January 2005 to express his Government's condolences for the tsunami disaster as well as at the passing away of former PM Narasimha Rao and of NSA Shri J.N. Dixit.

The Senegalese Minister for Tourism, Mr. Ousmane Masseck Ndiaye visited India to participate in the Tourism Summit at Hyderabad. He also met the Hon'ble Minister for Chemicals & Fertilizers in connection with the Indo-Senegalese joint venture *Industries Chimiques du Senegal* (ICS).

The first round of DTAA negotiations took place in New Delhi from 30 November-3 December 2004. The US \$15 million line of credit agreement between EXIM Bank of

India and Senegalese Ministry of Finance was signed in Mumbai on 10 December 2004.

Senegal has been regularly availing the scholarships under the ITEC programme. During April-November 2004, nine ITEC scholarships were availed of by Senegal.

At the request of the Senegal Government, M/s HMT (I) sent additional equipment and an engineer as part of upgrading the India-established US \$4.5 million Entrepreneur and Technical Development Centre (ETDC) at Dakar.

At the request of the Senegalese Government, an Indian maize expert was sent under ITEC to submit a report on technologies required for upgrading the Senegalese maize industry.

The Health Minister of Senegal visited India from 21-24 February 2005. Apart from meeting his Indian counterpart, he also visited the Ranbaxy factory in Indore and the Serum Institute of India in Pune.

A five member Senegalese delegation from Farut Media Centre visited Bangalore under the programme "Synchronization", jointly organized by Shristhi School of Art and Design, Bangalore and Future Academy, London from 20 March to 5 April 2004.

A three-year India-Senegal Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2004-06 was signed in Dakar on 30 September 2004 by the Senegalese Minister of Culture, Mrs. Safietou Ndiaye Diop and the Ambassador.

As part of the celebration of the 135th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Minister Diop inaugurated on 27 October 2004 a bust of Mahatma Gandhi at the Chancery premises. She also inaugurated a photographic exposition on Mahatma Gandhi at the Cheikh Anta Diop University, Dakar. The exhibition was opened to public from 27 October to 12 November 2004. A seminar was organized at the Dakar University on "The relevance of Gandhian thought in the 21st century". On 31 October, the film "Making of the Mahatma" was screened at the Dakar University auditorium.

Sierra Leone

Relations with Sierra Leone remained cordial. Sierra Leone has requested India's help in rebuilding its economy. Despite the difficult situation there, Sierra Leone continued to avail ITEC scholarships. During the year, they availed of 8 slots.

India is in the process of providing military assistance to Sierra Leone through building of barracks and providing training to its military personnel.

The Gambia

Mr. Sidi Morro Sanneh, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Gambia paid a visit to India from 11-13 January 2005. Mr. Sanneh led a 15-member delegation, which included three Ministers dealing with Health & Social Welfare, Education and Agriculture.

Mr. Sanneh called on External Affairs Minister and held official talks with Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs. The delegation had a meeting with CII and interacted with a cross-section of Indian businessmen. They also visited some of the manufacturing facilities in these sectors.

They requested India's help on various issues including setting up of their Planning Commission, recruitment of judges, purchase of agricultural machinery, hiring of educators for its universities, setting up of IT Training Centres & Call Centres, pharmaceuticals etc. Mr. Sanneh also requested for provision of lines of credit for some of these proposals.

The Indian community in The Gambia has steadily increased and now numbers over 250. They are mainly in retail trade and restaurant business, though there have been significant investment in agriculture and groundnut oil refinery.

Togo

Bilateral relations between India and Togo have remained cordial. India's Special Envoy Shri Salman Khurshid met with the Togolese delegation to the Extraordinary Summit of AU in Ouagadougou in September 2004. Togo has been generally supportive of our requests for support of candidatures for UN positions and ECOSOC. However, there has been no major activity. Commercial activity had picked up somewhat in 2003-04 but the level of trade has been the same as the previous year and India's exports to Togo have declined from the previous year.

Togo wants India's assistance in the health, agriculture, and education sectors and in human resource development and training.

ECOWAS

As part of its efforts at forging closer links with the countries of West Africa, India started discussions with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to establish a consultation and dialogue mechanism. On 13 October 2004, the High Commissioner to Nigeria, Shri Atish Sinha, became the first Permanent Representative of India to be accredited to the (ECOWAS) with an observer status. ECOWAS Executive Secretary Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, received High Commissioner Sinha's credentials and in turn handed over a letter which stated that the appointment would "encourage the development initiatives and the realization of projects aimed at accelerating the pace of integration in the sub-region, for the greater well-being of the West African people". He expressed hope that it would "deepen and facilitate a further expansion of India-ECOWAS relations".



EUROPE I

India's engagement with the individual countries in Europe and the European Union continued to grow during the year. Interactions were marked by regular exchanges of visits, including at the highest level, demonstrating a mutual desire to deepen and diversify bilateral relations. India shared a strategic relationship with France, Germany and UK and growing ties with a number of other countries in Europe, aimed at promoting more intensive bilateral cooperation over a wide range of areas. The 5th India-EU Summit, held at The Hague in November 2004, was a landmark in India's relations with the EU, for it launched the India-EU Strategic Partnership in recognition of India's growing stature as a major regional and global player. Interactions with individual countries in Europe reflected a shared understanding on various international issues. On the debate on UN reforms, India was able to garner significant support from several EU Member States. India and Germany, in a strategic move, agreed to support each other's candidature in an expanded UNSC.

Economic considerations continue to underpin India's strong ties with countries in Europe. The desire of EU Member States to enter into bilateral agreements/MoUs for enhanced S&T cooperation in niche areas of technology demonstrate the growing recognition of India's potential in this area. The civil society dialogue with major European countries, represented by the different Eminent Persons Groups and Round Tables, was another dimension of the multi-faceted relationship.

European Union (EU)

The year 2004 has been a watershed year for both India and the EU (its membership expanded from 15 to 25 countries). The EU upgraded its bilateral relations with India to a Strategic Partnership. India joins five other countries with which EU has this privileged relationship. The 5th India-EU Summit – the latest in the series of the annual institutionalized political dialogue at the highest level between India and the EU – was held on 8 November 2004 at The Hague, under the Dutch Presidency of the

European Union. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation and was assisted by External Affairs Minister Shri Natwar Singh, Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Kamal Nath and NSA Shri J.N. Dixit. The EU delegation was led by the Dutch PM and then President-in-Office of the European Council Dr. Jan-Peter Balkenende, and included the President of the European Commission, Dr. Romano Prodi, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Mr. Javier Solana, the EC Trade Commissioner Mr. Pascal Lamy, and the Dutch Foreign Minister, Dr. Bernard Bot. The Summit launched a Strategic Partnership between EU and India. It had an agenda that spanned the entire spectrum of India-EU relations, including global issues such as the fight against international terrorism, the role of multilateralism, regional developments of mutual concern, and a review of cooperation between the two sides on economic and trade matters. The scope of enhancing relations on the Science & Technology front was also underlined, particularly in the context of the proposed signing of a Framework Agreement between the two sides regarding India's participation in the Galileo Project, and India's interest in the ITER project. India and the EU also decided to set up an Energy Panel and an Environment Forum and agreed to draw up a Joint Action Plan covering the entire gamut of India-EU relations. The two sides also issued a Joint Declaration on Cultural Relations and a Joint Press statement. The Political Summit was followed by a CEOs Round Table from both sides. Prime Minister addressed the Round Table and reiterated the Government's commitment to continuing the economic reform process. He invited European companies to look at the new investment opportunities emerging in India in various sectors.

Interaction with the European Parliament continued during the year. An *ad hoc* delegation of the European Parliament, led by Mr. John Cushman, MEP, visited New Delhi and J&K from 20 to 24 June 2004. A delegation of the South Asia and SAARC delegation of the EP led by Chairperson Ms. Neena Gill, visited India from 1 – 6 November. The delegation met External Affairs Minister,

the Minister for Information & Broadcasting and the Minister for Environment, besides the Standing Committee on External Affairs, Rajya Sabha Members, former Home Minister Shri L.K. Advani, Shri N.N. Vohra, Co-Chair of the India-EU Round Table, and the National Human Rights Commission, FICCI and CII. A group of four Indian MPs visited Brussels in late November 2004 to participate in the IPU Conference on WTO issues.

External Affairs Minister, Shri Natwar Singh, visited Brussels on 13-15 September 2004, and met the CSFP High Representative Javier Solana, former External Relations Commissioner, Chris Patten and his successor, Ms. Benita Ferrero Waldner, the Dutch FM Bernard Bot (in his capacity as President of the European Foreign Affairs Council), and the Belgian Foreign Minister Mr. Karel de Gucht. He held extensive talks with them on a range of bilateral, regional and international issues of concern.

A delegation of four senior Members of the European Parliament, including the President of the EPP Group in the European Parliament Mr. Hans-Gert Poettering and the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Mr. Elmar Brok, visited India in February 2005. The delegation met External Affairs Minister and held discussions with Members of the Standing Committee on External Affairs. These meetings were especially important in the context of our efforts to enhance mutual understanding amongst Parliamentarians on both sides.

India and the EU have substantial trade and economic interests. The EU (as a bloc of 25 nations) is India's largest export destination and has a share of over 24 per cent in her total exports. India's exports to the EU in 2003 were Euros 13.30 billion and imports were worth Euros 14.20 billion – an increase of nearly 7 per cent over the previous year. In the year 2003, India was the 19th largest exporter to EU and occupied a share of 1.35 per cent in the total EU imports. On the other hand, India was the 16th largest importer of EU's products and had a share of 1.46 per cent in EU's global exports. The EU is one of the largest sources of FDI for India. Between the years 1991 to 2003, cumulative actual inflows are estimated at around Euros 6.2 billion, according to Eurostat Data. The most important sources of FDI from the EU are UK, Germany, and the Netherlands followed by France, Italy and Belgium.

The Framework Agreement for Science & Technology Cooperation between India and the EU increasingly

attracted the attention of economic actors as well as researchers on both sides. In March 2004, Shri V.S. Ramamurthy, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, led a delegation to Brussels to attend the first India-EC Steering Committee meeting, during which an India-EC Programme of Cooperation in S&T, 2004-2006 and a Joint Statement were signed. The two sides agreed to jointly organize 4 workshops during 2004-2005, in the areas of nanotechnology, genomics in health & food, surface transport (automotive sector) and sustainable development (natural disasters mitigation). The joint activities and projects will be assisted within the Sixth Framework of Research and Technological Development (RTD) for 2002-2006 of the EU. The 14th meeting of the India-EU Joint Commission was held in Brussels on 10 September 2004. The 2004 Euro-India Cooperation Forum on Information Society was held in New Delhi on 24-26 March 2004.

Civil society dialogue between India and EU continued during the year. The Seventh and Eighth Meetings of the India-EU Round Table were held in June 2004 in Srinagar and in London in December 2004 respectively. At the 7th round, bilateral cooperation for 'Enlarging Tourism', 'Promoting Trade and Sustainable Development' and a discussion on operationalisation of the Civil Society Internet Forum were discussed. The 8th meeting of the Round Table was co-chaired by Ms Anne-Marie Sigmund, President of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) on the EU side and Shri N.N. Vohra, the India Co-Chair. Among other issues, it discussed labour relations in the EU and in India and cooperation in education and training.

EU development cooperation assistance to India has generally been focused in the areas of environment, public health and education. In the second phase of its programme on education, the EC has made a commitment of Euros 200 million for the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan* (SSA) Programme, envisaged for the development of primary education covering 42 districts. The EC has drafted a new development cooperation strategy for its relations with India, articulated in its *Country Strategy Paper for India 2002-2006*, under which it has committed Euros 225 million for this period. The sectoral approach has now been replaced with a 'state-partnership' approach. Towards this end, the two sides signed an MoU on the States Partnership Programme during the year and Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan have been selected by the EC under this programme. The EC launched two new

programmes: Trade & Investment Development Programme with an outlay of Euros 14 million and the India window of the Erasmus Mundus Scholarship Programme, with an outlay of Euros 33 million. An MoU for the India-EC Scholarship Programme was signed on 7 January 2005 in Brussels. The Customs Cooperation Agreement, which was signed at the last Summit in New Delhi in October 2003, was ratified and came into force on 1 November 2004. The first round of negotiations for India-EU Maritime Agreement between the two sides was held in September 2004 in New Delhi.

United Kingdom

Relations between India and the UK continued to be very close. Frequent high-level bilateral consultations over the year helped to consolidate and advance cooperation in diverse areas. During PM's visit to London on 19-20 September 2004, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair described the bilateral relationship as "probably the strongest it has been today for many, many years. It is a relationship that is actually going from strength to strength." The two Prime Ministers launched the joint declaration titled 'India- UK: Towards a New and Dynamic Partnership', setting out plans to strengthen and broaden bilateral ties through a comprehensive strategic partnership. The Joint Declaration laid the ground for setting up a Ministerially led Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) to strengthen the strategic economic relationship and an Indo-UK Economic and Financial dialogue. The Prime Minister addressed a breakfast meeting of chief executives of select British firms and also held a meeting with the parliamentarians from Labour Friends of India. External Affairs Minister, NSA and Chairman, Planning Commission accompanied PM.

External Affairs Minister, Shri Natwar Singh had visited UK earlier in June 2004 and met Foreign Secretary Jack Straw with whom he had wide-ranging exchange of views on international, regional and bilateral issues. There were several other high-level bilateral visits strengthening and expanding the scope of economic and commercial related issues. Finance Minister Shri Chidambaram attended an event titled 'Passage to India' in London on 8-9 October in which several CEOs and prospective investors participated. Shri Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce & Industries, during his visits to London in June and October, met Ms Patricia Hewitt, Trade Secretary and discussed issues of bilateral interest and WTO. He also inaugurated a conference organized by FICCI-'Invest India' in October. Shri Praful Patel, Minister of Civil Aviation visited and

met his counterpart Mr Alistair Darling in September. An 'Incredible India Evening' was organized in London on 4 October 2004 to promote tourism with the participation of Smt. Renuka Chowdhury, Minister of Tourism. About 18 delegations from various states participated at the World Tourism Market held in London. Delegations from Haryana and Sikkim were led by the Chief Ministers and some were led by State Tourism Ministers. Minister of Communications and IT Shri Dayanidhi Maran visited British Telecom laboratories in Ipswich in September. Minister of State for Science and Technology Shri Kapil Sibal visited London to address an All Party Parliamentary Group on AIDS at the House of Commons in London in October. Smt. Panabaka Laxmi, Minister of State for Health met her counterpart Mr. John Hutton in London in November and discussed the scope for bilateral cooperation in healthcare sector. Chief Ministers of Chhattisgarh and Haryana held road shows to attract investment into their respective states. Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Kamal Nath and Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr. A Ramadoss participated in the Chatham House Conference 'The Pharmaceutical Industry in the 21st Century: Is India challenging the R&D Business model?

Finance Minister (FM), Shri P Chidambaram delivered the Keynote Address at the Advancing Enterprise 2005 Conference organized by Chancellor for Exchequer Mr. Gordon Brown. The Indo-British Economic and Financial Dialogue was launched during the visit and an agreement to this effect was signed by FM and Chancellor of the Exchequer Mr. Gordon Brown. He also launched the Foreign Policy Centre's new programme on 'India and Globalisation'. FM attended a breakfast meeting with G-7 Finance Ministers, the first time that India was invited to interact with them at one of their regular Group meetings. Other high level visits from India included those by Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Speaker Lok Sabha, Minister for Human Resource Development, Shri Arjun Singh, Ms. Kumari Selja, Minister of State for Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation. The 8th India-UK Round Table meeting was held in Yorkshire, U.K. in February.

There were visits to India by Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott as PM's Special Envoy, Defence Secretary Geoffrey Hoon, Mr. David Milliband, Minister of State for Education & Skills, Ms. Margaret Beckett, Cabinet Minister and Secretary of State for Environment, Sir Michael Jay, Permanent Under Secretary, CPFIN members led by Peter Luff, MP, David Lammy, Parliamentary Under

Secretary of State at the Department of Constitutional Affairs, Sir Kevin Tebbit, KCB, CMG, Permanent Under Secretary of State for Defence, Mr. Hillary Benn, Minister for International Development, Mr. Gareth Thomas, Junior Minister for International Development, Mr. Barry Gardiner, Minister for Economy and Education in Northern Ireland, Secretary for Trade and Industry, Ms. Patricia Hewitt and Minister for Environment Mr. Elliot Morley. British Foreign Secretary Mr. Jack Straw visited India from 17 – 18 February. In Delhi he met External Affairs Minister (EAM), Shri Natwar Singh and Home Minister Shri Shivraj Patil. An Indo-UK Prisoner Transfer Agreement (initialled in 1997) was signed during the visit and the MoU on return of illegal immigrants was renewed for a period of further one year. The discussions focused on bilateral relations as well as developments in our neighbourhood.

The UK is India's third largest trade partner after the USA and China, and the largest in Europe. Annual bilateral trade in goods and services between India and Britain was well over £ 5 billion during 2003. Between January and September 2004, total trade in goods registered a slight increase at £3.29b in India's favour. India has moved up, as UK's 15th most important export market. The UK continues to be the largest cumulative investor in India and the third largest investor post-1991. India is the eighth largest investor in the UK in terms of the number of projects and the second largest from Asia after Japan. The total number of Indian companies in the UK stand presently at 480. Prime Minister Blair and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry unambiguously supported offshore-outsourcing by the British companies pointing out the larger economic benefits to the UK. Air Services talks were held in London in September between the officials of Ministry of Civil Aviation and Department for Transport and concluded successfully with an agreement to increase the number of direct flights per week from 19 to 40 by both the sides in a phased manner over a period of one year and also to increase the number of destinations served in India to seven. The Annual CII CEO's Mission visited London in June. The third Financial Times-Nasscom Annual conference on outsourcing was held in London in November. The UK government's programme of development assistance to India continues to be its largest in the world. The British Department for International Development (DfID) plans to disburse £ 250 million to various programmes in India during 2004-05. UK assistance is channelled to several nationwide activities as well as to specific programmes in four focus

states (Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal). In October 2004, the UK announced substantial assistance to support the Government of India's Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan Programme with a commitment of £190 million over four years.

France

India and France enjoy cordial and substantive ties. The tempo of regular and structured consultations on a variety of issues of mutual concern continued in 2004. Late Shri J.N. Dixit, then NSA to PM, led the Indian side at the 12th round of the Strategic Dialogue held in Paris on 23 August 2004. The French side was led by Gourdault-Montagne, Diplomatic Advisor to the French President. Issues pertaining to international security and bilateral cooperation were discussed during the dialogue. Shri Dixit also called on French President Jacques Chirac and the French Foreign Minister, Michel Barnier.

French Foreign Minister, Michel Barnier, visited India on 27-28 October 2004 and called on Prime Minister, Raksha Mantri and Leader of the Opposition. External Affairs Minister led the delegation level talks covering a wide range of issues of mutual concern. The 6th meeting of the Joint Working Group on Terrorism was held on 2 April 2004 in New Delhi.

French Senate President Christian Poncelet led a Senate delegation to India from 3 - 5 February 2005. The delegation included Senators Fauchon and Placade, both active members of the Indo-French Friendship Association in the French Senate. The delegation called on the President, Vice President, External Affairs Minister and met the Members of the Standing Committee on External Affairs. The delegation was also briefed by the National Disaster Management Cell in the Ministry of Home Affairs, on our relief and rehabilitation work following the Tsunami, both in India as well as in the neighbouring countries affected.

In the field of Defence, continuous exchanges between the two sides were maintained during the year. The 7th Round of the Indo-French High Level Defence Committee meeting was held in Paris on 17-19 November 2004 at the level of Defence Secretary. The meetings of the three sub-Committees established under this dialogue mechanism were also held. In addition, the program of exchange between the armed forces of both country continued, with several incoming and outgoing visits at senior staff officer level taking place. The 3rd Indo-French Research Forum meeting was held in Paris from 18-21



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and British Prime Minister Mr. Tony Blair jointly addressing the press in London, 19-20 September 2004.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh meeting with German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder in New Delhi, 6-7 October 2004.

October, with the objective of furthering bilateral cooperation in the field of defence joint ventures.

The year witnessed continued growth in bilateral trade between India and France. The figure touched 2.5 billion Euros in 2003-04, with the balance of trade being marginally in India's favor. The Joint Working Groups on Energy, Roads, Urban Development and Mineral Exploration & Development met during the year to deliberate upon ways of fostering cooperation in their respective sectors. The visits of Minister for Commerce & Industry, Shri Kamal Nath; Minister for Tourism, Smt. Renuka Chowdhury; Minister of Communication and Information Technology, Shri Dayanidhi Maran; Minister of State for Food Processing Industries, Shri Subodh Kant Sahai contributed to sustaining high level interaction in the economic sphere. The visit of the high-level CII-CEOs delegation sponsored by the Confederation of Indian Industry, India's participation in trade fairs such as Foire de Paris, Pret-à-Porter, Cannes Water Symposium, Salon International de l'Alimentation (SIAL) as well as Buyer-Seller Meets for leather, fashion apparels and seminars on Information Technology and Business Opportunities in the Indian Agro Food Sector enhanced business interaction between the two countries.

In the fields of Science & Technology the two sides continued to maintain the momentum of bilateral cooperation. In the area of Space, the major bilateral project established is the MEGHA-TROPIQUES satellite development program, in respect of which an MoU was signed in November 2004 between ISRO and CNES. The satellite is now scheduled for launch on an Indian launcher by 2008-2009. An ISRO-CNES Joint Working Group for Space has also been constituted. On 16 September 2004, an MoU was signed between DAE and the '*Commissariat à l'Énergie Atomique*' (CEA). The 2nd session of the Indo-French Joint Committee on Atomic Energy was held in Mumbai from 8-11 November 2004. An MoU was signed between the Indian and the French Railways in Paris on 30 January 2004.

A meeting of the Coordinators of the Indo-French Forum was held in Paris on 3 May 2004. An Indian Film Festival "Did you say Bollywood", organized by the prestigious Centre Pompidou in collaboration with the Embassy was a great success. 16 ICCR scholarships were awarded to French nationals under the 2004-2005 Cultural Exchange Programme. The 5th meeting of the Industrial Research Committee of IFCPAR was held in Mumbai on 16 and 17 December 2004. The 4th meeting of the Joint Working

Group of the ICMR and INSERM on research cooperation in the area of health was held in Paris on 24 March 2004. The 33rd Meeting of the Scientific Council of the Indo-French Centre for Promotion of Advanced Research (CEFIPRA) was held on 3 and 4 May 2004 at Grenoble.

Italy

India's relations with Italy received a strong impetus with the State Visit of Italian President, Mr. Carlo Azeglio Ciampi from 12-16 February 2005. He was accompanied by Mr. Gianfranco Fini, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Antonio Marzano, Minister for Productive Activities, Mr. Giuliano Urbani, Minister for Culture, Ms. Letizia Moratti, Minister for Education, University and Education, Mrs. Margherita, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and a high-level business and media delegation.

President Ciampi held delegation level talks with PM. The talks focussed on possibilities for further co-operation in the fields of trade and commerce, culture, S&T, Space and related areas. Six Agreements were signed after the talks: an MoU on Political Cooperation, an MoU on Fishery and Aqua-culture Production, an MoU on Cooperation for the Conservation of Paintings of the Ajanta and Ellora Caves, an MoU between the Indian Ministry of S &T and Italian Ministry for Education, University and Research, Programme of Cooperation for the years 2005-07 under the Indo-Italian S&T Agreement and an Agreement between ISRO and Italian Space Agency on the Cooperation in Space, Science, Technology and Applications. A further six technical MoUs in the field of bioinformatics, neuroinformatics, Information Sciences & Applicable Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology, Micro-Electro-Mechanical Systems and Emerging Web Applications were signed between the centres of excellence on both sides during the visit.

President Ciampi's discussions with Rashtrapatiji focused on intensification of Scientific and Technological exchanges with increased emphasis on joint projects in areas of core competencies. Other important events organized during his visit were an Italy-India Business Forum jointly organized by CII, FICCI and CONFINDUSTRIA at Pragati Maidan and an art Exhibition 'Italian Art 1950-69, Masterpieces from the Farnesina Collection'.

Other high level visits from both sides in the course of the year include those by Italian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Margherita Boniver in July 2004



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at India-European Union joint press conference following the 5th India-EU Summit at The Hague on 8 November 2004.



President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam hosting Banquet Dinner in the honour of visiting President of Italy Mr. Carlo Azeglio Ciampi (12-16 February 2005). Seated to the right of President is Mrs. Franca Ciampi, wife of Italian President and on his left is Shrimati Gursharan Kaur, wife of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.

during which a new Indo- Italian Cultural Agreement was signed and an Alitalia flight was started on Milan-Delhi sector; Minister of State for Tourism Smt. Renuka Choudhury in September 2004 to promote India as a tourist destination in Italy; Italian Minister of State for Agriculture Mr. Paolo Scarpa Bonazza Buaro from 6-7 December 2004; Italian Minister for Productive Activities from 4-7 January 2005 for the 16th Session of the Indo-Italian Joint Economic Commission and Speaker of the Italian Lower House, Mr. Pier Ferdinando Casini from 12-14 January 2005.

Smt. Preneet Kaur, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and Smt. Jaya Bachchan, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) visited Rome from 16-18 October 2004 for attending the World Conference of Women Parliamentarians for protection of children and young persons.

The Embassy, with the support of Commune di Roma and the Indo-Italian Chamber of Commerce & Industry, organized a series of India-centric events called "Namaste India" in Rome from 9-18 July 2004. The Namaste India in Rome focussed on fashion, cinema, films, food, tourism and other related sectors of commercial importance to India.

Ireland

Ireland held the European Union (EU) Presidency during the first half of 2004 during which a meeting of India's Head of Missions based in EU member states chaired by Foreign Secretary was held in Dublin from 14-15 April 2004. The meeting was also addressed by Secretary General of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs.

A 5-member delegation from Irish Joint Parliamentary Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women Rights led by its Chairman, Mr. Sean Ardagh visited India from 18-25 October 2004. The Delegation met Chairperson of Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women, Chairperson of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment, Minister of State for Home Affairs and Delhi Chief Minister.

Germany

Chancellor Schroeder visited India on 6-7 October 2004 as part of annual summit level interactions. He was accompanied by Ms. Edelgard Bulmahn, Federal Minister for Education and Research, a high level official delegation and a twenty-two member delegation of CEOs of leading

German companies. He called on Rashtrapatiji, Vice President and had delegation level talks with PM. External Affairs Minister called on Chancellor Schroeder. At the delegation level talks with PM, the Chancellor expressed deep interest for enhancing relationship with India as envisaged in the Indo-German Partnership in the 21st Century. Indo-German 'Science Circle' that links research institutes and scientists on both sides through a website was inaugurated by the Chancellor. An MoU for Scientific Cooperation was signed by DST and Max Planck Institute to further bilateral cooperation in science and technology. Both the sides shared the view of the need for reform of the UN and reiterated to support each other's candidature in an expanded UNSC. The two sides decided to double bilateral trade from about \$ 5 billion in 2003 over the next five years.

German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer visited India earlier on 14 July 2004 and called on PM. External Affairs Minister led the delegation level talks where, in a strategic move, both India and Germany agreed to support each other's candidature for permanent membership in an expanded UNSC. He reiterated the importance of a joint coordinated approach to the issue of UN Reform, especially the UNSC. Finance Minister Eichel visited India on 14-15 October 2004 at the invitation of Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram to discuss G-20 related issues. Both the Ministers agreed to make concerted efforts to intensify bilateral economic cooperation and double bilateral trade, which currently stands at Euro 6 billion (final figures of 2004 awaited). On 20-21 November 2004, Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram and RBI Governor Shri Y. V. Reddy participated in the G-20 Ministerial meeting in Berlin. Finance Minister addressed an Investors Meet in Frankfurt on 22 November 2004. Mrs. Sheila Dikshit, Chief Minister of Delhi, accompanied by senior officials participated in the International Conference for Renewable Energies in Bonn (1-4 June 2004).

Chief Justice of India(CJI), Shri R.C. Lahoti, led the Indian delegation to the International Law Association Conference held in Berlin, 15-21 August 2004. CJI co-chaired the plenary session on corporate social responsibility and international law. On 10-11 November 2004 Shri Om Prakash Chautala, Chief Minister of Haryana visited Munich with a high level delegation to promote Haryana as tourism and investment destination. Shri Jagdish Tytler, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Overseas Indian Affairs visited Germany and met NRIs and PIOs on 10-12 October 2004. Foreign

Secretary, Shri Shashank led the Indian delegation to the Third International Conference on Afghanistan held in Berlin on 31 March –1 April 2004. FS also had discussions with German Secretary of State, Jürgen Chrobog. Defence Secretary, Shri Ajay Prasad led a composite delegation comprising representatives of armed, air and naval forces to Berlin and Munich on 4-8 April 2004. German Defence Secretary Dr. Peter Eickenboom paid a return visit heading a composite delegation from 5-8 December 2004 and held discussions with the Defence Secretary. Earlier, from 10-17 August 2004, a delegation led by Lt. General Friedrich Reichmann, Commander, Joint Operations Command of Germany, visited India. Dr. Beate Merk, Bavarian Justice Minister visited India from 31 August –6 September 2004. Minister-President of Hessen Mr. Roland Koch headed a business and official delegation to India from 1-8 February 2005. During the visit he interacted with high-level Union and State dignitaries and attended important business interaction.

In the first half of February, two Parliamentary delegations, one from the Indo-German Friendship Group in the German Parliament headed by Mr. Sebastian Edathy and a second from the German Association of Trade Fair Industries that included three German MPs, visited India. Another important delegation in February was of representatives of German SMEs who visited Delhi and Mumbai and interacted with Indian business and industry.

Belgium

India's relations with Belgium remained warm and friendly. External Affairs Minister, Shri Natwar Singh, visited Brussels from 12-14 September 2004 and had a wide-ranging exchange of views with Belgian Foreign Minister, Mr. Karel de Gucht covering bilateral, multilateral and regional issues. It was decided to establish an ad hoc dialogue on consular issues of mutual concern. Belgium is India's second largest trade partner within the European Union with bilateral trade turnover crossing Euro 6 billion for the year 2004. The Belgo-Indian Chamber of Commerce (BICC) celebrated its Golden Jubilee on 8 November 2004 with a Seminar entitled "India-Target 2005" which was graced by the presence of HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium. A delegation from the Belgian Senate Commission on Finance paid a visit to India in the first and second week of January 2005 and interacted with MPs in Indian Parliament, state functionaries in Karnataka and Maharashtra as well as Indian business representatives.

Luxembourg

India's relations with Luxembourg remained warm and friendly. Discussions were held between the Indian and Luxembourg authorities for the commencement of negotiations on bilateral Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. Luxembourg assumed the residency of the EU from 1 January 2005 for 6 months. Talks were held with Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce in preparation of a Trade Mission to India in 2005. Luxembourg assumed EU Presidency for the first half of 2005.

The Netherlands

India-Netherlands relations continued to be cordial and friendly. The highlight of the year was the Fifth India-EU Summit held in The Hague on 8 November 2004 during the Dutch Presidency of the EU. Prime Minister led the Indian delegation for the Summit and took opportunity of his visit to The Hague to call on Queen Beatrix. External Affairs Minister held a bilateral meeting with the Dutch Foreign Minister Dr Bernard R. Bot and Commerce & Industry Minister Shri Kamal Nath met his Dutch counterpart Ms Karien van Gennip. The trade and investment showed satisfactory growth during the year. The Netherlands remained among the top seven partners of India both in terms of the volume of bilateral trade at \$ 1.8 billion, in India's favour, as well as of the foreign direct investment into India. A 17-member joint CII/ FICCI business delegation visited the Netherlands. The visit coincided with the India-EU Business Interactions on 8 November 2004. In the consular field, one notable development was the Indian decision to join The Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Document under the Hague Conference of Private International Law. This accession would remove the legalization requirement for Indian documents like birth and marriage certificates before their use in the Netherlands and in all other member countries of the Hague Convention.

Portugal

India and Portugal celebrated the 30th Anniversary of re-establishment of diplomatic relations on 31 December 2004. On this occasion messages of felicitations were exchanged between Rashtrapatiji and Portuguese President, Dr. Jorge Sampaio and between External Affairs Minister and Portuguese Foreign Minister, Dr. António Victor Martins Monteiro reiterating the bonds of friendship and a mutual desire to strengthen bilateral relations. Bilateral relations were marked by a regular

exchange of high-level visits. Kumari Selja, Minister of State for Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation (Independent Charge) visited Portugal from 17-20 September 2004 and met with the Secretary of State of Social Security and the Minister of Cities, Local Administration, Housing and Regional Development and visited two Social Housing Projects. Minister of State for Overseas Indians Affairs Shri Jagdish Tytler paid a visit on 7 October 2004 to Lisbon and held discussions with various associations of Indian nationals as well as people of Indian origin in preparation of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to be organized in Mumbai. The Indian Naval Ship INS TABAR visited Lisbon for four days (18-21 April 2004) on her maiden passage from Kaliningrad, Russia to Mumbai. Indo-Portuguese bilateral trade stood at \$ 166 million, in India's favor. As part of trade promotion activities ITPO coordinated India's participation in the International Handicrafts Fair held at Lisbon (26 June-4 July 2004) where about 40 Indian companies participated. India participated as the theme country in the 27th Portuguese National Handicrafts Fair (24 July- 8 August 2004) at the invitation of the Mayor of Vila do Conde. The Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts, which coordinated India's participation, put up a colourful and attractive theme pavilion which, eventually turned out to be the focus of the exhibition.

Spain

Spain is an important partner for India in the European Union. Our relations remained warm and close with the new Government of José Rodríguez Zapatero, Prime Minister of the socialist coalition. There were important visits during 2004. Smt. Renuka Chowdhury, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Tourism visited Spain from 5-8 October 2004. Apart from addressing a road show organized by the India Tourist office, Paris, Minister of State (Tourism) called on Mr. José Montilla Aguilera, Spanish Minister of Industry, Tourism and Commerce. Bilateral issues such as organizing reciprocal country festivals, commencement of direct flight between the two countries and forging cooperation in important sectors like hotel chains and infrastructure building were discussed. Shri Jagdish Tytler, Minister of State (Overseas Indians' Affairs) visited Spain from 5-7 October 2004 and interacted with the local Indian community. Bilateral commercial ties strengthened considerably during this period. Bilateral trade was significantly in India's favor with Indian exports crossing \$1.5 billion in 2004. Important investment promotion events and Buyer Seller

Meets in leather and apparel sector were organized by the Mission in collaboration with the respective export promotion Councils. The Growing interest of Spaniards in Indian culture and heritage was evident in the form of enhanced tourism and overwhelming response to Indian cultural events. Tourism from Spain to India is likely to touch a figure of 38,000 by the end of this year. On the cultural side, an important Puppet Festival was organized in the north of Spain in November. India was the theme country for this festival, which also included depiction of various other Indian arts and cuisine. India's initiative of setting up of Casa de la India [India Cultural Centre] received a significant boost with the visit of DG (ICCR) who, on behalf of ICCR, presented a cheque of US \$ 50,000 to Casa de la India.

The Commonwealth

Commonwealth Secretary General, Mr. Don McKinnon, visited India in October 2004, in connection with Pre-CHOGM 2005 consultations with various Commonwealth Head of Government. He met PM and External Affairs Minister and discussed Commonwealth-related issues, including the format of the next CHOGM in Malta in November 2005. He emphasized that India's technical cooperation should be increased in a manner that reflected India's growing stature internationally. India continues to be the fifth largest contributor to Commonwealth budgets and has decided to increase its annual contribution to the Commonwealth Small States Office in New York to US\$35,000. India also remains one of the largest contributors to the CFTC, with an annual contribution of GBP 720,000. It continued its active membership of key Commonwealth bodies, including CMAG and the Committee on Terrorism, as well as the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Board of Governors and Commonwealth Foundation and participated actively during its meetings. During 2004, India chaired the Accreditation Committee of the Commonwealth, which is constituted to recommend accreditation of NGOs to the Commonwealth for participation in CHOGM 2005. A Conference of Commonwealth Chief Election Officers was held in New Delhi on 24-25 February 2005.

EUROPE II

India has traditionally enjoyed friendly and substantive relations with 29 countries of the Europe-II Division that came into existence in March 2004. The year under review saw epochal changes in the eco-political geometry of the

region. On 2 April 2004, seven East European countries, viz. Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). A month later, the European Union was enlarged to take ten more Member States in east and south of the Continent, viz. Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovak Republic and Slovenia. By the year-end, the EU decided that Bulgaria and Romania were on track to join the body in 2007/2008. The EU also decided to commence accession negotiations with Croatia and Turkey. The EU being our largest trading partner and source of investment, the ongoing changes had direct implications for India.

Albania

India and Albania appointed Honorary Consul Generals in each other's capitals during 2004.

Austria

President of Austria, Dr. Heinz Fischer paid a State visit to India on 16-21 February 2005. During this unprecedented visit, the Austrian President was accompanied by a high level delegation, including Mrs. Fischer, Federal Minister for Economics and Labour Mr. Martin Bartenstein, Chief Minister of Tyrol Mr. Herwig Van Staa, the Chief Minister of Salzburg Mrs. Gabriele Burgstaller and President of Austrian Federal Economic Chamber Mr. Christoph Leitl. The large number of businessmen and a significant science and culture delegation accompanying the President during the State visit underscored the importance the two countries attach to expanding their economic relations. During the visit, Dr. Fischer met the President of India Dr. Abdul Kalam and held talks with the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. President Fischer held separate meetings with the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, the External Affairs Minister and the Defence Minister. President Fischer also had a meeting with Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson, UPA. President Fischer and accompanying delegation visited Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Mysore. In Delhi and Mumbai, President Fischer addressed captains of Indian business and industry, in particular the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). Federal Minister Bartenstein, the Chief Ministers and the President of the Economic Chamber also had separate discussions. The visit provided a fillip to the traditionally warm and substantive bilateral ties.

During the visit, following bilateral documents were signed:

- i) Agreement on Infrastructure Cooperation in Health Sector;
- ii) Memorandum of Understanding on Development of Collaboration between the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh and the Medical University Innsbruck.

The bilateral engagements during the year also included meetings in Brussels between the External Affairs Minister and the Foreign Minister of Austria in early September 2004, visit of the Chief of Army Staff in August 2004, visit of a Ministerial delegation from Andhra Pradesh in August 2004 as well as the third round of Foreign Office Consultations held in end November 2004 in Vienna.

While Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar's visit to Vienna in September 2004 was in the multilateral context, he also discussed bilateral possibilities with his Austrian counterparts.

Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Rao Inderjit Singh visited Austria for the State funeral of late Austrian President Thomas Klestil in July 2004. On the sidelines of the engagements, the Minister had meetings with new Austrian President, Chancellor and Foreign Minister.

In September 2004, Ministry of Civil Aviation granted conditional permission to Austrian Airlines' request to operate Vienna-Mumbai flights in addition to their current flights to Delhi.

The 10th session of the Indo-Austrian Joint Economic Commission Meeting was held in Vienna during 17-18 January 2004. The meeting will further strengthen our growing economic and commercial ties.

Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH)

The Minister of State for Tourism Smt. Renuka Chowdhury paid an official visit to BiH from 29 October - 1 November 2004 during which the President of the Republic received her.

India sent two consignments of humanitarian assistance worth US\$ 50,000 (nearly Rs. 22 lakhs) to flood victims of Tuzla Canton of BiH in early 2004.

Bulgaria

Bulgarian Foreign Minister Dr. Solomon Passy began a two day visit to India on 28 July 2004, during which he was accompanied by Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs,

Defence and Agriculture, and some Members of Bulgarian Parliament. During the visit, the Foreign Minister had comprehensive exchange of views with the External Affairs Minister. He also paid courtesy calls on Rashtrapatiji and Defence Minister. The visiting dignitary reiterated Bulgaria's support for India's candidature for a permanent seat in the expanded UN Security Council and expressed interest in coordinating positions on terrorism. An MoU on mutual cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs, India and the Diplomatic Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bulgaria was also signed.

The 15th Session of the Indo-Bulgarian Joint Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation was held in Delhi during 17-20 November 2004. Bulgarian Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, Mr. Mehmed Dikme led the Bulgarian delegation, which also included Deputy Ministers of Economy, Transport & Communications and Youth & Sports. Shri Sharad Pawar, Agriculture Minister led the Indian delegation. A session of the bilateral Joint Business Council was also held.

The Third Session of the Indo-Bulgarian Joint Committee on Science & Technology met on 1-2 November 2004. It was co-chaired by Prof. Kamen Velev, Deputy Minister of Education & Science of Bulgaria and Prof. V.S. Ramamurthy, India's Secretary (Science & Technology). During the session, the Protocol of Cooperation in Science & Technology for the period 2005-07 was signed.

Golden Jubilee of the establishment of the Indo-Bulgarian diplomatic relations was observed in December 2004. Congratulatory messages were exchanged between the Presidents, Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of the two countries. A string of cultural events, symposia, conferences and postal commemorations were held in both countries to mark this occasion.

Croatia

The First meeting of Indo-Croat Joint Committee on combating international illegal drugs and psychotropic substances, international terrorism and organized crime was held in Zagreb on 8-9 September 2004.

After a gap of 6 years, ITPO organised participation of 14 Indian companies in the 80th Annual Zagreb International Autumn Fair 2004.

ICCR-sponsored visit of a 16-member Puppet Group to Croatia from 20-23 December 2004.

Cyprus

Mr. Sotos Zackheos, Cyprus Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs visited India on 4-7 November 2004 for the second round of Foreign Office Consultations with Indian side led by Smt. Shashi U. Tripathi, Secretary (West). Mr. Zackheos also had a courtesy meeting with External Affairs Minister to whom he delivered a letter of invitation from Mr. George Iacovou, Cyprus Foreign Minister. He also met the President of NASSCOM.

Czech Republic

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport, Mr. Milan Simonovsky visited India during 8-12 February 2005 and attended the IETF-2005, New Delhi. Mr. Simonovsky also met the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission and the Minister of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises.

The Union Minister of State for Environment and Forests Shri Namo Narain Meena visited Prague on 25-27 November 2004 to attend a multilateral meeting on follow up of the Montreal Protocol.

The Sixth session of India-Czech Republic Joint Committee was held in New Delhi on 16-17 December 2004. It was co-chaired by Czech Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Mr. Miroslav Somol, and on Indian side by Shri S.N. Menon, Commerce Secretary.

A number of cultural events including unveiling of a bust of Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore and a Festival of Indian Films were held in Prague during 2004.

Denmark

Danish Deputy Prime Minister Bendtsen visited India from 12-17 October 2004 during which he inaugurated an Inland Container Terminal in Dadri (UP). Danish Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation Mr. Helge Sander visited India on 25-29 October 2004 during which a bilateral MoU on biotechnology cooperation was signed. A 6 member delegation of Danish Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee visited India on 3-8 November 2004 during which it interacted with Indian Parliament's Standing Committee on External Affairs.

Finland

Mr. Erkki Tuomioja, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland paid a visit to India from 6-10 February 2005 in connection with a meeting on Helsinki Process held in New Delhi. He had a meeting with the External Affairs Minister.

Ms. Paula Lehtomaki, Minister of Foreign Trade and Development of Finland visited India from 1-9 February 2005. She was accompanied by a large business delegation. She had meetings with Minister of Commerce & Industry and other Ministers. She also participated in sectoral interactions between businessmen of India and Finland in New Delhi and Bangalore.

Finnish Under Secretary of State for External Economic Relations Mr. Pekka Lintu visited India during 7-10 June 2004. The visit was utilized to hold extensive interactions with officials of Indian Ministries of External Affairs and Commerce as well as the captains of Indian business in Delhi, Bangalore and Chennai.

A 75-member Indian Air Force Band team visited Finland from 1-8 August 2004 to participate at the Hamina Tattoo International Military Music Festival.

Greece

Over 80 Indian athletes participated in the 28th Olympic Games held in Athens during 13-29 August 2004. Major R.S. Rathore won a Silver medal in the shooting event. An official delegation led by Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Sunil Dutt, visited Athens during the period of the Olympics. Later, in the Paralympics also held in Athens during 17-28 September 2004, India's Devendra won a Gold Medal for Javelin throw while Rajender Singh won a Bronze Medal for Power Lifting.

Hungary

Hungarian Minister of National Cultural Heritage Mr. Istvan Hiller visited India from 22-25 November 2004. He, along with Minister of Information, Broadcasting & Culture Shri Jaipal Reddy inaugurated Hungarian Week of Culture in New Delhi.

Dr. Andras Balogh, Chief Advisor to Hungarian PM on International Strategy visited India from 17-27 November 2004 to participate in a Seminar on Panchsheel.

Shri Lakshmi Chand, Secretary (Industrial Policy and Promotion) visited Hungary on 29 March 2004 to initial the revised Agreement on Economic Cooperation.

The first meeting of the Indo-Hungarian Joint Working Group on Education was held in Budapest, 2-4 November 2004.

India's knowledge-based enterprises continued to strengthen their presence in Hungary with two new establishments opened during the year.

The Sixth Session of Indo-Hungarian Foreign Office Consultations was held in New Delhi on 31 January 2005. Deputy State Secretary in the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Laszlo Varkonyi visited India for this purpose from 30 January – 2 February 2005.

Malta

At the invitation of the External Affairs Minister, Dr. Michael Frendo, Foreign Minister of Malta paid an Official visit to India from 7-12 March 2005. During the visit, Dr. Frendo held discussions with the External Affairs Minister on ways to boost bilateral ties. He also interacted with Indian entrepreneurs.

Moldova

For the first time, a Moldavian Chambers of Commerce delegation visited India International Trade Fair organized in New Delhi in November 2004.

Norway

Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Jan Petersen paid an official visit to India on 6 July 2004, during which he had comprehensive exchange of views with the External Affairs Minister. The two Foreign Ministers signed a bilateral agreement to establish a Joint Commission of Cooperation. The visiting dignitary also held discussions with Minister of Commerce & Industry and the National Security Adviser.

Norwegian Minister of Trade & Industry Mr. Borge Brende visited India from 2-8 February 2005, accompanied by a nearly 60-strong business delegation. The visiting dignitary had a number of engagements apart from meeting the Minister of Commerce & Industry. He also attended a number of bilateral business events in New Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai.

Norwegian State Secretary, Mr. Vidar Helgesen paid a bilateral official visit to India from 11-15 October 2004. During the visit, the State Secretary held bilateral discussions with the Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Rao Inderjit Singh. He also called on Human Resource Development Minister Shri Arjun Singh. Norwegian State Secretary for Development Cooperation Mr. Olav Kjørven also paid an official visit to India on 7-8 September 2004 during which he met with the Minister of State for External Affairs Shri E. Ahamed and the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Dr. M.S. Ahluwalia.

The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of Norwegian

Parliament visited India from 21-26 January 2005. During their visit the delegation had meetings with the Speaker, Lok Sabha, External Affairs Minister and members of the Standing Committee on External Affairs in the Indian Parliament.

Poland

Marshal of Polish Sejm, Mr. Josef Olesky led a Parliamentary delegation for a three-day visit to India from 9 December 2004. Apart from meeting with the Speaker, Lok Sabha, the visiting dignitary was also received by Rashtrapatiiji, Vice-President and the External Affairs Minister. Mr. Oleksy handed over a letter to Rashtrapatiiji from Polish President Kwasniewski inviting him to visit Poland in 2005.

Raksha Mantri Shri Pranab Mukherjee paid a three-day official visit to Poland from 30 October 2004 during which he held useful discussions with Polish dignitaries including the President, the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister. A number of bilateral visits by defence functionaries also took place during the year.

India and Poland commemorated the Golden Jubilee of establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations by exchange of official messages and cultural functions, etc.

Following Poland's accession to the European Union, India initiated bilateral consultations with Poland on a new bilateral trade agreement. A large number of trade delegations also visited Poland during the year.

Romania

Minister of Communications & IT Shri Dayanidhi Maran led an Indian delegation to the 23rd Congress of the Universal Postal Union held in Bucharest from 19-22 September 2004. On the sidelines of the Congress, he discussed bilateral cooperation with his Romanian counterpart Ms. Adriana Ticau.

An Indian delegation led by Shri Ajay Prasad, Defence Secretary visited Bucharest from 8-10 April 2004. During the visit, the delegation called on Acting Defence Minister George Cristian Maior. The delegation also exchanged views on further bilateral defence cooperation with Secretary of State for Defence Gheorge Matache, and Secretary of State for Economy & Commerce Gen. Dr. Decebal Ilina.

Justice P.V. Reddy of the Supreme Court of India visited Bucharest from 19-21 May 2004 for the 12th Annual International Justice Conference.

Prince Radu of Hohenzollern-Veringen, Special Representative of the Government of Romania and his spouse Princess Margarita visited India during 7-12 November 2004, on the invitation of the Governor of Maharashtra. In Delhi they also called on the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Rao Inderjit Singh.

An "Indian Business Alliance of Romania" was established in Bucharest to co-ordinate and promote trade and investment co-operation with Romania. A major Indian Textile Exhibition was held in Bucharest and Brasov in end April 2004.

A Regional Conference of Hindi Scholars of Central Europe was held at the Sapientia-Hungarian University of Transylvania, Miercurea Ciuc, in July 2004.

Serbia and Montenegro (SCG)

Minister of State for Science & Technology and Ocean Development Shri Kapil Sibal paid an official visit to Serbia & Montenegro on 27-30 October 2004. Shri Kapil Sibal met with the President and the Foreign Minister of Serbia and Montenegro and the Minister for Science of the Republic of Serbia. A bilateral Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation was also signed.

Minister of State for Tourism, Smt. Renuka Chowdhury paid an official visit to Serbia & Montenegro on 1-4 November 2004. She inaugurated "Days of Indian Festival" and had meetings with SCG Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Economic Relations as well as the Serbian Minister of Tourism and Culture. A Memorandum of Understanding on Tourism Cooperation between India and Republic of Serbia was signed during the visit.

Minister of Economy and Privatization of the Republic of Serbia Mr. Predrag Bubalo paid to visit India during 31 January – 3 February 2005 at the invitation of Minister of State for Commerce and Industry.

Mr. Dusan Crnogorcevic, Assistant Minister (International Bilateral Cooperation), SCG Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited India on 2 December 2004 for the fourth round of India-SCG Foreign Office Consultations. The Indian side was chaired by Smt. Shashi U. Tripathi, Secretary (West). The visiting SCG official also called on Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs.

The 4th round of Foreign Office Consultations was held in New Delhi on 2 December 2004. Assistant Foreign

Minister of Serbia and Montenegro (SCG) Mr. Dusan Crnogorcevic and Secretary (West) led the two sides respectively in the Consultations. Mr. Crnogorcevic also called on Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Rao Inderjit Singh.

Sweden

A delegation of Swedish Defence Commission visited India on 2-7 November 2004. During this first-ever visit, the delegation was received by Parliament's Standing Committee on Defence as well as senior officials in Ministries of Defence and External Affairs.

A 20-member delegation of Sweden's Parliamentary Committee on Constitution visited India from 19-25 February 2005.

Mr. Hans Dahlgren, State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry visited India from 8-10 December 2004. He handed over to the External Affairs Minister, two replicas of the Nobel Medal for Literature awarded to Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore which was stolen from Vishwa Bharati Museum. He also called on the National Security Adviser. The fourth round of the Indo-Swedish Foreign Office Consultations was held on 9 December 2004 in New Delhi. The Indian and Swedish sides were respectively led by Smt. Shashi U. Tripathi, Secretary (West) and the Mr. Hans Dahlgren.

Mr. Lars-Olof Lindgren, Director-General (Trade Policy) in the Swedish Foreign Ministry led a business delegation to India in October 2004. Mr. Lindgren called on the Minister of Commerce & Industry, as well as the Minister of Communications & IT.

Slovak Republic

At the invitation of Rashtrapati, President of Slovak Republic, Dr. Ivan Gasparovic began a five-day State Visit to India on 11 December 2004. He was accompanied by Slovak First Lady Madame Silvia Gasparovicova, State Secretaries of Economy, Defence and Foreign Affairs as well as a large business delegation. Dr. Gasparovic met Rashtrapati and held delegation-level talks with the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. He also had courtesy call meetings with the Vice President, External Affairs Minister, and the Minister of Commerce & Industry. During the visit, three bilateral documents pertaining to Economic Cooperation, Cultural Exchange Programme and Cooperation in Small Scale Industries were signed. Slovak President's other engagements in

India included naming of a street in New Delhi after great Slovak leader Mr. Alexander Dubcek and addressing apex chambers in New Delhi and Mumbai. In a Joint Statement issued at the end of the visit, the Slovak side expressed support for India's candidature to the permanent seat in the expanded UN Security Council.

The Fifth Session of the Indo-Slovak Joint Committee on Economic and Commercial Cooperation was held in Bratislava during 18-19 October 2004. The session was co-chaired by the Director General of Foreign Trade on the Indian side and the Director General of Trade and Customer Protection from the Slovak side. The bilateral trade stood at US\$ 27 million in 2003-04.

Slovenia

The fifth session of Indo-Slovenian Joint Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation was held in Ljubljana on 21-22 April 2004. Shri G.K. Pillai, Additional Secretary in Ministry of Commerce & Industry led the Indian delegation and Ms. Renata Vitez, State Secretary for Foreign Economic Relation in the Ministry of Economy led the Slovenian side.

Switzerland

On invitation from Raksha Mantri, Switzerland's Federal Councillor for Defense, Sports and Civil Protection and Vice-President Mr. Samuel Schmid paid an official visit to India from 27 November – 1 December 2004. This was the first official visit by Swiss Defence Minister to India. Apart from detailed discussions with Raksha Mantri, the visiting dignitary was also received by Rashtrapati.

The ninth session of Indo-Swiss Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on 8 December 2004. The two delegations were led by Shri Abhijit Sengupta, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Ambassador Jorg Reding, Head of Bilateral Economic Relations. Bilateral trade relations registered a steady growth to reach US\$ 3.75 billion in the last year.

Turkey

Gen. Sukru Sariisik, Secretary General of the Turkish National Security Council visited India during 4-9 April 2004 and met the National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Admiral Madhavendra Singh, Army Chief, Gen. N.C.Vij, Foreign Secretary, Shri Shashank and the Deputy National Security Adviser, Shri Satish Chandra. The visit enabled both sides to exchange views on bilateral, regional and

international issues of common concern and contributed to greater mutual understanding of respective security and geo-strategic environment.

Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Admiral Madhavendra Singh paid a visit to Turkey from 10-15 May 2004 and had very positive interactions with his counterpart, Chief of General Staff, General Ozkok and other top brass of the Turkish armed forces.

The bilateral defence cooperation received a fillip from four-day goodwill visits of two Indian Naval ships, INS Ganga and INS Shakti to Istanbul port on 30 May 2004. This was first such visit in seven years.

The First Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Combating Terrorism with Turkey was held during 1-2 June 2004. The Indian delegation was led by Smt. Meera Shankar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and the Turkish delegation was headed by Ambassador

K. Ecvet Tezcan, Director General for Intelligence and Research.

The first Session of the Indo-Turkish Joint Working Group (JWG) of Economic Ministries was held in New Delhi during 6-7 October 2004. During the meeting it was agreed to set a bilateral trade target of US\$ 2 billion by 2009, as compared to current value of US\$ 1 billion. The JWG identified a number of sectors, including food & food processing, construction, textiles, automobiles, electronics, pharmaceuticals, tourism, hydrocarbons, IT, bio-tech, railways and leather for further cooperation.

Indian exports to Turkey crossed US\$ 1 billion mark for the first time in 2004. In addition, 37 Turkish experts availed of ITEC fellowships during the first seven months of 2004. Bilateral people-to-people contacts were boosted by a number of cultural events, food festivals and film screening organised in Turkey.



USA

India-US relations continued to witness intensive engagement towards a qualitative transformation in the year 2004-05. Both Governments reiterated their resolve to continue the process of developing a strategic partnership between India and the US. There is strong commitment on both sides to further widen, deepen and strengthen these ties. This is reflected in the Common Minimum Programme of the Indian Government and the Address of President to the Parliament in June 2004. With the re-election of President Bush in November 2004 the US Government has expressed its commitment to make the strategic partnership between India and US even more solid.

The two countries are involved in a broad dialogue on issues of mutual concern and interest, including strategic issues, defence, combating international terrorism, peacekeeping, science and technology, cyber security, health, trade, space, energy and environment. There is interaction between the two governments at all levels. External Affairs Minister's visit to Washington DC in June 2004 and subsequent meeting on the sidelines of ASEAN Regional Forum on 7-8 July 2004 with then US Secretary of State Colin Powell served to establish direct contact at the political level. On the US side, then Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage visited New Delhi on 13-14 July 2004 to reconfirm US commitment to continued expansion of India-US ties. The Defence Policy Group meeting in June 2004 in Delhi and India-US Space Conference in Bangalore in June 2004 provided positive signals.

Prime Minister's US Visit

Prime Minister met President Bush on 21 September 2004 on the sidelines of UNGA in New York. In the Joint Statement "US -India partnership: Co-operation & Trust" they noted that "bilateral relations had never been as close as they were at present" and set the direction for further development of the India - U.S. strategic partnership. During the meeting, President Bush emphasised that US

relations with India were vital and had great potential. Prime Minister underscored that mutual resolve to strengthen bilateral relations would create the environment of peace, prosperity and safety from terrorism. They welcomed the implementation of Phase 1 of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) to include the removal of ISRO Headquarters from the Commerce Department's Entity List, as the beginning of a new era of co-operation and trust. Expanded defence co-operation was perceived as an integral aspect of the expanding ties. The two leaders exchanged thoughts on their shared global concerns and agreed that making the world a safer place was an overriding priority. They recognized the importance of working closely together in the war against terrorism and in combating proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. They agreed that policies encouraging greater integration of the two economies and with the global economy would offer opportunities to expand and strengthen their economic partnership. To this end, the two leaders also expressed their desire to strengthen cooperation on international economic issues including the WTO's Doha Development Agenda, and on the bilateral efforts such as the U.S.-India Economic Dialogue and the High Technology Cooperation Group. Foreign Secretary visited Washington DC from 16-18 September 2004 to hold discussions with his counterparts in the US Administration. He had meetings in the State Department, the White House and the Pentagon. Foreign Office Consultations and the Asian Security Dialogue were held between Foreign Secretary and Under Secretary Marc Grossman. Foreign Secretary had very good meetings with top officials in the US Administration, including Secretary of State-designate Condoleezza Rice, Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and with Under Secretary for Business, Economic & Agricultural Affairs Alan Larson. Foreign Secretary also met with Under Secretary of Defence Douglas Feith, Under Secretary of Commerce Kenneth Juster and Deputy National Security Adviser, Steve Hadley. These meetings provided occasion for a very

extensive exchange of views at high levels, on both bilateral relations as also a number of regional and global issues. The US reiterated its strong commitment to strengthen Indo-US relations. Foreign Secretary led an industry-government delegation for the third HTCG meeting in Washington DC on 18-19 November 2004.

During this meeting Data Privacy and Defence Technology were the main themes for the industry-government day, while Strategic Trade and Trade Facilitation were the areas of focus on the government-government session. The meetings saw strong participation by both Indian industry and US as well as by government representatives from both sides. The plenary session had almost 100 participants.

India welcomed President Bush's initiative of 11 February 2004 enunciating proposals to combat WMD proliferation. As part of our bilateral dialogue mechanisms, AS (UN) and JS (AMS) held discussions with Assistant Secretary Stephen Rademaker on Strategic Stability and with Assistant Secretary Susan Burk on Non-proliferation Issues in Washington D.C. on 22 November 2004. U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visited India on 8-9 December 2004 and called on the Prime Minister besides having meetings with External Affairs Minister, Defence Minister, and the National Security Adviser. There was visible interest in broadening the ambit of bilateral defence cooperation.

An elaborate institutional structure of dialogue on defence issues is overseen by the Defence Policy Group, which continued its discussions at the meeting on 1-2 June 2004. Three aspects of our relationship - military exchanges, defence supplies and technical cooperation - are each addressed by a separate bilateral group. Military contacts, exchanges and exercises have been regular and have developed their own dynamics. Notable among them in 2004 have been Ex 'Co-operative Cope Thunder' in Alaska from 15-31 July 2004 (between the Air Forces), Ex Yudh Abhyas in Hawaii from 12-31 July 2004 and Ex Balance Iroquois/ Ex Vajra Prahar in Leh from 5-15 September 2004 (between the Armies), and Malabar Ex from 5-10 October 2004 and Ex Flash Iroquois in 6-24 October (between the Navies).

The US Department of Defence, on 16 November 2004, notified the US Congress of proposed sale of military equipment to Pakistan including eight P-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft, six PHALANX Close-In Weapon Systems and an ammunition complement of 2000

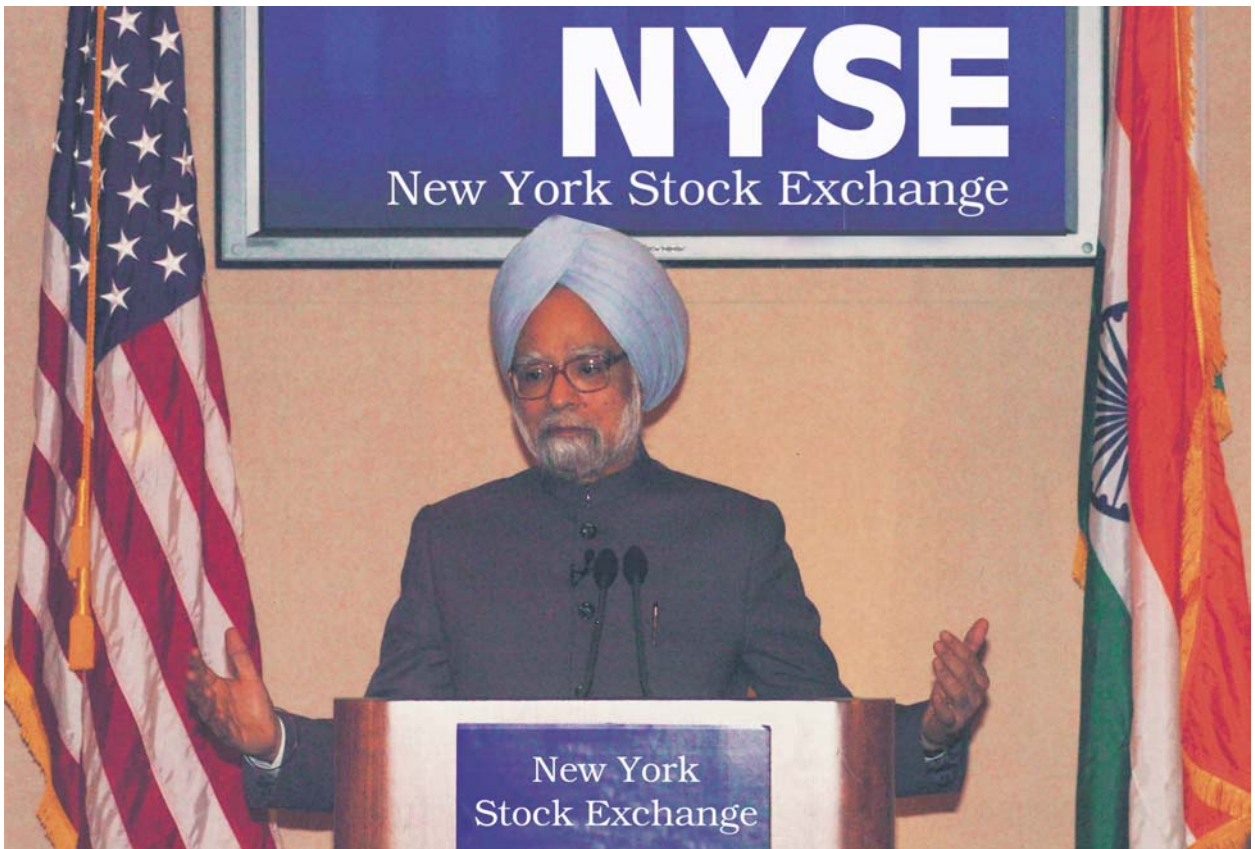
TOW-2A missiles and 14 TOW-2A Fly-to-Buy missiles (valued at \$ 1.2 billion). India's strong concern with respect to U.S. arms package to Pakistan was conveyed at high levels to the US Government. The repercussions of such sales on the ongoing India-Pakistan dialogue, currently poised at a sensitive juncture, were brought out. It was also pointed out that such transfers of arms to Pakistan at a time when Indo-US relations were seeing significant transformation and the US was being perceived in India as strategic partner, would impact on the positive sentiments and goodwill that have come to characterize Indo-U.S. relations. U.S. officials stated that the United States values its relationship with India and that President Bush is personally committed to take it forward. As far as India-Pakistan relations were concerned, while the US has an arms supply relationship with Pakistan, it was supportive of the India-Pakistan dialogue. It would also continue to take up concerns relating to cross-border terrorism.

Established in January 2000, the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism (JWGCT) continued to be a useful mechanism to further understanding of each other's concerns. The sixth meeting of the JWGCT, held in New Delhi from 31 August - 1 September 2004, discussed current trends in international terrorism, the situation in Afghanistan, and trends and concerns in South Asia, including cross-border terrorism. The two sides also (i) exchanged information on the law enforcement, legislative, financial and other measures taken in the field of counter-terrorism; (ii) agreed to continue training and capacity building programme; (iii) exchanged perspectives on multilateral efforts to counter-terrorism.

The first ever visit by a US Senate Majority Leader, Senator Bill Frist, accompanied by Majority Whip Senator Mitch McConnell, Senator Mike DeWine, and Senator Norm Coleman took place on 10 January 2005. The delegation called on the PM, External Affairs Minister, Minister of Health and Family Welfare and the Foreign Secretary. Another Congressional delegation led by Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asia and Pacific Affairs, Representative James Leach and comprising Senator Sam Brownback, Senator John Corzine, Representative Frank Pallone, Representative Diane Watson, Representative Earl Blumenauer, Representative Scott Garrett, and Representative Wayne Gilchrest visited New Delhi on 13 January 2005 and called on the Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and the Finance Minister.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh calls on US President George W. Bush in New York on 21 September 2004.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at the New York Stock Exchange on 22 September 2004.

US is India's largest trade partner and India rank 18th in the list of USA's partners. The total trade in merchandise and commodities was \$15.91 billion (up 17 per cent from \$13.56 billion in the same period last year) in the first nine months (January-September) of calendar year 2004. The rate of growth of our exports to US in this period has been impressive 26 per cent (from \$9.95 billion to \$ 11.54 billion).

The US is India's major FDI source, accounting for 21 per cent of approved FDI (\$16.48 billion) between January 1991 and March 2004. India's service exports to the US are more than \$6 billion annually. To enhance the trade and economic relationship between the two countries a dialogue process consisting of a triad was followed – Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP), High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG) and the high-level Economic Dialogue.

Since the establishment of the HTCG, high-technology trade between India and US, including licensed trade in dual-use items, has grown substantially. The U.S. dual use licenses for India climbed from 423 in FY 2002 to 619 in FY 2003 and 912 in FY 2004. In value terms too, this trade has gone up from \$26.78 million in FY 2002 to \$90.06 million in 2004. The license approval rate has increased from 84 percent to 90 percent in two-year time.

The Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) gave political direction to enhance cooperation in four areas - civilian space, civilian nuclear energy, 'dual use' items and missile defence. These areas of cooperation are designed to progress through a series of reciprocal steps that build on each other. Since January 2004, the two governments worked closely to conclude Phase One of the NSSP. This included implementation of measures to address proliferation concerns and ensure compliance with export controls. These efforts enabled the US to make modifications to export licensing policies that will foster cooperation in commercial space programs and permit certain exports to power plants at safeguarded nuclear facilities. ISRO Headquarters was removed from the Department of Commerce Entity List. The completion of Phase One of NSSP was announced in a Joint Statement on 17 September 2004 during Foreign Secretary's visit to US. Subsequently, two meetings - one in New Delhi on 21 October and the other in Washington on 18 November - took place of the Implementation Group of NSSP to explore ways to move further in the next phase.

An Agreement between the Government of India and

the Government of the United States of America regarding mutual assistance between their Customs Administrations was signed in New Delhi on 15 December 2004. The Agreement is aimed at facilitating reliable, quick and cost effective information and intelligence for the prevention, apprehension and investigation of Customs offences and offenders.

India and US have finalized a new Air Transport Agreement (ATA) after the bilateral civil aviation talks which were held from 13-15 January 2005 in Washington DC. The new agreement was initialled by representatives of the two countries and is expected to be signed at a later date at ministerial level. The proposed ATA would replace the existing 1956 Agreement to meet the growing requirements for air services and rising demand for travel facilities between the two countries. Following the conclusion of ATA, the air services between the two countries are expected to see an exponential growth, giving a greater fillip and thrust to the existing passenger, air cargo and mail services between the two countries. The ATA would also facilitate the rapidly increasing trade and commercial traffic, promote tourism and further enhance travel amenities and choices for the movement and travel of people of two countries.

India-US Economic Dialogue was set up following an understanding between US President and Prime Minister of India in November 2001. In 2004 both Governments agreed to the designation of Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission as the Co-Chairperson and Foreign Secretary as his Deputy, and the Economic Policy Assistant to the US President as the Co-Chair and Under Secretary for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs as his Deputy from the respective sides. The dialogue is being revamped to lend it greater focus and efficacy.

The second meeting of the India-US Cyber Security Forum (IUSCSF) was held in Washington on 8-10 November 2004. The Plenary and the Working Group sessions resulted in a very substantive programme of action.

Following the Tsunami tragedy, India and USA together with Japan and Australia and later joined by the Netherlands, and Canada formed a Core Group to coordinate more effective joint action in the first phase of operations. The group worked together closely with the UN and examined ways in which the relief effort could best be channelised through the UN. Even after disbanding of the Core Group, the two countries

cooperated within the overall ambit of the UN. India had deputed Liaison Officers at Hawaii with the Pacific Command and at Utaphao at the Combined Support Force (CSF) 536 and sent two US MPAT (Multinational Planning and Augmentation Team) trained officer to Utaphao to participate in the planning exercise at the CSF 536.

Catalogue of likely events till March 31 2005:

- Visit of US Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta in February 2005 when the Air Transport Agreement is likely to be signed.
- Visit of Treasury Secretary tentatively suggested for March 2005.

Canada

The Prime Minister of Canada Mr. Paul Martin visited India on 17-18 January 2005. He called on the President, met with Prime Minister and received the External Affairs Minister. In a Joint Statement, released after discussions between the two Prime Ministers, the two leaders agreed on the initiatives to strengthen and enhance the architecture of the India-Canada partnership and contribute to addressing global challenges more effectively. It was agreed, in particular, to direct designated scientific advisers on each side to report on advancing S&T collaboration, encourage strategic collaboration in select areas of science and industrial technologies, deepen environmental cooperation including the promotion of environmental friendly technologies, support a CEO Roundtable that would make recommendations for expanding economic ties, strengthen health research cooperation, advance cultural ties and enhance people to people contacts through improved visa and consular services by the two governments. The Joint Statement recognized the shared community and common history between India and Canada as natural assets. Both leaders also recognized a multilateral initiative for regional warning and natural disaster preparedness as a priority. The two Prime Ministers committed themselves to a sustained political engagement, a structured exchange of visits at the Cabinet level and to promote dialogues between their officials.

Apart from a review of bilateral relations, discussions also focused on recent developments in the respective regions, notably the transition to democracy in Afghanistan, India's dialogue with Pakistan, the situation in Iraq, developments in South East Asia and the Americas. The two Prime Ministers agreed that India and Canada should enhance

their dialogues on international, regional and global strategic issues. They agreed to work towards the recommendations of the High-level UN Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and reiterated their commitment towards contributing to a more effective, representative and accountable world body. India also welcomed the Canadian Prime Minister's initiative for a meeting of G-20 leaders to discuss issues of global concern, such as terrorism, development and global public health.

Prime Minister of Canada conveyed his condolences over the tsunami tragedy. The two Leaders underlined the need for a strong and sustained international response to such adversity, welcomed coordination of relief efforts resulting from their participation in the Core Group and recognized a multilateral initiative for regional warning and natural disaster preparedness as a priority. Prime Minister accepted an invitation extended by Prime Minister Martin to visit Canada.

Health Minister of Canada, Ujjal Dosanjh, visited India just prior to the visit of Prime Minister Martin. During this visit, the Indian Council of Medical Research and Canadian Institute of Health Research signed an MoU on cooperation in the health sector.

After he took over as Prime Minister in December 2003, Prime Minister Paul Martin reiterated Canada's commitment to the expansion of political, economic and commercial ties with India. Both India and Canada were preoccupied with general elections in 2004 and Canada continued its process of foreign policy review through the year. General elections in Canada saw a record number of Canadians of Indian origin elected to the House of Commons. These included Ujjal Dosanjh, Gurbax Singh Malhi, Ruby Dhalla, Navdeep Singh Bains (all from the Liberal Party), and Gurmat Grewal and Nina Grewal, Deepak Obhrai and Rahim Jaffer (from the Conservative Party). Ujjal Dosanjh is part of 39-member Paul Martin cabinet and holds the important Health portfolio. Several Indian-Canadians were also elected to the Provincial Parliaments.

Following general elections in Canada in June 2004, Prime Minister Paul Martin sent former Canadian Cabinet Minister Herb Dhaliwal as his Special Representative to India carrying a letter of felicitation for Prime Minister. The choice of Mr. Dhaliwal as the Canadian Prime Minister's emissary reflected the growing role of the Indian-Canadian community in Canadian political life.

The 6th India-Canadian Joint Working Group (JWG) on

Counter Terrorism met on 13 May 2004 in Ottawa. The meeting discussed ways to further expand and streamline cooperation in security and terrorism related matters. It helped further understanding of each other's concerns and capabilities in this area. Discussions were wide ranging. Both sides assessed the Group as very useful and an area of cooperation that is becoming increasingly relevant to international peace and security. There is now commonality of approach between India and Canada that terrorism does not have any national boundaries.

India and Canada continued to actively promote bilateral trade and investment during the year. During the period 1 January 2004 to 31 August 2004, Indian exports to Canada were C\$ 1035 million and imports from Canada were C\$ 510 million. Indo-Canadian bilateral trade has increased from US\$ 848.73 million in 1997-98 to US\$ 1350.47 million in 2003-2004, registering 59.11 per cent increase within a period of five years. Our exports have increased by 77 per cent and the imports by about 40 per cent during this period. The balance of trade has always remained in favour of India for the last five years. Major items of Indian exports to Canada are textiles & garments, gems and jewellery, organic chemicals, iron & steel, coffee, tea and other food products. Major items of India's import from Canada are wood pulp, newsprint, telecom and power equipment, aviation-related equipment, fertilizers and chemicals.

A number of Canadian companies have established a strong presence in India, in the IT and financial services sectors, with software development and electronic component facilities. Similarly, there has been considerable activity in the financial services sector with the expansion of Scotia Bank and Dundee Bancorp networks, the Birla Sun Life joint venture, TD-Waterhouse and Tata Finance, and the Lombard-ICICI partnerships. A new trend is that of Indian software companies investing in Canada. These include Infosys, Satyam, Wipro and Tata Consultancy all of whom have offices in Canada. Birla has set up a pulp mill.

The two Governments are currently negotiating a Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement. A Canadian delegation from their Department of International Trade visited New Delhi in this connection from 27-29 September 2004. A second round of talks was held in New Delhi on 21-22 February 2005.

A 19-member business delegation from the Government of Quebec visited New Delhi from 1-2 November 2004 and Mumbai from 4-5 November 2004. The objective of

the visit was to hold business negotiations with Indian companies and also to prepare the groundwork for a visit by the Premier of Quebec to India in early 2006. A two-member official delegation from the International Business Development Division of the Provincial Government of Manitoba visited India on 15-19 November 2004 to hold discussions with Chambers of Commerce in India.

For the first time a Canadian received the 'Padam Shri' Award in 2004. The Award was given to Flora MacDonald, former Member of Parliament, Federal Minister and a prominent educationist and social worker. Flora Macdonald visited India to receive the 'Padam Shri' at an Investiture Ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi on 30 June 2004.

The main community organization in Ottawa, the India-Canada Association (ICA) and Mr. Deepak Obhrai, Member of Parliament, jointly organised the 6th annual Diwali celebrations in the Parliament at Ottawa on 16 November 2004. Prime Minister Paul Martin attended the event and spoke in recognition of the contribution made by Indian-Canadians to the development of Canada and towards making Canada a truly multicultural society. In addition, leaders of several opposition parties in Parliament and a large number of other MPs and Senators also attended the Diwali function.

Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) were held on 16-17 December 2004 at the level of Secretary (West) and the Canadian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Peter Harder, after a gap of three years. The last FOCs were held in April 2001. It is expected that the year 2005 would see further expansion and deepening engagement between the two countries.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The level of engagement of the Government of India with the Latin American region continued to strengthen and deepen in 2004. The thrust of our policy towards the region is to strengthen and widen the existing relationship, setting up a mechanism for political dialogue and cooperation, and enhancing trade and commerce. Framework agreements are established with the regional groupings such as with the MERCOSUR group of countries, Political Dialogue and Cooperation mechanism with the CAN (Andean Community), a standing Joint Commission on consultation, cooperation and coordination with CARICOM, mechanism of Political Consultations with the Central American Group of countries (SICA).

Argentina

India's cordial relationship was reflected in several official visits and trade delegations. A 19-day cultural festival, NAMASTE-CONOCIENDO LA INDIA, was organized in September/October 2004 comprising of a photographic exhibition, feature films, talk on 'Indian Woman', fashion show, classical dance performance, musical recital, Indian folklore/contemporary dances and a theatre presentation. An Indian film festival in April 2004 was organised in the prestigious San Martin Theatre.

Brazil

The momentum of the bilateral co-operation emanating from the visit of President Lula's to India in January 2004 continued in the year. Shri Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce & Industry visited Brazil in June 2004 and met the Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim, Minister of Foreign Trade, Luiz Fernando Furlan, and discussed bilateral co-operation. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met President Lula of Brazil, on the margins of the UN General Assembly on 21 September 2004. Trade between India and Brazil is expected to improve over that of the 2003. In October 2004 signing of air services agreement between India and Brazil was approved.

Chile

The President of Chile, Dr. Ricardo Lagos visited India from 18 to 22 January 2005 on an official visit. Chilean President held discussions of mutual interest with President, Prime Minister, and External Affairs Minister. India and Chile agreed on the urgent need for reforms of the UN and expansion of the Security Council to reflect the new realities of the international situation. Three agreements for cooperation were signed during the visit, namely, Framework Agreement for Economic Cooperation; MoU between the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the Chilean Agricultural Research Institute and MoU on Sanitary and Phytosanitary issues between the Ministries of Agriculture.

Colombia

Close relations were marked by bilateral exchange of visits. Colombian Vice Minister for Bilateral Relations Mr Camilo Reyes visited New Delhi in May 2004 for Foreign Office Consultations. In September 2004, Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Colombia and reviewed ways to enhance bilateral relations. President Álvaro Uribe extended an invitation

to the President to visit Colombia, which has been accepted in principle. Exports from India to Colombia registered 41.8 per cent growth to reach US\$102.6 million. Indian Textile Exhibition was organised and Chemexcil delegation visited Colombia. Indian Company secured contracts for supply of plant and technology for manufacture of fuel ethanol worth about US\$ 32 mn.

Cuba

Indo Cuba Relations continued to be warm and friendly. Visits of Scientific delegations from India such as non-conventional energy, biomass, wind energy generation, co-generation from sugar, small hydropower generation and solar energy gave further thrust to bilateral relations. A Protocol in the field of Renewal Energy for the Biennium 2004-05 was concluded. ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) visited Cuba in March 2004 to study the geological and seismic data pertaining to the blocks in the Cuban EEZ sector of the Gulf of Mexico being offered for exploration to interested parties. The proposal is under consideration of OVL.

Cuban Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Manuel Aguilera visited Delhi in March 2004 as special envoy of the Cuban Foreign Minister to discuss issues related to the Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva. In 2004-05 all the 30 ITEC slots have been utilized. The Army Sports Institute has recruited three Cuban coaches for training boxers, weightlifters and divers in addition to coach hired by the Boxing Federation of India. The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Jose Guerra Menchero visited Delhi in December 2004 and called on External Affairs Minister.

Dominican Republic

Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Dominican Republic in September 2004 and called on President Fernandez and Vice President Rafael Albuquerque and Foreign Minister Carlos Troncoso Morales. The DR government announced its intention to upgrade diplomatic relations and open an Embassy in New Delhi. It also invited Indian companies to develop business and invest in areas such as IT, Pharmaceuticals, infrastructure projects and offered to work with India in the multilateral forums.

Ecuador

Ecuador agreed to re-open its Embassy in New Delhi and has shown keenness for Indian expertise in the petroleum

industry and pharmaceutical products from India. Indian Textile Exhibition was organised in Guayaquil. 3 Ecuadorian nationals received ITEC training in India up to December 2004. India participated in the celebrations connected with the declaration of Quito as the Iberoamerican culture capital for the year 2004 with a Bharatnatyam ballet group led by Ananda Shankar Jayant, which held performances to captivated audiences in Quito in October 2004.

Mexico

Relations continued to develop and strengthen further. Mexican Foreign Minister Dr. Luis Ernesto Derbez, had a brief meeting with External Affairs Minister in Washington in June 2004 and discussed issues of common interest. He led a delegation to India in August 2004 and called on External Affairs Minister, Finance Minister, Minister of Commerce & Industry among others to discuss and explore ways to strengthen bilateral economic and trade ties. Ms. Maria del Rocio Ruiz Chavez, Vice Minister, Ministry of Economy visited New Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad in August 2004 to explore avenues for further cooperation in S&T and information technology sectors. Delegation from the Election Commission of India visited Mexico in October 2004 and signed a MoU for cooperation. Indo-Mexican Friendship Group in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies (Lower House) held its inaugural meeting in November 2004 in the premises of the Mexican Congress to further strengthen bilateral relations. Cultural and educational relations continued to strengthen.

Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Rao Inderjit Singh led an Indian delegation to Mexico in February 2005. He met the Foreign Minister of Mexico and discussed issues of mutual interest.

Bilateral trade maintained a very encouraging growth pattern during 2004. Indian exports to Mexico have already reached US\$ 609.4 million during January-September 2004 as compared to US\$ 397.75 million for the corresponding period in 2003, having registered a significant increase of 53.2 per cent. Similarly, Mexican exports to India have also grown from US\$ 324.3 million to US\$ 365.7 million during the same period. Thus, total bilateral trade is expected to cross more than US\$ one billion mark in 2004 around US\$ 1.2 billion, the highest ever figure achieved by India in bilateral trade with any country in the region. Several trade promotion measures were taken such as participation in the international trade

fairs, generating awareness about our capabilities and technology and arranging visits from Mexico.

Uruguay

Uruguayan vice Foreign Minister visited India in September 2004, and participated in the foreign office consultation. He met representatives of Reliance, Mahindra and Mahindra, Central Warehousing Corporation of India (CWC), Nasscom BioTech and I Flex.

Venezuela

Foreign Office consultations were held in New Delhi in May 2004. The Venezuelan Foreign Minister, Mr. Jesus Arnaldo Perez, paid an official visit to India in September 2004 and had discussions with External Affairs Minister, Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas, Minister for Environment and Forests, Minister of State for Urban Employment & Poverty Alleviation. Mr. Rafael Dario Ramirez, the Venezuelan Minister of Energy & Mines met his counterpart in September 2004 and cooperation in hydrocarbon sector. Space Research and collaboration, IT were other areas of cooperation.

CENTRAL AMERICA – SICA

India's traditionally cordial relations with the seven countries that comprise Central America, viz. Costa Rica, Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama entered a new phase during 2004. The signing of a Declaration for the Establishment of a Mechanism for Political Co-operation and Dialogue between India and the member States of System of Central American Integration - (SICA) in 2004 during the visit of the SICA Foreign Ministers to India is an important milestone. Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs had substantive meeting with Dr. Oscar Santamaria, Secretary General of SICA and his team in September 2004 reiterating India's interest to develop multi-faceted cooperation with SICA member countries. Secretary General SICA who had visited India earlier in the year pledged cooperation with India in various areas including IT, education, disaster management, infrastructure projects, environment issues, tourism, etc. and proposed regular contacts between India and SICA. It will impart a new momentum in India's relations with the region, both bilaterally and regionally.

Three new governments who assumed office during this period in Guatemala, El Salvador and Panama conveyed



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh meets Mr. Paul Martin, Prime Minister of Canada during his visit to India, 17-18 January 2005.



External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh called on the President of Chile Dr. Ricardo Lagos during his visit to India, 18-22 January 2005.

their interest in developing and strengthening relations with India particularly in the context of learning from the Indian experience in human resource development. Economic and commercial relations remained on the upswing with the region registering a total of US\$ 164.89 million in 2003-2004, an increase of 12 per cent over 2002-03 when bilateral trade stood at US\$ 149 million. Indian business and industry is moving to new areas such as engineering goods, automobile part, chemicals, drugs and pharmaceuticals and information technology. Growing visa applications reflected this trend. Co-operation in training under ITEC grew further.

Panama

Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs attended the inauguration of the new President Martin Torrijos forming the Government in September 2004 and conveyed a message of friendship and felicitations from President. He met first Vice President and Foreign Minister Samuel Lewis Navarro and Vice Minister Ricardo Duran and agreed to work towards enhanced economic and commercial cooperation and to ease visa process. India's exports to Panama grew from \$ 49.4 million to \$ 54.44 million in 2003-2004. There is growing interest in IT sector. Cultural and academics cooperation was enhanced.

El Salvador

Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs visited El Salvador in September 2004 at the invitation of the Foreign Minister of El Salvador. He met Ana Vilma de Escobar, Vice President and Francisco Esteban Lainez, Foreign Minister of El Salvador and discussed issues of mutual interest including ways to enhance cooperation in IT, pharmaceuticals, agriculture and engineering. The Salvadorian side invited investment from Indian companies. Bilateral trade with El Salvador, though modest, grew from US\$ 4.9 million in 2002-03 to US\$ 7.64 million in 2003-04.

Guatemala

Trade with Guatemala grew over 20 per cent from US\$ 20.54 million in 2002-03 to US\$ 26.56 million in 2003-04, with a substantial component being automobiles and auto components and pharmaceuticals. Guatemala-India Chamber of Commerce was established.

Caricom

India proposed an institutional linkage for regular political

dialogue with CARICOM leading to CARICOM-India Joint Commission on Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination to institutionalize and enhance CARICOM-India relations. One of its first tasks is to formulate a CARICOM-India Technical Cooperation Programme in a range of areas including information technology. The Minister of State for External Affairs Rao Inderjit Singh led India-Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Political Dialogue and addressed the CARICOM Conference in Suriname in February 2005. The bilateral cooperation between India and CARICOM was reviewed and strengthened the political understanding.

Guyana

Foreign Minister Rudy Insanally of Guyana while addressing the 59th UNGA session, on 29 September 2004, reiterated Guyana's support to India's Permanent Membership of expanded UNSC. India is committed for construction of a cricket stadium in Georgetown and in November two financial Agreements were signed in this regard in the presence of the President of Guyana Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo. The first was a GOI grant of US\$ 6 million whereas the other was an EXIM Bank concessional Line of Credit for US \$ 19 million.

During the year 25 nominees were trained in India from Guyana under the ITEC programme. Presently in Guyana there are 7 Indian ITEC experts working in different fields. New Guyana Pharmaceutical Corporation (NGPC) and India's Cipla agreed to cooperate that will allow NGPC access to a full range of raw materials, bulk formulations, finished products and technical know-how from Cipla covering anti-retrovirals, which NGPC has started to produce for the state-funded HIV/AIDS treatment programme. India gifted solar photovoltaic pumps, G\$ 16 million agro-processing Vehicle to the Guyana.

Haiti

India gifted US\$10000 to procure medicines for the victims of Hurricane Jean which devastated Haiti in September 2004. Business delegation visited India and explored ways to enhance trade and commerce.

Honduras

Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of state for External Affairs led a delegation to Honduras in February 2005. He met the President of Honduras as well as Foreign Ministers of Central America (SICA) and discussed issues of mutual concern including cooperation between India and SICA.

Jamaica

India and Jamaica relations remained close and friendly. India extended support and relief measures worth US\$ 200,000 to Jamaica in the wake of devastation caused by hurricane. India extended a credit line of US\$10 million for supplies from India of centrifugal pumps for water supply and irrigation projects, another credit line of US\$2 million was extended for machinery and equipment for the small-scale industry and technical assistance in the field of Dairy and Engineering Foundry. Jamaica as an important member of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) played an important role in establishing an India-CARICOM dialogue mechanism.

The Bahamas (concurrent accreditation)

Concurrent accreditation for The Bahamas was shifted from Indian Mission in Washington DC to the Mission in Kingston in July 2004. The Bahamas continued to support India's concerns in the international forums. India extended relief supply to Bahamas in the wake of devastation caused by hurricane

Suriname

Relations between India and Suriname continued to be strengthened. Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs led an Indian delegation to Suriname

in February 2005. A concessional credit of US\$16 million was extended to Suriname for the construction of a 161 KV electric transmission line being executed by Indian companies, M/s. PEC and L&T. Mrs. Maria E. Levens, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Suriname visited India in November for India-Suriname Joint Commission. India agreed to provide a new Line of Credit for supply of equipment and services from India in areas such as agriculture, forestry, energy, defence and IT training.

Mr. Rattan Kumar Ajodhia, Vice-President of Suriname visited India from 5 to 11 January 2005 as Chief Guest of the Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas, 2005 at Mumbai.

Trinidad & Tobago

Bilateral relations between India and T&T remained friendly and cordial during the year. Special emphasis was placed on furthering the economic and commercial linkages. A credit line was launched in June 2004 for US\$8 million to finance Indian exports of goods and services. Bilateral trade continued to grow steadily at over 30 per cent per annum. T&T is a major Diaspora country and remained active. Seminar, International Hindi Conference and Hindi classes were organised to support Diaspora needs. Prof. George Maxwell Richards, President of T&T paid a private visit to India in November 2004 and called on the President.



United Nations and International Organisations

Characterized as a 'year of opportunities and difficulties for the United Nations' by the Secretary-General, the year saw the U.N. being called upon to perform difficult tasks, but with limitations in terms of support and resources. While the role and relevance of the UN came under continuing scrutiny, the year ended with the submission of a report proposing a broad framework for Collective Security for the new century, by the Secretary-General's High Level Panel. The UN continued its involvement in challenging peacekeeping and peace-building missions in different parts of the world, including Afghanistan, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti, Kosovo, Liberia, Sudan, Timor-Leste, and the Democratic Republic of Congo among others.

The UN also continued its activities in areas of human rights, health, women and children, population, sustainable development, financing for development, humanitarian activities and other development-related questions. India continued to play an important role in discussions at the UN and was often instrumental in evolving consensus on important contentious questions, while promoting the interests of the developing countries. India was elected to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the period 2005-07 with the highest number of votes from the Asian Group.

The 59th session of the General Assembly

The 59th session was held before the publication in early December 2004 of the report of the High-level Panel on threats, challenges and change set up by the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General devoted almost his entire statement made at the beginning of the General Debate to a plea for strengthening 'rule of law' at both national and international levels. The 59th session attached continued importance to combating terrorism; held a commemorative event on the ten-year review of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo; and adopted decisions based on the report of the Secretary-General on the modalities, format and organisation of the High-level plenary meeting in 2005 for the comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and steps for the realization of Millennium Development Goals.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the 59th session and in his address to the General Assembly, reaffirmed India's commitment to multilateralism. Prime Minister emphasized the need to reform the United Nations system, including through expansion of the Security Council, in both permanent and non-permanent categories, to make it a truly representative body. The Prime Minister also underlined India's willingness to take on the obligations and responsibilities that befit our standing and role in the world community. He highlighted the dangers posed by terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Prime Minister had bilateral meetings with the Heads of State/Government of Afghanistan, Pakistan, South Africa and the United States. He participated in a meeting with the Heads of State/Government of Brazil, Japan and Germany on United Nations reforms. The Prime Minister also had a meeting with the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan at which issues before the UN agenda came up in discussions.

Minister of External Affairs Shri Natwar Singh accompanied the Prime Minister for the 59th United Nations General Assembly session. External Affairs Minister had meetings with a number of his counterparts, including the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Angola, South Africa, Brazil, Thailand, China and Bangladesh. He also met the Secretary General of the Arab League and the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General. Minister of External Affairs had separate meetings with the Ministers of the Group of Four (consisting of India, Brazil, Germany and Japan), India-Gulf Cooperation Council and IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa). He also met with members of the UN Secretary General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed made a statement in the General Assembly on the items, "Report of the Security Council and Question of equitable representation on and increase in membership of the Security Council and related matters", and "Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the

outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields: commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development". Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Rao Inderjit Singh spoke at the General Assembly on the item "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency".

India participated in the two special events held on the eve of the beginning of the General Debate of the 59th session. The first was the formal launch on 20 September of the report of the World Commission on the social dimensions of globalisation co-chaired by the presidents of Tanzania and Finland. The text of the message from the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh was read out on the occasion. The other event was a meeting convened also on 20 September on the alleviation of hunger and poverty, at the initiative of the President of Brazil, at which the presidents of Brazil, Chile, France and Spain participated.

India's candidature as a permanent member of UNSC

The year saw a steady accretion of support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council, from various countries. India reached agreements of mutual support with the other three main aspirants, namely, Brazil, Germany and Japan. These were announced during their visits to India in 2004, by President of Brazil in January, German Foreign Minister in July and Japanese Foreign Minister in August, respectively. It is noteworthy that these aspirants are now going to work together. This was reiterated at the highest levels during the Summit held on 21 September 2004 in New York, on the sidelines of the 59th UN General Assembly, of the leaders of Brazil, Germany, India and Japan. The Group highlighted the need to reform the Security Council to make it more representative, legitimate and effective. They stressed that it was essential that the Security Council include, on permanent basis, countries that have the will and the capacity to take on major responsibilities with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security. They also agreed that Africa must be represented in the permanent membership in the Security Council.

A large number of leaders in their speeches, during the General Debate at the 59th session of the UN General Assembly, referred to the necessity of UN institutional reforms, the expansion of the Security Council, the

inclusion of new permanent members and India's credentials in this regard.

Discussions on these issues are likely to intensify in the UN in the coming months. India will actively participate in these discussions and see how best the objective of UN reforms and of India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council can be advanced.

Political issues at the General Assembly and Security Council

The Security Council

In the year 2004-05, India made a number of statements in public meetings of the Security Council on issues of importance such as Afghanistan, the Middle East, Timor-Leste, terrorism and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors, as well as thematic issues such as UN peacekeeping operations, justice and the rule of law and women and peace and security.

The General Assembly

India made statements on all issues of political and strategic importance at the plenary session of the 59th United Nation General Assembly, including Work of the Organization; Report of the Security Council; Question of equitable representation on and increase in membership of the Security Council and related matters; Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency; the Question of Palestine; the Situation in the Middle East; the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security and Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan.

Terrorism

The Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) followed an active programme of implementation involving appropriate legislative framework and measures to check financial flows to terrorists. India has to-date submitted four reports detailing legislative and other counter-measures in place against terrorism. India also made statements on three separate occasions in the Security Council in 2004-05 on the item "Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts".

With the adoption of resolution 1535 of 26 March 2004 the Security Council established the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to enhance

the CTC's ability to monitor the implementation of resolution 1373 and effectively continue the capacity-building work in which it was engaged. It also reflected the intention of the CTC to assume a more proactive role in its dialogue with Member States, evaluate the implementation of Resolution 1373, facilitate technical assistance to Member States and promote closer cooperation and coordination with International, Regional and Sub-regional organisations.

The adoption of resolution 1566 (8 October 2004) by the Security Council which, *inter alia*, condemned in the strongest terms all acts of terrorism irrespective of their motivation and called upon Member States to cooperate fully to expeditiously adopt the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) and the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, was welcomed by India as a logical extension of the existing multilateral cooperation on counter-terrorism and the ideas first enunciated in Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1373.

Peacekeeping

India is presently one of the leading troop contributors to UN Peacekeeping. India presently contributes troops to eight of the sixteen ongoing UN Peace-keeping operations. It is involved in the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and has a major civilian police component in the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). It has also provided military personnel to the UN Missions in Burundi and Cote d'Ivoire, as also police officers to UN Missions in Sierra Leone and Cyprus. India will also be contributing an infantry battalion, together with specialized and enabling resources, including an Air Force and Police component, to the upcoming UN Mission in Sudan (UNMISUD).

Presently, two senior positions in the field and at UN Headquarters are held by Indians. Gen Randhir Kumar Mehta was appointed to the prestigious post of the Military Adviser to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the UN Secretariat on 29 January 2005.

The Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK), which was established in September 2000 as a joint effort of the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Defence, with the objective of meeting UN training requirements and research, held various peacekeeping related events in the course of the year. The 'Asia Pacific Peace Operations -

Lessons Learned Seminar' was co-hosted by CUNPK with the United States Centre of Excellence for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, from 19-23 April 2004. The Seminar was attended by 35 foreign participants from 15 countries and 35 participants from India. CUNPK also conducted two international training capsules with the aim of providing integrated training in UN peacekeeping to Military contingent Junior Officers and Military Observers. A total of 26 foreign officers and 57 Indian officers attended these capsules. The participation of some nominees from developing countries was funded by Government of India. A National Seminar was held on 11-12 October 2004 to explore the topic 'Future of Peace Operations – Implications for India', in which 68 military and civilian personnel participated. 15 foreign and 20 Indian officers will be taking part in the UN Logistics & Staff Officers capsule scheduled to be conducted in January 2005.

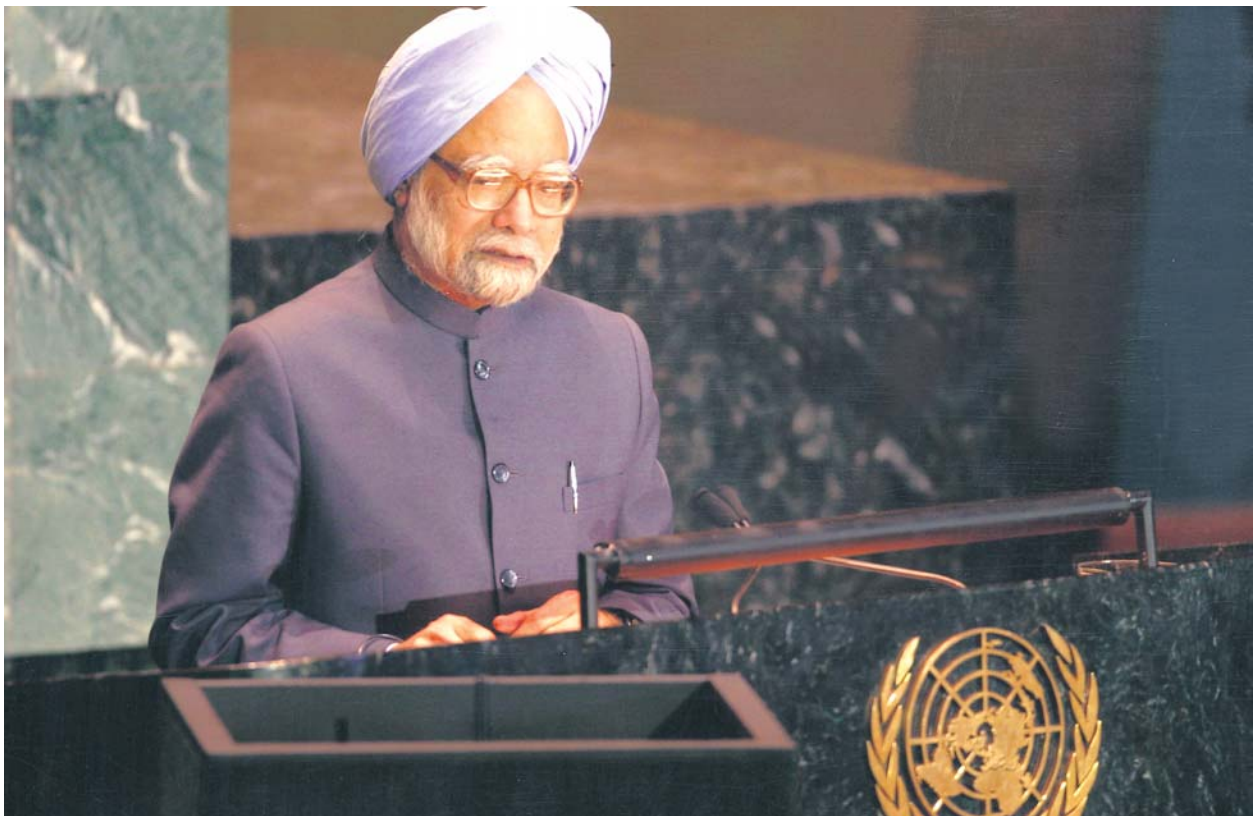
India has a bilateral dialogue on peacekeeping with U.S. and UK. The fourth meeting of the Indo-UK Joint Working Group on Peacekeeping was held in CUNPK, New Delhi from 23-25 November 2004. The meeting saw a comprehensive exchange of views on the emerging challenges in peacekeeping and an understanding of mutual perspectives on various conceptual and operational dimensions of peacekeeping. Apart from an exchange of experiences and ideas, the JWG is also a forum for planning joint activities and identifying institutional cooperation in peacekeeping. In this framework, a three-week 'Train the Trainer' programme was conducted in New Delhi by Centrex, the U.K. national police training institute, for Indian police officers involved in training for UN peacekeeping. Further initiatives in bilateral cooperation including a mutual exchange of instructors for peacekeeping training Centres have been identified.

Non-Aligned Movement

India participated at the XIV Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement which was held in Durban, South Africa from 17-19 August 2004. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Rao Inderjit Singh led the Indian delegation. The Conference adopted the Durban Declaration reiterating NAM's commitment to strengthening multilateralism and the centrality of the United Nations. The theme of the Conference "Challenges to Multilateralism in the 21st century" was discussed in the interactive Ministerial session. In his statement, Shri Rao Inderjit Singh brought out the integral link between non-alignment and multilateralism. He also



From left to right: Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and German Vice-Chancellor Joschka Fisher during the G-4 Meeting in New York on 21 September 2004.



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh addressing the 59th session of UN General Assembly in New York on 23 September 2004.

stressed the need for UN reforms, of ensuring balance between the developmental and promotional aspects of UN, as distinct from regulatory aspects. He emphasized the need for pooling together the capabilities in major developing countries and made some concrete suggestions in this regard.

India participated at the Ministerial Meeting of the NAM Committee on Palestine held at Putrajaya, Malaysia on 13 May 2004 which decided to establish a Ministerial delegation to be led by the Malaysian chair, to interact with the Quartet (UN, EU, US and Russia) and the P-5, to facilitate forward movement in the Middle East peace process. Reiterating its solidarity with the Palestinian cause and expressing concern at the grave political and humanitarian situation in the occupied territories and the unravelling of the peace process, the meeting also urged the U.N. Security Council to authorize an international presence and establish a UN Peacekeeping Mission in the occupied territories; convene a special meeting on Palestine on the sidelines of the next UNGA and further mobilize international public opinion and civil society. India also supported adoption, by the General Assembly, of the NAM resolution entitled "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security and promotion of international cooperation", on 5 August 2004.

The Annual Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Non-Aligned Movement was held on the margins of the 59th session of the UN General Assembly on 29 September 2004. India participated in the interactive debate held during the meeting on the topic "Reforming the United Nations to meet Global Threats and Challenges in the 21st Century". Based on the views expressed by the delegates, the inputs of NAM on the issue of UN reform were forwarded to the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

Middle East

The situation in the Middle East was a matter of continued debate in the UN this year. The Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly on the Situation in the Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory was reconvened on 16-20 July 2004 to consider the item on the "Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the occupied Palestinian territory". India made a statement at the meeting and voted in favour of the resolution which, inter alia,

acknowledged the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 150 votes in favour, 6 against and 10 abstentions.

Consideration of Agenda Items on the situation in the Middle East and the Question of Palestine was taken up at the General Assembly on 29-30 November 2004. Several countries, including India, participated in the debate on these items. While expressing regret and condolences over the death of President Arafat, most speakers called upon the parties concerned to put an end to violence and resume political dialogue through implementation of the "Quartet" Roadmap. Many delegations were of the view that elections scheduled in the Palestinian Authority and Israel's disengagement plan offered new opportunities to fulfil the vision of two States living side by side within secure and recognised borders. India voted in favour of the traditional resolutions under the above agenda items. India also participated in an open debate of the Security Council on the item 'The situation in the Middle East'.

Iraq

Following the request of the Iraqi Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) for UN facilitation in the transitional political process, the UN Secretary General's Special Advisor Lakhdar Brahimi visited Iraq in February and April 2004 and outlined a detailed roadmap for political transition. UN Security Council resolution 1546 adopted unanimously on 8 June 2004 endorsed the Brahimi timetable for Iraqi political transition and stated that the U.N. should play a leading role in the process, as requested by the Iraqi Government.

As the first step in the above plan, an Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) took over sovereignty on 30 June 2004 with the simultaneous dissolution of the Iraqi Governing Council. The U.N. Security Council and the UN Secretary General welcomed the handover of full responsibility and authority for governing Iraq to the IIG and the end of the occupation. On 14 July 2004, Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, who was serving as Pakistan's ambassador to the U.S was nominated as the Secretary General's Special Representative for Iraq. The second step of the Brahimi Plan was completed in mid-August 2004 when the U.N. facilitated the convening of a representative National Conference of over a thousand delegates, which in turn selected the members of the Interim National Council, set up to advise the Interim Government on policy matters. The UN also assisted in a limited manner in organizing the direct national elections held on 31 January

2005 to elect a Transitional Government. The UN assisted in establishing an independent Electoral Commission and in the technical preparation involving drafting of a legislative framework, preparation of voters' lists and training of electoral workers. The elections are to be followed by the drafting of a new constitution and convening of a referendum to approve it, followed by the setting up of a constitutionally elected permanent Iraqi Government by 31 December 2005.

Apart from outlining the timetable for Iraqi political transition, UN Security Council resolution 1546 also determined the thorny issue regarding status of the multinational force and its relationship with the Iraqi Government, by mandating the setting up of the MNF on the basis of the request of the IIG; by endorsing a 'security partnership' between the MNF and the IIG and by making the continuation of the MNF in Iraq beyond the stipulated one year, contingent upon the wishes of the IIG. UNSCR 1546 also included provisions for full transfer of economic powers including the disbursement of the Development Fund of Iraq and the Oil-for-food Programme.

Thus, from being a marginal player in the immediate aftermath of the war, the UN moved on to play a bigger role in the Iraqi political transition process. While the U.N. is being called upon to play a larger role and has the necessary mandate for it under UNSCR 1546, in reality, it is hamstrung by the difficult security situation and has had only a limited impact on the ground. Although the UN has been re-engaged in Iraq, whether it would be able to play a more substantive role and lead the forthcoming critical steps in the transition process remain to be seen.

India welcomed the unanimous adoption of UNSCR 1546, viewing the endorsement of the Interim Government of Iraq as the first step towards the transparent transfer of full sovereignty to the people of Iraq. Noting that the role of the UN had been unanimously accepted, it expected that the UN would play a central role in the developing situation in Iraq. Since the priority, in India's view, was to ensure an early return to conditions of security and normalcy for all the people of Iraq, and keeping in mind its historic and long-standing relationship with the Iraqi people, India reiterated its commitment to assist Iraq in the arduous task of political and economic reconstruction. India announced a contribution of \$ 30 million towards humanitarian assistance and reconstruction needs of Iraq through the *'International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFF)* set up by the UN. In June 2004, India

conveyed its interest in having the contribution earmarked for electoral assistance in Iraq. Subsequently, pursuant to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Election Commission of India and the United Nations for Cooperation in Electoral Assistance on 29 August 2004, India has offered assistance to Iraq, through the United Nations, in training of election officials and other election-related areas, as also financial assistance of \$ 5 million through the IRFF. Of this, an amount of \$ 2.5 million has been earmarked for the UN Iraq Trust Fund for Iraqi elections.

Afghanistan

In the UN, India continued to be supportive of a strong, united, sovereign and independent Afghanistan. On 8 December 2004 the UN General Assembly took up two items for discussion: 'The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security' and 'Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan'. A number of countries, including India, made statements under these agenda items. While India commended the Afghan people for the successful electoral process and the election of President Karzai as the first democratically elected President of Afghanistan, it also cautioned about the fragile security situation in the country, especially continuing terrorist activity; drug production and challenges to the consolidation of the central government. All speakers, without exception, noted the remarkable progress made by Afghanistan in its transition process, in particular the successful adoption of a Constitution and holding of presidential elections. Many delegations, however, referred to the continuing challenges faced by Afghanistan including, *inter alia*, terrorist threats, presence of militias, drug production and trafficking and criminal activity. Several delegations also referred to the need to conduct timely and credible parliamentary and local elections. Demonstrative of continued international interest in Afghanistan, as many as 145 Member States, including India, co-sponsored the General Assembly resolution on Afghanistan, which was adopted by consensus.

Information

The Committee on Information (COI) which makes recommendations to the General Assembly on the policy and activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI) held its annual session in New York in April–May 2004. The main issue of interest continued to be the controversy over the United Nations Information Centres

(UNICs). It was agreed that any decision on regionalisation of UNICs would be deferred until a detailed status report was made available to the Committee on the functioning of the Regional Information Centre that has been functional in Brussels since February 2004. Upon conclusion of its proceedings, the Committee adopted two resolutions on “Information in the service of humanity” and “United Nations Public Information Activities and Policies”. The Committee also took a decision to expand its membership from 102 to 107 to include Qatar, Iceland, Luxembourg, Madagascar and Cape Verde. The two resolutions and the decision were subsequently endorsed by the Fourth Committee when it discussed the agenda item: “Questions Relating to Information” on 21 October 2004. These were thereafter adopted by the plenary of the General Assembly on 10 December 2004.

The Economic and Social Council

The substantive session of ECOSOC was held in New York from 28 June -23 July 2004. The theme for the high-level segment this year was “Resources Mobilisation and Enabling Environment for Poverty Eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010”. A Ministerial Declaration was adopted at the conclusion of the high-level segment, which recognised the weak implementation of the Programme of Implementation for the LDCs, reaffirmed that good governance both at national and international levels was essential for the implementation of the commitments embodied in the Programme of Action and emphasised the need for concrete and substantial international support from governments and international organisations to the efforts by LDCs themselves.

The ECOSOC decided to endorse a strategy for smooth transition of countries graduating from Least Developed Country status and the recommendation of the Committee on Development Policy to graduate Cape Verde and Maldives from the group of Least Developed Countries and requested the General Assembly to take note of the recommendation.

The ECOSOC reviewed the work of the ad hoc advisory groups of the ECOSOC on African countries emerging from conflict and decided to extend the mandate of the ad hoc advisory groups on Guinea-Bissau and Burundi till the substantive session in 2005. The ECOSOC also decided to reactivate the ad hoc advisory group on Haiti and mandated the group to provide advice on Haiti’s long-

term development strategy to promote socio-economic recovery and stability for consideration of the ECOSOC at its substantive session in 2005.

The ECOSOC decided to upgrade the Ad hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters to a Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters and to expand its mandate to consider, inter alia, how new and emerging issues could affect international cooperation in tax matters and develop assessments and appropriate recommendations.

59th General Assembly

India continued to play an active role in the Second Committee. The General Assembly decided to convene a high-level plenary meeting of the Assembly at the commencement of the 60th session in 2005, to undertake a comprehensive review of the progress made in the fulfilment of all the commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration, including the internationally agreed development goals and the global partnership required for their achievement, and of the progress made in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields. In the light of this decision, deliberations on economic, environment and development issues in the Second Committee focused on the implementation of the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits and the need for increased resource flows for development. Delegations also emphasised the need to discuss new and innovative sources of financing for development, to complement the increased aid flows. The General Assembly decided to consider the proposals within the overall framework for the follow-up of the International Conference on Financing for Development.

The report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation entitled “A fair globalisation: Creating opportunities for all” received broad support of delegations. A special meeting was organised by co-chairs of the World Commission, Finnish President Tarja Halonen and Tanzanian President Benjamin William Mkapa, on 20 September 2004 at the United Nations to launch the report. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in his message on this occasion highlighted that effective national action required an enabling and facilitatory international environment, in which countries may formulate policies designed to promote economic growth and social justice, and expressed the hope that the report would lead to the development of a broader international

consensus on this subject. The General Assembly, for the first time, underlined the importance of policy space in the context of globalisation and interdependence.

Environment and Sustainable Development Issues

India participated actively in the work of the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the high-level commission within the UN system for sustainable development with the role of reviewing and promoting the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The twelfth session of Commission on Sustainable Development was held in New York from 14-30 April 2004, which focused on the constraints, obstacles and challenges faced by developing countries in meeting the agreed Johannesburg Plan of Implementation goals and targets in the thematic cluster of Water, Sanitation and Human Settlements. The high-level segment of CSD 12 was held from 28-30 April. Dr. Prodipto Ghosh, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests led the Indian delegation to CSD-12. He stated that the meeting had brought to fore the challenges faced by developing countries and emphasised the need to adopt and monitor the targets for means of implementation, including provision of financial resources by State partners and multilateral financial institutions and to address the issue of transfer of necessary technologies to developing countries.

The outcome of CSD-12 identified a number of challenges, including mobilising resources from all sources, facilitating the transfer of appropriate technologies and capacity-building in developing countries. These aspects will be addressed in the 13th session of CSD, to be held in April 2005, for decisions on policy options and practical measures.

Social, Human Rights & Humanitarian Issues

India participated and contributed actively in debates and discussions in areas of social development and human rights issues. The participation in debates by India on these issues in the General Assembly, the ECOSOC and the Functional Commissions was guided by its status as the largest democracy in the world, as a developing country and its commitment to the rule of law and the promotion and protection of human rights. India also played a very active role in the Regular Session of the NGO Committee.

Human Rights

In keeping with its traditional commitment to the human rights system of the United Nations, India continued to

participate in the working of the principal human rights bodies – the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, their subsidiary bodies and Working Groups. Shri Soli Sorabjee, India's representative in the Sub-Commission was elected the Chairperson of the Sub-Commission at its 56th Session. A constructive dialogue was maintained with the relevant Special Procedures and Treaty bodies. India accepted the request of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food to visit India on mutually convenient dates.

The 60th session of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) was held in Geneva from 15 March-23 April 2004. Foreign Secretary addressed the high level segment on 18 March 2004. India voted in favour of holding the special sitting requested by the OIC on the situation arising out of the assassination of Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

India continued to play a leading and balancing role at a time of increasing politicization and polarization of this important international forum. India participated actively in negotiations on thematic resolutions, and besides co-sponsoring many resolutions on a wide spectrum of thematic issues, piloted two biennial resolutions - on Advisory Services & Technical Cooperation and Tolerance & Pluralism – which were adopted by consensus. In tandem with other like minded delegations, India strongly opposed, in some cases successfully, attempts to create or indefinitely extend intrusive international monitoring mechanisms in spheres such as internally displaced persons, minorities, counter terrorism, etc.

Terrorism continued to be a subject of debate at the Commission, in which India participated in keeping with its well-founded approach that terrorists violate the most fundamental of the human rights - the right to life. Through constructive debate and discussions, India was able to reflect some of its concerns in the Mexican resolution on the issue and joined consensus.

The third and fourth sessions of the ad hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Promotion and Protection of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities were held from 24 May to 4 June and 23 August to 3 September 2004. India participated actively in the first reading of the draft text prepared by the Working Group.

In November 2004, India signed the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on sale of

children, child prostitution and child pornography, and on the involvement of children in armed conflicts.

A number of eminent Indians continued to serve as members of important Treaty monitoring bodies and human rights mechanisms. These include Shri P. N. Bhagwati (Member of the Human Rights Committee), Mrs. Chokila Iyer (Member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), Shri R. V. Pillai (Member of the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination), and Shri Miloon Kothari (Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing). Shri Arjun Sengupta's mandate as the Independent expert on the Right to Development came to an end.

Refugee, Migration and Disaster Reduction

India took part in the meetings of the Standing Committee and informal consultations of the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), as well as the Convention Plus initiative of the High Commissioner. It also participated in the annual 55th Session of the Executive Committee of the Office of the UNHCR in October 2004. India highlighted its historical tradition of hosting refugees and commitment to the principle of non-refoulement. In its interaction with the UNHCR, India articulated issues of particular concern to developing countries which host the bulk of refugees today, including the needs to address the phenomenon of massive and mixed refugee flows, and international burden sharing and responsibility. It also highlighted the link between humanitarian assistance and long-term development as a key input for preventive strategies for refugee protection. India reiterated its consistent position that durable solutions can only be based on the consent of concerned countries, together with an impartial, transparent and objective role of the UNHCR.

Humanitarian Assistance

India continued to pilot, on behalf of the Group of 77, the annual resolution on international cooperation in humanitarian assistance for natural disasters, from relief to development. The resolution adopted by the 59th session of the General Assembly focussed on the issue of resources and mandates the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report on this subject. A number of developed countries also joined the Group of 77 in co-sponsoring this resolution. The Indian delegation played an active role in the preparations for the World Conference on Disaster reduction held in Kobe in Japan in January 2005.

Global Commission on International Migration

The Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM) is a global panel which has been set up to address the question of international migration. It was launched with the support of UN Secretary General on 9 December 2003. Three Regional Hearings for Asia and the Pacific, Mediterranean and Middle East and for Europe have been held in Manila, Cairo and Budapest respectively. An inter-Ministerial delegation comprising of representatives of Ministries of Labour, Home Affairs and Ministry of External Affairs have been participating in the GCIM hearings. Shri N. K. Singh, former Member, Planning Commission is India's representative to the GCIM.

India, as a country of destination, origin and transit, has been able to put forward its concerns regarding the need to make a distinction between legal and illegal migration, the need to have non-discriminatory rules and regulations for legal migrants and the need for more liberal commitments on part of developed countries with regard to admission of independent professionals and contractual service suppliers at these meetings. The need to reach agreement on more liberal commitments under Mode 4 of GATS was stressed by India at this meeting.

Specialized Bodies: Operational Activities

Operational Activities of the UN System/UN Funds and Programmes

India continued to play a significant and constructive role in the work of the UN Funds and Programmes. Indian efforts contributed to ensure that these organisations continue to focus on their primary mandate of assisting developing countries in their efforts for poverty eradication and sustainable development without any dilution of the principle of country-driven programming, in accordance with national development plans and priorities. The Indian delegation also contributed to resisting efforts for introduction of conditionalities in the UN's development assistance programmes. India also made significant contributions to the triennial comprehensive policy review of the operational activities for development of the UN system, undertaken during the 59th session of the UN General Assembly.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

India actively participated in the UNCTAD XI Conference held in Sao Paulo, Brazil from 13-18 June 2004. Shri Kamal Nath, Minister for Commerce and Industry (CIM), led the Indian delegation. CIM addressed

the plenary and held several bilateral meetings with his counterparts on the sidelines of the Conference. The Conference adopted a Ministerial Declaration – the Sao Paulo Consensus – and a political message – the Spirit of Sao Paulo. The Consensus document provided a policy analysis of the current process of globalization and how this will impact on developing countries. It is also perhaps the first document to emanate from a multilateral forum which specifically draws attention to the shrinking policy space available to developing countries to pursue development objectives in the light of increasing commitments that they are being asked to assume pursuant to multilateral trade and other negotiations. One of the most significant developments of the UNCTAD XI Conference was the launching of the Third Round of negotiations under the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP).

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/ UN Habitat

The 8th Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF) of UNEP was held in Jeju Island, Republic of Korea from 27 – 31 March 2004. The Indian delegation was led by Dr. Prodipto Ghosh, Secretary (Environment & Forests). India participated actively in this meeting. India has also been participating in the meetings of the High-Level Open-Ended Inter-governmental Working Group on an Inter-governmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building.

International Labour Conference

Minister of Labour Shri Sis Ram Ola led the Indian delegation to the 92nd International Labour Conference (ILC), which was held in Geneva from 1-17 June 2004. Ministers for Labour from Maharashtra, Punjab and West Bengal were also members of the Indian delegation. The Indian delegation to the one-day 290th Session of the Governing Body, which immediately followed the ILC, was led by Secretary (Labour). The 92nd ILC focused its attention on the Report on globalization by the World Commission on Social Dimension of Globalisation, presented in February 2004. Other issues discussed were related to fishing, migration and human resources development. The resolutions committee adopted a resolution on the “promotion of gender equality, pay equity and maternity protection”.

World Health Assembly (WHA)

Indian delegation to the 57th World Health Assembly

(WHA), held in Geneva from 17-22 May 2004, was led by Director General of Health Services. Under the theme “HIV/AIDS”, WHA focused on the “3 by 5” initiative of the Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO). The Assembly adopted several important resolutions in the sphere of health, such as “Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health”, and the “Strategy on Reproductive Health”. A two-day presentation-cum-exhibition on traditional Indian medicines was held like previous years on the margins of the Assembly, in which eight Indian companies engaged in the manufacture of such medicines participated.

World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)

An Indian delegation led by Director General of the Indian Meteorology Department Dr. S. K. Srivastava participated in the 56th Session of the WMO held in Geneva from 8-18 June 2004.

United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)

India has been participating in all important meetings of the UNIDO including that of the Industrial development Board (IDB), Programme and Budget Committee (PBC), etc. The Indian delegation, in its interventions at the meetings of IDB, highlighted the commitment of the Indian Government to activities of UNIDO. The fact that India is among the largest contributors to the UNIDO was taken note of with appreciation in the statement made by the G-77 and China. It was mentioned that with the changing global requirements, UNIDO must emphasize on Information and Communication Technologies and their application for increasing the cost competitiveness of SMEs and structure their programmes accordingly and that India could contribute to structuring such programmes through its capabilities in this sector. India also pointed out that within the overall strategic imperative of sustainable development and employment generation, India had identified food processing, rural industry, skills up-gradation and small hydro power plants as among the focus areas for working together with UNIDO for greater impact. In the context of the discussion on South-South cooperation, India’s commitment to working towards this goal by offering Indian technology and expertise to other developing countries was highlighted, including in specific sectors such as biomass, small hydro power and manufacturing technology for low cost and earthquake resistant housing.

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

India participated in the sessions of the Working Groups of UNCITRAL on Procurement, Arbitration and Conciliation, Transport Law, Electronic Commerce, Security Interests held in Vienna during April-November 2004.

Economic and Social Council for Asia-Pacific (ESCAP)

The Sixtieth session of the Commission was held at Shanghai, China from 22-28 April 2004. The session comprised two segments. The senior officials' segment was held from 22-24 April 2004 and the Ministerial segment from 26-28 April 2004. The Indian delegation was led by the Commerce Secretary, Shri Dipak Chatterjee. The main theme of the Shanghai session was "Meeting the challenges in an era of globalisation by strengthening regional development cooperation". The importance of focusing on ESCAP work under its three thematic areas: Poverty reduction, managing globalisation and addressing emerging social issues was reaffirmed. The Shanghai Declaration was adopted.

Commission on Narcotics Drugs

India participated in the 47th regular Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) held in Vienna from 15 to 22 March 2004, in which it was endorsed for the Chairmanship of the 48th Session of CND. In the 47th Session, India piloted with Turkey the traditional resolution urging the international community to maintain delicate balance between supply of, and demand for, opiates for meeting medical and scientific needs. Australia also joined as one of the co-sponsors of the resolution.

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)

India participated in the 13th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), held in Vienna from 11-20 May 2004 and contributed to discussions, *inter alia*, on the preparations for the 11th UN Congress scheduled in Bangkok for the period 18-25 April 2005. In this and other relevant activities and fora, India underlined the need for importance of the outcome of the forthcoming UN Congress for the future work of the CCPCJ.

Group of 77

The Group of 77 met throughout the year to coordinate the negotiating positions of the developing countries for

meetings of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other bodies as well as for international conferences/meetings and their preparatory processes. Qatar chaired the Group of 77 during 2004. The twenty-eighth Annual Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 was held in New York on 30 September 2004, in which Shri Nirupam Sen, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations participated. He outlined the difficulties faced by many developing countries in their efforts to achieve their development goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals, called on the developed countries to fulfil their commitments, emphasised the need to discuss, as an additionality in terms of finance for development, non-traditional and innovative sources of financing and reiterated India's strong support for South-South cooperation.

The Group of 77 met in Sao Paulo on 11-12 June 2004 to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the Group, on the eve of the 11th session of the UN Conference on Trade & Development. The Ministerial Declaration adopted on this occasion reaffirmed the role of the Group in dealing with international economic and development issues and in advancing the economic interests of developing countries and stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation and coordination between the Group, China and the Non-Aligned Movement. In its statement and interaction, India highlighted the need for developing countries to coordinate their position and present a united front at multilateral trade negotiations so that these processes could be adequately influenced in favour of developing countries. India also reiterated its continued commitment and contribution to strengthening South-South cooperation.

High Level Exchanges

Shri Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister, who visited Geneva in the context of the meeting of India's HOMs in European countries, met the Acting High Commissioner (AHC) for Human Rights and Director General (DG) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The Acting High Commissioner (AHC) for Human Rights Mr. Bertrand Ramcharan called on External Affairs Minister in Geneva on 15 June 2004. External Affairs Minister reiterated India's commitment to promotion and protection of human rights and highlighted the significance India attaches to thematic issues and international cooperation in this regard.

The DG of ILO Dr. Juan Samovia called on Minister of

External Affairs in Geneva on 15 June 2004. During the meeting they discussed India's active role in the Organization. Their discussions centred on India's role in ILO and also on the Report "A Fair Globalisation: Creating Opportunities for All" brought out by the Commission on Sustainable Development, constituted by the ILO under the co-Chairmanship of the Presidents of Tanzania and Finland.

Mr. Carlos Magarinos, Director General of UNIDO, visited India from 15-23 September 2004. He called on Ministers of External Affairs, Commerce & Industry, Minister of State for Environment & Forests and Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, and held discussions with senior government officials during his visit. Mr. Abel J. J. Rwendeire, Managing Director, Programme Development and Technical Cooperation visited India from 23-30 October 2004.

Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU)

The 111th Assembly of the Inter Parliamentary Union was held in Geneva from 28 September – 1 October 2004. A 15-member Indian delegation headed by the Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha Shri Somnath Chatterjee and including Shri Suresh Pachouri, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions and Parliamentary Affairs participated. India was a member of the drafting committee of the First Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, with India's Shri M. Salim as its Rapporteur. India's reservations on the resolution adopted by the Assembly and also on the term 'human security' (agenda item 5) were placed on record. India's contribution towards IPU for the year 2005 is CHF 56730.

Elections

India was re-elected to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in October 2004 securing the highest number of votes among all candidates for seats that were contested. India received the support of 174 out of the 190 members of the General Assembly who were present and voting. India was elected unopposed to the Programme Coordination Board of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS [UNAIDS]. During the year, India's candidate was also elected unopposed to the UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).

India was elected to the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organisation under Part-II by elections held on 2 October 2004 during the 35th General Assembly of the Organisation held in Montreal during 28 September-8 October 2004.

India was also elected to the Postal Operations Council of the Universal Postal Union during the 23rd Congress of the Union held in Bucharest, Romania in during 15 September- 5 October 2004.

Dr. Arjun Sengupta was nominated as the Independent Expert on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty, a mandate created by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) in 1998 and extended by the CHR at its 60th Session in April 2004. The mandate was confirmed by the Economic and Social Council of the UN in July 2004.

Disarmament

India's commitment to non-discriminatory and universal nuclear disarmament and the global elimination of all Weapons of Mass Destruction continued to be reflected in its policy pronouncements and diplomatic initiatives. The country's stand on issues related to disarmament and international security in various multilateral and regional forums was premised on India's national security interests and its tradition of close engagement with the international community to promote cooperative efforts at addressing these challenges.

Bilateral dialogues with key countries continued to be pursued this year and harmonisation of India's national imperatives and security obligations with international concerns on non-proliferation and disarmament also progressed steadily.

On the regional level, India's participation in the confidence and security building process and structure under the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) acquired greater momentum.

Regular contact was maintained with key international and non-governmental organisations active in the field of disarmament with a view to disseminating the Indian perspectives on disarmament issues.

ASEAN Regional Forum

India took part in the work of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) through participation in the various meetings organised under the aegis of the ARF, including the second Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crimes (ISM on CT-TC) held in Manila, Philippines on 30-31 March 2004, the ARF Senior Officials' Meeting held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in May 2004 which took stock of the developments and prepared for the 11th ARF Ministerial Meeting in July; Workshops on 'Maritime Security' organized by Indonesia, Malaysia

and the United States from 24-26 September 2004 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 'Cyber-Security' organised by Republic of Korea from 7-8 October 2004 and the Inter-Sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures (ISG on CBMs) held in Phnom Penh from 24-26 October 2004.

The 11th ARF Ministerial meeting was hosted by Indonesia in Jakarta from 1-2 July 2004. External Affairs Minister lead Indian delegation to this annual meeting. The issue of terrorism and terrorist threat to the region as a whole continued to dominate the ARF agenda. The Ministers deliberated on ways and means to increase practical cooperation among member states in this respect and adopted a 'Statement on Strengthening Transport Security', which calls for cooperative actions for safeguarding transportation means from the terrorist threats. The Ministers also adopted a Statement on Non-proliferation. Minister of External Affairs in his intervention emphasized the need for a concerted fight against global terrorism without any double standards or equivocation and underlined the potential risks in its linkages with proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

United Nations General Assembly

India continued to play an active role on disarmament issues in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. At the 59th Session of the First Committee, India's Resolution on "Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction", was adopted once again unanimously. India had first tabled this Resolution at the 57th Session of the UNGA in 2002. At the 59th session, the number of co-sponsors for the Resolution increased from 17 last year to 47, including Japan, Russia and the UK. The Resolution reflects the shared concern of the international community on the threats posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and retains its continuing relevance as an unambiguous statement from a truly universal and democratic body like the UN General Assembly.

India reiterated commitment to its principled stand on global nuclear disarmament based on the firm conviction that progressively lower levels of armaments globally will guarantee undiminished security for all. India believes that its security would be enhanced in a nuclear-weapons-free-world. With this commitment to global nuclear disarmament, India re-introduced its Resolution "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons" which was first introduced in 1982. This

Resolution calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances, as a first step towards reducing the salience of nuclear weapons.

India's Resolution on "Reducing Nuclear Danger", first introduced in 1998, which calls for the review of nuclear doctrines and immediate and urgent steps to reduce the risk of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons, was also re-tabled.

India's Resolution 'Role of Science and Technology in the Context of International Security and Disarmament', highlighted the qualitative aspects of the arms race, and the need for a genuinely multilateral and non-discriminatory response. India has maintained that technology denial to responsible States does not serve the objectives of non-proliferation but only signals a punitive intent. All these resolutions were adopted by a good majority as in previous years.

Conference on Disarmament

The Conference on Disarmament (CD), the 'sole multilateral disarmament treaty negotiating body', held three sessions during 2004 in Geneva on 19 January-26 March, 10 May-25 June and 26 July-10 September. Besides the usual formal plenary meetings, the Conference held this year structured informal plenary meetings on the issues on CD's existing agenda. India actively participated in the deliberations on various proposals to end the impasse in the CD over adoption of a Programme of Work. During the course of consultations, India adopted a flexible and constructive approach in order to contribute to establishing a Programme of Work for the CD that reflected the concerns and priorities of all its Member States.

United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC)

The UN Disarmament Commission is the only universal forum with the mandate to deliberate on issues related to disarmament and arms control and to make recommendations to the General Assembly. The Substantive Session of the UNDC in 2004 was held from 5-27 April 2004 in New York. The Commission could not adopt its agenda as there was no consensus on the two substantive issues that it could take up for its deliberations. Though various proposals were made by the Non-aligned Group, the European Union and the United States, there was no convergence of views.

International Atomic Energy Agency

The 48th Session of the General Conference of the IAEA was held from 20 – 24 September 2004. The Indian delegation was led by Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission. As in the past few years, the resolutions on strengthening of safeguards, security and the safety of radioactive sources were the most contentious. India endeavoured to maintain a balanced approach in the GC resolution on 'safeguards' for all the Member States of the Agency without discrimination. The Indian delegation also contributed in great measure to the scientific forum on nuclear fuel cycles and challenges. India maintains support to the promotional role of the IAEA, in particular, to IAEA's on-going work on the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO). A case study on the Indian Advanced Heavy Water Reactor (AHWR) was one the 14 case studies conducted under this project.

Dr. Mohamed El Baradei paid an official visit to India from 13-16 November 2004. He delivered an inaugural address at the 15th annual conference of the Indian Nuclear Society (INSAC –2004) at Mumbai on 15 November and had meetings with Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission. During his stay in Delhi, he held discussions with Foreign Secretary, National Security Advisor and Minister of External Affairs on various issues of mutual interest, including on the role of IAEA in promoting access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. During the discussions it was conveyed that nuclear energy would continue to occupy an important place in our energy mix, given our desire to sustain a fast rate of economic growth. DG, IAEA averred that the work of the Agency encompassed both the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and contribution to non-proliferation objectives. He appreciated India's technological prowess and its contribution to various IAEA activities.

India continued to participate in several advisory groups set up by the Director General, IAEA in technical and policy areas including the Advisory Group on Security (AdSec) and the recently established experts group on the Multinationalisation of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle. India also participated in the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) conference, organized by the US and Russia prior to the 48th General Conference of the IAEA.

Chemical Weapons Convention

India continued to play an active role at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) at The

Hague during the year. India is an original State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

India was successfully re-elected to the Executive Council of the OPCW at the Ninth Conference of the States Parties to the CWC held at The Hague from 29 November – 3 December 2004. India effectively engaged in the deliberations and decision-making particularly the implementation of the Action Plans on Article VII (National Implementation Measures) of the Convention and universal adherence to the Convention. India highlighted all issues of concern to us and to other developing countries during this Conference and also the meetings of the Executive Council.

India continued to fulfil all its commitments under the Convention. Having declared possession of chemical weapons to the OPCW in 1997, India's destruction efforts have been proceeding well ahead of the destruction timelines stipulated under the Convention, under the OPCW inspections. Mr. Roglio Pfrter, Director General of the Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) visited India from 28 March – 4 April 2004. In the various interactions, India's continued interest in the success of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and its full and effective implementation was reiterated.

Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

The Second Annual Meeting of the States Parties to the BWC was held in Geneva from 6-10 December 2004 to discuss and promote common understanding and effective action on: (i) Enhancing international capabilities for responding to, investigating and mitigating the effects of cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons or suspicious outbreaks of disease; and (ii) Strengthening and broadening national and international institutional efforts and existing mechanisms for the surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious diseases affecting humans, animals, and plants. India has been supportive of this process of annual meeting of States Parties of the BTWC and believes that these meetings can play an important role in promoting common understanding among states parties through exchange of views and national experiences. A Meeting of Experts was held from 19-30 July 2004 at Geneva to prepare for the Meeting of States Parties. The Indian delegation actively participated in the deliberations at the Meeting of Experts and made detailed country presentations.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

India is a High Contracting Party to the Convention on

Prohibitions Or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and has ratified all its protocols, currently in force, including the Amended Protocol II on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of Mines, booby traps and other devices.

The Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on CCW held in 2001 had decided to establish an Open-ended Group of Governmental Experts to discuss in two separate Working Groups (a) ways and means to address the issue of Explosive Remnants of War and (b) Mines Other Than Anti-personnel Mines. Three sessions of the Group of Governmental Experts were held in 2004. India's Permanent Representative to the CD, was nominated by the NAM Group as the Coordinator for the Meetings of the Working Group on Explosive Remnants of War. A Meeting of States Parties to the CCW was held at Geneva from 18-19 November 2004. The Meeting decided that the Group of Governmental Experts will continue its work in 2005. It also decided with the recommendation of NAM Group that India will continue to coordinate the Meetings of the Working Group on Explosive Remnants of War in 2005.

The Annual Meeting of the States Parties to the Amended Protocol II to the Convention on CCW on Prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby traps and other devices was also held at Geneva on 17 November 2004. India informed the Meeting about the steps taken by it to implement the provisions of Amended Protocol II and its commitment to the vision of a world free of landmines.

India remains committed to the objective of a non-discriminatory, universal and global ban on anti-personnel land mines through a phased process that addresses the legitimate defence requirements of the states while ameliorating the critical humanitarian crisis that has resulted from an indiscriminate transfer and use of land mines. India participated as an "Observer" in the First Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines (APLs) and on their Destruction (Ottawa Convention), held in Nairobi, Kenya from 29 November – 3 December 2004, as it shares the humanitarian concerns arising out of indiscriminate use of APLs, though it is not a party to this convention, as it fails to take into account the legitimate security interests of countries which necessitates the usage of landmines for defensive purposes within valid security norms and in accordance with

internationally acknowledged and well defined safety parameters.

Small Arms and Light Weapons

India is acutely aware of the problem of proliferation of and illicit trafficking in small arms and remains committed to participating actively in international search for effective solutions, including the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) adopted at the UN Conference on Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July 2001.

India's Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament chaired the Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing and Marking of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, established by the UN Secretary General pursuant to the Resolution 56/24 V of the UN General Assembly. The Group of Governmental Experts had recommended by consensus that it was both desirable and feasible to develop an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace in a timely and reliable manner illicit small arms and light weapons. This recommendation was endorsed by the 58th session of the General Assembly in 2003.

An Open Ended Working Group to negotiate an instrument to identify and trace in a timely and reliable manner illicit small arms and light weapons has been established. The First Substantive Session of the Open-Ended Working Group established by the Secretary General to negotiate an instrument on marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons was held at New York from 14-25 June 2004. The Indian delegation, led by Ambassador/PR to the CD, made a series of technical presentations on various elements of a future instrument and, thereby, helped shape the discussions within the Group. India will remain constructively engaged in the negotiating process, which will continue actively in 2005.

Outer Space Affairs

The 47th Session of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN COPUOS) was held in Vienna from 2 to 11 June 2004. The Indian delegation statement highlighted the Indian Space programmes, contribution of India to international cooperation and also made a presentation on role of space technology in Disaster Management. India effectively coordinated with both the developing and developed countries on various issues and successfully represented and safeguarded its interests. The Committee also reviewed and endorsed the report of the 43rd Session of the Legal Sub-Committee, which had held its meeting earlier.

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia

The Ministerial meeting of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 22 October 2004. External Affairs Minister led Indian delegation to this meeting. Apart from India, delegations of China, Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were represented by their Foreign Ministers. Thailand FM also participated as Thailand was inducted as the latest full member of the CICA at this meeting, thus becoming the first South East Asian country to be a member of CICA. The Meeting adopted a "CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures" and "CICA Rules of Procedure". Considerations of aspects related to the establishment of a Secretariat were deferred for the Summit, which would be held in 2006, for want of consensus. The Catalogue of CBMs contains a number of CBMs which member states can adopt on a voluntary and gradual basis. These cover the politico-military sphere, new challenges and threats as well as social, economic and humanitarian spheres. At the end of the meeting a Joint Declaration was also adopted by the Ministers, which covers a number of issues including terrorism, WMD proliferation, Afghanistan, Iraq and Middle East.

External Affairs Minister in his speech at the plenary meeting noted the progress made by CICA and emphasised that peace and prosperity in Asia and beyond could only be ensured through a cooperative approach building on the strengths of each other. Minister of External Affairs highlighted the fact that terrorism posed a serious challenge and called on member states to eliminate it through a comprehensive and sustained effort. He also noted that given the diversity of Asia measures to promote greater social and economic interaction should be the first priority.

International Law and Developments

Sixth (Legal) Committee of the UN General Assembly

During the current session, the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly considered various important items, which inter alia include the following: Responsibility of States, Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property, Reports of the UNCITRAL, International Criminal Court, Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the UN, Measures to Eliminate Terrorism, Legal Protection under the Convention on the Safety of the UN and Associated

Personnel and the International Convention against the Reproductive Cloning of Human Beings.

The Sixth Committee further adopted two legal instruments during this session namely, the Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property and also the Legislative Guide on Insolvency Law.

The General Assembly on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee decided to accord observer Status in the General Assembly to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Southern African Development Community, Collective Security Treaty Organization, Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and the Economic Community of West African States.

The General Assembly considered the draft articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts prepared by the ILC. During the discussion, different views were expressed as to the eventual form of the draft articles. Several speakers spoke in favour of convening an international conference of plenipotentiaries to negotiate an international convention. Some even suggested establishing an ad hoc Committee or Working Group to commence the preparatory work towards such a conference. Other speakers expressed doubts as to the necessity of enshrining the articles in a convention, especially since some of the provisions have already come to be accepted as part of general international law. Further consideration has been deferred to till the 62nd session of the General Assembly, so as to give more time to States to understand the legal intricacies involved in draft articles and its implications thereof.

The Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property recognizes the principle that States and their entities do not enjoy jurisdictional immunity from the courts of other countries in respect of their commercial transactions.

A decision was taken by the General Assembly to continue the work of the enlargement of the scope of the Convention on Safety of the United Nations and Associated Personnel including, inter alia, by means of a legal instrument.

International Criminal Court

The International Criminal Court has become functional at The Hague after the entry into force of the Rome Statute. There are 139 signatories to the Statute out of which 97 countries have ratified it. The Assembly of State

Parties has adopted the Elements of Crime and the Rules of Procedure and Evidence prepared earlier by the Preparatory Commission. The Assembly of State Parties has also elected 18 judges for the Court and its Prosecutor. The Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) has currently opened two investigations in Africa. Two States Parties, the Republic of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, have referred situations to the Chief Prosecutor Mr. Luis Moreno-Ocampo. After rigorous analysis, the Prosecutor has decided to open investigations into both situations.

Human Cloning

The ad hoc Committee, which was established by the General Assembly to elaborate the international convention on Human Cloning, was unable to resolve the scope of the Convention. One group of States wanted to ban all types of human cloning immediately. Other States, including India supported the proposal for the elaboration of an international instrument prohibiting reproductive cloning immediately, and discussion and elaboration of a legal instrument regarding all other forms of cloning including the therapeutic cloning on a step-by-step basis, leaving States the freedom to take decision whether or not to allow therapeutic cloning in their country.

Special Committee on the UN Charter

The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization considered several proposals on: maintenance of international peace and security; peaceful settlement of disputes between States; the Trusteeship Council; coordination with other committees etc. concerning the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular with regard to assistance to third States adversely affected by sanctions. India's stand over the years has been that the Security Council should hold the primary responsibility towards the affected third States, as a part of the sanctions imposing decisions. The Council should establish a 'Trust Fund' for that purpose based on the scale applicable to the peacekeeping operations as well as voluntary contributions.

Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism

It may be recalled that the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism is being considered within the framework of a Working Group of the Sixth Committee since 2000 on the basis of a draft

proposed by India. Though, in principle, agreement has been reached on major draft articles, a few outstanding issues remain that include: Article 2 (definition of offence), Article 2 *bis* (relationship with prior sectoral conventions) and Article 18 (exclusion of actions of security forces of a State). However, the main outstanding issue relates to the proposal to exclude from the application of the Convention acts against "foreign occupation".

IMO Legal Committee

One of the important agenda items before the Legal Committee of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) is the consideration of Draft Protocol to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, 1988. This initiative was taken by IMO in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on US in 2000. The draft Protocol prepared by USA proposes amendments to the SUA Convention aiming to incorporate issues that are not connected with terrorism *per-se*, but are aimed at incorporating disarmament and non-proliferation issues including the incorporation of "proliferation security initiative". India opposed these amendments and recorded its reservations during the 88 Session of the Legal Committee as also during the IMO Council Meeting. India also made reservations on certain aspects relating to the mandate of the Legal Committee and on the discussion of the NPT related principles within the scope of the proposed amendment exercise.

Oceans and Law of the Sea

The work under this item in the UN General Assembly focused on dual themes: first, harmonizing national legislation with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982 and second, the protection of marine biological diversity. The highlight of this year's oceans resolution is the establishment of a Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, as destructive practices need to be addressed both within exclusive economic zones and beyond. However, the areas beyond national jurisdiction present particular legal and logistical challenges for the international community. In preparation for the meeting of the Working Group in early 2006, the Secretariat will prepare a report on these issues.

UNCITRAL

The Working Group of the United Nations Commission

on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) relating to Insolvency Law adopted a Draft Legislative Guide during this year. The Legislative Guide includes a comprehensive statement of key objectives and core features for a strong insolvency regime including out-of-court restructuring. The crucial task in designing a general insolvency law is to balance the priorities of various interests in the process of liquidation. The recommendations in the guide have tried to achieve this delicate balance.

The Working Group on Transport Law is presently negotiating a new convention, with a view to reviewing the existing laws relating to the international carriage of goods by sea and other modes, to cope with the practical changes due to technological developments. It would be predominantly a convention pertaining to Carriage of Goods by Sea having multimodal character. At the fourteenth session, discussion was held on issues relating to the liability for the damage to or loss of goods during the carriage, freedom of contract, and jurisdiction and arbitration for the purpose of settling disputes, which may arise out of the interpretation or application of the provisions of the proposed convention.

International Hydrographic Organization

This Division participated in the restructuring of the Convention on International Hydrographic Organization (IHO). Towards this end, a Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) has been established to revive and enlarge the 1956 Convention establishing the IHO, as well as its General and Financial Regulations. This year the Division participated in the fifth and final meeting of the SPWG held in Tokyo. The outcome of the Meeting would be discussed at the extraordinary conference of the IHO to be held in April 2005.

AALCO

The Annual Conference of the Asian African Legal Consultative Organisation (AALCO) for the year 2004 was held at Bali from 21-25 June 2004. During the conference, the Organization discussed several contemporary issues of international law: (i) Report on Matters relating to the work of the International Law Commission at its Fifty-fifth Session, (ii) The International Criminal Court: Recent Developments, and (iii) Expressions of Folklore and its International Protection. A special one-day session considered in depth the issues relating to Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children.

Free Trade Agreements

Pursuant to the Free Trade Agreement with MERCOSUR, agreements on Rules of Origin, Safeguard Measures and Dispute Settlement Procedures as well as the two lists of products for exchange of concessions were finalized. Negotiations were held pursuant to the SAFTA for finalization of agreements on Rules of Origin, finalization of lists of products for exchange of concessions, mechanism for compensation of revenue losses to the LDCs, provision of technical assistance and reconciliation of SAFTA provisions for smooth implementation of Trade Liberalization Programme. Free Trade Agreement among BIMSTEC countries was signed during this year. Discussions over Free Trade Agreements with ASEAN and Thailand and Framework Agreements with South African Customs Union, and with Gulf Cooperation Council are at various stages of consideration.

Investments

Under the auspices of SAARC, this Division has also participated in the negotiations aiming to conclude a SAARC Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investments. During this year, Bilateral Investment Promotion Agreement (BIPA) negotiations were held with Latvia and Uruguay. However, bilateral discussions with Bosnia Herzegovina, Azerbaijan, Senegal, Slovak Republic, Papua New Guinea and Tunisia are at various stages. The text has been finalized for establishing the SAARC Arbitration Council, which will have competence in settling investment related and other legal disputes in the region and the agreement is expected to be signed in the forthcoming meeting of the SAARC Summit.

Private International Law

The Division is examining the Hague Conventions on Private International Law for the purpose of India's becoming a party to them. This would help the Indian courts and parties to suits in seeking international cooperation in several civil law areas from other States parties to these conventions. As a result, India has deposited the Instrument of Accession for The Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents, 1961. Accession to the Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extra Judicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters, 1965, and the Convention on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters, 1970 is under process. The issue of becoming a party to the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction 1980 is under active consideration.

Participation of Legal and Treaties Division in the Development of International Law

This Division participated in the Inter-Governmental Experts meeting on the UNESCO's Preliminary draft Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions. It also participated in the Drafting Committee meetings held in Paris, as well as in the Inter-Governmental Experts Group Meeting on the Elaboration of a Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Suppression of Piracy and Armed Robbery in Asia, held in Tokyo.

This Division also participated in the JWG Meeting between India and the UK to discuss and strengthen the issues relating to peace-keeping; the JWG meeting between India and Israel on combating terrorism; and the Working Group meeting of BIMSTEC Countries on Counter Terrorism.

The L&T Division participated in bilateral negotiations for concluding extradition treaties, agreements on mutual legal assistance in criminal and in civil matters with foreign countries. As a result, extradition treaties with Kuwait, Republic of Korea, Bahrain, the Philippines were signed. Treaties with Nepal and Oman have been finalized and are ready for signing. Further, treaties with Israel, Malaysia and Senegal are under negotiation. As regards mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, agreements were negotiated and finalized with Bahrain, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Agreements with Nepal, Azerbaijan, Germany, Bulgaria, Turkmenistan, Egypt and Malaysia are under negotiation. Agreements in mutual legal assistance in civil matters were finalized with Bahrain and Kazakhstan.

The Division examined several extradition requests and other requests for international cooperation received from the domestic as well as foreign jurisdictions and rendered legal advice therein.

This Division participated in bilateral talks with Pakistan on issues relating to Tulbal Navigation Project, Baglihar Project and Kishanganga Project to discuss technical issues and application of relevant provisions of the Indus Water Treaty.

This Division examined the extension of the 'Dual Citizenship' scheme to the PIOs (Persons of Indian Origin), taking into account the compatibility of the legal position with regard to dual nationality and the concentration of the Indian Diaspora.

This Division provided opinion on Cabinet notes relating to: Accession to the World Custom Union; Establishing a National Clean Development Mechanism Authority (CDMA) under the Kyoto Protocol; Accession to the Rotterdam Convention on PIC Procedures relating to Pesticides and Chemicals.

Further it also provided opinion on matters relating to the Commonwealth, Antarctica, acceding to Hague Conventions on Private International Law, International Whaling Convention, Parliament Questions, International Humanitarian Law, human rights, refugees, speech of IHL for the Indian delegation attending the 111th International Parliamentary Union meeting, environmental aspects of oil exploration in the territorial sea and EEZ of India etc. It also dealt with various Parliament Questions on the subject of international law.

Various other international legal issues and cases, in particular before the Indian courts, relating to the application of Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961; Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963; Passport related matters under the provisions of the Passports Act, 1967; Section 86 of the Indian Civil Procedure Code requiring the consent of the Central Government before suing the foreign government in Indian Courts were examined.

India has signed/ratified many multilateral/bilateral treaties/agreements entered into by India with foreign countries during the year. These inter alia include Social Charter of the SAARC; the Additional Protocol to the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism; Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA); Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network adopted by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific; WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control; Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. A comprehensive list is placed at **Appendix IX**. A list of Instruments of Full Powers issued during the year 2004 is at **Appendix X** and a list of Instruments of Ratification is at **Appendix XI**.



During the period under review, India continued its efforts to increase its integration with the world economy, particularly with the economies of Asia. India also played an active role in furthering the economic interests of other developing countries in various international organizations and multilateral, regional and sub-regional groupings. India's "Look East" policy, which was initiated in 1992, added a new dimension by successfully organising the first India-ASEAN Car Rally 2004.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the 3rd India-ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) Summit held in Vientiane, Laos on 29-30 November 2004. The 3rd India-ASEAN Summit marked a maturing of the multi-faceted relationship and put in place the framework for a long-term partnership with ASEAN. The Summit demonstrated mutual interest in strengthening India-ASEAN relations, which are rooted in deep historical and cultural ties. A mutual desire to expand cooperation in political, security, technological and economic areas was also evident.

The Summit adopted the "India-ASEAN Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity" document which sets out the vision for future cooperation between India and ASEAN. The salient features of the document and the Plan of Action annexed to it include cooperation for strengthening and reforming the UN system, cooperation in WTO and other multilateral fora, combating the menace of international terrorism and transnational crimes, disarmament, development of regional and subregional infrastructure, capacity building and human resources development. On the sidelines of the Summit, the Prime Minister held bilateral meetings with leaders of Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Singapore and Vietnam.

At the Summit, ASEAN leaders expressed appreciation for support provided by India to CLMV countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam) for bridging the development gaps in ASEAN. The Minister

for External Affairs inaugurated the Lao-India Entrepreneurship Developmental Centre (LIEDC) established with Indian assistance in Vientiane on 27 November 2004. Similar EDCs in the other CLMV countries are expected to be ready by 2005. PM announced that India would replenish the India-ASEAN Cooperation Fund, which funds agreed projects between India and ASEAN, by an additional contribution of US \$ 2.5 million. He also conveyed his support, in principle, to the newly set up ASEAN Development Fund.

The Third ASEAN-India Business Summit was held from 19-21 October 2004 at New Delhi and Chennai. Prime Minister delivered the inaugural address. Sectoral Sessions were held on Tourism, Infrastructure (roads, ports, airports, and urban infrastructure), Financial Services and Biotechnology at New Delhi and on Agriculture & Food Processing, IT & ITES, Engineering & Manufacturing, Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals at Chennai. The events were well attended.

The first India-ASEAN Car Rally was flagged off by Prime Minister at Guwahati on 22 November 2004. The second leg of the Rally was flagged off by all ASEAN leaders together with the Prime Minister at Vientiane on 30 November 2004. The Rally concluded at Batam, Indonesia on 11 December 2004. This initiative has generated enormous public interest in India-ASEAN relations and it is expected that it would promote connectivity, as well as enhance trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people links between India and ASEAN.

The year also witnessed expansion of India-ASEAN functional cooperation in areas of mutual interest, including IT, Space and Science and Technology. An ASEAN Exploratory Study Mission in Information Technology visited India from 30 March-2 April 2004. The areas of cooperation which were identified include Cyber security, ICT, Human Resources Development, IT project for disabled, e-Commerce and Wi-max for rural areas. The ASEAN-India Working Group on Science and

Technology met in Singapore on 11 June 2004. Discussions were held to promote further cooperation in the areas of Advanced Materials, Biotechnology, and Information Technology. A training course under the first phase of ASEAN-India Cooperation in Space was conducted at the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, Dehradun from 24 May to 4 June 2004. Participants from eight ASEAN countries attended the training course. The areas identified for cooperation in the initial stages are capacity building and use of Indian Remote Sensing (IRS) data for environmental management.

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)

The first BIMSTEC Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand on 31 July was a watershed event for the sub-regional grouping. The Summit was attended by the President of Sri Lanka and Prime Ministers of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Thailand. Nepal and Bhutan joined the grouping in February 2004. The Summit was preceded by meetings of senior officials and Foreign Ministers of the member nations.

As an outcome of the Summit, the name of the grouping was changed from BIMST-EC to BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation). The Declaration which was adopted by the Summit, places special emphasis on cooperation in the sectors of trade and investment, transport and communications, tourism, energy, human resources development, agriculture, fisheries, science and technology and people to people contacts. It was also agreed to expand the cooperation into areas of public health, education, rural community development, small and medium scale enterprises, construction, environment, information and communications technology, biotechnology, weather and climate research and natural disaster mitigation and management. The Summit attached importance to the development of transport and communication infrastructure, hydropower and hydrocarbon projects and intra BIMSTEC interconnectivity of electricity and natural gas grids. Joint development of BIMSTEC tourism packages, introduction of BIMSTEC Travel Card/Visa, coordination of efforts of member countries in combating the menace of international terrorism and transnational crimes, promotion of exchanges of parliamentarians, media

persons, students and faculty, sports persons etc were also agreed upon by the Summit. India offered to host ministerial meetings in Energy and Tourism in 2005 and the 2nd Summit in 2006.

The first meeting of BIMSTEC Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) took place in Bangkok on 7-8 September 2004 to finalise the Terms of Reference (TORs). It was followed by the first meeting of BIMSTEC Task Force on 9 September 2004 to review various sectors of cooperation. The 2nd meeting of the TNC and a meeting of the Working Group on Rules of Origin were held in New Delhi from 6-8 December 2004.

The first meeting of Chief Executives of Railways of BIMSTEC countries was jointly organised in New Delhi by the Ministry of Railways and the Asian Institute of Transport Development (AITD), New Delhi from 20-21 September 2004. This was in pursuance of recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting held in New Delhi in 2001 to address issues relating to development of rail networks, status of Trans-Asian Railway routes, harmonization of technologies and human resource development in the BIMSTEC member countries. The Meeting stressed the need to create a genuinely regional cooperative effort aimed at human resource development. The meeting recommended that a new institutional arrangement, supported by an adequate corpus of funds, be set up. AITD has offered to contribute Rs. 20 lakhs as seed capital for this purpose, to be supplemented by contributions from member countries and grants from multilateral bodies. The Indian Railways have offered to train railway personnel from member countries free of cost. The next meeting of Chief Executives of Railways of BIMSTEC countries will be held in Myanmar.

The 1st meeting of the BIMSTEC Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism was held in New Delhi from 9-10 December 2004. The terms of Reference and "Mandate" for the Joint Working Group were adopted at this meeting.

Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)

The fifth Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) of the Indian Ocean Rim- Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) was held in Colombo from 26-27 August 2004. The meeting of the COM was preceded by the meetings of the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group



External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh calls on the President of Republic of Korea Mr. Roh Moo-hyun during his visit to India, 4-6 October 2004.



From left to right: Prime Ministers of Nepal, Myanmar, President of Sri Lanka and Prime Ministers of Thailand, India, Bhutan and Bangladesh during the 1st BIMSTEC Summit Meeting.

(IORAG), Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF), Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI), and Committee of Senior Officials (CSO). The Indian delegation was led by Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs. A new concept of fast track implementation of projects was agreed upon at the 5th COM. This envisages a "5+" approach, meaning thereby that projects involving at least five Member states would be undertaken as IOR-ARC projects.

India organised an E-Commerce Round Table from 11-12 August 2004 as an Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum project. The Department of Science and Technology in cooperation with The Energy Research Institute (TERI) would organise a Workshop on Disaster Mitigation and Management in 2005, an offer from India accepted by the 5th COM. A workshop on entrepreneurship development for small, medium and micro enterprises for interested member states will also be organized by India.

India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA)

The first Meeting of Science and Technology Ministers of IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum) was held in New Delhi on 25 October 2004. The meeting identified four main thrust areas for initiating cooperation viz.: (a) development of vaccines for AIDS, TB and Malaria, (b) application of biotechnology in health and agriculture, (c) nano-science and technology, and (d) oceanographic sciences. It was also decided that IBSA Science and Technology meetings will be held annually while the Working Group on Science and Technology would meet every six months. The second meeting of the IBSA Focal Points was held in New Delhi from 29-30 November 2004 to review developments and prepare for the 2nd meeting of the Trilateral Commission.

MGC

The Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) is an initiative launched in Vientiane in November 2000 by six countries - India and five ASEAN countries, namely, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam for enhancing cooperation in tourism, education, culture, and transport and communications. As part of Delhi-Hanoi rail link under MGC, a feasibility study by RITES Ltd. was initiated in September 2004 for the Jiribam (Manipur)-Mandalay (Myanmar) missing rail route. As part of cooperation in culture, a Museum of Traditional Textiles of MGC

countries is being set up in Siem Reap, Cambodia by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR).

G-15

As a founder member of the Group of Fifteen (G-15), India played an active role in various G-15 projects and activities, in order to promote economic and technical cooperation among the G-15 countries. India is coordinating a number of G-15 projects, viz. solar energy applications, establishment of gene banks for medicinal and aromatic plants, and an Entrepreneurship and Technical Development Centre in Senegal (ETDC). The project for the revival of Nigeria Machine Tools, assisted by India at a cost of US\$5 million is nearing completion.

OECD

India's interaction with the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) has intensified considerably over the years. The Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) and OECD hosted the Global Forum on International Investment (GFII) from 19-21 October 2004. This is an open forum for policy dialogue among OECD members, non-members and other stakeholders worldwide. The meeting allowed participants to share their perspectives on the issue of international investment flows.

SAARC

Following the tsunami tragedy, Bangladesh the host of the Thirteenth SAARC Summit, postponed the meeting from January to 6-7 February 2005. India took a decision not to attend the Thirteenth Summit in Dhaka on the scheduled dates against the background of the then prevailing situation in our neighbourhood, which had caused us grave concern. India reiterates its continuing and consistent commitment to the SAARC process, and to increased regional cooperation among Member States and maintains that it is only in an environment free from political turmoil and violence that a Summit would yield the desired outcome.

The Twelfth SAARC Summit in January 2004 in Islamabad witnessed the signing of three documents, the SAARC Social Charter, an Additional Protocol on Terrorism and a framework Agreement on SAFTA. India offered to contribute US\$ 100 million for Poverty Alleviation projects in SAARC countries (outside India).

As mandated by the Twelfth Summit, the Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation (ISACPA) prepared a report setting out SAARC Developmental Goals (SDGs) for the next five years in the areas of poverty alleviation, education, health and environment. The ISACPA Report was launched in different SAARC capitals through the year 2004. India launched the ISACPA Report on 21 December 2004. A Regional Poverty Profile-2004, the second such report, detailing economic indicators of SAARC member countries is to be presented at the Thirteenth Summit in Dhaka.

Proposals by India

At the 25th Council of Ministers Meeting in Islamabad, July 2004, India made the following significant proposals: [the status report on each proposal is given in brackets]

- i) *Setting up a South Asian Parliamentary Forum*: India sought to set up a South Asian Parliamentary Forum to deliberate on issues pertaining to regional cooperation endeavours under SAARC, and offered to host the next meeting of the Forum. [India will be hosting a meeting of the Forum during the Budget Session 2005].
- ii) *Establishment of a SAARC High Economic Council* formed with the Finance and Planning Ministers of the SAARC Member Countries to promote ideas and initiatives related to regional economic integration in economic, trade, financial and monetary areas. [The 4th SAARC Commerce Ministers Meeting in Islamabad, 20-23 November 2004 conveyed approval for Member States to send their comments to the Secretariat for consideration during the Thirteenth Meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation to be held in Bangladesh at a date to be decided in 2005].
- iii) *Setting up of a SAARC Infrastructure Fund*, for major infrastructure projects in the region. [The 4th SAARC Commerce Ministers Meeting in Islamabad, 20-23 November 2004 approved that in the first instance, advice of SAARCFINANCE (a body comprising Governors of Central Banks and Finance Secretaries of SAARC), may be obtained about the conceptual viability and feasibility of the proposal].
- iv) *Setting up of National Committees* in member countries mandated to monitor and devise programmes to implement the goals of the SAARC Social Charter, as well as consult with each other to promote collaborative Poverty Alleviation Projects, including under the SAARC Poverty Alleviation Fund. [Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation has been identified as the nodal focal point for cooperation with SAARC counterparts].
- v) As part of the SAARC Awareness Year for TB and HIV/AIDS, India offered to host a meeting this year of experts and community workers, train paramedics from the SAARC countries, and also offered to send medical vans and mobile awareness units to each of the SAARC countries. [A project is under preparation by National Aids Control Organisation (NACO), in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs, for implementing this project].
- vi) India has offered training in the field of statistics. [India has asked SAARC Secretariat to suggest dates suitable to member countries for holding the first meeting towards implementing this proposal].

Negotiations for a South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA)

The SAFTA has seen progress with six meetings held between January and December 2004. There has been progress on fine tuning the Sensitive Lists, and narrowing differences on Rules of Origin. A Concept Paper on Mechanism for Compensation to the Least Developed Contracting States (LDCS – Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal) is to be discussed at the Maldives meeting in March 2005. Requests made by the LDCs for Technical Assistance would be forthcoming from India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It is hoped that all issues would be wrapped up by June 2005, enabling countries to complete formalities for bringing SAFTA into effect by January 2006. With SAFTA coming into force by 1 January 2006, and its full operationalisation by 2016, we shall be able to move forward in other areas of economic integration such as services and investment, with a view to moving towards a Customs Union and eventually a South Asia Economic Union by 2020. Our proposal at the July Ministerial Meeting for the establishment of a SAARC High Economic Council was with the idea of promoting ideas and initiatives related to regional economic integration in economic, trade, financial and monetary areas. Alongside SAFTA, Trade Facilitation

Agreements pertaining to Customs Cooperation and Avoidance of Double Taxation are likely to be signed during the Thirteenth Summit.

Proposal for an Early Warning and Disaster Response Regime

As approved in the 6th Environment Ministers Meeting, India has prepared and circulated through the Secretariat a Concept Paper on “Information Sharing on Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation”. This would be considered by an Expert Group meeting sometime in 2005, which would submit its recommendations to the Seventh Meeting of the SAARC Environment Ministers in Dhaka, November 2005. India is keen to set up a SAARC Centre for Disaster Management in New Delhi. The Centre would provide a mechanism for sharing information on disaster

management amongst SAARC countries and also benefit from best practices prevailing in the region and beyond. This Centre would be located within the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), New Delhi, an institution of international standard, and can function as a resource base for data and Regional Training Centre in SAARC for Disaster Management. India would be in a position to share IT and GIS-based information systems for disaster management as well as space application technologies. The Centre would benefit from the synergies of co-location with NIDM. The proposal acquires additional relevance and urgency in the wake of the recent tsunami tragedy, which has seen such a large loss of life, displacement of persons, and loss of property and infrastructure.



The Technical Cooperation (TC) Division of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has been responsible for administration of technical assistance under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme and the Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Plan (SCAAP) to developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Gulf countries and small Islands in the Pacific and Caribbean region. The ITEC and SCAAP together cover 156 countries, Eritrea being the newest member of ITEC partner countries.

ITEC programme is meant to support the political objectives of Indian diplomacy in developing countries and share Indian know-how, technology and expertise with these countries. Ever since its inception in 1964, the ITEC programme has earned goodwill for India among the ITEC partner countries.

Budget allocation for the Technical Cooperation Division for the year 2004-05 has been Rs.30 crores for ITEC, Rs.5.5 crores for SCAAP and Rs.5.1 crores for Aid for Disaster Relief.

ITEC has following contents:

- Training (both Civil and Military)
- Projects and Project-related assistance such as supply of equipment, consultancy services and feasibility studies
- Deputation of Indian experts
- Study visits of senior officials to India
- Aid for Disaster Relief.

Civilian training is the most popular and the most effective means of cooperation, which has been appreciated by the recipient countries. For civilian training under ITEC/SCAAP, all expenses like international air travel, tuition fees, living allowance, study tours, medical assistance in case of sickness and book allowance are borne by the Ministry of External Affairs. The civilian training covers Audit, Banking, Finance & Accounts, Drugs and Pharmaceuticals, Education Planning & Administration, English Language, Entrepreneurship, Food Technology,

Manpower Resource Planning, Information Technology, Journalism & Mass Communication, Labour Administration, Management, Parliamentary Studies, Remote Sensing, Rural Development, Small Scale Industry, Standardisation, Small Business Development and Textile Technology. While ITEC/SCAAP Programmes are basically bilateral, of late, regional groupings are also included in the programme. Extra training slots have been provided to ASEAN and BIMSTEC countries. For the first time, training slots have also been earmarked for African Union (AU). In addition to regular training courses approved under ITEC/SCAAP, special courses have been arranged specifically for nominees of these regional groupings.

In the current financial year, TC Division intends to Provide civil training to 3600 nominees of ITEC partner countries for which 3549 applications have been received by 18 February 2005 and 2159 persons have actually been trained. List of the institutes offering civilian courses to foreign nominees under ITEC/SCAAP Programme of the Ministry of External Affairs are at **Appendix-XIV**. Country-wise position about slots earmarked and utilised under ITEC and SCAAP for the period April-February 2005 are shown at **Appendix- XV**. **Appendix-XIII** shows the expenditure statement for the financial year 2004-05.

Defence Training: India offers training in all the three wings of Defence Services to selected number of countries in some of the prestigious institutions like National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi, and Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington in Tamil Nadu. The training covers a number of fields, such as, Security and Strategic Studies, Defence Management, Artillery, Electronics, Mechanical Engineering, Marine and Aeronautical Engineering, Anti-Marine Warfare, Hydrography, Logistics and Management & Qualitative Assurance Services.

The 45th NDC Course (National Defence College) in New Delhi began in January 2005 and 22 officers from foreign countries are participating in the course, the duration of which is almost one year. In the 60th DSSC course, which began in May 2004, there are 30 foreign defence

personnel. In addition, 268 slots (124 for Army Courses, 55 for Air Force Courses and 89 for Naval Courses) have been allotted during 2004-2005. The military trainings are offered under ITEC I, ITEC II, Self Financing Scheme and Reciprocal schemes. In case of ITEC-I Scheme, the entire cost of air travel, tuition fees, living allowance, medical and study tours are borne by the Government of India while in case of training programmes under ITEC-II only cost of international air travel is met by the beneficiary countries. Rs.10 crores have been earmarked for defence training. The slots allotted for the year 2004-2005 may be seen at **Appendix-XVII**.

Aid for Disaster Relief

Supplies of medicines, blankets and mosquito nets were the main items of disaster relief to certain countries during the year 2004-2005. The beneficiary countries are Belize, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala in Central America (Rs.14.461 lakhs) Jamaica (Rs.90 lakhs), Grenada (Rs.22.5 lakhs), Haiti (Rs.4.5 lakhs), Suriname (Rs.43 lakhs) Bahamas (Rs.22.5 lakhs) and Dominican Republic (Rs.22.5 lakhs). In addition, DPR Korea was gifted 1,000 Metric Tonnes of rice worth Rs.1.67 crore. **Appendix XVI** shows India's aid for disaster relief during 2004-05.

Projects & Supplies

Cambodia

In line with a commitment made by the Vice-President of India to the Prime Minister of Cambodia, an Agreement was signed between the two Governments for the conservation and restoration of Ta Prohm Temple Complex at Siem Reap in Cambodia through Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). ASI had estimated the total cost of the project as Rs.19.57 crores to be implemented in 10 years. The Committee on Non Plan Expenditure (CNE) had approved the first phase(2003-04, 2004-05) amounting to Rs.3.50 crores and also accorded its approval in principle for the total (estimated) cost of the project i.e. Rs.19.57 crores. The work is under progress.

It has been decided to gift 1,000 bicycles to Cambodia for the use of elected Commune Councilors.

Indonesia

In line with a request made during the visit to India by the former President of Indonesia, a Vocational Training Centre for Construction Sector has been set up in Jakarta under ITEC at the cost of at Rs.308.70 lakh. The National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. (NSIC) is the

implementing agency for the project. All the machinery and equipment supplied from India have been installed by the 1st batch of experts from NSIC. In January 2005 the 2nd batch of experts have also been deputed and they are currently imparting training to the Indonesians. The project is expected to be completed and handed over to the Indonesian side shortly.

Laos

In pursuance of the discussion during the 4th India-Laos Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation held in New Delhi, an expert from NIC, Department of Information Technology was deputed to Laos to conduct a feasibility study for setting up of an IT Centre. Total cost involved will be Rs.9.6 crore and the project will be completed in three phases. The first phase of setting up IT lab has been completed at a cost of Rs.5.5 lakhs.

In pursuance of the commitment already made, audio-visual equipment worth Rs.6.54 lakhs was gifted to India-Lao Friendship Association by the Prime Minister during his visit to Laos in November 2004.

Yemen

In pursuance of an agreement with the Government of Yemen, equipment worth Rs.1.9 crore is being gifted for setting up of a vocational training centre at Taiz for the Al-Khotwa Institute.

Zimbabwe

A commitment was made by the Government of India to the Government of Zimbabwe for the development of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises under G-15 Cooperation Programme and US \$ 5 million was earmarked for the project. An MoU is being finalized following fresh feasibility study conducted by HMT (I) , the implementing agency for the project. The project is expected to begin shortly.

Deputation of Experts

The services of ITEC experts has continued to be in great demand in ITEC partner countries.. The total number of experts deputed to various countries has reached 51 in 2004-2005. The experts deputed are in various fields such as Architecture, Dairy Farming, Medicine, Security, Town Planning, Remote Sensing, Agriculture, Television Transmission, WTO Matters, etc. Details of experts deputed in the current financial year as also of experts who were sent earlier but whose deputation is still under continuation, are at **Appendix-XVIII**.



The Investment and Trade Promotion (ITP) Division prepared a detailed INVESTMENT AND BUSINESS Brief to supplement and update the comprehensive information contained in its publication “India Reliable Business Partner – Attractive FDI Destination”. The Brief was circulated to all Indian Missions abroad to equip them with the latest developments in the Indian economy along with facts and figures relating to its trade and investments. As part of the new policy of active promotion of foreign investment into India, the Division co-published a four-page “India Investment Manifesto” which was carried by Asia Money, a sister organization of the prestigious publication Euro Money, in their special issue of November 2004 on “Invest in India 2004”.

The Division participated actively in the meetings of Foreign Investment Promotion Board, Reserve Bank of India, Ministry of Civil Aviation and other policy meetings contributing to reforms and liberalization of the economy and investment procedures. The Division took active part in governmental and non-governmental meetings on energy issues. The Division has been advocating that India should acquire petroleum and gas assets abroad for strategic energy security. The Division interacted with Export Promotion Councils, Trade and Industry bodies, Commerce Ministry and the Missions for promotion of India’s exports. The ITP Division supported the efforts of the Ministry of Commerce in organizing inter-active sessions between Commercial Representatives posted in Indian Missions in East Asia with Indian business and industry in Chennai, Bangalore, Mumbai and Delhi in September 2004.

The Government has been using development aid, including grants and Lines of Credit (LOCs) on concessional terms as tools for promotion of India’s political, economic and commercial interests. In 2004-2005, to date, LOCs amounting to US\$ 423 million have been approved for disbursement and an additional amount of US\$ 352 million is in the pipeline. The grants and LOCs

have helped Indian companies to obtain project contracts and orders for supply of goods and services in a number of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The Division has been highlighting to the media and the business community in India and abroad of the importance being attached by the Ministry of External Affairs to economic diplomacy to promote India’s economic and commercial interests. As part of this, the Missions are being encouraged to be pro-active in the promotion of India’s economic and commercial interest.

The Division has received positive feedback about the efficacy of its new website www.indiainbusiness.nic.in which is devoted exclusively for the economic and commercial aspects of India’s diplomacy. The website is constantly updated with comprehensive and relevant information for global investors and businessmen about the opportunities in India.

As part of its drive to promote India as an attractive investment destination, the ITP Division supported the efforts of the Ministry of Commerce in organizing the OECD sponsored Global Forum on International Investment (GFII) and the India Investment Roundtable which were held in New Delhi in October 2004. While the main theme of the GFII was “Investment for Development: Forging Partnerships”, the India Investment Roundtable focused on opportunities and policy challenges for investment in India.

The ITP Division hosted Mr. Donald J. Johnston, Secretary General of the OECD who visited India on 15 October 2004 at the invitation of External Affairs Minister. During his visit, the Secretary General called on PM and discussed measures to strengthen relations and intensify interaction between OECD and India in order to address the various challenges that are faced especially by developing countries.



The Policy Planning and Research Division serves as a nodal point for interaction with the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), formerly known as the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), the University Grants Commission (UGC) and its affiliates and the Area Study Centres (ASC) located in various universities and specializing in research on various regions of the world.

The Division extended financial assistance to various academic institutions/think-tanks located in different parts of the country for holding conferences, seminars, preparation of research papers, exchange of scholars and support for Track-II programmes on issues related to India's external relations and security. A list of seminars/conferences/meetings/study projects organized/undertaken by institutions/NGOs partly funded by the Policy Planning & Research Division is given at **Appendix – XII**.

As per the initiative of the Foreign Secretary, the Policy Planning Division also undertook the revival of the Monthly Summary for the Cabinet. This covers the broad spectrum of India's relations with different countries of the world during the month.

The Research Section of the Division continued to edit and publish the Annual Report of the Ministry. The Report served as a compendium of India's interaction with the rest of the world in the political, economic and cultural

fields, including the views of the government on various facets of international relations.

The Section also remained seized of the depiction of India's international boundaries in foreign publications. Cases of incorrect depiction were taken up with the concerned governments or the publisher through the Indian Mission abroad for necessary corrective measures. The Division was also responsible for scrutinizing the depiction of India's external boundaries in the foreign publications imported into the country, and offered its advice to the Ministries dealing with the matter. It coordinated the supply of map-sheets to various Government and semi-Government agencies for use in their official work with the Survey of India and the Ministry of Defence. The Research Section dealt with requests from research scholars for access to the records of the Ministry.

Record Management

There are about five lakh files, both classified and unclassified, lying in the Records Management Section of the Ministry. Record Management Section has been sending old files for reviewing regularly to the concerned officers/sections/divisions for taking a decision regarding retention or otherwise of these files. 2164 files which were no longer required have been destroyed by burning.

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The External Publicity Division, as the interface of the Ministry with the media, continued to project India's perspective on foreign policy issues. The Government's concerns and viewpoint on various issues were actively articulated and widely disseminated through regular and special press briefings, statements, backgrounders, website, audio-visual material, brochures and pamphlets etc. The Division strengthened public diplomacy efforts through providing new and updated material to Indian Missions abroad for promoting India.

Special attention was paid to articulate the foreign policy priorities of the **new Government** which came into power in May 2004. The subsequent intensive diplomatic engagement of the new Government was evident from the exchange of high-level visits which provided excellent opportunities for articulating India's stand on various issues. Prime Minister's visits to Bangkok for **BIMSTEC Summit**, London, New York for **UN General Assembly**, The Hague for **India-EU Summit** and Vientiane (Laos) for **India-ASEAN Summit** were extensively covered in the national and world media. The External Publicity Division arranged interviews by several Indian and international newspapers and magazines for Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister. Prime Minister's interviews were carried by prominent world media which included *inter alia* The Times, Time magazine, Wall Street Journal, Charlie Rose Show, Financial Times, Kommersant, Rossiiskaya Gazeta and Toronto Star.

The Composite Dialogue Process between India and Pakistan, Indo-US relations including Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) and meetings of High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG), India's relations with its neighbours – Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Myanmar and other major countries like Russia and China, UNSC reform, India's aid to Afghanistan, India's stand on Iraq and its support to Palestine were among the main issues which were the focus of our publicity efforts. India's perspectives on terrorism, international peace, security and disarmament and the

progress achieved by India in the fields of economy, S&T, IT, biotechnology etc. were also highlighted.

Spokesperson's Office

Press briefings, statements and releases remained the most popular means of communication for journalists and proved to be highly effective in ensuring well-informed media coverage. The Division's approach in this regard remained both reactive and proactive with responses provided to specific issues raised by the media and information disseminated on issues of concern to the Ministry. About 150 press briefings were held or briefing points released by the Official Spokesperson during the period April 2004 – January 2005. In addition, more than 150 press releases and statements were issued during the same period.

External Affairs Minister, Foreign Secretary and other senior officials of the Ministry addressed special media briefings on important issues of concern. External Affairs Minister held press briefings in the External Publicity Division after assumption of charge and on the occasion of the completion of six months of UPA Government in office.

Media management during the hostage crisis in Iraq was one of the crucial activities carried out during the year. It was ensured that the media received regular updates through the statements issued by the Ministry during the crisis. These statements were promptly uploaded onto the website and simultaneously sent to various news organizations through email.

India's relief efforts in the wake of the Tsunami disaster were given due publicity. Besides regular briefings by Official Spokesperson, a joint briefing by Foreign Secretary and Chief of Integrated Service Command was also organized. The Division also sent regular updated information to the Indian Missions on Tsunami.

Website

The Ministry's website www.meaindia.nic.in was updated

on a real-time basis with latest press releases, briefings, statements, documents, reports, Question-Answers in Parliament, interviews and relevant articles and op-ed pieces from Indian and international media. The electronic versions of our releases have become a popular and cost-effective means of disseminating information to the media. Many journalists access them directly from the website while about 200 contacts registered in the Division's database are also sent emails. All issues of the Ministry's monthly magazine "India Perspectives" and various other publications and audio-visual material produced by the Division are also placed on the website. The Division is also in the process of digitizing press conferences and briefings for the website.

The weekly **MEA Newswire** covering important developments of the week continued to target intellectuals, opinion-makers, think-tanks and India-watchers across the globe. An **electronic Notice Board** was created for use as a source of information on the publicity material available with the External Publicity Division for the Missions. Professionally written articles on various aspects of India were also made available to the Missions through the Notice Board.

Media facilitation

External Publicity Division continued to extend logistical and liaison assistance and support to foreign media delegations accompanying Head of State/Government (HOS/G) visiting India and Indian media delegations accompanying President, Prime Minister and Vice-President on their visits abroad. The Division actively supported visiting media delegations and Indian media in connection with HOS/G visits from Bhutan, Canada, Chile, Germany, Malaysia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia and Sri Lanka through issue of media advisories, organizing press conferences/interactions, facilitating access to ceremonial areas, meetings and providing assistance for transport and accommodation. Similar support was extended during visits at the Foreign Minister/Ministerial level from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, China, Comoros, Congo, Croatia, France, Gambia, Germany, Iran, Japan, Kuwait, Mauritius, Mexico, Myanmar, Norway, Pakistan, Russia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Surinam, Thailand, USA, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, etc.

The Division facilitated the work of media delegations through setting up of media centres with Internet,

telephone, fax and other facilities during President's visits to Tanzania & South Africa, Vice-President's visit to South Africa and Prime Minister's visits to Laos, Thailand, The Netherlands, USA and UK. Similar support was provided to media covering visits of External Affairs Minister to Kazakhstan, Nepal, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russia, Switzerland, UK, USA and Vietnam. The Division also extended assistance to Indian journalists based in foreign countries and those travelling abroad.

Foreign Media Representatives

The Division facilitated the functioning of approximately 310 representatives of foreign news agencies and media organizations based in India by providing up to date and relevant information including through regular briefings on issues of interest as well as assistance in matters of credential documents, visas, residence permits etc. Visa extensions and/or accreditation facilities were extended to about 300 foreign journalists. During the General Elections in May 2004, which received wide and unprecedented coverage across the world, more than 100 journalists from abroad were assisted in coverage, access to polling stations, accreditation matters etc.

Visits by Foreign Media

External Publicity Division, in coordination with Indian Missions abroad, continued to organize visits of foreign journalists to India and their interaction with important institutions and centres of excellence in India. Meetings with senior officials, intellectuals, academicians, and business representatives, among others were organized for the visiting journalists. These visits have emerged as a key element of our multi-pronged efforts to bring about a more accurate and contemporary depiction of India in the foreign media as the journalists obtain a unique, first-hand impression of developments in India's foreign policy, economy, science and technology and culture.

The Division facilitated the visits of more than 50 journalists to India between April 2004 and January 2005. These included familiarization visits by senior journalists and editors from Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Egypt, Hungary, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, Russia, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, UK, USA, etc. For the first time in several years, a group of seven Pakistani journalists were invited for a ten-day visit. These visits had the desired effect and led to increase in positive portrayal/coverage of India and its diversified achievements in reputed foreign publications.

Audio-Visual Publicity

The Division received over 325 proposals from different countries for production of documentary films on varied themes depicting India's natural and cultural heritage, economy, social traditions etc. Of these, more than 275 were cleared on receipt. The rest were forwarded to other concerned Ministries, States and other organizations for further processing. It is expected that approximately 50 proposals would be dealt with during February and March 2005.

The commissioning/acquiring and supply of documentaries, duplication of documentaries and despatch to Indian Missions abroad on regular basis/on request, dubbing of documentaries in foreign languages, presentation/lending of old documentaries and feature films to Indian Missions and foreign governments/organisations, dubbing and subtitling of films in foreign languages, procurement and supply of feature films for participation in film festivals and Indian film weeks abroad, organizing cultural publicity and exhibitions etc are some of the major audio-visual publicity activities undertaken by the External Publicity Division.

The films and documentaries commissioned by the Division are aimed at positive projection of India's image abroad. It is also ensured that they dovetail into India's foreign policy objectives. **14 documentaries** were completed (see box for details). Other documentaries viz. "Aneka Ras" (India and Indonesia), "People of Indian Origin in the Middle East", "India - ASEAN Car Rally", "The Environment and Sustainable Development of India", "Indian Heritage Sites in Aden", "Peacekeepers" and a 24-capsule documentary on J&K are in various stages of production and commissioning.

A crisp 25-minute film "**Democracy in Action**", showcasing the Indian electoral process and the use of modern technology involving Electronic Voting Machines was produced in May 2004. This film was used extensively by Indian Missions and was broadcast in several countries.

Special screening of documentary films "The Soul Connection" and "India and ASEAN - Partners in Progress" commissioned by the External Publicity Division were organised in April and December 2004 respectively for the diplomatic community based in New Delhi, Indian and foreign media personnel and eminent persons from the world of art and cinema. The External Publicity Division supported the 6th Cinefan Festival held in New Delhi in July 2004 and the 35th International Film Festival

Documentaries Completed

- Kashmir in Indian Poetry
- Rooh Punjab Di
- A Self Portrait
- Rebuilding the Playground - Combating Child Labour in India
- Adventure Sports India
- Steps & Strides
- India and ASEAN - Partners in Progress
- IT Revolution in India
- Timeless Friendship: Indo-Afghan Relations
- A Bridge So Near: India -Bhutan Relations
- Life Encoded: Biotechnology – The Indian Effort
- Indian Legends
- An Indivisible Unity
- Nectar in Stone

of India held in Goa in November–December 2004.

Indian Feature Film Festivals/Film Weeks were organised in Argentina (Buenos Aires), Azerbaijan (Baku), Brazil (Brasilia & Sao Paulo), Bulgaria (Sofia), Czech Republic (Prague), France (Paris), Jamaica (Kingston), Kenya (Nairobi), Kyrgyzstan (Bishkek), Myanmar (Yangon and Mandalay), Peru (Lima), Philippines (Manila), Russia (Moscow), Spain (Madrid), Taiwan (Taipei), Turkmenistan (Ashgabat), USA (Washington, Chicago), Uzbekistan (Tashkent), Venezuela (Caracas) and Yugoslavia (Belgrade).

Documentaries acquired/commissioned by the Ministry were also sent to the Missions for non-commercial telecast on foreign TV channels. Some of these documentary films were **shown on foreign TV networks** in Bahrain, Bhutan, Kenya, Laos, Malaysia, Namibia, Romania, Tanzania, and Vietnam due to the sustained efforts of Indian Missions. Besides, audio-visual material in the form of Betacam cassettes, CD-ROMs, audio and video CDs, DVD and cassettes were also supplied to the Missions for **library and presentation purposes**. The material sent was in accordance with the requirement of Missions and was selected carefully to represent the diversity of India. Requests for sanction of audio-visual equipment and other

hardware like TVs, VCRs, dish antennas etc received from missions and offices in Ministry were also processed.

During the period, a photo exhibition “**The Path of Compassion**” on Buddhist sites and art heritage in India was despatched to Indian Missions in Bangkok, Beijing, Belgrade, Berlin, Colombo, Hanoi, Manila, Moscow (5 sets), Paris, Phnom Penh, Tokyo (2 sets), Ulaanbaatar (2 sets), Washington and Yangon. Another photo exhibition “**Velha Goa**” about Churches of old Goa was despatched to Indian Missions in Berlin, Copenhagen, Dublin, Lima, Lisbon, Moscow, Paris, Rome and San Francisco. Transparencies available in the audio-visual library of External Publicity Division on various subjects were also duplicated and sent to the Missions on request.

A **photo exhibition** on **Panchsheel** organized by the External Publicity Division in November 2004 was inaugurated by External Affairs Minister at Vigyan Bhavan Exhibition Hall. The exhibition was attended by both Indian and foreign dignitaries including diplomats from foreign Missions in New Delhi.

India Perspectives

India Perspectives continues to be the flagship magazine of the Ministry’s publicity effort abroad. The magazine aims at promoting India’s rich cultural heritage, as also the giant strides the country is making in the fields of Information Technology, space, nuclear energy, science and technology and other related fields of human endeavour. Published in **ten international languages** to reach almost all corners of the globe, the magazine carries carefully selected articles encompassing all facets of life in India to portray India’s achievements in diverse fields. The magazine also lends a helping hand in tapping India’s vast tourism potential by carrying beautifully illustrated features on various destinations in the country. It also seeks to articulate India’s foreign policy concerns in a subtle manner. The current and old issues of *India Perspectives* are available in the electronic format to the readers on the Ministry’s website. Going by the reader’s response from around the world, the magazine is keenly awaited every month and has created a niche for itself. As India celebrated 400 years of the Guru Granth Sahib, the December 2004 issue of the magazine sought to bring out the relevance and importance of this great book that has stood the test of time.

Special Publications, Brochures and Books

Brochures Published

- Celebrating Democracy
- India: Scripting Future Histories (in German & Burmese)
- Panchsheel
- General Election 2004
- Afghans First - India at Work in Afghanistan (in German)
- Bridging the Ocean: India leads relief measures in tsunami-hit areas
- India: A Dynamic Democracy

The External Publicity Division brings out special publications on important issues and events. Besides brochures (see box for details), special publications on 12th SAARC Summit, First BIMSTEC Summit (July 2004), PM’s visit to London and New York (September 2004) and President’s visit to the United Republic of Tanzania & the Republic of South Africa (September 2004) were brought out between April 2004 and January 2005.

For the first time in recent years, the External Publicity Division brought out in collaboration with *India Today Plus*, a high quality coffee table book titled “**India-Moods and Memories**”. 3,000 copies of the book, consisting of articles on various facets of India by well-known personalities are being sent to Indian Missions for distribution.

In addition, 5,000 copies of a publication “Experiencing India through its World Heritage Sites” (comprising a collection of photographs by the world renowned photographer Raghu Rai) is also under preparation.

The Division despatched several books and magazines to Indian Missions/Posts abroad depending upon their requirements.

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The Protocol Division remained fully engaged with the growing number of incoming and outgoing high-level visits, conferences, credential ceremonies, official entertainment and other multifarious functions. Protocol Division's ability to handle a large number of visits of foreign dignitaries contributed to India's enhanced international image and profile. Streamlining of protocol norms and standards continued to be a focus of attention.

List of Foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners who Left India during the period 1.4.2004 to 28.02.2005 on completion of assignment

Name	Date of Departure
H.E.Prof. Ashir Ataev, Ambassador of Turkmenistan	3 April 2004
H.E. Mr. Jaime Infante, Ambassador of Colombia	1 June 2004
H.E.Dr. Nuri El-Fituri Al-Madani, Ambassador of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahriya	3 June 2004
H.E.Mr. Alexander M. Kadakin, Ambassador of the Russian Federation	2 July 2004
H.E.Walter Gyger, Ambassador of Switzerland	20 July 2004
H.E.Prof. Moses Musonda, High Commissioner of The Republic of Zambia.	27 July 2004
H.E.Mr. Mohamed Louafa, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco	3 August 2004
H.E. Mr. Askar O. Shakirov, Ambassador of The Republic of Kazakhstan	13 August 2004
H.E.Mr. Philip Mc Donagh, Ambassador of Ireland	18 August 2004
H.E.Mrs. Vera Barrouin Machado, Ambassador of the Federative Republic of Brazil	19 September 2004
H.E.Dr.Saeed M.Al.Shamsi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates	9 October 2004
H.E.Mr. Ladislav Volko, Ambassador of the Slovak Republic	15 October 2004
H.E.Mr. Julio Faesler Carlisle, Ambassador of Mexico.	31 October 2004
H.E.Mr. Mun Song Mo, Ambassador of The Democratic People's Republic of Korea	8 November 2004
H.E. Ms. Penny Wensley, High Commissioner of Australia	21 November 2004
H.E.Mr.Enrique Anchordoqui, Ambassador of Uruguay	22 November 2004
H.E.Mr. Hua Junduo, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China	24 November 2004
H.E.Mr. Armen Baibourtian, Ambassador of The Republic of Armenia	2 December 2004
H.E.Dr.Ibrokhim Mavlonov, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan	11 January 2005
H.E.Mrs. Maite E.Nkoana Mashabane, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa	22 January 2005
H.E.Mr. Alejandro Garrido A., Ambassador of Panama	2 February 2005

List of Foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners who presented their Credentials during the period 1.4.2004 to 28.02.2005

Name	Presentation of Credentials
H.E. Mr.Mun Song Mo, Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	7 May 2004
H.E. Mr. Amadou Bocoum, Ambassador of the Republic of Senegal	7 May 2004
H.E.Mr.Khalaf Abbas Khalaf Al-Foudari, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait	7 May 2004
H.E.Mr. Choi Jung-il Choi, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea	7 May 2004
H.E.Mr. Luke Rokovada, High Commissioner of Fiji	7 May 2004
H.E. Mr. Vuk Zugic, Ambassador of Serbia & Montenegro	7 May 2004
H.E.Mr. Antonio Armellini, Ambassador of Italy	7 May 2004
H.E. Mr. Harry Mutuma Kathurima, High Commissioner of Republic of Kenya	7 May 2004
H.E.Ms.Inga Eriksson Fogh, Ambassador of Sweden	7 May 2004
H.E.Abubakar Garba Abdullahimni, High Commissioner of the Federal Republic of Nigeria	5 August 2004
H.E.Mrs. Milena Santana Ramirez, Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	5 August 2004
H.E.Mr.Dato' Zulkifly@Ibrahim Abdul Rahman, High Commissioner of Malaysia	5 August 2004
H.E.Mr.Balumuene Nkuna, Ambassador of Democratic Republic of Congo	5 August 2004
H.E.Mr. Bruno Claude Frederic Ranarivelo, Non-Resident Ambassador of Madagascar.	5 August 2004
H.E. Mr. Graeme Charles Waters, High Commissioner of New Zealand	29 September 2004
H.E. Mrs.Usha Chandnee Dwarka-Canabady, High Commissioner of Republic of Mauritius	29 September 2004
H.E. Mr. S.K.Walubita, High Commissioner of The Republic of Zambia	29 September 2004
H.E. Mr. Ivan Nemeth, Ambassador of The Republic of Hungary	29 September 2004
H.E.Mr.Tchary G.Niyazov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan	29 September 2004
H.E.Mr.Kairat E.Umarov, Ambassador of Republic of Kazakhstan	29 September 2004
H.E.Mr.Gilbert Bleu-laine, Ambassador of Cote d' Ivoire	29 September 2004
H.E.Mr. Kieran Dowling, Ambassador of Ireland	29 September 2004
H.E.Dr. Tamerlan Elmar oglu Karayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan	30 November 2004
H.E.Mr. Dominique Dreyer, Ambassador of Switzerland	30 November 2004
H.E.Mr. Alexander Ilascik, Ambassador of the Slovak Republic	30 November 2004
H.E. Mr. Pedro De Bedout Gori, Ambassador of Colombia	30 November 2004
H.E. Mr. Han Chang On, Ambassador of Democratic People's Republic of Korea	30 November 2004
H.E. Lt. Gen (Retd) AnbareeAbdul Sattar Adam, High Commissioner of The Republic of Maldives	30 November 2004
H.E.Mr. Jose Vicente de Sa Pimentel, Ambassador of the Federative Republic of Brazil	30 November 2004
H.E.Mr. Vyacheslav Ivanovich Trubnikov, Ambassador of the Russian Federation	18 January 2005
H.E.Mr. Ernesto Carlos Alvarez, Ambassador of the Argentine Republic	18 January 2005

H.E.Mr.John McCarthy AO, High Commissioner of Australia	18 January 2005
H.E.Mr.Rogelio Granguillhome, Ambassador of Mexico	18 January 2005
H.E.Mr.Sun Yuxi, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China.	18 January 2005

Countries which opened their resident missions in Delhi on the dates mentioned:

Republic of Tajikistan Embassy	9 October 2003
Republic of Fiji High Commission	2 January 2004
Republic of Guyana High Commission	25 October 2004
Republic of Maldives High Commission	17 November 2004
Republic of Azerbaijan Embassy	1 December 2004
Kingdom of Lesotho High Commission	January 2005
Republic of Ecuador Embassy	4 February 2005

Visits in 2004

State Visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

Dignitary	Dates
HE MR Bharrat Jagdeo, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana	6-13 January 2004
HH Shaikh Khalifa Bin Saman Al-Khalifa, Prime Minister of Bahrain	11-19 January 2004
HE Mr. Nambaryn Enkhbayar, Prime Minister of Mongolia	14-19 January 2004
HE Mr Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil	25-28 January 2004
HE Mr Ion Iliescu, President of Romania	28 January –1 February 2004
HE Mr. Goh Chok Tong, PM of Singapore	8-11 July 2004
H.E. Mr. Roh Moo-hyun, President of Republic of Korea	4-6 October 2004
H.E. Mr. Gerhard Schroder, Chancellor of Germany	6-7 October 2004
Rt. Hon. Helen Clark, PM of New Zealand	17-20 October 2004
H E Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of Myanmar	24-29 October 2004
H.E. Mr. Ivan Gasparovic, President of the Slovak Republic	11-16 December 2004
The Honourable Dato” Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia	19-23 December 2004

Official/Working visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

Working Visit of HE Mr. Goran Persson, Prime Minister of Sweden	9-11 January 2004
Official Visit of HRH Paras Bir Bikram Shah Dev, Crown Prince of Nepal	18 January –1 February 2004
HE Mr. Amani Abeid Karume, President of Zanzibar	7-12 March 2004
HE Mr Ayatollah Hashemi Shahroudi, Head of Judiciary	9-15 March 2004
HE Mr. Mahindra Rajapaksa, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka	17-19 July 2004
The Rt. Hon. Sher Bahadur Deuba, Prime Minister of Nepal	8-12 September 2004
H E Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, President of Sri Lanka	4-7 November 2004
HE Mr Shaukat Aziz, Prime Minister of Pakistan	23-24 November 2004

HH The Aga Khan	24 November –1 December 2004
HM The King of Bhutan	24-29 November 2004
H.E. Mr. Vladimir V. Putin, President of the Russian Federation	3-5 December 2004.
HE Mr. Driss Jettou, Prime Minister of Morocco	6-9 December 2004

Official visits by Foreign Minister and equivalent level

Hon J K Cuttaree, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Regional Cooperation of Mauritius	6-11 January 2004
Visit of Minister and Representatives of System of Central American Integration(SICA)	1-5 February 2004
Rt Hon Jack Straw, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of United Kingdom	5-8 February 2004
HE Mr Silvan Shalom, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Israel	9-12 February 2004
HE Mr. Dominique de Villepin, Foreign Minister of France	12-13 February 2004
HE Mr. Dimitrij Rupel, Foreign Minister of Slovenia	14-18 February 2004
India-EU Troika Ministerial Meeting (Foreign Ministers of Ireland, Netherlands and Commissioner for External Relations of EC)	15-16 February 2004
HE Dr Edmund Stoiber, Minister President of Free State of Bavaria	16-21 February 2004
Foreign Ministers of Team-9 (Western Africa)	29 February –3 March 2004
Foreign Ministers of Brazil-South Africa (IBSA Trilateral Meeting)	4-5 March 2004
HE Mr. Colin L. Powell, Secretary of State of USA	15-17 March 2004
Hon' Lakshman Kadirgamar, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka	28-29 April 2004
Hon' Lakshman Kadirgamar, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka	29 May –2 June 2004
H.E. Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Foreign Minister of Bhutan	7-10 June 2004
H.E. Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, Foreign Minister of Thailand	8-11 June 2004
H.E. Mr. Joschka Fischer, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany	13-14 July and 19-21 July 2004
H.E. Mr. Youssouf Ouedraogo, Foreign Minister of Burkina Faso	22-25 July 2004
H.E. U Win Aung, Foreign Minister of Myanmar	23-25 July 2004
H.E. Mr. Dai Bingguo, Special Rep. from China	25-30 July 2004
H.E. Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Foreign Minister of Iran	25-26 July 2004
H.E. Dr. Solomon Passy, Foreign Minister of Bulgaria	27-30 July 2004
H.E. Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, Foreign Minister of Japan	12-14 August 2004
H.E. Dr. Luis Ernesto Derbez, Foreign Minister of Mexico	12-14 August 2004
H.E. Mr. Souef Mohamed El-Amine, Foreign Minister of Comoros	22-27 August 2004
H.E. Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah, Foreign Minister of Kuwait	24-26 August 2004
H.E. Dr. Abdullah Adbullah, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan	31 August to 3 September 2004
H.E. Mr. Jesus Arnaldo Perez, Foreign Minister of Venezuela	1-3 September 2004
H.E. Mr. Khurshid M Kasuri, Foreign Minister of Pakistan	4-8 September 2004
H.E. Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Foreign Minister of Senegal	8-12 September 2004

H.E. Mr. Sergey V Lavrov, Foreign Minister of Russian Federation	8-10 October 2004
H.E. Mr. Tang Jiaxuan, Councillor of State Council of China	18-20 October 2004
H.E. Mr. Michel Barnier, FM of France	27-28 October 2004
H.E. Dr. Sodyq S Safaev, Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan	29-31 October 2004
H.E. Mr. M Morshed Khan, FM of Bangladesh	31 October to 2 November 2004
H.E. Jaya Krishna Cuttaree, FM of Mauritius	4-9 November 2004
H.E. Ms. Maria E Levens, FM of Surinam	15-19 November 2004
H.E. Mr. Alexander D. Zhukov, DPM of the Russian Federation	18-20 November 2004

Transit visit of Heads of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

Transit visit of H.E. Mr Ion Iliescu, President of Romania	5 January 2004
Transit visit of H.E. Mr. Goran Persson, Prime Minister of Sweden	13 January 2004
Transit visit of H.E. Mr Ion Iliescu, President of Romania	5 February 2005
Transit visit of H.E. Mr. Aleksandr Kwasniewski, President of Poland	21 February 2004
Transit visit of H.E. Mr . Aleksandr Kwasniewski, President of Poland	27 February 2004
Transit visit of H.E. Mr Abdul Qader Bagamal, Prime Minister of Yemen (HYDERABAD)	1 April 2004
Transit visit of President of Madagascar (Kolkata)	12 May 2004
Transit visit of H.E. Mr AJJ Jammeh, President of Gambia (Mumbai)	22 May 2004
Transit visit of H.E. Mr Museweni, President of Uganda (Kolkata)	26 May 2004
Transit visit of H.E. Mr Museweni, President of Uganda (Kolkata)	30 May 2004
Chief Stella Obasanjo, First Lady of Nigeria	1-10 December 2004
H.E. S.R. Nathan, President of Singapore	10-20 December 2004

Visits abroad of President/Vice President/Prime Minister of India

Visit of Prime Minister of India to Islamabad (for SAARC summit)	3-6 January 2004
Visit of Vice President of India to South Africa	25 April –3 May 2004
Visit of Prime Minister of India to Bangkok for First BIMST-EC Summit	29-31 July 2004
Visit of President of India to Tanzania and South Africa	11-18 September 2004
Visit of Prime Minister of India to London, New York and Geneva	19-27 September 2004
Visit of Prime Minister of India to The Netherlands (for Fifth India-EU Summit)	7-10 November 2004
Visit of Prime Minister of India to Vientiane (Laos)	28-30 November 2004

Visits in 2005

State Visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

Dignitary	Dates
H.E. Dr Ricardo Lagos, President of Chile	18-22 January 2005
H.M. King Jigme Singye Wangchuk, King of Bhutan	23-27 January 2005
H.E. Mr Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, President of Italy	12-16 February 2005
H.E. Dr Heinz Fischer, President of Austria	16-22 February 2005

Official/Working visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

The Rt Hon'ble Paul Martin, PM of Canada	17-18 January 2005
H.E. Mr Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	23-25 February 2005

Official visits by Foreign Minister and equivalent level

H.E. Mr Sidi Morro Sanneh, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of The Gambia	11-13 January 2005
H.E. Mr Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Foreign Minister of Senegal	21-24 January 2005
H.E. Mr Frederick Mitchell, Foreign Minister of Bahamas	26 January –1 February 2005
H.E. Mr Ramazani Baya, Foreign Minister of Democratic Republic of Congo	1-4 February 2005
Rt Hon Jack Straw, British Secretary of State	16-18 February 2005
H.E. Mr Kamal Kharrazi, Foreign Minister of Iran	20-22 February 2005
H.E. Mr Lakshman Kadirgamar, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka	24-26 February 2005

Private/Transit visit of Heads of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

HE Mr Jules Rattankumar Ajodhia, Vice President of Suriname (Chief Guest of Pravasi Bharat Diwas 2005)	4-12 January 2005
H.E.Mr Anerood Jugnauth, President of Mauritius	10-22 January 2005
Prime Minister of Turkey (Delhi)	6 February 2005
H.E. Ashi Sangay Choden Wangchuck, Queen of Bhutan	6-21 February 2005

Private/Transit visits of Foreign Minister and equivalent level

H.E. Mr Jan Petersan, Foreign Minister of Norway	January 2005
H.E. Mr Laurie Chan, Foreign Minister of Solomon Islands	17-20 January 2005
H.E. Mr Sadiq S Sofaev, Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan	7-8 February 2005

Visits abroad of President/Vice President/Prime Minister of India

Nil



The CPV Division of the Ministry of External Affairs through the Central Passport Organisation (CPO) and through the passport, visa and consular wings of Indian Missions and Posts abroad provides a direct interface with the general public in India, with the Indian Diaspora abroad and with foreign nationals. The Ministry issues passports and renders passport related services through the Passport Offices in India.

Currently there are 30 Passport Offices in India. All Passport Offices have been computerized and issue machine-printed and machine-readable passports. Grant orders for issue of passport are generated electronically. All routine passport related work such as generation of cash, index checking, writing of passports, addresses and dispatch are computerized and records maintained electronically. Passport applications are being scanned and stored electronically. As part of strengthening the public grievance mechanism, all Passport Offices have been instructed to set up Facilitation Counters and Help Desk to assist applicants and also to attend to grievances/complaints promptly. A public grievances mechanism also exists within the CPV Division under close supervision of JS (CPV).

Passport Services

Decentralisation through Post Offices and District Offices

As part of Decentralisation Scheme, District Passport Cells (DPCs) have been opened at districts levels where the office of the District Magistrate/Superintendent of Police receives passport applications and after scrutiny and police verification forwards them to the concerned Passport Office for issuance of passports. Currently there are approximately 400 DPCs in 26 states in India. Opening of DPCs has resulted in decongestion in Passport Offices to a large extent. In addition to expediting the police verification process, DPCs also provide relief to the applicants who do not have to travel long distances to approach Passport Offices. The passport applications are

also received through the network of Speed Post Centres. Currently there are approximately 215 Speed Post Centres that accept passport applications.

Ongoing Innovations

The 'Tatkaal' Scheme for out-of-turn issue of passports has enabled the system to speedily respond to demand for issuance of passports on urgent basis. During the year 2004 (upto December 2004) a total of 206915 passports were issued under the Tatkaal Scheme resulting in additional revenue of Rs. 31.12 crore.

Tele-enquiry system is available in 22 Passport Offices and touch screen enquiry kiosk has been introduced in PO Bangalore on pilot basis.

Review of Passport Issuance System

An Inter-Ministerial Committee on 'Review of the Passport Issuance System' which was set up in the Cabinet Secretariat has made several recommendations to simplify the passport issuance system. A large number of recommendations have already been implemented and the remaining recommendations are being processed in consultation with the concerned agencies.

Infrastructure

The Government has taken up construction of buildings to house the Passport Offices at Bangalore, Kolkata, Lucknow, Jaipur and Bhubaneswar. At present, Passport Office buildings at eight places viz Mumbai, Chandigarh, Cochin, Kozhikode, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Patna and Panaji are owned by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Office premises in six Passport Offices are owned by Central Government/State Government and are rented in 16 Passport Offices. The process for purchase of land for four Passport Offices i.e. Tiruchirapalli, Guwahati, Jalandhar and Mumbai is also underway.

Computerisation

At present, all 30 Passport Offices have been computerised. E-mail facility is available at all

computerised Passport Offices. Web pages have also been created for all Passport Offices. A proposal for a comprehensive computerised network and connectivity with interlinking of all Passport Offices as well as creation of a Central Processing Cell is envisaged.

Workload

During the period January-December 2004, a total number of 3352780 passports were issued and 395598 miscellaneous services were rendered. Passport-Office wise break-up of the figures for number of passport applications received/passports issued/misc. services rendered and revenue and expenditure is at **Appendix IV**.

Scanning of Passport Files

Lack of sufficient space for storage of old applications and difficulties in speedy retrieval for reference or for court related matters have been a long-standing problem. To overcome this problem, it was decided to scan old applications and to store the information in CDs. CNE (Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure) approval was obtained. Scanning of old passport application has been completed in all Passport Offices.

Passport Officers Conference

A Passport Officers Conference was held at Cochin on 26 September 2004. Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs inaugurated the Conference. He emphasized on modernization, decentralization, elimination of pendencies, speedy redressal of public grievances, proper maintenance of office buildings and zero tolerance towards corruption and negligence.

Consular Services

All Missions and Posts abroad render consular services to Indian diaspora abroad. In cases of deaths of Indians abroad, prompt assistance was provided by Indian Missions and Posts for completing the formalities for early dispatch of the mortal remains, liaison with the local and Indian authorities and keeping the relatives of the deceased informed. During January-November 2004, 8909 Indians were arrested abroad. 2378 deaths of Indians abroad were reported to the Ministry.

Visa Services

Over the years, the procedure for grant of visa by Indian Missions and Posts has been simplified. Most Missions and Posts grant visas either across the counter on the same

day or at the most within 48 hours. A project for computerisation of the Visa & Passport Wings of the Missions and Posts in the Gulf, West Europe and North America is under implementation. First, those Missions and Posts would be computerised where the volume of services rendered is high. Separately, CPV Division and NIC have been working on the computerisation of the Visa and Passport Wings of High Commission of India, Islamabad and London.

Consular Attestation

During the year 2004-05, 5,37,467 documents were accorded consular attestation in CPV Division, of which 232060 were commercial documents. This service is rendered on the same day without any charges and is prompt and efficient.

Consular Agreements – Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance Agreements

In order to provide a legal and institutional framework to combat organised crime, international terrorism and drug trafficking, and to respond to the growing international dimensions of financial and other crime, bilateral agreements are being negotiated with several countries to provide legal underpinning to this international effort. These consular agreements include Treaties on Extradition, Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters.

During the visit of the President of South Korea to India in October 2004, two agreements, Treaties on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal matters were signed. Extradition treaty and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters were signed with Kuwait in August 2004 during the visit of the Foreign Minister of Kuwait to India. An Extradition Treaty was also signed between the Government of India and The Sultanate of Oman on 26 December 2004.

During the year, official delegations visited Nepal to negotiate Treaties on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. An official delegation visited Singapore to negotiate Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters. Official delegations from Iran, Hong Kong, Singapore and Kazakhstan visited India to negotiate various consular agreements. As a result, text of visits of various foreign delegations to India, Extradition Treaty with Oman, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in

Civil Matters with Kazakhstan, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters with Hong Kong and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters with Singapore were finalized and initialled at official level.

The Ministry actively pursues requests for extradition and legal assistance from foreign governments both for criminal and civil/commercial offences. The requests for extradition emanate from our obligations under the Extradition Treaties or Extradition Arrangements entered

into with various countries. During the year 2004, 14 extradition requests from various investigation agencies were forwarded to the Foreign Governments. During the same period, India received 10 extradition requests from foreign governments. The Government of India extradited two persons. Three persons were extradited to India from foreign countries. Government of India received 88 requests for legal assistance from foreign governments and 37 Indian requests for legal assistance in criminal matters were forwarded to the foreign governments.

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Administration

Shri Natwar Singh assumed charge of Minister of External Affairs on 23 May 2004. Shri E. Ahamed and Shri Rao Inderjit Singh also assumed charge of Ministers of State on the 23 May 2005. Shri Shyam Saran assumed charge of Foreign Secretary from 1 August 2004.

Effective pursuance of India's foreign policy objectives necessitates increase in India's diplomatic presence abroad. Equally important challenge for the Administration Division during the year was to keep the morale of its personnel high by providing adequate promotional avenues in all grades. As part of the policy to meet the functional requirements of the Ministry, both at Headquarters and in Indian Missions/Posts, as also to meet the aspirational needs of its personnel, the Administration Division undertook the 4th Cadre Review of IFS and also the first ever Cadre Review of IFS 'B'. The 4th Cadre Review IFS enabled creation of 29 posts at Grade III of IFS and also 40 posts at Junior Scale of IFS and Probationers' Reserve. The first ever cadre review of IFS(B) provides for creation of 60 posts at Under Secretary level, 94 posts at Section Officer level and 67 posts at Private Secretary level, and also commensurate reductions in Group 'C' posts. With the active support of DoP&T and Ministry of Finance, the Ministry has been able to get necessary approvals for both the Cadre Reviews and also implemented them in a time-bound manner.

Ministry implemented mandatory Screening Committee mechanism devised by DoP&T for optimization of Direct Recruitment at all levels— which resulted in abolition of posts. Administration Division also undertook extensive studies of human resources deployments in the Ministry and effected various measures to rationalize the distribution of personnel both in the Missions/Posts abroad as well as in various Divisions at Headquarters in the wake of above mandatory abolition of posts. This exercise was also aimed at streamlining the support staff available in the Ministry by providing sufficient number of more qualified senior staff, in the light of dwindling numbers of lower level staff particularly at UDC/LDC level.

A total of 3340 officers and staff are employed by the Ministry at Headquarters and in 162 Missions/posts abroad, as detailed in the table at **Appendix I**. This includes Indian Foreign Service A (IFS), Indian Foreign Service B (IFS B), Interpreters and Legal & Treaties (L&T) Cadres.

Recruitment made in the Ministry from 1 April to 30 November 2004 through Direct Recruitment (DR) and through Departmental Promotions (DP) and Limited Department Examinations (LDE) including against reserved vacancies, are given in the table at **Appendix II**.

The table at **Appendix III** gives details of the language proficiency of officers of the Ministry.

Ministry continued its efforts aimed at maximizing efficiency through simplification of rules and regulations and adoption of new technology.

Establishment

Two new Divisions, Projects Division and e-Governance and Information Technolog Division, were carved out of the Establishment Division to ensure special attention to construction projects and computerization in the Ministry. The Establishment Division remains a service Department responsible for renting and maintenance of all premises of the Ministry in India, renting of premises abroad, fixation of allowances and grants and supply of office and residential equipment, furniture and art objects to Missions as well as offices at Headquarters.

A system of mid-term review of the foreign allowance effective from 1 October every year was introduced to make the system of annual indexation introduced in 1998 more responsive to changes in the cost of living. The Indexation Team visited South Africa, London and Rome to examine problems related to the depreciation of the US dollar. On the recommendation of the Team, the ministry provided protection to the Representational Grant in terms of local currency and to the Foreign Allowance in certain Missions. A comprehensive review

of the Representational Grant and Special Grants is under consideration.

The floors of Akbar Bhawan, vacated by CDoT, were renovated. The new Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs will occupy part of it while the rest will be with the Ministry. Work is also to start soon on the renovation of C-I Hutments, where the Records Management Section is located.

The Committee for selection of art objects (Oda Committee) was reconstituted. Smt. Anita Saran, Spouse of Foreign Secretary is the Chairman of the Committee. Members of the Oda Committee are: Shri S. Varadrajan, formerly Secretary (Culture), Chairman, Expert Committee, National Museum; Shri Rajiv Lochan, Director, National Gallery of Modern Art; Dr. Sudhakar Shanna, Secretary, Lalit Kala Academy; Ms. Purnima Rai, Delhi Crafts Council; Ms. Jasleen Dhamija, Textile Expert; Ms. Lekha Bhagat, Pottery Expert; Shri Dilip Sinha, Joint Secretary (Estt. & Projects), Ministry of External Affairs (as Ex-Officio Secretary).

Projects Division

The Projects Division of the Ministry of External Affairs is a service Department administering expenditure related to Capital Outlay for purchase of built-up properties and construction and renovation projects in India and abroad. In addition, the Division is responsible for repair and maintenance of the Ministry of External Affairs' premises abroad.

Projects

The Ministry attaches high priority to the expeditious completion of planned construction projects in India and abroad and is moving resolutely to achieve this goal. Efforts to expedite construction on government owned plots have been intensified and substantive progress was made during 2004-05 in developing these plots and commencing planning and construction activities in a systematic manner.

The Ministry has successfully completed construction of the Embassy complex in Abu Dhabi. Other projects are in various stages of planning and implementation. Financial approval of the competent authority has been obtained for construction of the Chancery and staff residences in Warsaw, redevelopment of High Commissioner's Residence in Singapore and construction of the Chancery in Abuja. Pre-construction activities for these projects, such as finalization of drawings and

obtaining local body approvals, have been initiated. Financial approval for the projects in Brasilia, Kathmandu, Islamabad, Tashkent, etc. is being processed. Design for the Dhaka Embassy complex has been finalized and the Ministry is in the process of signing an agreement with the consultant following which cost estimates will be drawn up.

For projects where financial approval already exists, Ministry is taking steps for their timely execution. The first stage building permit for the construction project in Beijing has been obtained and second stage approvals are being processed. The process of short-listing contractors has also been initiated. Fresh tenders are being floated for the Muscat construction project where the tendered cost turned out to be above the approved cost. The residential construction project in Moscow, which had reached an advanced stage of planning, has been stalled in view of the withdrawal of the plot by the local authorities and efforts are on to reach a mutually acceptable solution. Renovation of the PR's Residence in Geneva is underway and construction of residences at 8 SAS London has been initiated. Construction of a Cultural Centre in Tokyo and renovation of other properties of the Mission in Tokyo are at planning stage.

New plots for construction of Chancery were acquired in Mauritius and Bahrain. A plot offered by the Mauritian government in the upcoming Cyber City for construction of our Chancery, in lieu of the earlier plot, was accepted during December. In Bahrain, a plot in the new diplomatic enclave was purchased based on a decision of a Property Team that visited Bahrain in January 2005. The Qatar authorities have informed that a plot will be allotted to us in the new diplomatic enclave in Doha by mid 2005.

In India, construction of the Foreign Service Institute complex, including the hostel and administrative block and residences, is at an advanced stage of execution. An additional strip of land has been acquired for the FSI complex and local body approvals are being sought for the plans. The headquarters of the Asian-Afro Legal Consultative Organisation, being constructed in Chanakyapuri as a gift from the Government of India, is nearing completion. Construction of the ICCR building in Kolkata and Regional Passport Office building in Lucknow is also in progress. Construction of the RPO building in Chandigarh has been completed. Construction of a housing complex for the Ministry of External Affairs officers in Pappankala, Dwarka has also been completed and allotment of flats has already started.

Financial sanction for the construction of the Ministry of External Affairs Officers' Housing Complex in Chanakyapuri has been obtained and CPWD has been asked to implement the project within a stipulated time frame. CPWD is in the process of obtaining local body approvals.

The Jawaharlal Nehru Bhavan project has been entrusted to the CPWD for design and execution. Formerly known as Videsh Bhavan, the Jawaharlal Nehru Bhavan will serve as the headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs, and will be located at the junction of Janpath and Maulana Azad Road. An in-house concept design has been prepared by CPWD which is in architectural harmony with the creation of Lutyens and other buildings on the Central Vista and is in consonance with the environment and surroundings. As the building would house the Foreign Ministry, which is frequently visited by foreign dignitaries, due care has been taken to ensure that the building not only meets the Ministry's functional requirements, but also has a notable presence, representative of India's stature in the international community.

The concept design of the Jawaharlal Nehru Bhavan has been approved in principle by the Delhi Urban Arts Commission while approval of the Central Vista Committee and other local bodies is being processed. Simultaneously, financial approval of the project is also being sought. The Committee for Non-Plan Expenditure has approved the project at a cost of Rs. 175.57 crores, based on CPWD estimates. Necessary steps are being taken to obtain Cabinet approval. CPWD has indicated that construction of the building will take forty months after receipt of all approvals. The Ministry attaches a high priority to the project and it would be the effort of the Ministry to ensure that the project is completed on schedule once the necessary approvals are obtained.

In pursuance of the recommendations of the Standing Committee of Parliament on External Affairs, progress of construction projects is being closely monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. Status of the projects is regularly reviewed with a view to ensuring proper follow up and timely implementation.

Purchase of Property Abroad

Ministry has been making efforts to cut down on government expenditure on rentals through purchase of built up property abroad. High rental stations have been identified and Missions in these stations have been asked to locate suitable properties for purchase. Increase in the Ministry's delegated financial powers for expenditure on purchase/ construction projects from Rs. 5 crores to Rs 15 crores has given greater leeway to Missions to explore possibilities of purchase. It has been the endeavour of the Ministry to process proposals received in an expeditious manner. Property for Ambassador's Residence was purchased in Panama in March 2004. A Property Team visited Buenos Aires and Georgetown in January 2005 and recommended purchase of Chancery and Embassy Residence in both the stations. Various formalities associated with purchase are being processed with a view to concluding these purchases within the current financial year. Proposals for purchase of property in various other stations are under active consideration of the Ministry.

e-Governance & Information Technology

A new Division, called e-Governance & Information Technology, was created to reflect the increased importance attached to the e-Governance initiatives in Ministry of External Affairs, in addition to the ongoing hardware supply aspect.

A major project on a worldwide scale was initiated and completed during this period, namely, Project Standardised Email Addresses and Management. Through the implementation of this project, all Ministry of External Affairs email users have been brought under a single domain of **user@mea.gov.in**. Every Mission/Post has also been given the standard email IDs under the scheme. Moreover, all officers have been given Name Based Permanent Email IDs that can be used based on *anywhere-anytime* basis.

Apart from this, various other projects like Mission Passport and Visa package, Diplomatic ID card digitization, Parliamentary Assurances Monitoring Systems have been completed. Ministry of External Affairs's website has been standardized under **www.mea.gov.in** domain name.



The Coordination Division consists of three Wings: Parliament Section, Coordination Section and Students Cell.

Parliament Section

Coordination Division is the nodal point of the Ministry of External Affairs for all work relating to Parliament including Questions-Answers, Assurances, debates on foreign relations and laying of reports on the Table of both Houses of Parliament. The Coordination Division also organizes the meetings of the Consultative Committee on External Affairs, and coordinate and look after work relating to Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs and other Parliamentary Committees with regard to matters handled by the Ministry of External Affairs.

Coordination Section

Coordination Section processes requests for grant of no objection from political angle to the visits by Governors, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha, Union Ministers, Ministers in the State Governments, MPs, MLAs, members of the Judiciary, Government officials etc. Political clearance is normally accorded by the Ministry of External Affairs after taking into consideration several factors. These include guidelines laid down by the Government of India for this purpose; the political and functional justification for the visit; the background and antecedents of the organizers; and the recommendation from our Mission/Post concerned. The recommendations of this Ministry are an essential input before a Government official is permitted to proceed abroad.

During the year, Coordination Section also processed a large number of approvals for participation of various Indian sportsmen and sports teams in international events abroad and foreign sports teams in India.

During the year, Anti-Terrorism Day (21st May), Sadbhavana Diwas (20th August) and Quami Ekta Week/ Diwas (19-25 November) were observed with due solemnity. Pledges were administered, both at Headquarters and in our Missions abroad.

Requests for grant of no objection for holding international conferences, seminars, workshop, acceptance of foreign aid/grants, approvals under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, grant of Amateur W/T Licence under the Indian Telegraph Act 1885, grant in aid to Indo-foreign cultural friendship and cultural societies located in foreign countries, were also processed during the year in an expeditious manner. Similarly, diplomatic clearance for non-scheduled flights, visits by foreign naval ships and vessels were processed.

Students Cell

Students Cell, a part of the Coordination Division, deals with the selection, nomination and admission of foreign self-financing students against reserved seats in MBBS/BDS, Engineering Degree, B. Pharmacy and Engineering Diploma courses in Medical and Engineering institutions.

It also deals with political clearance in respect of foreign students seeking admission to Graduate and Post Graduate courses in Engineering, Medicine, Management and other technical and professional courses including Elective training in various medical institutions and research courses.

It liaises with the various government Ministries/ Departments and institutions in connection with the issue of political clearance and admission of self-financing foreign students to various technical and professional courses.

149 valid applications for admission to MBBS/BDS were received in the academic year 2003-2004, and 164 in the year 2004-2005. Similarly 122 and 126 applications were received during the years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 respectively for admission to reserved seats for Degree/ Diploma in Engineering and Pharmacy.

During the years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, in addition to processing of applications for admissions against reserved seats, 1123 and 1236 applications respectively were processed for grant of no objection from political angle.



Non Resident Indians and People of Indian Origin Overseas

After creation of the new Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, most of the subjects which were being handled by this Division have been transferred to the new Ministry. Since the NRI/PIO Division is still a part of the Ministry of External Affairs, some of the subjects handled by the Division during the period under review are given below:

Third Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2005

The 3rd Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was organized in Mumbai from 7-9 January 2005. NRI/PIO Division gave full secretariat backup to the newly formed Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) in organizing the event. The Prime Minister inaugurated the event and Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards were conferred by the President on 15 prominent NRIs/PIOs. It gave an opportunity to the Government to feel the pulse of the Indian diaspora vis-a-vis their expectations and to evolve a broad framework of policy to engage the diaspora for mutual benefit.

Inaugurating the 3-day event, Prime Minister announced the extension of dual citizenship to overseas Indians in

all countries who migrated from India after 26 January 1950. Following PM's announcement, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is taking action in simplifying the application form and format of citizenship certificate and issue of OIC visa. The Indian Citizenship Act and Supplementary Rules are accordingly being amended and this will be notified to all concerned.

Grievances Received from NRIs / PIOs

During the period in question, the Division received a large number of complaints from NRIs / PIOs regarding illegal occupation and violation of their property in India. These grievances were referred to the concerned state Governments for amicable settlement. Complaints were also received regarding failed and fraudulent marriages of Indian girls with NRI/PIO grooms. Since the problem was assuming serious proportions, State Governments were sensitized to create a separate Cell to handle such problems, including counseling and legal options, in line with recommendations of the National Commission for Women whose report highlighted the plight such women seeking urgent redressal.

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The Foreign Service Institute continued its endeavor to train foreign diplomats apart from training IFS Probationers and other Ministry of External Affairs officials. Three Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) and two Advanced Courses on Asia for Foreign Diplomats (ACAAD) and a Special Course for Palestinian Diplomats (SCPD), were conducted by the Institute during the year. A Special Course for Canadian Diplomats is to be conducted from 21 – 24 March 2005. The Virtual Campus of FSI, set up in consultation with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) to impart Mid-Career Training to serving Indian diplomats, was inaugurated by the External Affairs Minister on 27 July 2004. The Institute also conducted a two-week residential mid-career Module on Foreign Policy, Security, Economic and Regional Issues for serving Indian diplomats who have completed 18-20 years of service. MoU for Cooperation with Foreign Service Institutes of Bulgaria, Venezuela, Afghanistan and Namibia were signed during the year.

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) continued its endeavour not only in training Indian and foreign diplomats during the year 2004-2005 but also maintained institutional linkages with its counterparts in other countries. A brief detail of the Institute's working during the year is given below:

Training of Indian Diplomats

Launching of Virtual Campus for Mid Career Training

Foreign Service Institute (FSI) established in 1986 was originally tasked with the mid-career training for our officers. In pursuance of this objective competent authorities approved an Internet based training programme for mid-career officers. The proposal for Internet based training programme was made in view of the fact that our officers are scattered at different posts and jobs across the world in different time zones and the movement of officers on transfer either to headquarters or to another mission, at different times, make them unavailable for headquarter-based training in significant number at any given moment.

The mid-career training shall focus on the following Groups of officers:

- **Target Group 1 (TG-1):** officers with service of 11- 13 years
- **Target Group 2 (TG-2):** officers with service of 18-20 years

The training course started in July 2004 with 1992 batch officers in TG- 1 and 1985 batch officers in TG-2. The online training focused on foreign policy, security, economic and regional issues for both the groups. For the TG- 2 officers, FSI organized a two-week residential module from 3-14 January 2005 in New Delhi. The aim of the residential module is to supplement the online learning with interaction with important decision-makers. As part of the two-week module the TG-2 participants also attended a three day module on "Strategic Management and Leadership" at Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

Training of Indian Foreign Service Officers

One year training programme for the nine Indian Foreign Service Officer Trainees of 2003 batch was successfully completed on 7 January 2005. A variety of subjects were covered in the programme through lectures, interactive seminars as well as visits to various institutions. As in the previous year the curriculum for training included Foreign and Security policy; economic policy; International Law and legal issues; Press, culture and information; consular affairs; functional skills etc. In order to provide the participants with a deeper understanding of these subjects, to enhance their knowledge of immediate neighbourhood and to familiarize them with the work of Indian Missions abroad, the programme also included three study visits to countries in the SAARC region. FSI commenced the one-year training programme for sixteen- member Indian Foreign Officers of 2004 batch on 10 January 2005.

Training programme for Indian journalists

FSI started an annual course for Indian correspondents

on “Diplomacy and Indian Foreign Policy”. The first programme was held from 31 January – 4 February 2005, which was inaugurated by External Affairs Minister Shri K. Natwar Singh. 24 journalists participated in the Course.

Training programme for Indian Administrative Service Probationers

FSI conducted a one-day Workshop on India’s Foreign Policy for 92 probationers of 2004 batch of Indian Administrative Service on 18 February 2005.

Training of Foreign Diplomats

35th and 36th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) were organised from 8 March to 16 April 2004 and from 23 August to 1 October 2004 respectively. **2nd and 3rd Advanced Course on Asia for Foreign Diplomats (ACAFD)**, a course for mid-career/senior level foreign diplomats, were held from 26 April to 7 May 2004 and from 18 to 29 October 2004 respectively. The Special Course for Palestinian Diplomats was conducted successfully from 22 November to 17 December 2004. Shri E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs, graced the Valedictory Function as Chief Guest and presented the certificates to the trainee diplomats. The new Dean of the Foreign Service Institute Shri Atish Sinha also attended the Valedictory Function.

A Special Course for Canadian Diplomats is to be conducted from 21 - 24 March 2005 in New Delhi. The 37th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats is being held from 14 February to 24 March 2005. Diplomats from 33 countries are attending the 37th PCFD.

Institutional Linkages

Former Dean of Foreign Service Institute, Shri Santosh Kumar, visited Vienna from 23 to 26 June 2004 to attend the 32nd Annual Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Academics and Foreign Relation Institutes hosted by Diplomatic Academy of Vienna. He was a Panelist for Panel Discussion on “Challenges for Diplomacy in 21st Century.” Memorandums of Understanding for cooperation between FSI and Foreign Service Institutes of Bulgaria, Venezuela, Afghanistan and Namibia were signed during the year.

During the year FSI was visited by the following dignitaries/delegations to discuss facilitation of mutual co-operation and bilateral relationship:

- (i) Ms. Katherine Peterson, Dean, United States Foreign Service Institute, Washington D.C.;
- (ii) A two member delegation from the Foreign Service Institute of Canada;
- (iii) A three member delegation from Myanmar led by Mr. U. Tint Deir, Director General, Training, Research and Foreign Languages Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Myanmar;
- (iv) A 29 member delegation of the Singapore Senior Management Programme which included senior public servants of the Government of Republic of Singapore; and
- (v) A delegation of nine trainee officers from Foreign Service Academy of People’s Republic of Bangladesh led by the Vice- Principal of the Academy.



Implementation of Official Language Policy and Propagation of Hindi Abroad

21

The Ministry of External Affairs is making all efforts for the promotion and propagation of Hindi in its offices as well as in Missions/Posts abroad. Besides implementing the Official Language Policy of the Government of India, it plays an important role in the promotion and propagation of Hindi abroad. Documents like Bilateral Treaties, Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, Credentials, Speeches of President, PAC paragraphs, Annual Report of the Ministry and Parliament Questions submitted to both the Houses of Parliament are issued bilingually.

The Ministry has a well-formulated scheme of propagation of Hindi abroad. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) deputed visiting Hindi Professors to various foreign universities. Indian Missions/Posts abroad promote and assist in the learning of Hindi through correspondence courses conducted by Central Hindi Directorate. In 2004-05, out of 100 slots there were 43 students admitted from 18 countries to learn Hindi at the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. Hindi teachers were appointed in many Indian Missions/Posts abroad under a special scheme to teach Hindi to the children of Mission personnel and other officials of organizations like Airlines, Banks etc.

Hindi teaching material and related children literature on various subjects, such as, Indian Culture, Art, literature, History and Philosophy were sent to Indian Missions/Posts for their libraries and also for donating to educational institutions and various voluntary organizations engaged in promotion of Hindi. Fifteen prominent Hindi magazines are also being sent to Missions/Posts abroad. Teaching material, including textbooks, dictionaries, audio-visual cassettes, computer software, CD-ROMs etc. were also sent on a regular basis. Computer was gifted to some of the Missions.

The Missions/Posts maintain close contact with local

organizations and people of the Indian community, and fulfill their Hindi language related requirements. Some Indian Missions/Posts organized Hindi conferences, literary events, Hindi essay competitions etc. to promote Hindi. Some Indian Missions such as London, Yerevan and Kathmandu publish Hindi magazines. Financial assistance is given to organizations engaged in teaching and promotion of Hindi as well as Indian culture abroad. Embassy of India in Budapest was granted Rs.1.75 lakh for continuing Hindi classes for higher learning. Different Missions were given grant for conducting various programmes for Hindi on Hindi Divas. Indian Mission in London published "Bharat Bhavan" with the financial help of the Ministry.

A Regional Hindi Conference was organized on 1-3 July 2004 in Bucharest (Romania) for propagation of Hindi abroad. 14 scholars were invited from 7 nations for this conference. Ministry of External Affairs was also represented in this Conference. It was widely appreciated by the scholars of these countries.

India Mission in Nepal initiated 6 scholarships for Intermediate and 1 scholarship for BA level student. This will give a good gesture to the neighbouring country for Hindi.

A high-level committee, under the Chairmanship of Minister of State, was set up in Ministry of External Affairs on introduction of Hindi as a Language in UN. Consequent upon organising some constructive meetings in this regard, information from all concerned was called for and the procedure of preparing an Advocacy Paper is on the way. To achieve the goal, integrating people of Indian Origin in selected countries and use of the communication media are proposed. Sufficient assistance from External Publicity Division is being taken and the articles on this subject are invited, which are considered to be circulated worldwide.

A Hindi Fortnight was organised in the Ministry in September 2004. Various competitive programmes like Hindi noting/drafting, Hindi essay writing, Hindi stenography, Hindi typing and Hindi song/poetry recital competitions were held in which a large number of officials of Ministry of External Affairs participated. Hindi day was observed in several Missions/Posts abroad for which substantive grants were given by the Ministry from the Hindi budget.

Hindi forms an integral part of the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) training programmes. Intensive training

on Government's Official Language policy and its implementation (Rules and Regulations) was given to the fresh trainees in their departmental training programme.

Meeting of the Official Language Implementation Committee was held on 28 January 2004. The Committee of Parliament on Official Language inspected Passport Office, Bhopal on 14 August 2004 and Passport Office, Chennai on 27 October 2004.

In a number of countries, a panel of interpreters has been identified and is available with the Mission when high level dignitaries visit respective countries.



The Ministry is committed to ensuring gender equality among all its personnel. Equal opportunities are provided to women officers to take up challenging positions and assignments, and currently 15 women officers are posted abroad as Heads of Missions/Posts/Permanent Representatives/Consul Generals. There are 5 women officers at Secretary Level at present in addition to 7 at Additional Secretary level, 24 at Joint Secretary Level and 17 at Director Level. Women officers have also held important positions representing India in prominent international organizations such as United Nations and its related organizations like UNESCO.

The present distribution of women officers among the various cadres in the Ministry of External Affairs is at **Appendix XIX**.

There is a Women's Cell in the Ministry to address complaints of sexual harassment of women officers at the work place and to coordinate and interact with institutions/bodies such as National Commission for Women. It is headed by an Additional Secretary level officer.

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The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (hereinafter referred to as the Council or ICCR) is an autonomous body that was set up in 1950, with the primary objective of establishing, reviving and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. The major activities of the Council include:

- (i) Administration of scholarship schemes for overseas students on behalf of the Government of India;
- (ii) Exchange of exhibitions;
- (iii) Organization of and participation in seminars and symposia;
- (iv) Exchange of performing arts groups;
- (v) Establishing and maintaining Chairs and Professorships for Indian Studies abroad;
- (vi) Presentation of books and musical instruments;
- (vii) Annual organization of the Maulana Azad Memorial Lectures and Maulana Azad Essay Competition and other programmes on behalf of Ministry of External Affairs (MEA);
- (viii) Providing the secretariat for the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding;
- (ix) Publications;
- (x) Maintaining Indian Cultural Centres abroad and supporting special bilateral programmes.

Scholarships and Welfare of International Students

One of the major activities of the ICCR is implementation of scholarship programmes for overseas students. The Council administers various schemes for studies in undergraduate, post-graduate and doctoral programmes as well as for pursuing professional courses such as engineering, pharmacy, accountancy, business administration and management. The thrust of the scholarship programme is towards developing nations with special focus on the

neighbourhood. Approximately 1200 new scholarships were offered by the Council during 2004-05 to students under various Schemes. The percentage of utilization of scholarship slots has been approximately 60 per cent this year. The total number of overseas students studying in India under various schemes is about 1500 representing over 75 countries.

Under its mandate to look after the general welfare of foreign students, the Council organized students' camps to familiarize the students with multifarious aspects of Indian life and heritage. During the period, one summer camp each to Sikkim/Darjeeling, Shimla/Kullu/Manali and Nainital/Ranikhet/Almora were organized. The representation of about 45 foreign students was there in each camp. To promote fraternity among international scholars studying under various scholarship programmes of the Council and to enhance their appreciation of Indian cultural heritage, the Council organized 5 winter camps in the country in December. Around 250 international students participated in these camps.

The International Students Wing of the Council organized an Orientation Programme for the Indian Foreign Service Probationers to give them an overview of Indian art and culture. The Annual International Students Festival commemorating the Birth Anniversary of Council's Founder President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was held on 7 December 2004 at Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi. Students from 21 countries presented various cultural items of their region. The Council also invited applications for the next academic session for approximately 1050 scholarship slots.

The Council's proposal to issue ATM cards to foreign students studying in Delhi to withdraw their scholarship dues has received a good response. The Council is now considering extending this facility to ICCR scholars studying in Bangalore and Hyderabad.

Indian Cultural Centres and Chairs Abroad

In order to promote awareness and appreciation of India's composite cultural heritage abroad, the Council is maintaining Cultural Centres in Cairo (Egypt), Berlin (Germany), Port Louis (Mauritius), Paramaribo (Suriname), Georgetown (Guyana), Jakarta (Indonesia) with a sub-Centre in Bali, Moscow (Russian Federation), London (UK), Almaty (Kazakhstan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Durban and Johannesburg (South Africa), Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) and Suva (Fiji) with a sub-Centre in Lautoko. The Council is also funding Music and Dance Academy at Dhaka (Bangladesh).

As part of its ongoing process to fill the vacant posts the Council has deputed dance/yoga teachers to ICCs Paramaribo, Jakarta and Bali and Hindi Professors to man the Chairs at the University of Romania and Silpakorn Univeristy, Bangkok.

The activities of the Cultural Centres reflect the cultural needs of the local population. The Centres organize talks, lectures, exhibitions of visual arts, essay competitions, performances of dance and music, staging of plays, screening of Indian films, publication of news bulletins, seminars on current issues etc. Regular teaching classes of Indian music, dance, tabla, yoga and Hindi are conducted at some of these Centres. The Centres also maintains Libraries, Reading Rooms and Audio-Video Libraries for the visitors. Apart from organizing their own activities, these Cultural Centres also provide a supportive role to the respective Indian Missions for coordinating various cultural activities. The Centres develop and maintain contacts with the local citizens particularly students, teachers, academicians, opinion-makers and cultural personalities to project holistic picture of India's rich and diverse cultural heritage.

Visiting Professors and Chairs of Indian Studies Abroad

The Council is maintaining Chairs of Indian Studies abroad to teach Indian languages and other related subjects under the Bilateral Cultural Exchange Programmes, Scheme of Propagation of Hindi abroad and Council's own programme. Presently 19 professors are teaching Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Modern Indian History, Indian Civilization in Paramaribo (Suriname), Budapest

(Hungary), Moscow (Russia), Seoul (South Korea), Warsaw (Poland- 2 posts of Hindi and Tamil), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago- 2 posts of Hindi and Modern Indian History/South Asian Affairs), Ankara (Turkey), Sofia (Bulgaria), Bucharest (Romania), Beijing (China), Madrid (Spain), Bangkok (Thailand), Paris (France), Osh (Kyrgyzstan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Brussels (Belgium) and Moka (Mauritius). The Council sent a Visiting Professor on Modern Indian Studies to Poland. The Council is planning to depute Visiting Professor/Teacher of Sanskrit, Hindi and Yoga at Silpakorn University, Bangkok; Warsaw University, Poland and our cultural center in Jakarta respectively in the month of February 2005. The Council has also been providing assistance to institutions/centers overseas imparting courses in Indology and Indian Studies.

Publications

Under its Publication programme the Council regularly brings out six journals in 5 different languages. These are 'Gagananchal' (Hindi), 'Africa Quarterly' and 'Indian Horizons' (English), 'Thaqafat-ul-Hind' (Arabic), 'Papeles de la India' (Spanish), and 'Rencontre Avec L'Inde' (French). The Council has proposal to publish seminar proceedings of "At Home in the World – International Festival of Indian Literature", Indo-Iran Seminar, and a book on Situation of Arabic Language in Indian Universities. Publication of a Coffee-Table book on Maulana Azad is already in process.

During the period, the Council brought out the Arabic edition of its publication "Contemporary Relevance of Sufism". The Council participated in the 10th Delhi Book Fair during 21-29 August 2004 organized by the National Book Trust of India at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. The Council also participated in a book exhibition at Karnal, Haryana on the occasion of the Gandhi Jayanti. The latest edition of ICCR's prominent journal "Indian Horizons" has been brought out in an entirely new format and style.

ICCR Publication "Vision of India" edited by Dr. Karan Singh was released by Dr. Najma Heptulla, President, ICCR on 24 January 2005 at Convention Hall, Hotel Ashok, New Delhi.

Presentations

During the period, the Council sent books, art objects, audio-visual materials, musical instruments etc. on Indian culture, art, architecture, history, dance and music to 29

countries, namely, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Belgrade, Belarus, Canada, China, Chile, Cambodia, Indonesia, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, London (U.K.), Mongolia, Mauritius, Malaysia, Nigeria, New Zealand, Portugal, Poland, Panama, U.S.A., Trinidad & Tabago, Uzbekistan, Thailand, Zambia, Maldives, Seychelles, South Africa, Slovak Republic, Tajikistan, and Tashkent through Indian Missions abroad for presentation to VVIP's and local dignitaries, libraries, institutions and schools.

Library

The ICCR, established in 1950, has a collection of 50,000 volumes mainly on Indian history, art and culture. It also subscribes various newspapers and journals. The main attraction of the library is a collection of 195 rare manuscripts in Urdu, Arabic and Persian languages. The manuscripts and other rare books along with the microfilm rolls are housed in a special section of the library called 'Gosha-e-Azad'. The Library is a boon for researchers in Indology. The Library is a member of DELNET (Developing Library Network). The Library renewed subscription of 32 Indian and foreign journals for the year 2005-06.

ICCR Library primarily serves as a reference library and provides consultation and inter-library loan services to scholars and the organizations/institutions. Interested research scholars, members of the public are permitted to use the library on the basis of letter of recommendations from the heads of the departments of the universities/institutions or on the basis of membership of other organized libraries. During the period April-November 2004, approximately 2000 visitors have consulted the resources of the Library.

The Library has digitized 125 manuscripts, rare books, speeches by Maulana Azad, Maulana Azad Lecture series, catalogue of manuscripts, available in Urdu, Arabic, Persian, Hindi & English language for preservation and dissemination purpose. The Council's Library has awarded six short term library fellowships on India's Cultural Diplomacy and Maulana Azad's vision on science, technology and development in Hindi and English language. The Council has started redesigning the website of its own.

Audio-Visual Recording

In order to preserve the archives of the Council, 331 CDs of empanelled artistes have been digitized.

Exhibitions

During the period, the Council commissioned two busts of Mahatma Gandhi and one bust of Rajiv Gandhi for permanent installation in Buenos Aires, Paris and Port Louis respectively.

The Council also sent six major exhibitions namely, (i) Photographic Exhibition "My Land My People" to Seychelles, Zimbabwe and Namibia and Paramaribo (ii) Exhibition entitled "Celebrating Women-Amrita Shergil Revisited" to Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan during the Festival of India, Mongolia & Moscow (iii) Exhibition of "Madhubani Paintings" to Port of Spain for permanent display, (iv) Exhibition of "Murals of India" to the Nehru Centre, London for permanent display, (v) "Indian Dolls & Dresses" to Belgrade, (vi) Exhibition of Contemporary Graphic prints to Poland and 12 paintings on calender for permanent display in the Nehru Centre, London.

There is a proposal to organize Hungarian stamps exhibition in New Delhi in February 2005.

The Council sent a statue of Mother Teresa to Chicago in December 2004. The Council has plans to send busts of Mahatma Gandhi to Chile, Smt. Indira Gandhi to South Africa and of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose to Myanmar.

Besides these, the Council organized two incoming exhibitions in New Delhi, one from Slovak Republic "Posters & Symbols" by Thomas Pisecky and Michal Pisecky from 9-18 September 2004 and second, an exhibition of Painting and Craft Fair from Kyrgyzstan from 11-16 October 2004. The Council undertook the printing of a Special Cover, Commemorative Stamp and Cachet on the occasion of 50th Anniversary of Panchsheel and made arrangements for transportation of a Padmasana from Bali to Rishikesh.

Incoming & Outgoing Distinguished Visitors Programme

As part of its effort to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries, the Council facilitates exchanges of scholars, intellectuals, academicians and artistes under the Distinguished Visitors Programme. During the period, the Council hosted 18 visitors/delegations from different parts of the world. The Council hosted the visit of Dr. Saleh Ibrahim El Mabrouk, Director, Libyan Academy of

Graduate Studies, Mr. Uxi Mufti, Vice-President of the World Crafts Council from Pakistan. Visit by 53 Distinguished Indians from diverse fields were sponsored for interaction with their counterparts, to participate in international seminars, conferences, workshops or to lecture on different subjects.

The Council sponsored the visit of Dr. Suryakanta Maharana, Lecturer, Birla Institute of Science & Technology, Pilani to Malaysia and Prof. Sachchidanand Sahai, Eminent Art Historian on South East Asia to Cambodia and neighbouring countries. At the request of Indian Mission, the Council is sponsoring visit of Ms. Shoba Broota, renowned Painter, to Guyana to draw a portrait of Dr. Cheddi Jagan, former President of Guyana.

The Council provided Orientation Grant to Ms. Preethi Ganegoda and Ms. Suryakala Chandrika from Sri Lanka and Dr. Danuta Satsik, Head Department of South Asian Studies, Warsaw University, Poland.

Creative Dialogue (Award/Seminar/Symposia)

Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding

The Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding 2003 was conferred on Mr. Goh Chok Tong, former Prime Minister of Singapore on 9 July 2004 at a special ceremony organized at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Maulana Azad Essay Competition

The Award Presentation Ceremony for the Maulana Azad Essay Competition 2002 was held on 4 September 2004 at Vice-President's House. The Vice-President gave away the Awards to the Winners.

The Council provided financial assistance to Society for Indian Ocean Studies, Hyderabad for organizing an international seminar "India's Cultural Diplomacy in South East Asia : Challenges and Opportunities" held from 3-5 July 2004; and to the Asiatic Society of Mumbai for holding a two-day conference "Re-Visioning Mumbai" held on 29-30 October 2004.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Memorial Lecture

Instituted in 1958, as a mark of honour to the memory of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Memorial Lectures are intended to contribute towards the promotion of better understanding among different people of the world. Pt.

Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, delivered the first lecture. Lord Meghnad Desai delivered the 36th Maulana Azad Memorial Lecture on 14 December 2004 on the topic "**Globalisation and Culture**". Dr. Najma Heptulla, Hon'ble President, ICCR presided over the function. Former President Shri K.R. Narayanan, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Shri Jaswant Singh, Members of Parliament from Lok Sabha & Rajya Sabha, diplomats, academicians and eminent persons from different walks of life attended the Lecture.

Performing Arts

During the period, the ICCR sponsored the visits of 64 Outgoing Cultural Delegations to 70 countries, covering all continents of the world. Special emphasis was given to holding workshops-cum-lecture demonstrations with local artistes, in addition to performances. A significant number of younger artistes and folk group formed part of these delegations.

Some of the major festivals/events in which Indian performing groups participated were "2nd SAARC cultural Festival" in Bangladesh, "Annual Thyagaraja Festival" at Cleveland in USA, "Sacral Music Festival" in Poland, "Heritage India Festival" in USA, "Summer Festival of Dubrovnik for 2004" in Croatia, "World Tea Festival" in Russia, "Fashion Show" in CIS countries, "Anniversary of Panchsheel" in China, "Spring Festival" and "Gwacheon Festival" in South Korea, "Gramstown Theatre Festival" in South Africa, "150 years of arrival of Indian Labour" in Guyana, "150 Years of Arrival of Indians" in Carrabian, "Hue Festival" in Vietnam, "Festival of India" in Colombia, "Theatre Festival" in Oslo, "Days of Indian Culture" in Canada, "Oslo Festival" in Dublin, "Edinburgh Festival" in United Kingdom, "Mini India Festival" in Belgrade, "Tolosa International Puppet Festival, India Window" in Spain, "Cerventino Festival" in Mexico, "Barcelona Festival" in Venezuela, and "Imtrat Raising Day Celebrations" in Bhutan.

During the period the Council sponsored a 4-member Vocal group to Pakistan and an 8-member Qawwali group to Myanmar. The Council has plans to send 5 classical/performing groups to Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Mauritius, and Kathmandu upto March 2005.

The ICCR organizes the visits of performing artistes/troupes to India from countries all over the world for performances in various cities of India. These groups are

hosted under the ambit of bilateral Cultural Exchange Programmes as well as in response to recommendations of the Indian Missions abroad and requests received from Foreign Diplomatic Missions/Cultural Centres in India. During the period, the Council hosted the visit of 8 foreign cultural troupes to India from 8 countries. These groups were hosted from Trinidad & Tobago, Egypt, Croatia, Nepal, Indonesia, Angola, Poland and Sri Lanka under the ambit of existing Cultural Exchange Programmes (CEP) and outside CEPs.

The Council from many years has been organizing performances by emerging and outstanding artistes respectively, under the “Horizon” and “Retrospectives”, series in New Delhi and other cities. The Council under its “Retrospectives” Series organized the performances by eminent empanelled artistes. The Council also organized Dance and Music performance by foreign artistes residing in India.

Miscellaneous Projects

As a part of the commitment made by the Prime Minister of India to the Cambodian Government, the Council has established five computer kiosks for use by children of under-privileged and downtrodden society of Cambodia. The efforts made by the Council on behalf of the Government of India were welcomed and well received by the Combodian side. The Council has also been assigned the work relating to establishment of a Traditional Asian Textile Museum in Cambodia. While the project is being financed by the Government of India, the Cambodia Government is providing land for the same.

Accounts

ICCR’s approved Budget Estimates for the year 2004-05 are Rs. 5590.00 lakhs. The expected receipt is Rs. 40.00 lakhs.



The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) was founded in 1943 with a view to encourage the study of Indian and international affairs. It is one of the most prestigious centres for the study of international relations in the country. After being declared as an institution of national importance, the ICWA pursued a vigorous programme of activities in pursuance of its mandate. It aimed to provide through its seminars, publications, lectures, and a specialized library, information for basic understanding of the complexities of the international system.

Sapru House Building

Major civil repairs were undertaken and will soon be completed. Sapru House is being restored to the status appropriate for housing an institution of national importance. The portion of the Sapru House building occupied by the Children's Film Society and Maharaja Ranjit Singh Trust have since been vacated. The portion vacated by them will be utilized for the use of research scholars.

Grant-in-Aid

ICWA's grants-in-aid for the year 2004-05 was projected and approved for Rs.1.65 crores.

Publications

Besides its periodical publications, *India Quarterly* and *Foreign Affairs Report*, the Council brought out other publications namely: Third Africa Day Lecture delivered by Shri Shashank, former Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.

CSCAP India Secretariat and Africa Centre

The Council for Security and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) India Secretariat was relocated in the Sapru House. The Seminars on the topics viz. (1) "China: A Growing Power in South East Asia". (2) "Cooperation in Combating Terrorism in the Bay of Bengal (BIMSTEC)

Region" and (3) "From Bali to Vientiane: Road Map for India-ASEAN Partnership", were organized at Sapru House under the Chairmanship of Ambassador A.N. Ram. A seminar on the topic "Elections in Indonesia", was organized which was presided by Prof. S. D. Muni of JNU. Distinguished journalists and academicians attended these seminars.

Library

The Sapru House Library, after repairs, renovation, extension of space, is air-conditioned and has been bettered for use as reference library for international affairs. During the period, a significant addition of 994 titles of books, serials and bound periodicals were made to its strong existing collection. The Library has received 390 titles of research journals and important dailies from India and abroad. Out of these 201 titles of eminent journals were indexed as part of its 'Current Awareness Service' to the research scholars. About 3700 entries of important articles on international relations and world politics were prepared from research journals both Indian and foreign. As part of bibliographical support to the users, Select Lists of Articles on Current Affairs were prepared for publication in the Foreign Affairs Report Vol. 2 and 3 from July 2003 to September 2004 of the ICWA.

Under fully depository scheme of the UNDP about 5350 new documents were received from the United Nation in New York and were added to its collection. Similarly, approximately 1600 European Union and Indian Government publications were received by the Library and made available to the users. Beside, 36000 press clippings were culled out from 8 major national dailies and 4 regional newspapers raising the number of its collection to 2.9 million approximately.

More than 10,608 visitors used the library for their research work and reference. During this period 219 research scholars, subject experts, journalists and others were enrolled as members of the Library. Research students from different universities and colleges have made use of library material for their research work. The important

universities were Aligarh Muslim University, University of Kumaon, Madurai University, Karnataka University, University of Bangalore, Deen Dayal Upadhyay University, Gorakhpur, Gulab Singh Hindu College, Bijnor, University of Allahabad, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, Himachal Pradesh University, Simla, University of Delhi, Kurushetra University etc.

To promote the study of African nations, the library has added valuable reading material in Africa Centre exclusively created in the library. The automation work of the library is in progress. A separate multi-media section has been created for this purpose.

Seminars/Symposia/Conferences

The ICWA conducted a number of seminars, symposia and conferences during the period under the report. Special Lectures were delivered by H.E. Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Senegal, His Highness Prince Radu of Hohenzollern-Veringen, Romania. The Council organized a major International Seminar on “Panchsheel”, which was attended by thirteen foreign delegates and six Indian

delegates. External Affairs Minister Shri K.Natwar Singh inaugurated the seminar. An International Seminar on “Emerging Trends in Indo-African Relations” was also organized by the council which was inaugurated by Minister of State for External Affairs Shri.Rao Inderjit Singh. A complete list is at **Appendix XX**.

The Council proposes to hold following Lectures/ Seminars in the months of February and March 2005

February 2005

- i) Series of Lectures on: Report of U.N.S.G.’s High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.
- ii) Lecture on: Nuclear Weapons and the Anomalies of Global Governance- by Prof. Ramesh Thakur, Senior Vice-Rector, United Nations University.

March 2005

Panel discussion on:

- a) Elections in Palestine.
- b) Follow up of SAARC Summit.
- c) Elections in Iraq.



Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

25

RIS is New Delhi based think-tank specialized in international economic relations and development cooperation. RIS is an autonomous body of the Ministry of External Affairs. Its mandate includes functioning as an advisory body to the Government of India on matters pertaining to multilateral economic and social issues, including regional and subregional cooperation arrangements, as may be referred to it from time to time. RIS is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue among developing country think-tanks on international economic issues.

Highlights of the RIS' work during the year 2004-05 are presented below:

Research and Policy Inputs Provided to the Government

RIS conducted research studies to assist the policy formulation and preparations for major Summit Meetings and other negotiations held in the year. Some of these inputs include the followings:

- **India-ASEAN Summit and Related Events:** RIS had prepared a document on ASEAN-India Vision 2020 in consultation with ASEAN think-tanks which formed the basis of the Partnership Agreement signed at the Vientiane Summit held in November 2004. RIS provided inputs to Ministry of External Affairs and PMO in preparations of the Summit including notes on Asian Economic Community. Inputs were also provided to PMO in preparation for the India-ASEAN Business Summit held in New Delhi in October 2004.
- **SAARC Ministerial Meeting:** A Note on "SAFTA and Beyond: An Agenda for SAARC" was sent to Hon'ble External Affairs Minister, Government of India on 17 July 2004 following a briefing meeting called by him.
- **Preparations for the Dhaka Summit of SAARC:** RIS has prepared two policy notes on the future directions of SAARC and submitted to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). In addition, a note has

been submitted to the PMO in preparation of the Summit that has now been postponed.

- **NAM Ministerial Meeting Durban, South Africa, 17-19 August 2004:** RIS participated in the discussion meetings organized by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, respectively on 6 August 2004 and 11 August 2004, for inputs for the mid-term Ministerial Meeting of NAM. Subsequently a Note on Economic Agenda for NAM was sent on 12 August 2004.
- **BIMSTEC Summit:** Revised Report on Future Directions of BIMSTEC: Towards a Bay of Bengal Economic Community was provided to the MEA.
- **India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA):** RIS prepared a study on the Potential Economic Partnership between India, Brazil and South Africa at the request of Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **India-China Joint Study Group:** As a member of the group, DG-RIS participated in the Meetings of the JSG held in Delhi (July 2004) and Beijing (December 2004). RIS assisted in drafting a number of chapters of the JSG draft Report besides preparing draft Indian inputs on behalf of the MEA.
- **India-Korea Joint Study Group:** DG-RIS has been appointed a member of the JSG and participated in the first meeting of the Group held in New Delhi in January 2005. RIS is also assisting in preparation of draft chapters of the Report.
- **UNCTAD XI:** RIS prepared a policy brief on the agenda of UNCTAD XI to assist the preparation for the event in India and other developing countries. This policy brief was circulated among the member country delegations and among the NGOs.
- **WTO/NAMA Negotiations:** RIS has been assisting the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in preparations for the ongoing WTO negotiations especially Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) negotiations with notes and analytical

inputs. RIS has regularly provided simulations and sensitivity analysis of different proposals during the period under review.

- **Expert Group on Preferential Rules of Origin:** RIS is represented on the Expert Group set up by the Government of India, 2004 and was assigned by the Department of Commerce the task of preparing a study to identify products that do not qualify change of industrial classification. RIS has submitted inputs in the context of different RTAs being negotiated by India and presentations have been made at the meetings of the Group on the subject.
- **India-Mercosur PTA:** RIS assisted the ongoing negotiations on India-Mercosur PTA with inputs on sensitivity analysis of Indian products and on rules of origin provided to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **SAFTA Negotiations:** Submitted inputs on SAFTA Rules of Origin, for Ministry of Commerce, Government India, July 2004.
- **India-Thailand FTA:** RIS participated in a number of panel discussions for the Government of India – UNCTAD study on identification of sensitive items.
- **Inter-Ministerial Consultative Group on ‘Trade and Environment’:** RIS has been appointed as the Lead Institute for an Expert Group of the Consultative Group constituted jointly by the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) and Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI).

In addition, major on-going studies at RIS during the period under review include a roadmap for an Asian Economic Community including sectoral cooperation, preparatory work for the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference of WTO, regional trade arrangements and developing countries, potential of Mekong-Ganga partnership, strategic approach for strengthening the international competitiveness in knowledge-based industries; promotion of export-orientated industrialization, on employment generation potential of export-oriented manufacturing, issues concerning biodiversity, biosafety and development of capacity for biotechnology, among others.

Policy Dialogue, Conferences and Symposia

During 2004-05 RIS organized a number of policy dialogues, conferences and symposia to fulfill its mandate of fostering intellectual dialogue among developing countries. Major events organized in the period include:

High-Level Conference on Asian Economic Integration: Vision of a New Asia, Tokyo, 18-19 November 2004

The high-level conference was organized by RIS in collaboration with the Council on East Asian Community (CEAC), Tokyo; Development Research Centre (DRC) for the State Council of China, Beijing; Global Security Research Institute (G-SEC), Keio University, Tokyo; Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER), Kuala Lumpur; and with the support of Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Tokyo. It was attended by heads or senior experts of leading think-tanks of Asia. It was a follow-up of an earlier conference organized by RIS in New Delhi in March 2003 to promote the agenda of a broader Asian economic cooperation. Hon'ble Mr. Koichi Kato, Member of Japanese Diet delivered the inaugural address. Among the distinguished experts who addressed the conference include Professor E. Sakakibara, former Vice-Minister of Finance, Japan; Dr Rodolfo Severino, former Secretary-General of ASEAN; Prof. Zhang Xiaoji, Director-General, DRC, Beijing; Dr Eric Teo, Council Secretary, Singapore Institute for International Affairs; Dr Djisman Simandjuntak, Chairman, CSIS, Jakarta; Professor Mohammed Ariff, Executive Director, MIER, Kuala Lumpur; Ambassador M. Xuto, Executive Director, ITD, Bangkok; Prof. Yao Chao Cheng, Dean, Shanxi University, Taiyuan, China; Dr Chan-Hyun Sohn, Senior Fellow, KIEP, Seoul; Professor T. Ide, former Vice Minister, EPA, Japan; Professor A. Seth, President, G-SEC, Tokyo; Prof. Ito Kenichi, President, CEAC, Tokyo; Shri B.J. Panda, Hon'ble MP, India; Ambassador Shashank, former Foreign Secretary, India; Ambassador S.T. Devare, Vice-Chairman, RIS; Dr Nagesh Kumar, DG-RIS; Mr Rahul Khullar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India; Dr Rajiv Kumar, Chief Economist, CII; senior officials of ADB, UN-ESCAP, among many others. The conference issued a statement calling for launch of an Asian Economic Community in a phased manner to begin with Japan, ASEAN, China, India and Korea (JACIK).

India-ASEAN Eminent Persons Lecture by Secretary-General, ASEAN, New Delhi, 18 October 2004

RIS jointly with the Ministry of External Affairs organized the Fifteenth India-ASEAN Eminent Persons Lecture by H.E. Mr. Ong Keng Yong, Secretary-General, ASEAN on 18 October 2004 in New Delhi. H.E. Mr. Ong Keng Yong spoke on “Forging ASEAN-India: Partnership for the 21st Century”. Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, chaired. DG-RIS welcomed the delegates



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Minister of Commerce and Industry Mr. Kamal Nath at inauguration of the 3rd Indo-ASEAN Business Summit. Also seen in the picture (from left) are Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia; H.E. Mr. Ong Keng Yong, Secretary General, ASEAN; FICCI President Shri Y. K. Modi and Shri Y.C. Deveswar, Vice President, CII.



From left to right: Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Director General, RIS; Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs; H.E. Mr. Ong Keng Yong, Secretary General ASEAN; and Shri Rajiv Sikri, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs at the India-ASEAN Eminent Persons Lecture.

and Ambassador Rajiv Sikri, Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs extended a vote of thanks.

Regional Conference on SAARC: Post-Islamabad Challenges, New Delhi, 31 August 2004

This Conference was organized by RIS jointly with South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) with participation by senior experts from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives and India. The conference addressed the issues concerning challenges to the implementation of SAFTA, potential for cooperation in energy issues as well as evolving a regional approach to poverty and social issues. Late Shri J. N. Dixit, the then National Security Adviser, delivered the inaugural address. Among the distinguished experts who addressed the Conference included Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, Hon'ble Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas; Professor Arjun Sengupta, Chairman, RIS; Professor Rehaman Sobhan, Executive Director, SACEPS; Professor Muchkund Dubey, President, CSD; Dr. Mohan Man Sainju, Chairman, IIDS, Kathmandu; Dr. Sman Kelegama, Executive Director, Institute for Policy Studies, Colombo; Dr. Kamal Hossain, Former Foreign Minister of Bangladesh; Dr. Akmal Hussain, Member of Economic Advisory Board to the President of Pakistan; and Dr. Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission.

International Conference on Biotechnology for Asian Development; New Delhi, 7-8 April 2004

This conference was organized by RIS in collaboration with CII and IUCN and with the support of UNESCO and the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India. Shri K. C. Pant, then Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission inaugurated the Conference. The Conference was addressed by leading experts on the subject from several Asian countries and covered sessions on Biotechnology and Food Security in Asia: Priorities and Challenges; Biotechnology and IPR Regime: International Developments and Policy Options; Trade, Labeling, Traceability and Issues in Biosafety Management; Socio-Economic Analysis and Studies on Biotechnology; Public-Private Partnerships in Biotechnology: Issues, Modalities and Lessons; Country Specific Experiences and Options for Asian Regional Cooperation in Biotechnology; and devoted a special panel discussion to Agricultural Biotechnology in India.

National Workshop on Strategic Approach to Strengthening International Competitiveness in Knowledge-based Industries, New Delhi, 13 August 2004

This workshop was organized by RIS jointly with the

Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Ministry of Science and Technology. Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, Honourable Minister of State for External Affairs inaugurated the Workshop and Dr. George B. Assaf, Director, UNIDO, New Delhi delivered a keynote lecture. The Workshop covered presentations of studies prepared by RIS faculty and consultants as a part of the DSIR project on the subject and commentaries by policy makers and industry representatives from select technology intensive branches of industry.

Seminar on National Innovation System: Experience of Select Asian Countries, New Delhi, 14 January 2005

This seminar was chaired by Professor Ashok Parthasarathi, Centre for Study of Science Policy, Jawaharlal Nehru University and had a keynote presentation by Dr. Se-Jun Yoon, Director, Asia and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT), New Delhi. The other presentations were 'The Case of Thailand' by Dr. Patarapong Intarakumnerd, Project Leader, National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), Thailand; 'The Case of Vietnam' by Dr. Bach Tan Sinh, Acting Director, National Institute for Science and Technology Policy and Strategy Studies (NISTPSS), Vietnam; 'The Case of India' by Professor K.J. Joseph, Visiting Senior Fellow, and 'The Case of Singapore' by Dr Sachin Chaturvedi, Fellow RIS.

Outreach, Global Presence and Networking

In order to increase international visibility and outreach, an attempt has been made to participate in major international events relevant to the work of RIS. As a part of this, RIS has obtained a Consultative Status with UNCTAD, WTO and NAM and has participated in the preparatory processes for the high level meetings to influence the international development agenda. The growing international recognition of RIS work on multilateral trade negotiations led to an invitation by the WTO Secretariat to address a key panel at the WTO Public Symposium held in Geneva in May 2004. RIS has also taken steps to strengthen networking with other policy think-tanks for collaborative activities. A MoU has been signed with the Development Research Centre (DRC) of the State Council of China for a regular policy dialogue following the first dialogue conducted in New Delhi in March 2004. DRC, Malaysian Institute of Economic Research, and the Council of East Asian Community, Japan also collaborated with RIS in organization of the High-level Conference in Tokyo. RIS also received delegations from Shanxi University of

Economics in China and from Institute of World Economics and Politics in Hanoi, Vietnam to establish institutional links. Relationship with the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) Singapore was further strengthened during the year with joint publication of three books and with the proposal of organizing the Second ASEAN-India Forum in India in 2005 jointly.

Relationship with IPS, Sri Lanka; ITD, Bangkok and Centre for Policy Dialogue, Dhaka have continued to grow stronger with BIMSTEC report being produced in collaboration with them. RIS has also strengthened links with Pakistan Institute for Development Economics (PIDE) which hosted a seminar to launch RIS' *South Asia Development and Cooperation Report 2004* in Islamabad at the Pakistan Planning Commission Auditorium in August 2004. RIS has also collaborated with the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) presently headquartered at Dhaka in co-hosting a number of seminars including a joint conference in Dhaka in May 2004 on SAARC economic integration issues and launch of RIS 2004 Report. RIS had launched a New Asia Forum as a network of institutions and experts to promote regional economic integration in Asia. This network has developed with its own dedicated website www.newasiaforum.org and a quarterly journal *New Asia Monitor* which have been received well. The Forum website is fast becoming a rich repository of news, analysis and documentation on Asia's development prospects and regional cooperation and the journal, a forum for exchange of information, resources and analysis on regional economic cooperation in Asia.

UN-ESCAP has invited RIS to be a member of the Institutional Advisory Board (IAB) for its Asia-Research Network on Trade (ARTNET) representing India and to participate in its meetings. RIS collaborated with the Asian Development Bank (Manila) for its High-Level Conference on Asian Economic Cooperation, besides discussions on possible funding of two research projects.

UNCTAD, Geneva consulted RIS in connection with its *World Investment Report 2004* and International Food Policy Research Institute (Washington) has commissioned a study on seed industry besides ongoing collaboration in food safety project along with Universities of Melbourne and ANU and Thammasat University in Bangkok. IUCN-Asia Region based in Colombo has signed a MoU with RIS for research collaboration besides jointly organizing a conference on biotechnology in Asia. Commonwealth Secretariat, London has also commissioned a study at RIS. RIS has been designated as the Academic Arm Unit from India for the Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) and

participated at the ACD Think-Tanks Symposium held at Bangkok on 15-17 December 2004.

Capacity Building and Training Programmes

Visiting Research Fellowships in International Economic Issues and Development Policy Research

RIS in collaboration with India Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme of the MEA, Government of India has instituted a Visiting Research Fellowships Programme in international development policy research for researchers and officials from developing countries. Under this programme, RIS receives three Visiting Fellows each year for duration of four months each. Visiting fellows for the 2004/05 have started their programme in January 2005.

Training Module for IFS Officer Trainees, 23-27 August 2004

RIS offered a five-day Training Module on International Economic Issues for the IFS Officer Trainees of 2003 Batch from 23-27 August 2004. During their stay at RIS, the Officers were given an orientation in various issues concerning trade in multilateral, regional and bilateral fora. The faculty for the module comprised senior faculty members of RIS as well as select experts from outside associated with RIS.

Training Programme on RTAs/FTAs for the Officers of Tariff Commission

RIS has been approached by the Tariff Commission to organize a training programme on regional and bilateral trade arrangements for its officials in March 2005. This programme covers various issues concerning the regional and bilateral trade arrangements and their implications.

RIS Publications

During 2004-05 RIS published seven books, issued two policy briefs and 18 Discussion Papers (**Appendix XXI**) during the period. Two issues each of the *South Asia Economic Journal* and the *Biotechnology and Development Review* and four issues of *New Asia Monitor* were brought out in addition to four issues of *RIS Diary*. RIS publications can now be downloaded from its website: www.ris.org.in and www.newasiaforum.org

Budget

RIS received a budgetary support of Rupees 137 lakhs during 2004-05 from the Ministry of External Affairs.



To support research, the Ministry's Library has modern information technology equipment and rich resource materials, with over one hundred thousand books and a large collection of maps, microfilms and official documents. The Library receives and maintains 600 periodical titles. It has in-house computer systems consisting of a server, 7 PCs and 8 terminals including some supporting data entry and retrieval in Hindi. It has CD-ROM work station and CD-ROM databases on foreign affairs and current affairs. The Library is also equipped with a CD-writer, a colour scanner (with OCR capability as well as facility for storage and retrieval of images), a microfilm/fiche reader printer, plain paper photocopier, as well as a VTR and colour monitor and a laser printer with desktop publishing (DTP) software. This has enabled better presentation of publications and documents of the Library/Division.

All Documentation/Bibliographic Services as well as other library operations and services have been computerized, using an integrated library software package. Information on all books, maps, documents and selected periodical articles received in the Library since 1986 [and pre-1986 publications in active use] are available on-line through each terminal/computer in main library Patiala House. Our officials both at Headquarters and in our Mission abroad can also access library's information databases on Internet on Ministry of External Affairs Library's website: www.mealib.nic.in

The library's Internet facilities are being gradually made available to visiting users who include Research Scholars and former Foreign Service Officers. Library now also welcomes users to submit their reference queries while surfing Library's website or through e-mail. Answers to these queries where possible are sent through e-mail for faster response.

All new documents received in the Library – books, maps, microfilms, selected articles from periodicals – are being fed into the in-house computer system to create a database on foreign affairs. Using this database and CD-ROM databases, the Library provides Current Awareness Services and Bibliographical and Research Services. In addition, the Library regularly publishes:

- “Foreign Affairs Documentation Bulletin” – a list of selected articles on International Relations.
- “Recent Additions” – an annotated list of publications added to the Library.

CD – ROM Publication (s)

The Library in cooperation with NIC has brought out a full text CD-ROM version of Annual Reports of Ministry of External Affairs [from 1948 to 1998-99] and Foreign Affairs Record [from 1955 to 1999 (August)]. The information on the CD can be retrieved via combination of searches including search on any given word or combination of words. The CD-ROM version was prepared based on material available as on 1 January 2000. This CD can be consulted in the main library of the Ministry at Patiala House, New Delhi. Process for its revised/updated edition has started and it is likely to be issued next year.

Further, the Ministry of External Affairs Library has gone in for LIBSYS: an integrated Library management software covering all the features of Library. LIBSYS follows MARC and supports both print and non-print materials. It facilitates import/export of data in standard exchange format such as MARC format. LIBSYS supports word-based free text searching using Boolean operators. LIBSYS provides online validation of input data prior to updating the database.

Library users including research scholars are welcome to access the Library's website or the on-line computer-based information in the Library at Patiala House, New Delhi in different databases, including CD-ROM databases, and the Foreign Affairs Information Retrieval System (FAIRS). Photocopying and computer printout facilities are also available to all library users including research scholars.

Recently Library has also initiated steps towards establishment of virtual library. It has started to provide important full text articles available on net through e-mail to senior Foreign Service officers and the response in this regard has been very encouraging.



Welfare Division looks after general welfare of all employees of Ministry of External Affairs and management of canteen services at South Block, Akbar Bhawan and Patiala House. During the year 2004-2005, the Ministry of External Affairs lost five employees for whom all assistance were rendered by the Division for hospitalization, funeral and ex-gratia payment from Staff Benefit fund. On this Division's recommendation External Affairs Spouses Association (EASA) presented cheques amounting to Rs. 20,000/- each to the six dependents of deceased employees of the Ministry of External Affairs.

There were five students for MBBS, seventeen for engineering and one for Diploma course, for whom the Division carried out formalities with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Human Resource Development. 55 seats in Kendriya Vidyalaya were utilized by the children of the officers/staff of the Ministry of External Affairs. Cases with the Police authorities were taken up to the satisfaction of concerned officials. During the year, other welfare measures undertaken by the Division were arrangements for collection of funds for Flag Days for

Communal Harmony, Red Cross, Armed Forces and Ministry of External Affairs Staff Benefit Fund.

Two dependents were employed in Ministry of External Affairs against regular LDC posts on compassionate grounds and one on daily wages during 2004. A path-breaking policy initiative has been taken for giving priority to dependents of deceased employees of the Ministry of External Affairs in appointment on daily wages in all offices of Ministry of External Affairs. A secure transport service has been started for families returning from abroad during night-time. In the area of stress management 'Art of Living' course was conducted at Headquarters and a paper with questionnaire on Stress Management in Missions abroad has been circulated for benefit of Ministry of External Affairs employees working abroad. The Division has been active in promoting awareness for team spirit through various circulars. A parallel catering outlet has been proposed to be set up in South Block for providing quality product and professional services for the visiting Diplomatic Corps and international visitors as well as for VIP's.



Appendix I

Cadre strength at Headquarters and Missions/Posts abroad during 2004-2005 (including posts budgeted by Ministry of Commerce & those held in abeyance/ex-cadred)

S. No	Cadre/Post	Posts at Headquarters	Posts at Mission	Total
1	Grade I	4	22	26
2	Grade II	5	20	25
3	Grade III	35	118	153
4	Grade IV	37	99	136
5	Jr. Admn. Grade/Senior Scale	48	132	180
6	(I) Junior Scale	1	29	30
	(ii) Probationers Reserve	27	..	27
	(iii) Leave Reserve	15	..	15
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	19	..	19
	(v) Training Reserve	7	..	7
	IFS(B)			
7	(I) Grade I	43	100	143+60*
	(ii) Deputation Reserve	6	..	6
8	(i) Grade II/III	96	178	274+94*
	(ii) Leave Reserve	30	..	30
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	16	..	16
	(iv) Training Reserve	25	..	25
9	(I) Grade IV	203	407	610
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	..	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	55	..	55
10	(I) Grade V/VI	250	193	443
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	..	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	14	..	14
11	(I) Grade II of Cypher Cadre (Cypher Assistant)	49	143	192
	(ii) Leave Reserve	24	..	24
**12	(I) Private Secretary	35	199	234
	(ii) Leave Reserve	14	..	14
13	(I) Personal Assistant	130	195	325
	(ii) Leave Reserve	33	..	33
	(iii) Training Reserve (Hindi)	10	..	10
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	12	..	12
14	Stenographer(Gr. III)	17	77	94
15	Interpreters' Cadre	6	27	33
16	L&T Cadre	14	1	15

(* Post created/reduced as a result of Cadre Review)

(** The figure for Private Secretary include 60 posts which have been upgraded to Principal Private Secretary (PPS). Out of 60 posts of PPS, 22 posts have further been upgraded to Sr PPS.)

Appendix II

Recruitment made in various groups in the Ministry of External Affairs and reserved vacancies filled by Schedule Caste/Schedule Tribe/Other Backward Classes(OBC) categories from April to November 2004

Group	Total No.of Posts	Number of Posts			Unreserved
		Reserved			
		SC	ST	OBC	
Group-A	82	14	6	6	56
Group-A (Ex Cadre)	1	1	-	-	-
Group-B	346	56	21	1	268
Group-C	30	11	2	3	14
Group-D	1	-	-	-	1
Total	460	82	29	10	339

Appendix III

Language-wise Statement of Officers (Grade - I to Junior Scale of IFS) as on 30 November 2004

Language	Number of Officers	Language	Number of Officers
Arabic	88	Thai	2
Bhasa Indonesia	13	Tibetan	2
Chinese	56	Turkish	6
French	70	Dutch	1
German	30	Gorkhali	1
Italian	5	Swedish	1
Japanese	24	Malay Bhasa	1
Kiswahili	8	Hungarian	1
Nepalese	3	Vietnames	1
Persian	21	Burmese	1
Portuguese	17	Mandarin	1
Russian	75	Ukranian	1
Serbo Croatian	3	Kazakh	1
Sinhalese	2	Hebrew	3
Spanish	59		

Appendix IV

Statement showing the number of applications received and passports issued including under Tatkaal Scheme, miscellaneous applications received and services rendered as well as Revenue(including revenue under Tatkaal Scheme) and Expenditure figures of the Passport Offices from 1st January, 2004 to 31st December, 2004.

Name of RPO/PO	No. of Applications received	No. of Passports issued	No. of miscellaneous applications received	Miscellaneous services rendered	Passports issued under Tatkaal Scheme	Revenue under Tatkaal Scheme	Total Revenue	Total expenditure
Ahmedabad	214443	235335	17895	19129	7130	8991000	223777698	28635772
Bangalore	170826	167010	28620	28418	10421	13051500	186016217	22930889
Bareilly	44680	41989	3256	3202	1519	2281000	47278899	8541252
Bhopal	53519	43970	4913	4873	3199	4273000	57478750	5453458
Bhubaneswar	26594	20987	1986	1963	1150	1538000	48293740	7478470
Chandigarh	204326	184987	24525	22225	7168	10376000	233409010	22685557
Chennai	230529	216367	29240	26299	22735	32810000	273633931	26797069
Cochin	176339	177863	34810	34620	15754	22020800	202075031	23146142
Delhi	207773	158258	32280	31515	16024	29103700	235239387	44808025
Ghaziabad	49831	40280	6178	6023	2618	3853600	52779867	5410259
Guwahati	18978	18055	1431	649	2184	3643000	23724000	3508246
Hyderabad	273128	284753	33060	32292	23927	46088800	413615858	32104067
Jaipur	136424	106091	9170	6592	6183	7896500	145411946	16695741
Jalandhar	168418	166425	18076	17402	1032	2001825	189702537	19319598
Jammu	14250	11206	899	869	463	642500	16142080	3028782
Kolkata	115006	114542	12611	12388	3595	5053400	124373517	13571022
Kozhikode	238217	237355	24236	23811	23802	33745500	284480096	24313113
Lucknow	161051	133238	10114	9432	1985	2796000	158518793	24256675
Mumbai	228982	218355	29063	28261	8914	15960000	240410545	50305451
Nagpur	26215	24515	1889	1757	2437	3120500	29099300	3690337
Panaji	23515	23913	7903	7780	2187	3167500	30825996	4643352
Patna	71366	53901	3181	3084	658	870000	67563900	7825316
Pune	62426	60009	8305	8231	5082	6458500	68859185	8738149
Ranchi	19525	15277	1734	1469	1294	1722800	21390600	2822167
Srinagar	12020	10585	933	919	430	589300	13072069	5321697
Surat	69798	61820	5441	5029	2473	3117600	70957870	*
Thane	87686	79072	8766	8657	4529	6710500	94115910	**
Trichy	222368	261803	20937	19307	10581	14785000	278581040	26302129
Trivandrum	121765	119594	22804	21534	15359	21599000	152265994	14962055
Vishakhapatnam	65832	65225	8072	7868	2082	3003700	73825785	7175366
TOTAL	3515830	3352780	412328	395598	2069153112705254056919551464470156			

* expenditure included in RPO Ahmedabad's as LOC combined with RPO Ahmedabad.

** expenditure included in RPO Mumbai's as LOC combined with RPO Mumbai.

Appendix V

Finances of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2004-2005

The Budget Allocation of Ministry of External Affairs in the Budget Estimates (BE) 2004-2005 is Rs. 3640.49 crores which is an enhancement over BE 2003-2004 by Rs. 230.69 crores i.e. by 6.77%. There is an increase in the Revised Estimates for 2004-2005 by Rs. 244.31 crores i.e. by 6.71%.

MEA Expenditure and Budget (2001-02-2004-05)

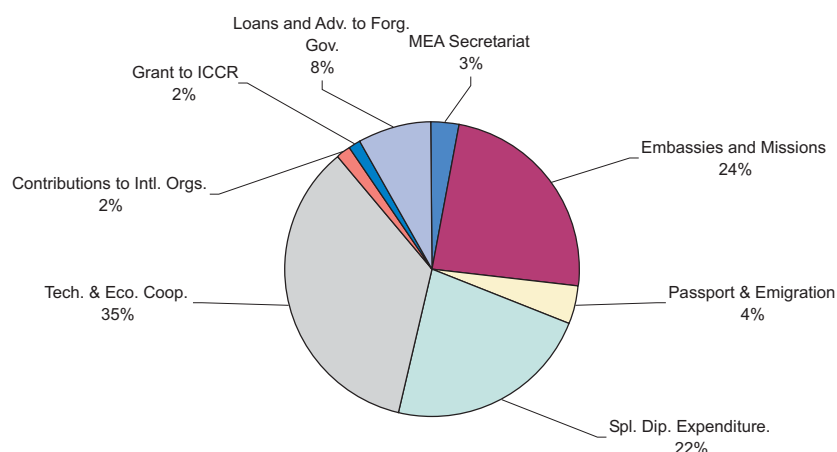
Years	Actuals (in Rs Crores)	%age variation
2000-2001	2488.85	Nil
2001-2002	2624.55	5.45%
2002-2003	3253.79	23.98
2003-2004	3344.91	2.8%
2004-2005 (BE)	3640.69	8.84%
2004-2005 (RE)	3885.00	6.71%

Appendix VI

The Major Sectoral Allocations in the 2004-2005 Budget

Sectors	Allocation (in Rs Crores)
MEA Secretariat	118.30
Embassies and Missions	896.26
Passport and Emigration	159.98
Special Diplomatic Expenditure	841.01
Technical & Economic Cooperation	1326.39
Contributions to International Organisations	61.50
Grant to Indian Council for Cultural Relations	57.50
Loans and Advances to Foreign Governments	298.88
Others	125.18

Principal Allocations in the Final Estimates 2004-05



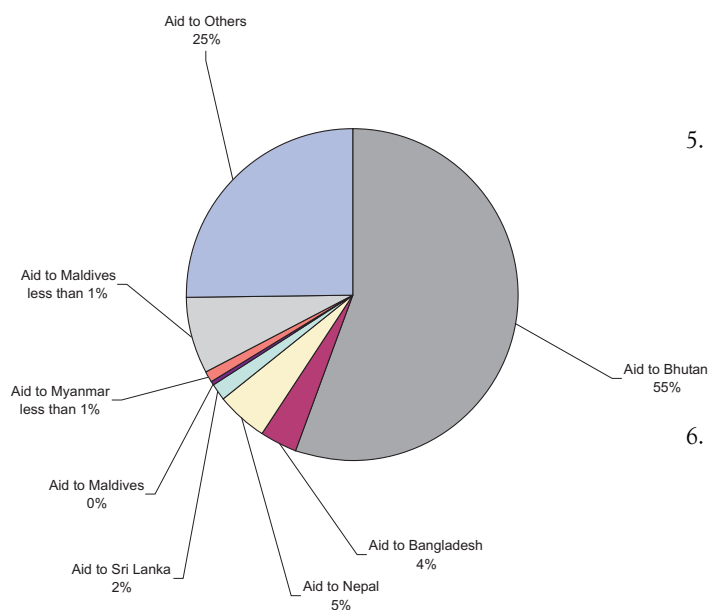
Appendix VII

Principal Destinations of India's Aid Programmes

The principal beneficiaries of our Aid & Loan Programmes in the Current Financial Year are as under :

Aid & Loan to Countries	(In Rupees Crores)
Bhutan	768.65
Bangladesh	3.30
Nepal	66.17
Sri Lanka	15.30
Maldives	3.20
Myanmar	6.21
African Countries	106.84
Others (Including Developing Countries)	356.72

Principal Destinations of India's Aid Programmes



- 3.1 Aid to Bhutan accounts for 58% of India's total aid budget. Other important destinations for Indian aid programs include African Countries – 8%, Nepal – 5%, Sri Lanka – 1%, Bangladesh, Maldives and Myanmar –1% and Other countries – 27%
- 3.2 The Government of India has extended loans to the Governments of Bangladesh and Bhutan to assist in the implementation of developmental projects. During 2004-2005, the loans extended to the Governments of Bangladesh and Bhutan amount to Rs. 18.87 crores and Rs. 280.00 crores respectively.
4. The Budget of the Ministry of External Affairs is essentially a Non-Plan Budget. However, from 1996-97, a Plan head has been established with the approval of the Cabinet. This primarily caters to certain large developmental projects undertaken in Bhutan, as part of project assistance requested by Government of Bhutan in the Government of India's "Aid to Bhutan" Programme. The Tala Hydroelectric Project currently under implementation in Bhutan is a prestigious and important project. The other projects being funded from the Plan head are the Punatsangchu and the Dungsung Cement Plant, both in Bhutan.
5. The estimated expenditure on the Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs during the current financial year is Rs. 118.30 crores which forms about 3% of the total estimated revenue expenditure of the Ministry. Estimated Expenditure on Indian Missions and Posts abroad is expected to be of the order of Rs. 896.26 crores which is about 25% of the total revenue expenditure of the Ministry.
6. The Ministry of External Affairs' revenue from Passport and Visa fees and other receipts are likely to be of the order of Rs. 1117.20 crores. It is estimated that Passport fees would account for about Rs. 520 crores, Visa fees Rs. 575 crores and other receipts for Rs. 22.20 crores.

Appendix VIII

C & AG Report of Ministry of External Affairs

Avoidable loss due to delay in claiming refund of VAT: Delay of HCI, London, in claiming refund of VAT paid on renovation of the Embassy Residence from October 1999 to May 2001 resulted in a loss of Rs. 2.44 crore.

(Para 2.1 of Report No. 2 of 2004)

Transaction Audit Observations

Avoidable expenditure on hiring of temporary accommodation for High Commissioner at London: Hiring of temporary accommodation 47 weeks prior to the anticipated renovation of Embassy residence for accommodating the High Commissioner of India resulted in avoidable expenditure of Rs. 1.71 crore.

(Para 2.2 of Report No. 2 of 2004)

Transaction Audit Observation

Undue benefit to officials of Embassy of India, Rome: Despite repeated audit observations, the Mission at Rome made payment of inadmissible lunch and transportation charges for children of India based staff which resulted in unintended benefit of Rs. 79.26 lakh to the staff from April 1998 to March 2003.

(Para 2.4 of Report No. 2 of 2004)

Transaction Audit Observations

Injudicious retention of vacant accommodation: The High Commission of India, Male retained the vacant leased accommodation for two years from January 2001 to December, 2002, against the permissible period of 90 days, which resulted in injudicious expenditure of Rs. 39.71 lakh on payment of rent.

(Para 2.8 of Report No. 2 of 2004)

Transaction Audit Observations

Delay in disposal of vacant property: Ministry of External Affairs have delayed disposing a building in Aden which fell vacant in March 1994 leading to deterioration of its condition. The Ministry also delayed approval to the Mission's proposal of leasing out the building resulting in a loss of Rs. 16.96 lakh to the exchequer.

(Para 2.10 of Report No. 2 of 2004)

Transaction Audit Observations

Irregular payment of gardener's wages: The Embassy of India, Muscat, made irregular reimbursement of Rs. 5.74 lakh on account of gardener's wages to the Head of Mission although the cost of garden maintenance was included in the rent of the Embassy residence and the garden was actually maintained by the landlord.

(Para 2.13 of Report No. 2 of 2004)

Transaction Audit Observations

Appendix IX

Treaties/Conventions/Agreements Concluded or Renewed by India with other Countries during the period January 2004 to March 2005

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
MULTILATERAL				
1	Social Charter of the SAARC.	04.01.2004		04.01.2004
2	The Additional Protocol to the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism.	04.01.2004		04.01.2004
3	Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA)	04.01.2004		04.01.2004
4	Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network adopted at Bangkok by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	27.04.2004		
5	WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.	10.09.2003	22.01.2004 (R)	05.02.2004
6	Framework Agreement between the Mercosur and the Republic of India.	17.06.2003	01. 08.2003 (R)	
7	Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents, 1961		26. 10.2004 (A)	14.07.2005
8	(A) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflict; and(B) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.	15.11.2004		
9	Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation between India and Member States of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf.	25.08.2004		
10	Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of the Team-9 Countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Senegal and India).	01.03.2004		01.03.2004
11	C 108 Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958.		17.01.2005 (R)	
12	Convention on Nuclear Safety.	20.09.1994		

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
BILATERAL				
AFGHANISTAN				
1	Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Cooperation between the FSI of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Institute of Diplomacy of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan.	1.9.2004		1.9.2004
ARMENIA				
2	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	23.5.2003	13.8.2004	
BAHRAIN				
3	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	13.1.2004	6.8.2004	
4	Extradition Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain.			
5	Agreement on Juridical and Judicial Cooperation in Civil and Commercial Matters 'between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain.	13.1.2004	21.10.2004	
6	Agreement on Mutual legal Assistance in Criminal matters between the Government, of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain.			
BRAZIL				
7	Co-operation Agreement in the field of Tourism between the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of India	27.1.2004		
8	Framework Agreement between the Government of the Federal Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of India on Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.	27.1.2004		

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
9	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Exemption of visa requirement for holders of Diplomatic and Official/ Service Passports.	27.1.2004		
10	Cultural Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil for the Years 2004-2005.	27.1.2004		
11	Programme of Cooperation between the Indian Space Research Organisation and the Brazilian Space Agency for the year 2004.	27.1.2004		
12	BULGARIA Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Bulgaria	23.10.2003		
13	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Bulgaria on Cooperation in the field of Youth Affairs & Sports	23.10.2003		23.10.2003
14	Memorandum of Understanding between the Electronics and Compute Software Export Promotion Council (ESC) and the Bulgarian Association of Information Technology (BAIT)	23.10.2003		23.10.2003
15	Memorandum of Understanding between the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs, Republic of India and the Diplomatic Institute of the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Bulgaria	28.7.2004		28.7.2004
CUBA				
16	Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Standards of the Republic of India and the National Bureau of Standards of the Republic of Cuba in the fields of standardisation certification and information.	16.12.2003		16.12.2003
CZECH REPUBLIC				
17	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Czech Republic on Defence Cooperation.	21.10.2003		

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY				
18	Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of India on Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance on Customs Matters.	29.11.2003		
FRANCE				
19	Extradition Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the French Republic.	4.1.2003	15.4.2004	
20	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for establishing the Indo-French Institute of Mathematics (IFIM)	25.9.2004		25.9.2004
21	Memorandum of Understanding between French National Railways (SNCF) and Ministry of Railways, Government of India	30.1.2004		31.1.2004
HUNGARY				
22	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Hungary for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	3.11.2003	20.2.2004	
23	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Hungary for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	3.11.2003		
24	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Hungary on Defence Cooperation	3.11.2003		
25	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Hungary on Exemption of Visa Requirement for Diplomatic and Official Passport Holders	3.11.2003		
26	Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of India and the Republic of Hungary on Cooperation in Information Technology and Services	3.11.2003		3.11.2003
INDONESIA				
27	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia on Combating International Terrorism.	2.07.2004		2.7.2004

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
ISRAEL				
28	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel on Cooperation in the field of Protection of the Environment.	9.9.2003	7.5.2004	
29	Iran Agreement on the Joint issue of Stamps between the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Iran.	July 2004		July 2004
ITALY				
30	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Italian Republic on Cooperation in the Fields of Science & Technology.	28.11.2003	7.5.2004	
KAZAKHASTAN				
31	Memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of the republic of India and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Republic of Kazakhstan within the framework of the Park of Information Technology.	15.9.2004		15.9.2004
KOREA				
32	Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Republic of Korea	5.10.2004		
33	Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Republic of India and the Republic of Korea	5.10.2004	4.11.2004	
KUWAIT				
34	Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the State of Kuwait	25.8.2004		
35	Agreement between the Republic of India and the State of Kuwait on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	25.8.2004		
36	Memorandum of Understanding of Establishment of India-Kuwait Strategic Consultative Group.	25.8.2004		25.8.2004
LAO'S PDR				
37	Agreement on Mutual Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic on Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Related Matters.	6.11.2002	23.1.2004	

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
MONGOLIA				
38	Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Animal Health and Dairy between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia.	15.1.2004		
39	Agreement for Cooperation in Space Science, Technology and Applications between, the Department of Space of the Government of Republic of India and the Ministry of Infrastructure of the Government of Mongolia.	15.1.2004		15.1.2004
40	Protocol of Cooperation between the Department of Biotechnology of the Ministry of Science and Technology, The Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of the Government of Mongolia in the field of Biotechnology.	15.1.2004		15.1.2004
MOROCCO				
41	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco relating to Air Services	7.12.2004		
42	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for Cooperation in the field of Agriculture Research and Education.	7.12.2004		7.12.2004
43	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Power between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Morocco.	7.12.2004		7.12.2004
MOZAMBIQUE				
44	Agreement on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Republic of India and the Ministry of the Republic of Mozambique.	22.2.2004		22.2.2004
MYANMAR				
	Memorandum of Understanding of Cooperation in the field of Railways between the Government of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar.	27.7.2004		27.7.2004

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
NEPAL				
46	Bilateral Cooperation Agreement between Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), India and Nepal Bureau of Standards and Metrology (NBSM), Nepal	9.9.2004		9.9.2004
47	India-Nepal Rail Services Agreement	21.5.2004		21.5.2004
NORWAY				
48	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway regarding the Establishment of a Joint Commission of Cooperation.	6.7.2004		6.7.2004
PAKISTAN				
49	Agreement between India and Pakistan on Rail Communication	21.1.2001		21.1.2001
PHILIPPINES				
50	Extradition Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Philippines.	12.3.2004	3.5.2004	
POLAND				
51	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Poland on Co-operation in Combating Organized Crime and International Terrorism.	17.2.2003	21.10.2004	
ROMANIA				
52	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Romania for cooperation on Visa Free Regime for Diplomatic Passport Holders	31.1.2004		31.1.2004
53	The Agreement between Government of India and Government of Romania on cooperation in Plant Protection and Phytosanitary Quarantine Field	31.1.2004		
54	Memorandum of Understanding between the Romanian Television and Doordarshan	31.1.2004		31.1.2004
55	Memorandum of Understanding between the Romanian Broadcasting and All India Radio	31.1.2004		31.1.2004

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
SERBIA & MONTENEGRO				
56	Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro.	28.10.2004		
57	Tourism Agreement			
SINGAPORE				
58	Executive Programme on Cooperation in the fields of Arts, Heritage, Archives and Library between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Singapore for the years 2004-2007.	19.10.2004		19.10.2004
SLOVENIA				
59	Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	13.1.2003	30.8.2004	
SOUTH AFRICA				
60	Memorandum of understanding between the Government of the 'Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the field of Communications and Information Technologies	15.9.2004		15.9.2004
SRI LANKA				
61	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Tourism between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.	23.1.2004		23.1.2004
62	Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Small Scale Industries, Republic of India and Ministry of Industry, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.	27.1.2004		27.1.2004
SUDAN				
63	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Sudan for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	2.10.2003	23.01.2004	

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
SURINAME				
64	Memorandum of Understanding between India and Suriname on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture	17.3.2003		
SWITZERLAND				
65	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Swiss Federal Council on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology.	10.11.2003	6.8.2004	
66	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Swiss Confederation on Cooperation in the Event of Disasters.	10.11.2003	20.2.2004	
SYRIA				
67	Memorandum of Understanding between India and Syria on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture	15.11.2003		
THAILAND				
68	Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	8.2.2004	18.3.2004	
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO				
69	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Inter-Governmental Commission on Political, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation.	5.2.2003	18.3.2004	
UNITED KINGDOM				
70	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom on the return of Illegal Immigrants.	30.1.2004		30.1.2004
UKRAINE				
71	Agreement between the Republic of India and Ukraine on Mutual Protection of Classified Information.	12.8.2003	07.4.2004	
72	Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and Ukraine	3.10.2002	26.5.2004	

Appendix IX

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
UZBEKISTAN				
73	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan for establishing Indo-Uzbek Centre for Information Technology.	29.10.2004		29.10.2004
VENEZUELA				
74	Memorandum of Understanding between the Foreign Services Institute of India and the Foreign Service Institute of Venezuela	2.10.2004		
YEMEN				
75	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Yemen for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	30.10.2002	10.2.2004	10.2.2004
ZAMBIA				
76	Memorandum of Understanding between India and Zambia on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and Allied Sectors.	21.4.2003		

Appendix X

Instruments of Full Powers Issued during January 2004 - December 2004

S. No	Convention/Treaty	Date of Full Powers
1	Full Powers in favour of Shri B.S. Minnas, Secretary (SSI), Ministry of Small Scale Industries to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Small Scale Industries, Republic of India and Ministry of Industry, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.	13.01.2004
2	Full Powers in favour of Smt. Rathi Vinay Jha, Secretary, Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Culture to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Tourism between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.	21.01.2004
3	Full Powers in favour of Shri Dipak Chatterjee, Commerce Secretary, Department of Commerce to sign the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network adopted at Bangkok by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.	26.04.2004
4	Full Powers in favour of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology to sign the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro.	24.09.2004
5	Full Powers in favour of Shri Himachal Som, Ambassador of India to Italy to sign the Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of San Marino for Elevation of Relations from Consular to Diplomatic.	04.11.2004
6	Full Powers of Shri Nirupam Sen, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations and Authority to sign (a) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict; and (b) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.	04.11.2004

Appendix XI

Instruments of Ratification/Accession Issued during the Period January 2004 to December 2004

S. No	Instrument of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification/Accession
1	WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.	22.1.2004
2	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	6.8.2004
3	Extradition Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the French Republic.	15.4.2004
4	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Hungary for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	20.2.2004
5	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel on Cooperation in the field of Protection of the Environment.	7.5.2004
6	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Italian Republic on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology.	07.06.2004
7	Extradition Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Philippines.	3.5.2004
8	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Sudan for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	23.1.2004
9	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Swiss Federal Council on Cooperation In the fields of Science and Technology.	6.8.2004
10	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Swiss Confederation on Cooperation in the Event of Disasters.	20.2.2004
11	Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on Mutual Legal Assistance In Criminal Matters.	18.3.2004
12	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Inter-Governmental Commission on Political, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation.	18.3.2004
13	Agreement between the Republic of India and Ukraine on Mutual Protection of Classified Information.	7.4.2004
14	Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and Ukraine	26.5.2004
15	Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	30.8.2004

Appendix XI

S. No	Instrument of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification/Accession
16	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	30.8.2004
17	Agreement on Mutual Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic on Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Related Matters.	23.1.2004
18	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Poland on Co-operation in Combating Organised Crime and International Terrorism.	21.10.2004
19	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain on Juridical and Judicial Cooperation in Civil and Commercial Matters for the Service of Summons, Judicial Documents, Commissions, Execution of Judgments and Arbitral Awards.	21.10.2004
20	Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance In Criminal Matters between the Republic of India and the Republic of Korea	4.11.2004
21	Treaty on Extradition between the Republic of India and the Republic of Korea	24.11.2004
22	Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the State of Kuwait	9.12.2004
23	Agreement between the Republic of India and the State of Kuwait on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	3.12.2004
24	Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance and the Recognition and Enforcement of Judgments in Civil Matters between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of French Republic	07.12.2004
25	Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	07.12.2004
26	C 108 Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958	10.1.2005
27	The Convention on Nuclear Safety	17.1.2005
28	Agreement on Cultural Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Italy	20.1.2005
29	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco regarding Merchant Shipping and Related Maritime Matters	20.1.2005
30	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco regarding Merchant Shipping and Related Maritime Matters	23.1.2005
31	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Bahrain on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	23.1.2005

Appendix XII

Conferences/Seminars/Meetings/ Study projects organised/undertaken by Institutions/ NGOs which were partly funded by Policy Planning & Research Division

A. Expenditure already incurred during 2004-05

Sl.No.	Event	Institution	Amount (Rs.)
1.	A Commemorative conference in 2007 of the first Asian Relations Conference of March 1947 File No. F(ii)12(12)/2004	Association for Asian Union	56,520/-
2.	To undertake specific projects such as holding international conferences, publishing and printing original research work, organizing lectures etc. File No. F(ii)12(16)/2004	Centre for Indian Studies, Beijing University	5,00,000/-
3.	Project "US Policy towards Muslim countries" File No. F(ii)12(16)/2004	ORF Institute of Asian Studies, New Delhi	3,00,000/-
4.	Proposal from Indian Association of West & Central Asian Studies, (Amb.M.H.Ansari) to organize lectures and research meetings on West & C. Asia. File No. F(ii)12(9)/2004	Indian Association of West & Central Asian Studies.	1,50,000/-
5.	Publishing in book form the proceedings of the International seminar on "Nationalism, Transnationalism and Indian Diaspora" organized by them during 27-29 January, 2004 F(ii)12(21)/2004	Centre for Indian Diaspora & Cultural Studies, Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University, Patan.	37,500/-
6.	Publication of proceedings of V Int'l conference on "Hispanism & Luso-Brazilian Studies, Flashback from the present" (Balance Payment) File No. F(ii)12(68)/2003	Centre of Spanish Studies, JNU	16,680/-
7.	7 th Asian Regional Seminar on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy (Balance Payment) File No. F(ii)12(54)/2002	United Schools International, New Delhi	12,500/-
8.	To participate in the 2 nd India-Serbia & Montenegro dialogue at Belgrade in June 2004. File No. F(ii)12(33)/2004	Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi	1,39,500/-
9.	Academic trip of Dr. Adesh Pal to Australia & Fiji File No. F(ii)12(38)/2004	Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University, Patan	41,380/-

Appendix XII

Sl. No.	Event	Institution	Amount (Rs.)
12.	Participation in a joint seminar on the theme of broader politico-economic trends in Asia (Balance Payment) File No. F(ii)12(54)/2003	Centre for Strategic & Int'l Studies, New Delhi	75,285/-
13.	Project "Preparation of reports on three human rights conventions" F(ii)12(25)/2004	ISIL, New Delhi	4,11,400/-
14.	Reimbursement of expenditure incurred on seminar "Central Asia in Transition: Dynamics of Political, social & economic development" in March 2004 File No. F(ii)12(73)/2003	University of Mumbai.	50,000/-
15.	Hosting India-US exchange of Military Law, March 1-3, 2004 File No. F(ii)12(19)/2004	United Services Institution of India, New Delhi	18,215/-
16.	Participation in joint seminar on theme of "Broader politico-economic trends in Asia" File No. F(ii)12(54)/2003	Centre for Strategic and International Studies, New Delhi	75,285/-
17.	Ethnic Conflict in Fiji: Challenges of assimilation before Indian diaspora File No. F(ii)12(61)/2003	Dr. Amba Pande, JNU	3,966/-
18.	Conducting next round of Track-II dialogue with Pakistani counterpart. File No. F(ii)12(8)/98	India-Pakistan Neemrana Initiative, New Delhi	2,60,385/-
19.	Conducting next round of Track-II dialogue with Pakistani counterpart. File No. F(ii)12(8)/98	India-Pakistan Neemrana Initiative, New Delhi	33,487/-
20.	India-Australia Joint Study for drawing up a road map for strategic partnership File No. F(ii)12(35)/2003	Dr. C. Raja Mohan, Professor, Centre for South Asian Studies, JNU	12,500/-
21.	Publishing the proceedings of the V International Conference on "Hispanism and Luso-Brazilian Studies: Flashback from the Present" (Final Payment)F(ii)12(68)/2003	Centre of Spanish Studies, School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies, JNU	16,780/-
22.	Seminar on "Domestic Turmoil in South Asia Implications for India's Security & Foreign Policy" in March, 2004 and publishing a monograph. (Final Payment)File No. F(ii)12(36)/2003	School of International Studies, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry	25,750/-

Appendix XII

S. No.	Event	Institution	Amount (Rs.)
23.	Seminar on “the challenges to India’s foreign policy in the new era” in October, 2004 (75%) File No. F(ii)12(15)/2004	H.N.B. Garhwal University, Srinagar, Uttaranchal	56,250/-
24.	Participate in the Second Canada-India Dialogue at Vancouver in March, 2004 (Final Payment)File No. F(ii)12(4)/2004	Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi	48,200/-
25.	Seminar on “India-Pakistan Relations in the Pursuit of Peace” in March, 2004 (Final Payment)File No. F(ii)12(78)/2003	Vidya Prasarak Mandal, Mumbai	1,14,592/-
26.	International seminar on Fyodor I. Tyutchev’s Bicentennial “Traditions of Philosophical Poetry in Russian and Indian Literature” during 5-7 November, 2003 (Final Payment)File No. F(ii)12(44)/2003	Centre of Russian Studies, JNU	9,120/-
Total			24,65,025

B. Balance amount to be released for projects already sanctioned

Sl.No.	Event	Institution	Amount (Rs.)
1.	Hosting 2 nd dialogue with delegation from ship and ocean foundation, Tokyo	Society for Indian Ocean Studies, N.Delhi	73,000/-
2.	Preparation of reports on three human rights conventions Fee including airfares to expert for evaluation of reports	ISIL, New Delhi	4,11,400/- <u>+ 1,25,000/-</u> 5,36,000/-
3.	Project “China and South Asia : Bangladesh-China relations” by Dr.Shyamali Ghosh	IDSA, New Delhi	1,77,480/-
4.	Preparation of study report in connection with India-Australia Joint study for drawing up a road map for strategic partnership	Dr.C.Raja Mohan	12,500/-
5.	Project “India’s Nuclear Diplomacy after Pokhran-II : its government and public face.	ORF Institute of Security Studies, New Delhi	2,95,000/-
6.	Seminar “Domestic turmoil in South Asia: Implications for India’s security and foreign policy “	Pondicherry University	26,000/-

Appendix XII

Sl.No.	Event	Institution	Amount (Rs.)
7.	Seminar "India and the emerging Asia"	JNU, New Delhi	65,000/-
8.	Seminar "Hydroind-2004"	National Hydrographic Office, Dehradun	50,000/-
9.	Second Canada-India Dialogue	CPR, New Delhi	48,200/-
10.	Project "Reshaping the discourse on Pakistan-occupied Kashmir"	Centre for Strategic and Regional Studies, Univ. of Jammu	5,00,000/-
11.	Conference "Bio-terrorism and bio-defence"	Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi	25,000/-
12.	Second round of Track-II India- Sri Lanka dialogue	IIC, New Delhi	61,600/-
13.	To undertake specific projects such as holding international conferences, publishing and printing original research work, organizing lectures etc.	Centre for Indian Studies, Beijing University	5,00,000/-
14.	Track-II dialogue with Development Research Centre of the State Council of China	RIS, New Delhi	60,000/-
15.	Seminar "India and the new Europe"	Association of Indian Diplomats, New Delhi	15,500/-
16.	India-Yugoslavia dialogue	CPR, New Delhi	40,000/-
17.	Seminar "Fyodor I. Tyutchev's bicentennial : Traditions of philosophical poetry in Russian & Indian Literature	JNU, New Delhi	18,750/-
18.	Project "Central Asia's Security concerns : Implications for India"	Centre for Russian, C.Asian & East European Studies, JNU	37,500/-
19.	Bringing out a publication containing select articles on international law	ISIL, New Delhi	12,500/-
20.	Project " Reasons behind Anti-US feelings in the Arab world and how this can be exploited by India....."	Dr. Manjushree Singh	5,000/-
21.	Seminar "language, Traditions & Society in mid-West & Central Asian countries	Panjab University	30,000/-
22.	Project "Iran 25 years after the revolution as reflected in literature, art & films"	ORF Instt. of Asian Studies New Delhi	37,500/-
23.	Project "Pvt.Int'l Law issues affecting NRIs"	ISIL, New Delhi	6,00,000/-
Total			27,26,530

Appendix XIII

Expenditure Statement for the period April 2004-January 2005 (ITEC & SCAAP Programmes)

Major/Minor Accounts	Total No. of Slots Allotted in 2004-2005	Total No. of Trainees as on 18.02.2005	Expenditure Incurred up to 31.01.2005	Budget Heads of Grant 2004-2005
Major Head-3605, 17-ITEC Programme, 17.00.32-Contribution	2826	1819	34.84 crore	BE 30 crore RE 45 crore
Major Head-3605, 19-SCAAP Programme, 19.00.32-Contribution	716	494	4.02 crore	5.5 crore
Total	3542	2313	38.86 crore	BE 35.5 crore RE 50.5 crore

Appendix XIV

List of Institutes offering 'B' and 'C' Category Courses to Foreign Nominees under ITEC/SCAAP Schemes (2004-2005)

S. No	Name of Institute	City/State
1	Administrative Staff College of India	Hyderabad
2	Aptech Limited.	Mumbai
3	Bureau of Indian Standards	New Delhi
4	Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training	New Delhi
5	Central Fertilizer Quality Control & Training Institute	Haryana
6	Central Food Technological Research Institute	Mysore
7	Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages	Hyderabad
8	Central Institute of Tool Design	Hyderabad
9	Central Poultry Training Institute	Karnataka
10	Central Scientific Instruments Organisation	New Delhi
11	Centre For Development of Advanced Computing	Mohali(Chandigarh)
12	CMC Ltd.	New Delhi
13	Comptroller and Auditor General of India	New Delhi
14	Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India	Gujarat
15	Fluid Control Reseach Institute	Kerala
16	Human Settlement Management Institute	New Delhi
17	Indian Institute of Mass Communication	New Delhi
18	Indian Institute of Production Management	Orissa
19	Indian Institute of Remote Sensing	Dehradun
20	Institute of Applied Manpower Research	New Delhi
21	Institute Of Government Accounts & Finance	New Delhi
22	Institute of Secretariat Training & Management	New Delhi
23	International Management Institute	New Delhi
24	International Statistical Education Centre	Kolkata
25	JIS College of Engineering	Kolkata
26	Narula Instittute of Technology	Kolkata
27	National Crime Records Bureau	New Delhi
28	National Institute of Bank Management	Pune
29	National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration	New Delhi
30	National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development	Noida

Appendix XIV

S. No	Name Of Institute	City/State
31	National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education & Research	Punjab
32	National Institute of Rural Development	Hyderabad
33	National Institute of Small Industry Extension Training	Hyderabad
34	NIIT Limited	New Delhi
35	Postal Training Centre	Karnataka
36	Research & Information System for the Non-aligned and Other Developing Countries	New Delhi
37	RITES	Haryana
38	SIBIT	New Delhi
39	South India Textile Research Association	Coimbatore
40	TATA Infotech	New Delhi
41	Technical Teachers' Training Institute	Chennai
42	V.V. Giri National Labour Institute	Uttar Pradesh
43	Water Resource Development Training Centre	Roorkee

Appendix XV

Allocation and utilisation of Civilian Training Slots under ITEC and SCAAP (2004-05)

Country	Slots	Total Joined	Total Joined	Country	Slots	Total Joined	Total Joined
ITEC				Estonia	25	24	19
Afghanistan	100	102	80	Ethiopia	30	46	27
Algeria	12	9	9	Fiji	30	29	13
Angola	21	16	3	Georgia	35	33	23
Antiguan				Grenada	5	7	5
Beramuda	7	7	3	Guyana	35	51	35
Argentina	3	3	1	Honduras	7	3	2
Armenia	60	86	63	Hungary	2	2	1
Azerbaijan	10	9	6	Indonesia	88	119	71
Bangladesh	120	108	56	Iran	15	18	13
Belarus	10	12	10	Iraq	125	121	78
Belize	7	10	6	Ivory Coast	40	56	34
Benin	10	4	3	Jordan	5	8	4
Bhutan	80	43	32	Kazakhstan	60	41	27
Bolivia	03	1	0	Kiribati	2	2	1
Bosnia	2	1	0	Korea(DPRK)	10	10	6
Brunei Darussalam	10	1	0	Kyrgyzstan	65	50	38
Bulgaria	10	17	5	Laos	60	74	42
Burundi	5	1	0	Latvia	4	4	3
Cambodia	60	67	47	Lebanon	2	3	2
Colombia	20	21	13	Liberia	10	2	2
Commonwealth of Dominica	5	4	1	Lithuania	10	7	6
Costa Rica	7	4	3	Macedonia	04	-0	0
Cuba	38	38	36	Madagascar	15	9	4
Djibouti	10	0	0	Malaysia	23	10	7
Dominican Republic	5	1	1	Maldives	20	33	19
East Timor	20	6	2	Mali	03	1	1
Ecuador	5	4	2	Mauritania	2	2	1
Egypt	13	13	9	Mexico	13	15	5
El-Salvador	7	9	9	Moldova	2	1	1
Eritrea	05	5	4	Mongolia	50	34	29
				Morocco	05	5	2

Appendix XV

Country	Slots	Total Joined	Total Joined	Country	Slots	Total Joined	Total Joined
Myanmar	130	134	101	Uzbekistan	109	113	77
Nepal	80	30	24	Vanuatu	5	2	0
Nicaragua	7	5	3	Venezuela	5	5	5
Oman	55	70	53	Vietnam	100	144	90
Palau	2	1	1	Yemen	30	31	25
Palestine	30	55	19	Total		2821	1819
Panama	15	15	10	SCAAP			
Papua New Guinea	10	29	9	Botswana	25	20	18
Paraguay	2	3	2	Burkina Faso	10	2	2
Peru	8	6	6	Cameroon	05	4	3
Philippines	35	46	16	Comoros	5	0	0
Poland	03	4	3	Gabon	05	6	1
Republic Of Sao Tome	2	2	0	Gambia	10	10	4
Romania	10	13	9	Ghana	60	80	55
Russia	100	123	77	Kenya	53	69	48
Rwanda	10	4	0	Lesotho	30	19	16
Senegal	20	14	10	Malawi	05	11	3
Slovak Republic	5	7	4	Mauritius	40	49	31
Solomon Island	7	6	2	Mozambique	20	50	17
Sri Lanka	120	93	75	Namibia	50	48	38
Sudan	70	120	52	Niger	5	1	0
Suriname	20	20	14	Nigeria	53	58	29
Syria	40	37	30	Seychelles	20	22	18
Tajikistan	100	43	30	Sierra Leone	15	9	8
Thailand	90	53	39	South Africa	100	93	64
Togo	02	2	2	Swaziland	05	4	0
Tonga	10	6	6	Tanzania	75	73	54
Trinidad & Tabago	20	19	9	Uganda	30	32	23
Tunisia	10	7	5	Zambia	45	31	23
Turkey	50	76	40	Zimbabwe	50	67	39
Turkmenistan	32	36	32	Total		758	494
Ukraine	10	13	8				
Uruguay	5	12	6				

Appendix XVI

Military Training Slots Allotted to various Countries during the period April-November 2004 under ITEC/SAP

S.No	Country	Army	Navy	Air Force	DSSC	NDC	Total
Under ITEC/SAP							
1	Bangladesh	6	19	5	0	1	31
2	Bhutan	0	0	0	1	1	2
3	Botswana	3	0	0	0	0	3
4	Cambodia	3	2	4	0	0	9
5	Egypt	0	0	0	0	1	1
6	Ethiopia	0	0	0	1	0	1
7	Ghana	3	2	1	0	0	6
8	Indonesia	2	3	4	0	1	10
9	Kazakhstan	4	0	0	1	0	5
10	Kenya	3	3	0	0	0	6
11	Kyrgyzstan	4	0	0	0	0	4
12	Lao	2	0	4	0	0	6
13	Lesotho	3	0	0	0	0	3
14	Malaysia	2	3	3	0	0	8
15	Maldives	0	0	0	0	1	1
16	Mauritius	14	9	5	0	0	28
17	Mongolia	3	0	0	1	0	4
18	Myanmar	19	3	2	1	1	26
19	Nepal	0	0	0	2	1	3
20	Nigeria	3	4	2	0	0	9
21	Seychelles	4	5	0	1	0	10
22	Sri Lanka	0	0	0	3	2	5
23	Syria	0	0	0	1	1	2
24	Sudan	0	0	0	1	0	1
25	Tajikistan	6	0	0	0	0	6
26	Tanzania	3	2	0	1	0	6
27	Thailand	0	0	0	0	1	1
28	Uganda	3	0	0	0	0	3
29	Uzbekistan	2	0	0	0	1	3
30	Vietnam	10	4	0	0	1	15
	Total	102	59	30	14	13	218

Appendix XVI

S.No	Country	Army	Navy	Air Force	DSSC	NDC	Total
Under SFS							
1	Australia	0	0	0	1	0	1
2	Botswana	22	0	14	1	0	37
3	Chile	0	0	0	0	1	1
4	France	3	0	0	0	1	4
5	Germany	0	0	0	0	1	1
6	Iran	0	1	0	0	0	1
7	Kenya	0	0	6	0	0	6
8	Kuwait	0	1	0	0	0	1
9	Japan	0	0	0	1	0	1
10	Malaysia	1	1	0	1	1	4
11	Nigeria	3	20	0	1	1	25
12	ROK	0	0	0	1	0	1
13	Singapore	0	1	0	1	1	3
14	South Africa	0	2	0	1	0	3
	Total	29	26	20	8	6	89
Reciprocal							
1	Bangladesh	0	0	0	3	0	3
2	UK	0	0	0	3	1	4
3	US	0	0	0	2	1	3
	Total	0	0	0	8	2	10

Appendix XVII

List of ITEC Experts presently stationed (November 2004)

S.No.	Country	Name	Field	From	To
1	Laos	Major Ashok Jha	Teaching English & Armytactics	19.9.2001	December 2004
2	Laos	Major Sandeep Nautiyal	Teaching English & Army tactics	19.9.2001	December 2004
3	Zambia	Col. UK Gurung	Indian Military Advisory Team [IMAT]	3.1.2004	2.1.2006
4	Zambia	Lt.Col. Raghu Srinivasan	Indian Military Advisory Team [IMAT]	3.1.2004	2.1.2006
5	Zambia	Lt.Col. Raghu Srinivasan	Indian Military Advisory Team [IMAT]	3.1.2004	2.1.2006
6	Zambia	Wing Cdr. V. R. Choudhary	Indian Military Advisory Team [IMAT]	3.1.2004	2.1.2006
7	Guyana	Dr. V. C. Mathur	Group Planning		1.1.2005
8	Guyana	Sh. C. D. Banerjee	Digital Technology	1.9.2002	31.8.2005
9	Seychelles	Cdr. P. Pokhariyal	Naval Advisor	January 2003	January 2005
10	Jamaica	Sh. K.K. Tiwari	Foundry Expert	11.2.2002	10.6.2005
11	Namibia	Sh. R.K. Dubey	Lecturer in Mathematics	1.3.2003	1.3.2005
12	Laos	Lt.Col.Vivek Sharma	English Language Teacher	March 2003	March 2006
13	Laos	Major S.S. Maini	English Language Teacher	April 2003	April 2006
14	Jamaica	Sh. K. Mohan	Dairy farming	May 2003	May 2005
15	Guyana	Dr. R.P.S. Kharb	Veg. Seed Expert	June 2003	June 2005
16	Guyana	Dr. A. Murugan	Milk Marketing	July 2003	July 2006
17	Guyana	Sh. Mukul Gupta	Town Planner	August 2003	August 2005
18	Mauritius	Sh. A.K. Gupta	Architect	July 2003	July 2005
19	Lesotho	Major Sanjay Kr. Maurya	Surgical Specialist	August 2003	August 2005

Appendix XVII

S.No.	Country	Name	Field	From	To
20	Lesotho	Major A.K. Gupta	Indian Army Training Team	August 2003	August 2005
21	Lesotho	Major Pawan Dhull	Indian Army Training Team	August 2003	August 2005
22	Lesotho	Major Neeraj Gossain	Indian Army Training Team	August 2003	August 2005
23	Lesotho	Major Prabhat Gidda	Indian Army Training Team	August 2003	August 2005
24	Lesotho	Major Vijay Manral	Indian Army Training Team	August 2003	August 2005
25	Lesotho	Major Sanjay Mohla	Indian Army Training Team	September 2003	September 2005
26	Lesotho-Ind Batch	Major J. S. Minhas	Indian Army Training Team	September 2003	September 2005
27	Lesotho	Major Harpreet Singh	Indian Army Training Team	September 2003	September 2005
28	Lesotho	Major N.K. Ohri	Indian Army Training Team	September 2003	September 2005
29	Ethiopia	Shri J. M. Gupta	Foreign Trade Expert	October 2003	January 2005
30	Seychelles	Lt.Col. LVR Singh	Military Adviser	October 2003	October 2005
31	Lesotho	Brig. Padam Budhwar	Security Adviser, IATT	November 2003	February 2005
32	Seychelles	Dr. Jagat Ram	Eye Specialist	November 2003	November 2005
33	Guyana	Sh. C.H. Ranga Rao	TV Transmission Engg.	December 2003	December 2005
34	Lesotho	CHM Laxma Reddy	Indian Army Training Team	December 2003	August 2005
35	Lesotho	CHM B. Devrai	Indian Army Training Team	December 2003	August 2005
36	Lesotho	HAV Bidhan Mech	Indian Army Training Team	December 2003	August 2005
37	Lesotho	CHM Simon K. John	Indian Army Training Team	December 2003	August 2005
38	Lesotho	HAV A.K. Bharti	Indian Army Training Team	December 2003	August 2005

Appendix XVII

S.No.	Country	Name	Field	From	To
39	Mauritius	Sh. K.P. Singh	Quantity Surveyor	26 August 2004	August 2005
40	Mauritius	Sh. P. K. Singh	Quantity Surveyor	26 August 2004	August 2005
41	Mauritius	Sh. Deepak Thakur	Quantity Surveyor	26 August 2004	August 2005
42	Mauritius	Sh. N.K. Singh	Civil Engineer	26 August 2004	August 2005
43	Mauritius	Sh. A. K. Rastogi	Civil Engineer	September 2004	September 2005
44	Mauritius	Sh. Rakesh Singhal	Trainer for bureaucrats	July 2004	July 2005
45	Mauritius	Mrs. Nandita Hazarika	Trainer for bureaucrats	July 2004	July 2005
46	Mauritius	Mrs. Sethuramalingham	Trainer for bureaucrats	August 2004	August 2005
47	Mauritius	Sh. Rajesh Kumar	Architect	November 2004	November 2005
48	Mauritius	Sh. P.S. Negi	Architect	November 2004	November 2005
49	Mauritius	Sh. Rajesh K. Kaushal	Architect	November 2004	November 2005
50	Mauritius	Sh. B.K. Chakravarty	Architect	November 2004	November 2005

Appendix XVIII

Aid for Disaster Relief

Supplies of Pharmaceuticals were the main items of disaster Relief to Least Developed Countries during 2004-05

Sl.No.	Name of the countries	Items	Amount in Rupees
1	4 countries of the Central America El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Belize	Supply of medicines	Rs. 14,46,10.71
2	DPRK	Donation of 1,000 metric tonnes of wheat, rice	Rs.1,67,10,000.00
3	Suriname	Supply of HIV/Aids, medicines supply pf vaccines, insecticides, nets	Rs.43,00,000.00
4	Jamaica	-	Rs.90,00,000.00
5	Grenada	Supply of medicines	Rs.22,50,000.00
6	Haiti	Supply of medicines	Rs.4,50,000.00
7	Dominican Republic	Supply of medicines	Rs.22,50,000.00
8	Bahamas	Supply of medicines	Rs.22,50,000.00
	Total		Rs.373.54 lakhs

Total Budget Grant for ADR during 2004-05 is Rs. 5.1 crore

Appendix XIX

Gender-Related Statistics

Cadre	Total Strength	No. of lady officers	As % of the total strength
IFS	618	80	13%
IFS-B	2674	359	13%
L&T	15	2	13%
Interpreters	33	6	18%
Library Cadre	14	3	21%

Appendix XX

Seminars/Conferences/Round Tables Talks Organised by ICWA from April 2004

No.	Date	Topic	Participants
1.	23 April 2004	Seminar on : “The Future of Trans-Atlantic Relations” Former Foreign Secretary.	Amb. V.K. Grover, Prof. Balveer Arora, JNU, Prof. Varun Sahni, JNU, Shri M.K. Rasgotra,
2.	5 May 2004	Seminar on: “Latin American Integration and India”	H.E. Mr. Jorge Heine, Amb. of Chile, Prof. R. Narayanan, JNU, Prof. Abdul Nafey, JNU, Prof. R.L. Chawla, JNU, Amb. M.P.M. Menon.
3.	7 May 2004	Seminar on: “China: A Growing Power in South East Asia”	Prof. Manoranjan Mohanty, ICS, Prof.Swaran Singh, JNU, Shri Sujit Dutta, IDSA, Dr. G.V.C. Naidu, IDSA. Amb.A.N.Ram.
4.	2 June 2004	Lecture on: “Third Africa Day”	Shri.Shashank, Foreign Secretary, H.E. Mrs. M.E. Nkoana- Mashabane, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa, H.E. Maj. Gen. Charles Dickson Ndaxu P. Namoloh, High Commissioner of the Republic of Namibia.
5.	15 June 2004	Consultative Meeting: “Panchsheel and the Contemporary World”.	Amb. C.V. Ranganathan
6.	13 July 2004	Lecture On: “Religion and State Formation in West Asia”.	Prof. David S.Thomas (USA), Amb. S.K. Bhutani
7.	28 July 2004	Seminar on: “Elections in Indonesia”	Dr. Shankari Sundararaman, JNU, Dr. G.V.C. Naidu, IDSA, Dr. Udai Bhanu Singh, IDSA, Prof. S. D. Muni, JNU,
8.	10 September 2004	Lecture On: “NEPAD Team 9: Relations between India and Africa”.	H.E. Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Republic of Senegal, Shri Shashank, Former Foreign Secretary.
9.	24 September 2004	Meeting with the delegation from Karachi Council of Foreign Relations, Economic Affairs & Law (KCFREAL) Pakistan	Participants from Pakistan: Chief Justice (Retd.) Saeed uz Zaman Siddiqui, Mr. Mansoor Alam, Mr. Liaqat Merchant, Dr. A.S.Nasir, Dr.(Ms.) Shaheen Salahuddin, Mrs.Merchant, Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, Mr.Salahuddin Ahmed. Participants from India: Dr. Syeda Hameed, Justice A.M.Ahmadi, Amb. S.K.Singh, Shri Salman Haider, Amb. Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Shri Inder Malhotra, Prof.Suresh Sharma, Shri Siddharth Varadarajan, Ms. Monika Mohta Ms.Subha Rajan.
10.	29 September 2004	Lecture On: “Nuclear Issue and Japan”.	H.E. Mr. Yasakuni Enoki, Ambassador of Japan, Amb. Arjun Asrani.
11.	13 October 2004	Seminar on: “Cooperation in Combating Terrorism in the Bay of Bengal (BIMSTEC) Regions: Challenges and Prospects”.	Prof. S.D.Muni, JNU, Dr.Manoj Joshi, HT, Prof. P.V.Rao, Osmania University, Hyderabad, Rear Admiral Raja Menon, USII, Dr. Manmohini Kaul, JNU, Amb. A. N. Ram
12.	16 November 2004	Lecture On: “Romania on its way to European Union”.	His Highness Prince Radu of Hohenzollern-Veringen, Romania.

Appendix XX

No. Date	Topic	Participants
13. 18 November 2004	International Seminar on: "50 Years of Panchsheel: Towards A New International Order Based on Genuine Multilateralism".	Shri. K.Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister, delivered the Keynote Address. Invited overseas dignitaries included: Shri. C. M. Bhandari, AS(PP&R), MEA, Mrs. Julea Dolly Joner, African Union, Prof. Maria Renee Cura Chivilcoy, Argentina, Mr.Liu Shuqing, China, Mr. Jia Zhijie, China, Dr. Andras Balogh, Hungary, Mr. Sabam Siagian, Indonesia, Mr. Nyunt Tin, Myanmar, Dr. B.B. Thapa, Nepal, Dr. Mubashir Hasan, Pakistan, Prof. Maria Krzysztof Byrski, Poland, Dr. Kishore Mahbubani, Singapore, Ms. Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, South Africa, Prof. Kusuma Snitwongse, Thailand.
14. 19-20 November 2004	International Seminar on: "Emerging Trends in Indo-African Relations"	Shri. Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State External Affairs delivered the Keynote Address.
15. 24 November 2004	Seminar on: "From Bali to Vientiane: Road Map for India-ASEAN Partnership".	Prof. S.D.Muni, JNU, Prof.C.Raja Mohan, JNU, Dr.Nagesh Kumar, RIS, Amb.A.N.Ram
16. 2 December 2004	Lecture on "India, EU and Germany: a two-laned Strategic Partnership"	H.E. Mr. Heimo Richter, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Amb. S.K. Lambah
17. 6 December 2004	Function to commemorate the "International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People"	Shri Rajiv Sikri, Secretary(East), MEA, Amb. Gharekhan, Amb. Ms. Dhabiya Khamis, Chief Representative, League of Arab States Mission, H.E. Mr. Elyes Kasri, Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia, H.E. Mr. Osama Musa, Ambassador of the State of Palestine
18. 21 December 2004	Seminar on "Security and Political Situation in Iraq"	Shri E. Ahamed, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Amb. S.K. Bhutani, Prof. Hari Vasudevan, JMI, Shri Talmiz Ahmad, AS, MEA, Prof. Shri Prakash, JMI, Amb. M.H. Ansari, Shri Satish Jacob, Prof. C. Raja Mohan, JNU, Amb. Ranjit Gupta, Dr. Arshi Khan, Hamdard University
19. 28 December 2004	Lecture on "Economic Diplomacy in Postmodern Times: The need to manage interfaces between government, business and NGOs"	Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, Dr. Raymond Saner of Centre for Socio Economic Development(CSEND), Geneva
20. 30 December 2004	Panel Discussion on Report of the UNSG'S High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change	Shri Shyam Saran, Foreign Secretary, Lt. Gen. Satish Nambiar, Director, USI, Amb. Vijay Nambiar, Amb. Muchkund Dubey, Commadore C. Uday Bhaskar, Officiating Director, IDSA, Shri Dileep Padgaonkar, Consulting Editor, The Times of India

Appendix XXI

Select Conferences/Workshops/Seminars Organised by RIS

- RIS/IUCN/CII International Conference on Biotechnology for Asian Development; New Delhi, 7-8 April 2004.
 - SACEPS/CPD/RIS Seminar on Follow-up of SAARC Summit Decisions and Launch of the *South Asia Development and Cooperation Report 2004*, Dhaka, 18 May 2004.
 - Seminar on the Agenda of UNCTAD XI, New Delhi, 4 June 2004.
 - Technical Seminar on Short-term Forecasting of India's Exports: Methodological Issues, New Delhi, 6 July 2004.
 - Seminar on Effects of Trade Openness on Productivity in Manufacturing Industries: A Cost Function Approach, New Delhi, 7 July 2004.
 - Seminar on WTO's July Framework, New Delhi, 6 August 2004.
 - RIS/DSIR National Workshop on Strategic Approach to Strengthening International Competitiveness in Knowledge-based industries, New Delhi, 13 August 2004.
 - PIDE/RIS Seminar on *South Asia Development and Cooperation Report 2004*, Islamabad, 18 August 2004.
 - RIS/SACEPS Regional Conference on SAARC: Post-Islamabad Challenges, New Delhi, 31 August 2004.
 - Brainstorming on India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Economic Cooperation, New Delhi, 8 September 2004.
 - Seminar on the Agenda for G-8 under British Presidency, New Delhi, 23 September 2004.
 - India-ASEAN Eminent Persons Lecture by Secretary-General, ASEAN, New Delhi, 18 October 2004.
 - High-Level Conference on Asian Economic Integration: Vision of a New Asia, Tokyo, 18-19 November 2004.
 - ICWA/RIS/CSCAP Seminar on From Bali to Vientiane: Road Map for India-ASEAN Partnership, New Delhi, 24 November 2004.
 - Seminar on TRIPs Regime and Access to Essential Medicines, New Delhi, 3 December 2004.
 - Seminar on National Innovation System: Experience of Select Asian Countries, New Delhi, 14 January 2005.
- RIS Publications**
- Books**
- *Towards an Asian Economic Community: Vision of a New Asia, 2004* by Nagesh Kumar (ed) and published jointly with Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore.
 - *Food Safety Regulation Concerns and Trade: The Developing Country Perspective*, by Rajesh Mehta and J. George (eds.), 2005, New Delhi: Macmillans.
 - *ASEAN-India Vision 2020: Working Together for a Shared Prosperity* by RIS and ASEAN-India Network of Think-Thanks, 2004.
 - *Future Directions of BIMSTEC: Towards a Bay of Bengal Economic Community* by RIS in consultation with IPS, Colombo; ITD, Bangkok; and CPD, Dhaka, 2004.
 - *WTO Negotiations and Indian Small Scale Industry* by Rajesh Mehta and Pooja Agarwal. Published jointly with Federation of Indian Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises (FISME) and Office of Development Commissioner (SSI), Ministry of Small Scale Industries, 2004.
 - *Biotechnology and Development: Challenges and Opportunities for Asia* by Sachin Chaturvedi and S.R. Rao (eds.), published jointly by Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore and RIS.
 - *India-ASEAN Partnership in an Era of Globalization: Reflections by Eminent Persons* (Second imprint), published jointly by Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore and RIS.
- RIS Policy Briefs**
- #13 *UNCTAD XI and the Development Dialogue for the 21st Century*
 - #14 *Oil Shock and Cyclical Upturn in US Interest Rates: Implications for Asia*

Appendix XXI

RIS Discussion Papers	
#86 <i>Towards a Free Trade Area in South Asia: Charting A Feasible Course for Trade Liberalisation with Reference to India's Role</i> by Indra Nath Mukherji.	#75 <i>Transport Cooperation in BIMST-EC: Issues and Way Forward</i> by Prabir De.
#85 <i>Industrial Restructuring and Export Competitiveness of the Textiles and Clothing Sector in SAARC in the Context of MFA Phase-Out</i> by Ram Upendra Das.	#74 <i>WTO Market Access Negotiations and Indian Small Scale Industry</i> by Rajesh Mehta and Pooja Agarwal.
#84 <i>India's Export by Countries and Commodities: On the Estimation of a Forecasting Model Using Panel Data</i> by Rajesh Mehta and Parul Mathur.	#73 <i>ASEAN-India Economic Relations: Current Status and Future Prospects</i> by Rahul Sen, Mukul G. Asher and Ramkishen S. Rajan.
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	<i>RIS Diary</i> , Vol. 3 No. 1, January 2005.

Abbreviations

ACAFD	Advanced Courses on Asia for Foreign Diplomats	CUNPK	Center for UN Peacekeeping
ACD	Asian Cooperation Dialogue	CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
AGPL	Actual Ground Position Line	DPC	District Passport Cell
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum	DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations	ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ASI	Archeological Survey of India	EU	European Union
BDR	Bangladesh Rifles	FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical And Economic Cooperation.	FIEO	Federation of Indian Export Organisations
BSF	Border Security Force	FOC	Foreign Office Consultations
CAN	Community of ANDEAN Nations	FSI	Foreign Service Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community	FTA	Free Trade Agreement
CBM	Confidence Building Measures	GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
CD	Conference on Disarmament	GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
CECA	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement	GOI	Government of India
CEL	Central Electronics Limited	GSLV	Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle
CEP	Cultural Exchange Programme	HAL	Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
CFY	Current Financial Year	HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting	HOM	Head of Mission
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia	HOP	Head of Post
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry	HTCG	High Technology Cooperation Group
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	IBSA	India, Brazil and South Africa
CLMV	Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam	ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
CLMV	Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam	ICWA	Indian Council of World Affairs
COMESA	Community of Eastern and Southern Africa	IFS	Indian Foreign Service
CPIF	A Chinese Peoples Institute of Foreign Affairs	IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
CSCAP	Council for Security and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific	ILO	International Labour Organisation
		IMO	International Maritime Organisation
		IRIGC	Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission

Abbreviations

ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation	PTA	Preferential Trade Agreement
ITPO	Indian Trade Promotion Organisation	RITES	Rail India Technical Economic Services
JCE	Joint Committee of Experts	ROK	Republic of Korea
JEC	Joint Economic Commission	SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
JSG	Joint Study Group	SAFTA	South Asian Free Trade Area
JTG	Joint Technical Group	SCAAP	Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Plan
JWG	Joint Working Group	SCPD	Special Course for Palestinian Diplomats
LAC	Latin American Countries	SICA	System of Central American Integration
LCDS	Least Developed Contracting States	SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
LOC	Line of Control	TCIL	Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam	TEAM-9	Techno-Economic Approach for Africa India Movement
MERC-OSUR	Market of Southern Cone Countries	UGC	University Grants Commission
MNA	Myanmar News Agency	UMFCCI	Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding	UNCO-PUOS	UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
NAM	Non Aligned Movement	UNDC	United Nations Disarmament Commission
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	UNGA	UN General Assembly
NDC	National Defence College	UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugee
NIDM	National Institute of Disaster Management	UNMEE	UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
NRI	Non Resident Indian	UNSC	United Nations Security Council
NSCS	National Security Council Secretariat	UP A	United Progressive Alliance
NSSP	Next Steps in Strategic Partnership	WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	WTO	World Trade Organisation
PCFD	Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats		
PIO	People of Indian Origin		
PIS	Personnel Information System		
PLA	People's Liberation Army		