



Annual Report

2006 - 2007

**Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India**



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Introduction and Synopsis

The foreign policy of India has been shaped by the desire to create an external environment conducive to peace and stability in the region, ensuring our accelerated economic development and the safeguarding of our national security. In pursuit of this enlightened national interest, India has undertaken a comprehensive engagement with the world – with all major powers, with our extended neighbourhood and with our partners in the developing world and the Non-aligned Movement.

In consonance with our desire to live in a neighbourhood of peace and prosperity, India continues to accord the highest priority to closer political, economic and cultural ties with its neighbours. India is committed to developing political relations with its South Asian neighbours on the basis of sovereign equality and mutual respect. This is exemplified most recently by the upgrading of the 1949 friendship treaty with Bhutan.

The countries of the subcontinent are bound together by history, culture and ethnic ties, and share a common destiny. India has a vision of South Asia as an integrated entity in which there is free flow of goods, peoples and ideas, unfettered by boundaries. There is a real opportunity today for shared prosperity between India and her neighbours. Amidst high growth rates in the region, we are in a position to advance together through trade, open borders, and regional economic integration. We strive to build strong and enduring partnerships with all our neighbours. Politically, this requires an enabling environment of peace and security, containing threats from extremism, terrorism and removing the sources of political discord. Our endeavour is also to work together with India's neighbours to create a common space of prosperity based on enhanced economic, trade and investment linkages and sustainable social and economic development. As host of the next SAARC summit in New Delhi, India will take the initiative to accelerate regional economic and political development. Through a

strengthened SAARC process, we hope to usher in a new phase of effective regional cooperation, reconnecting the subcontinent to itself and the world. It is our hope that one of the key steps in this process, namely, the full implementation of SAFTA, will be realized soon.

India perceives the world today as increasingly multivalent, marked by considerable political cooperation among the major powers with ever more inter-twined economies. The current global economy is increasingly defined by freer and substantive movement of capital and by the technology revolution, in particular information technology. The freedom of movement of capital is yet to be matched by the other factors of production or by ideas. In this age of globalisation, the most pressing problems of the day require global responses, such as the scourge of international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related technologies, trafficking of arms and drugs, the increasing levels of violence and destruction perpetrated by non-state actors, pandemics and natural disasters, climate change and environmental degradation which require coordinated transnational action.

To meet the challenges posed by the emerging international scenario, India has worked towards strengthening relations with all the countries, particularly the major powers of the world. India's relations with USA have been substantially transformed in the last couple of years. The visit of President Bush to India in March 2006 following Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's landmark visit in July 2005 further underscored our common commitment to carry this partnership forward. The understanding between India and USA on civilian nuclear energy cooperation is significant from the larger perspective of our energy security. India and Russia remain committed to their multi-faceted bilateral relationship founded on traditional strategic ties. This was reaffirmed during the visit of President Putin to India in January 2007.

India has also entered into strategic partnerships with the European Union, UK, France and Germany. PM's visit to Japan in December 2006 reflects our growing ties with Japan, both in substance and strategic significance.

India has significantly expanded its network of international relationships and the country's political engagement and economic and technical cooperation with the world is greater today than ever before. Trilateral meetings between India, Russia and China were held at Summit level in July 2006 at St. Petersburg and at Foreign Minister level in February 2007 at New Delhi to discuss international issues and trilateral cooperation among the three countries. Through the IBSA forum, India is engaged with two leading emerging economies, Brazil and South Africa. India has devoted considerable attention to ASEAN and its "Look East" policy has been further strengthened by regular participation in the East Asia Summit. India has also developed closer relations with countries in the Gulf region. India continues to intensify its engagement with countries in West Asia, Africa and Latin America. India's participation in the NAM Summit at Cuba reflects its commitment to promote South-South cooperation.

In the current debate on reforming the United Nations, India has repeatedly underlined the urgency of restructuring global institutions — both political and economic — to reflect the new realities on the ground. In particular, the developing world must find its due representation among the permanent members of the UN Security Council. India continues to work with like-minded nations for an equitable, multi-polar world order, which takes into account the legitimate aspirations of developing countries.

India's foreign policy gives considerable stress on economic diplomacy so as to promote the country's social and economic development goals by providing increased access to international markets, sources of energy and advanced technologies as well as by harnessing higher levels of foreign direct investment especially in critical areas such as infrastructure. Recognizing that its own economic growth is closely linked to the economic progress of other countries, India has strengthened institutional inter-linkages with economic groupings such as SAARC, ASEAN, BIMSTEC, Mekong-Ganga

Cooperation, IBSA, G-15, G-8, Indian Ocean Rim, and the East Asia Summit. India has also played a significant role in the WTO and other international economic institutions so that the evolving multilateral framework of economic cooperation can benefit India.

Neighbours

Afghanistan: India continued its policy of building bilateral relations with Afghanistan and assisting it in its reconstruction. India reaffirmed its commitment to the development of a sovereign, stable, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan by increasing its cumulative pledge of assistance by US\$ 150 million during the year, raising it to US\$ 750 million. Of this, the expenditure this year was about US\$ 90 million. India's assistance projects are in a wide range of sectors, including hydro electricity, road construction, agriculture, industry, telecommunications, information and broadcasting, education and health. India also supported Afghanistan's entry into SAARC and External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, visited Kabul in January 2007 to invite President Karzai to the 14th SAARC Summit to be held in New Delhi. President Karzai visited India in April and in November 2006. India co-hosted with Afghanistan, the 2nd Regional Economic Cooperation Conference (RECC) on Afghanistan in New Delhi on 18-19 November 2006. The security situation in Afghanistan, however, continued to remain a matter of concern. There was a sharp escalation in violence, particularly in the east and south of the country where insurgents, mainly the Taliban, were able to get support and shelter from across the border.

Bangladesh: Relations with Bangladesh were guided by India's commitment to engage the Government of Bangladesh on the entire gamut of relations between our two countries. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia visited India in March 2006 during which a revised bilateral trade agreement and an agreement on mutual cooperation for preventing illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances were signed. The Ministers of Water Resources of India and Bangladesh met in September 2006. Official level meetings included Home Secretary level talks in August 2006 and meetings of the Joint Boundary Working Group in July 2006, the Joint Group of Customs in May 2006, the Joint Working Group

on Trade in July 2006 and the Standing Committee on Inland Water Transit and Trade in September 2006. Presently, a caretaker government is in place in Dhaka and general elections, originally scheduled to be held in January 2007, have been postponed. As a friendly neighbour, India is interested in Bangladesh remaining stable, peaceful and democratic.

Bhutan: India-Bhutan relations, which are based on shared historical and cultural linkages, were further consolidated in all areas. India conveyed its full support to Bhutan during its transition to a democratic constitutional monarchy.

King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan accompanied by the Trongsa Penlop Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the Crown Prince of Bhutan, visited India from 26-31 July 2006.

In a momentous development, Jigme Singye Wangchuck announced the transfer of responsibilities of the Monarch and Head of State to the Crown Prince Trongsa Penlop Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck on 9 December 2006 who became the Fifth Druk Gyalpo of Bhutan.

Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the Fifth Druk Gyalpo, paid his first visit abroad to India from 7-12 February 2007, during which India and Bhutan signed the India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty, which updates the Treaty of 1949. The signing of the Treaty marked a historic moment in our relations with Bhutan, and reflects our mutual desire to enhance our relationship with Bhutan to an even higher level of cooperation and goodwill to meet the aspirations of our two peoples for a better life. The Treaty reinforces the close, warm and exemplary relations of complete trust, respect and confidence that have existed between the two countries for decades.

China: India-China relations continued to develop steadily. The year 2006 was celebrated as the India-China Friendship Year with a number of commemorative activities. The process of high-level interactions, which has contributed to mutual understanding and cooperation, was sustained. The visit of President Hu Jintao of China to India was a milestone in bilateral relations and resulted in a number of significant understandings, which have further substantiated the strategic and cooperative partnership between the two countries. The two sides also

continued their efforts to seek a peaceful resolution of outstanding differences, including the boundary question. Discussions between the Special Representatives on a mutually-agreed framework for the settlement of the boundary question continued. Bilateral trade crossed the US\$ 25 billion mark (according to Chinese statistics) and the signing of the Agreement on Investment Protection and Promotion during the year will facilitate two-way investment flows. Border trade through Nathula was resumed during the year. Defence exchanges and functional cooperation in various areas continued to expand. It was also decided to open new Consulates in Kolkata and Guangzhou and establish a hotline between the Foreign Ministers. The process of confidence building measures in the border areas was strengthened with the operationalisation of border personnel meetings at Kibithu-Damai in the Eastern Sector.

Maldives: Our bilateral relations with the Maldives continued to be close and friendly. Both India and the Maldives were engaged in developing mutual understanding and closer cooperation through exchange of high level visits and organizing training programmes. President Gayoom visited India in January-February 2007 to attend the international conference held by the Indian National Congress to commemorate the centenary of the Satyagraha movement. External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Maldives in January 2007. Ismail Shafeen, the Defence Minister of Maldives visited India in January 2007.

Myanmar: Further substance was added to India's relations with Myanmar which are cordial and trouble free. There was a regular exchange of high level visits during the period. President's visit to Myanmar in March 2006 was the first-ever visit by an Indian President to Myanmar and the first Head of State/Head of Government visit from India in nearly a decade. During the visit an MoU on Cooperation in the energy sector was signed. General Thura Shwe Mann, Chief of Joint Staff and Major General Maung Oo, Home Minister of Union of Myanmar visited India in December 2006 for talks with their Indian counterparts. External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Myanmar in January 2007. Several official level meetings took place through the period. Work continued on cross border infrastructure projects, including the resurfacing of the Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemoyo Road and the

Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, which would benefit Myanmar and the North East region of India, as well as improving bilateral trade.

Nepal: The year 2006 witnessed momentous changes in Nepal and was a turning point in the nation's history. After the restoration of multi-party democracy in April 2006, the people of Nepal made significant progress in finding a peaceful political solution to the challenges facing the country. A Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed by the Government of Nepal and CPN (Maoist) which formally brought to an end the armed insurgency. The Agreement laid down the road-map for further steps, as per which the process of arms management was initiated, the interim Constitution promulgated, and an interim Legislature, with the inclusion of CPN (Maoist), constituted in January 2007. These developments were significant steps in Nepal's journey towards a settled constitutional order to enable the people of Nepal to realize their aspirations for peace and prosperity. India will extend its full support to the Government and people of Nepal in their task of nation building at this juncture of their history.

The Prime Minister of Nepal, G.P. Koirala, paid his first visit abroad to India from 6-9 June 2006 during which the close ties of friendship between our two countries were reinforced. An economic assistance package of Rs. 1000 crore was offered to Nepal. The External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Nepal in December 2006.

Pakistan: India-Pakistan relations remained well short of their potential and are yet to be fully normalised. India seeks a cooperative and constructive relationship with Pakistan based on trust and confidence in an atmosphere free of violence. India believes in settling all issues, including Jammu and Kashmir through bilateral talks. Towards this goal India has pursued a policy of constructive engagement with Pakistan to establish peaceful, friendly and cooperative relations. The dialogue process hinges on the 6 January 2004 commitment of the President of Pakistan not to permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism. The Composite Dialogue made some progress during the year. An agreement on 'Reducing the Risk from Accidents relating to Nuclear Weapons' was initialled and a Revised Shipping Protocol was signed. People-to-people

interaction has further been facilitated by the Poonch-Rawalakot bus service introduced across the LoC. India extended tariff concessions under SAFTA to Pakistan, but Pakistan has not done so to India.

Cross-border terrorism continued to affect bilateral relations. The Mumbai blasts of July 2006, which had cross-border linkages, led to the postponement of Foreign Secretary talks. When Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met President Musharraf in Havana in September 2006, it was decided to institute a Joint anti-terror mechanism and resume the Composite Dialogue. The Joint anti-terror mechanism was set up during Foreign Secretary talks in November 2006, and will test Pakistan's resolve and commitment to combat cross-border terrorism. External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Pakistan in January 2007 to convey invitation for the SAARC Summit in New Delhi. The fourth round of the Composite Dialogue will commence in March 2007.

Sri Lanka: India-Sri Lanka relations continued to develop in 2006. India is concerned at the ongoing hostilities in Sri Lanka which has taken its toll on civilian casualties and resulted in an exodus of refugees. India is of the view that the only way out is a negotiated, political settlement which meets the legitimate aspirations of all communities while respecting the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka.

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse visited India in November 2006. Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayake visited India in January 2007 to attend the Satyagraha conference. Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama visited India in end January 2007. From India several ministerial and official level visits took place. External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Colombo in January 2007 to handover the SAARC Summit invitation to the Sri Lankan President.

Bilateral trade for the period April to October 2006 amounted to US\$ 1 billion and annualized figures are expected to touch US\$ 2 billion. India became the second largest investor in Sri Lanka. Bilateral tourism received a boost as the weekly frequency of flights between the two countries increased and Indians formed the largest group of tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka. There was progress in the negotiations between India and Sri Lanka on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

(CEPA) which would build on the success of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

South-East Asia and The Pacific

India's relations with countries in the South East Asia and South Pacific, including Australia and New Zealand, continued to improve. As a principal objective of our "Look East" policy, actively pursued over the last decade and a half, India has developed multi-faceted relationship with the countries in the region. Prime Minister participated in the India-ASEAN and East Asia Summits held in Cebu, Philippines in January 2007. The External Affairs Minister participated in the Ministerial meetings preceding the Summits as well as in the MGC Foreign Ministers' meeting. It was agreed at the India-ASEAN Summit that efforts would be made to finalise India-ASEAN FTA by July 2007. India's trade with most of the countries in the region showed significant improvement during the year. India continued to help Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Pacific Island countries in their development efforts. India extended humanitarian assistance to Indonesia and the Philippines in the aftermath of natural disasters in these two countries. Defence cooperation and cultural exchanges between India and the countries in the region also continued to show enhanced coverage.

East Asia

Japan: India continued to attach high priority to strengthening relations with Japan. The dynamic growth in bilateral relations was reflected in several high-level visits, positive momentum in bilateral trade, increase in Japanese investments into India and enhancement of defence and security cooperation, including the visit of Defence Minister to Japan. There has been a qualitative shift in India-Japan relations following Prime Minister's visit to Japan in December 2006. During the visit, the two sides agreed to establish a Strategic and Global Partnership, which would involve closer political and diplomatic coordination on bilateral, regional, multilateral and global issues, comprehensive economic engagement, stronger defence exchanges, enhanced technological cooperation as well as working towards a quantum increase in cultural ties, educational linkages and people-to-people contacts. Discussions have begun on a

Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement marking the beginning of a new phase in economic engagement with Japan.

Republic of Korea (ROK): India-ROK relations have developed and diversified in recent times, particularly since the visit of President Roh Moo-hyun to India in October 2004 and that of our President to ROK in February 2006. During the year, the two sides continued to work together to substantiate the "Long-Term Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity", including diversification of trade and investment linkages, enhanced momentum in defence relations and increased people-to-people contacts. ROK continued to be an important economic partner, with the trade volume increasing by 35% to touch US\$ 6,162 million in 2005-06. ROK companies expanded and consolidated their business presence in India through increased investments. Principal among these was the decision of POSCO to invest \$ 12 billion for an integrated steel plant in Orissa. Regular meetings of India-ROK Joint Task Force were held to develop a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between the two countries.

Mongolia: India continued to enjoy excellent relations with Mongolia during the year 2006. High level visits, cooperation in education, human resource development and cultural exchanges strengthened bilateral cooperation and partnership.

Eurasia

India continued its close, extensive and cooperative interaction with all Eurasian countries. Intensified interactions with Russia that have characterized our bilateral relations, found reflection in the landmark visit of President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation on 25-26 January 2007, when he participated as the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations. A series of important agreements were signed/ adopted by the two sides, including a Joint Statement signed by the two leaders, a Joint Statement on nuclear energy cooperation, a Cultural Exchange Programme and agreements on space cooperation, constructing additional nuclear power plants and custom exchanges. Trade and investment, energy, defence, space, science and technology, political dialogue

and culture are important focus areas for cooperation between the two countries.

India exchanged high level official, parliamentary and commercial delegations and cultural troupes with all its other Eurasian partners to pursue its bilateral objectives with respective countries. In this context, the President of Tajikistan visited India in August, 2006 and the Prime Minister visited Uzbekistan in April, 2006. Cultural festivals, seminars, conferences and trade exhibitions were organized regularly; bilateral agreements in various fields were signed, training courses were offered and assistance provided within the parameters of the ITEC Programme as well as through other channels.

The Gulf, West Asia and North Africa

The Gulf: The year 2006-07 witnessed further consolidation of India's relations and bilateral interactions with the countries of the Gulf. The Amir of Kuwait paid a successful visit to India in June 2006. Trade and economic relations witnessed significant expansion underscored by the success of the Second Industrial Conference held between India and GCC states in March 2006 in Muscat, Oman. Joint Commission meetings were held with Oman, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait coupled with exchange of visits by several trade and commercial delegations with the countries of the region. The first round of negotiations to enter into a Free Trade Agreement between India and GCC states in Riyadh in March 2006 was one of the many steps to tap the immense potential that exists for trade and economic cooperation. The finalization of a number of bilateral agreements helped further strengthen the institutional framework for cooperation. Efforts were made to ensure the welfare of expatriate Indian communities especially by entering into institutional arrangements with the countries of the region. Overall, this year was marked by a more proactive engagement with our Gulf neighbours with whom we share a common interest in promoting durable peace and stability in the region.

India's relations with Iran are underlined by historical, civilisational and multifaceted ties. The bilateral cooperation has acquired a strategic dimension flourishing in the fields of energy, trade and commerce, information technology and transit. During 2006-07, relations with Iran were further strengthened through regular exchanges.

The External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Iran on 6-7 February 2007. Views were exchanged on bilateral and regional issues. The impetus provided by high level discussions has contributed to cooperation in multifarious areas including strategic and security spheres. The burgeoning trade relations that have witnessed over 43% increase over the previous year have placed bilateral relations on a new trajectory. India's commitment to strengthening its bonds of friendship with Iran for mutual prosperity and peace and stability in the region has been reiterated at the highest level. The desire and endeavour to developing relations have been operationalised through institutionalised linkages.

West Asia and North Africa (WANA): The crisis in West Asia continued to engage our attention. India condemned the use of force and expressed deep concern at the developments in Lebanon clarifying that this could have negative implications for the entire region. India reiterated its call for all parties to renounce violence and resolve their differences through peaceful means. India's view that lasting peace and security in the region can be achieved only through a negotiated and comprehensive solution that takes into account the legitimate interests and grievances of all the parties concerned, was reiterated. India's support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people in the region based on UN Security Council Resolutions, continued to form the bedrock of India's policy towards the Middle East situation.

The King and Queen of Jordan visited India from 30 November – 2 December 2006. Other important visitors from this region were the Moroccan Foreign Minister in June 2006, the Egyptian Foreign Minister in December 2006 and the Israeli Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour, also in December 2006. Minister for Agriculture, Sharad Pawar, visited Israel in May 2006.

Bilateral trade with WANA countries has significantly improved. Trade with Egypt stood at US\$ 1065 million in 2005, up from US\$ 628 million in 2004, crossing US\$ 1 billion mark for the first time. Trade with Israel stood at US\$ 2.5 billion in 2005. India has also invested in a major way in the hydrocarbon, fertilizers and power sectors in WANA countries.

Africa

In Sub-Saharan Africa, India has strengthened its engagement at bilateral, regional and Pan African levels for upgradation of relations. Special emphasis has been given to capacity building, technical assistance and HRD, grant assistance for development projects and credit lines. India's dialogue with the AU has led to the decision to work for the establishment of an India-Africa Forum.

There was growing recognition in the region that India can be an ideal partner in economic development and a reliable source of affordable products, services and technologies in sectors as diverse as agriculture and small industries on one hand, and IT and space technology on the other. Exchange of several VVIP and ministerial visits were a testimony to the growing interest. Countries of the region overwhelmingly supported India's candidature to various international fora, including Human Rights Council.

The Ministry provided direct assistance to a number of countries in response to humanitarian emergencies or in the context of longer-term development projects. Multi-million dollars worth of concessional lines of credit for infrastructure development projects were extended.

Over 1000 officials from Africa received training in India under the ITEC and SCAAP; over 10,000 African students studied in India and several Indian experts went on secondment.

India continued to be one of the largest contributors to peacekeeping in Africa: 3000 troops in Sudan, 3500 in DRC and over 1000 on Ethiopia-Eritrea border.

The Ministry led the Indian industry in the promotion of private sector project partnerships through regional CII Conclaves in Lusaka and Addis Ababa & Pan-African Conclave in New Delhi.

Relations were upgraded with the Regional Economic Communities of COMESA, SACU, SADC and EAC.

The TEAM-9 initiative along with India-Africa Project Partnership Conclaves continue to provide an effective impetus to deepen India's relations with several important countries of West Africa. Projects of a value of over US\$ 200 million are under implementation under Lines of

Credit (LoC) in the TEAM-9 countries. In 2006, an agreement to extend a US\$ 250 million LoC by the Government of India to the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development was signed. The impact of these initiatives on our relationship with countries of West Africa region was evident in the visit of President of Gabon and Foreign Minister level visits that India received from countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Benin, Senegal, Ghana, Angola, Republic of Congo and DR Congo. At regional and institutional level, we had visits from Chairperson of the AU Commission and a Ministerial delegation from ECOWAS.

Work for implementation of the Pan African e-network Project continued. Dakar (Senegal) was chosen as the site for establishment of the hub for the project. Memoranda of Understanding for participation in the project have already been signed with 20 countries in Africa.

Europe

India's engagement with the European Union continued to strengthen. Development of relations with the EU and its member states is a principal focus of India's foreign policy. Europe, particularly a Europe that is uniting would play the role of a key pole in the evolving multi-polar international system. The Helsinki Summit of October 2006 took significant decisions to progress the India-EU strategic partnership. One of the most important of these is for the two sides to enter into a broad-based trade and investment agreement.

India's engagement with Europe is not only important in the bilateral and India-EU contexts but in trying to develop common approaches to addressing various global challenges. India shares a strategic partnership with the European Union, and also individually with France, Germany and the UK. During the year, India's engagement with the EU and individual countries in Europe intensified and diversified further as indicated by twelve Summit level interactions (UK, France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Portugal, Finland, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Romania and Norway) and burgeoning interactions across the board. These included a growing number of parliamentary and ministerial level visits, indicative of growing interest on the part of Europe in interacting with a rapidly growing

India as well as our steadily growing cooperation with this part of the world. This co-operation encompassed a wide range of areas from political to trade and investment, culture, science and technology.

The EU is India's largest trading partner accounting for 1/5th of India's total external trade. Bilateral trade has steadily grown between 2001 and 2005 at over 10% on average to reach Euro 40 billion in 2005. India and the EU are also important investment partners. Total FDI inflows from the EU to India are US\$ 8 billion. Indian companies have also begun to invest in the EU in recent years. UK, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy and The Netherlands are important trade & investment partners for India.

India-EU relations are firmly based on the shared values of democracy, pluralism and rule of law and have grown exponentially from what used to be a purely trade and economic driven relationship to one covering all areas of interaction. In order to carry forward their strategic partnership in these various areas, India and the EU adopted a comprehensive Joint Action Plan in 2005, the first time that India has adopted such an Action Plan with any of its partners.

There was strong focus on India in Germany in 2006. India was the Partner Country at the Hannover International Trade Fair; Guest of Honour Country at the Frankfurt Book Fair and the focus country at the Bonn Biennale Art festival.

A Defence Cooperation Agreement was signed with Germany; a Social Security Agreement was signed with Belgium; a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty was signed with Spain and Bulgaria; an Extradition Treaty was signed with Portugal.

The Festival of India (Oct 2006-Jan 2007) was organized by ICCR in collaboration with Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels.

The Americas

The last year was marked by a broadened India-US dialogue on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest. This encompassed strategic and security issues, defence, counter-terrorism, science and technology, health, trade, space, energy, maritime cooperation, and environment which reflect the transforming nature of the

India-U.S. bilateral relationship.

President George W. Bush paid a state visit to India in March 2006 during which he and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh announced initiatives in agriculture, science and technology, space and maritime cooperation. President Bush also called on President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and received UPA Chairperson and the Leader of Opposition.

Several steps were taken by both sides to implement the understanding on resumption of civil nuclear energy co-operation that was reached in July 2005. India finalized its Separation Plan and the US Government amended its domestic laws to legally enable it to resume full civil nuclear cooperation with India. Both sides started negotiation on a bilateral agreement for implementation of the understandings of 18 July 2005 and March 2006 Separation Plan. India joined FutureGen and the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor initiative.

Total trade between India and the USA stood at \$26.76 billion in 2005, an increase of 23.6% over 2004. The Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture launched in July 2005 was further advanced with an announcement of a 3 year Work Plan.

The India-US Defence Policy Group held its eighth meeting in New Delhi and its sub-groups also held their separate meetings. The Five Working Groups under the India-US Energy Dialogue – Oil & Gas, Power & Efficiency, New Technology and Renewable Energy, Coal and Civil Nuclear Energy - carried out a series of collaborative activities and initiatives.

Relations with Canada continued to expand in various areas. Both countries carried forward their cooperation in science and technology, and agreed to discuss resumption of defence contacts. Discussions on setting up an Environment Forum and an Energy Dialogue are ongoing.

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

Relations with the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean continue to evolve. The effort was, in particular, to add substantive trade and economic content to our traditionally warm and friendly relations with the

countries of the region with which we are bound by common values and principles that we share, including the principles of democracy, pluralism, respect for multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity. The effort is to reduce the physical distance between India and Latin America and the Caribbean and work together to increase connectivity and build on the growing complementarities and opportunities for co-operation.

During 2006-07, relations with the region were strengthened and diversified with exchange of high level visits, Joint Commission meetings and Foreign Office Consultations. The visit of the Prime Minister to Brazil and Cuba was the first ever visit to the region after a gap of 20 years. The relations with Brazil have been upgraded to a strategic partnership. The visit of the Vice President to Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago further intensified our traditional linkages with the Caribbean region. The bilateral trade with almost all the countries in the region has continued to increase. A number of Indian companies have started seriously pursuing investments and joint ventures in the region. Academic, cultural and educational exchanges have also increased. The cricket stadium in Guyana built with India's financial assistance of US\$ 25 million, including a grant component of US\$ 6 million was inaugurated in November 2006.

United Nations and International Organisations

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the 14th NAM Summit in Havana in September 2006. In his highly acclaimed statement, he emphasized India's strong commitment to NAM and called for new NAM initiatives on energy security, Africa and West Asia.

The External Affairs Minister led the Indian delegation to the General Debate of 61st UNGA Session in September 2006 in his capacity as the then Defence Minister. His statement at the General Debate covered a number of major issues including the need to address the inequities in the global economic and financial order, Millennium Development Goals and comprehensive reform of the UN, and was widely acclaimed. He also led the Indian participation at the 30th Annual Ministerial Meeting of the G-77 held in New York on 22 September

2006, besides attending a meeting of the Commonwealth foreign ministers as well as the inaugural meeting of the Foreign Ministers of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China).

India has been actively involved in the reform process at the UN stressing the imperative for this to enhance the UN's ability to serve the interests of the majority of its membership, which is from developing countries. The decision making structures at the UN, especially the Security Council, need to be reflective of contemporary realities. This would also bring about greater legitimacy and ownership of important decisions among the membership of the UN. India also made effective contributions to the ongoing discussions on other major elements of UN reform including revitalization of UNGA, strengthening of ECOSOC, the UN's development agenda and reform of its management structures and procedures.

With a view to maintaining momentum towards reform and expansion of the UN Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories, India maintained constant contact and coordination with Brazil, Germany and Japan in the format of the G-4 Group of Countries which have been working together for this purpose. Intensive contacts and deliberations were also maintained with other members of the United Nations. High level delegations from Headquarters attended the AU Summits. Without diluting India's commitment to seeking a permanent seat at the UN Security Council, India also announced its bid for the non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council for the term 2011-2012.

India was elected as a member of the Organizational Committee of another new body of the UN, namely, the Peace-building Commission under the category of top five providers of military personnel and civilian police to the UN peace-keeping operations. India contributed an amount of US\$ 2 million to the Peace-building Fund.

India was also elected to the newly set up Human Rights Council in May 2006 with the highest number of votes among the contested seats and will be contesting for membership of the Council again in 2007. India has been an active participant in the discussions on human rights issues at the UN and the recently formed Human Rights

Council, including on its mandates and work methods. India also engaged in the deliberations that led to the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and are among the countries that signed the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance on the day when it opened for signature.

The Ministry has been fully engaged in the global discussions on sustainable development and climate change including proactive participation in the formulation of positions and negotiations at the meetings of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol given the critical implication that these can have for India's growth and development. The involvement in Climate Change issues has also included interactions with key countries and in India's participation in partnerships for clean technologies.

With growing capacity and willingness to assist in the area of humanitarian assistance, India contributed US\$ 2 million to the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund and has a member on its Advisory Board.

India has always been mindful of the vulnerabilities of countries with special needs such as the Least Developed, the Land Locked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States. Our participation at the review meeting in New York on the UN's plan of action for these groups was at Ministerial level. We have also undertaken specific efforts to assist Small Island Developing States and those from the islands in the Pacific Ocean.

International Migration issues have become another important issue on the global agenda. India participated at the Ministerial level at the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development at the UN.

While welcoming the adoption of a Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the UNGA in September 2006, India continued to pursue the important issue of expeditious finalization of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism for which it had presented a draft as far back as in 1996. It accepted a visit by a delegation of UN counter-terrorism experts in November 2006 which was mutually beneficial.

During the year 2006, India and its nominees were elected

to several UN and International organisations which included Inter-governmental Cultural Heritage of UNESCO, Executive Council of International Telecommunication Union, UN Human Rights Committee, INTERPOL, the International Law Commission and the Radio Regulation Board of ITU.

India made further commitments for enhancing cooperation within the Commonwealth and played an active role in its various fora and initiatives. It agreed to host the International Partnership Summit of the Commonwealth Connects Programme of which it is the largest contributor.

Multilateral Economic Relations

SAARC has entered into its third decade. India will host the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi on 3-4 April 2007. There is renewed hope that the time has come to move SAARC from consultation to an implementation phase. India hopes to upgrade regional cooperation during its Chairmanship of SAARC. Emphasizing on the need for connectivity in the region, the Prime Minister, during the 13th Summit in Dhaka in November 2005 stated "if we wish the next 20 years in SAARC to be different, we should take the first decision to reconnect the countries of the subcontinent...". He offered on a reciprocal basis, transit facilities to all countries of the region, including greater air connectivity through a virtual open skies arrangement. A SAARC Multimodal Transport Study has been conducted and there is hope that the South Asian region will be well connected through air, rail and road. To highlight the need for connectivity, a SAARC Car Rally is being organized. At the forthcoming SAARC Summit in April 2007, Afghanistan will also become a member of SAARC and, for the first time, five Observers – China, Japan, European Union, Republic of Korea and USA – would be invited to attend the Summit.

India continued its policy of active engagement with various economic groupings like ASEAN, EAS, MGC, BIMSTEC, IOR-ARC, IBSA, G-15, G-8 etc so as to further deepen its integration with the world economy and to reap the benefits of natural synergies with various regions. Taking forward its Look East policy, India participated at the ASEAN-India and the East Asia Summits as well as the MGC Foreign Ministers' meeting

held in Cebu, Philippines in January 2007. Efforts are being made to finalize the ASEAN-India FTA at an early date. The ASEAN leaders acknowledged that India is one of their most active dialogue partners and emphasized the cultural and civilizational links with India. India would host the 2nd BIMSTEC Summit in 2007. Prime Minister led the Indian delegation to the 1st IBSA Summit held in Brasilia, Brazil in September 2006 where 5 trilateral agreements in the areas of maritime transportation, biofuels, agriculture, information technology and trade facilitation were signed. Prime Minister participated in a meeting of the outreach countries of the G-8 Summit held in St. Petersburg, Russia in July 2006, signaling India's willingness to constructively contribute to the endeavours to find global solutions to the challenges being faced by the international community. India continued its efforts with the developing countries to evolve common positions on issues and causes of common interest and to further the same in the integrated world economy.

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and Development Partnership (DP)

As ever, technical cooperation constituted an important element in the conduct of diplomatic relations with developing countries. India's bilateral assistance, extended through the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme to 156 countries, saw 4000 participants attending training courses aimed at capacity building and human resource development. Requests for increased assistance in this area were conveyed at various bilateral meetings including at the highest level from the developing world. The programme also assumed new dimensions with regional and multilateral organizations actively associating themselves with the programme.

Further progress in developing in-house expertise in project delivery with a view to maximizing cost-effectiveness, expeditious delivery, and coordination, buttressed the increasing emphasis on the delivery of development projects as part of India's development cooperation programme.

India's humanitarian programme of relief and solidarity to disaster-struck parts of the world was continued as before.

Investment and Technology Promotion (ITP)

The Ministry continued to accord high priority to economic diplomacy to attain Government's overall foreign policy goals and to face the challenges and exploit the opportunities thrown up by the fast integrating world. Some of the major objectives of economic diplomacy that the Ministry constantly sought to achieve were promotion and enhancement of external trade through market and region specific schemes, ensuring higher levels of energy security by supporting Indian companies to acquire oil and gas equity abroad and realization of our political and strategic interests abroad through economic action using Lines of Credit, Grants and technical assistance. These helped in building partnerships with friendly countries and in opening markets for Indian products and projects abroad.

Policy Planning and Research (PPR)

The PPR Division maintained close interaction with institutions as well as individuals specializing in policy research and analyses on themes having a direct bearing on India's foreign policy and international relations and provided financial assistance for holding a number of seminars and undertaking research studies with a view to deriving invaluable inputs for the Ministry's foreign policy planning, formulation and implementation process. A database of experts and institutions specializing in policy research and analyses has already been developed by the PPR Division and is updated on regular basis.

A Foreign Policy Coordinating Committee (FPCC) has been constituted in the Ministry. The Committee functions under the supervision of Minister of External Affairs and PPR Division provides the Secretariat for FPCC. The FPCC will work on themes such as India's relations with its neighbours, global issues, relations with major regions and countries, economic issues and case studies/historical research. The FPCC met twice during 2006 and deliberated on important foreign policy issues.

The PPR Division prepared the Annual Report of the Ministry and also the Monthly Summary for the Cabinet. It also handled work related to examination of maps depicting India's external boundaries in coordination with Survey of India.

Protocol

As compared to 2004, when 63 incoming VVIP/VIP visits took place, 114 incoming visits at the same level took place in 2006. A similar trend has emerged in terms of increase in the number of Foreign Resident Diplomatic Missions in Delhi whose number has gone up from 116 in 2003 to 130 in 2006. Foreign Resident Missions in Delhi are also growing in size and nearly 150 posts are being added annually. This trend is expected to continue.

Consular, Passport and Visa Services

There are presently 31 Passport Offices and 16 Passport Collection Centres in India. It is proposed to open new Passport Offices at Amritsar, Dehradun, Raipur, Shimla, Coimbatore and Madurai in 2007. A number of measures have been taken to make the passport issuance system simpler and speedier for the comfort and convenience of the public like decentralization and online applications.

Approval from the Ministry of Finance for creation of 293 additional posts in various categories was received in September 2006. The process for filling up these posts in various Passport Offices will be completed by March 2007. Another proposal for creation of 287 posts in Indian Missions/Posts abroad is presently under consideration of the Ministry of Finance.

Indian Embassies in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE in the Gulf region have introduced, with effect from April 2006, provision of free legal aid for two hours twice a week to Indian workers to resolve labor related issues.

Visa waiver agreements with Mongolia and Mexico came into force in February 2006, thereby increasing the number of such countries to 35. Efforts are being made to sign such agreements with other countries.

The process of computerization of passport and visa sections has been completed in London, New York, Islamabad, Kuwait, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Muscat, Dhaka, Riyadh, Madrid, Paris, Singapore and Colombo. The process of computerization in remaining missions and posts will be completed by March 2007.

The Ministry has embarked on several projects with a view

to modernizing and upgrading the passport/visa issuance system, like centralized printing of passports, issuance of e-passports and outsourcing of visa work.

Administration

The Indian diplomatic presence was expanded by opening five new missions and posts during the year. Special efforts were made to simplify rules and regulations with the objective of decentralizing decision-making. A comprehensive exercise on revision of pay scales of local staff was carried out. Austerity measures were implemented through abolition of posts and increase in tenure of postings.

A severe shortage of posts necessitated special focus on optimum utilization of human resources. A review of deployments at various levels was conducted, indents were placed for recruitment and promotions were effected well in time. The Special Drive to fill up backlog vacancies in reserved categories was carried forward.

The Ministry implements the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 and has included recruitment to the Indian Foreign Service under its ambit. Ministry is sensitive to gender equality and strives to provide equal opportunities for women employees at all levels.

In line with Government's policy of promotion and propagation of Hindi, the Ministry has been making special efforts in this regard. All important documents like Bilateral Treaties, Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, Annual Report of the Ministry and Parliament Questions are prepared bilingually. The Hindi website of the Ministry was launched. Meetings of the Hindi Advisory Committee and the Official Language Implementation Committee were held. A Hindi Pakhwada was organized in the Ministry with active participation of the Ministry's employees. Various Hindi training programmes were organized by the Foreign Service Institute.

Ministry has well-formulated schemes for propagation of Hindi abroad through Indian Missions abroad, including provision of Hindi teaching material, financial support,

donation of audio-visual material, grant of scholarships to foreign students to study Hindi in India, organizing Hindi Diwas, etc. Regional Hindi conferences were organized periodically in different countries. The World Hindi Day was celebrated on 10 January 2007. Action is underway for organizing the 8th World Hindi Conference in New York in July 2007, as well as for establishment of the World Hindi Secretariat in Mauritius.

Right to Information Act

As per the mandate of the RTI Act, a comprehensive list of information has been put online under the title “Basic Information Related to MEA”. Particulars of facilities available to the citizens for information including names and address of public information officers (as per article 4(1)(b)(xvi) of RTI Act 2005) as well as that of the Chief Appellate Authority (under Sec 19(1) of RTI Act 2005) for the Ministry, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Indian Council of World Affairs and Central Passport Offices can be accessed on the website of the Ministry, viz. www.mea.gov.in

Coordination

The Coordination Division of the Ministry serves as the nodal point for all work relating to Parliament in MEA and for examination of proposals for clearance of foreign tours of Ministers, legislators and government officials. It also clears holding of international conferences and sports events in India. The Students Cell of the Division deals with the selection, nomination and admission of foreign self-financing students against reserved seats in the medical and engineering institutions in the country. The Coordination Division is assisting the Inter-State Council Secretariat in organising the Fourth International Conference on Federalism being hosted by the Government of India at New Delhi from 5-7 November 2007.

External Publicity

The External Publicity Division, as the interface of the Ministry with the media, continued to project India’s foreign policy objectives through interaction with both Indian and international media. The concerns and viewpoint of the Government on various issues were actively articulated and widely disseminated through

regular and special press briefings, statements, backgrounders and postings on the website of the Ministry.

Public Diplomacy

The Public Diplomacy Division of the Ministry of External Affairs was created in May 2006 to organize the outreach activities inside and outside India, and audio visual and print publicity. It is with these objectives in mind that the Public Diplomacy Division has been engaging and supporting institutions, universities and think tanks.

The External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee launched the Global India Foundation, an independent think tank, on 16 January 2006. Contacts have been initiated with reputed international think tanks such as the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London. The Division participated in the 35th annual conference on South Asia organized in University of Wisconsin (USA), and a conference on “Challenges for Foreign Ministries: Managing Diplomatic Networks & Optimizing Value” on 31 May-1 June 2006 in Geneva.

The Division commissions/acquires documentaries aimed at positive projection of India’s image abroad and sends these to Indian Missions abroad for presentation, screening and telecast on foreign TV channels. In addition, the Division brought out booklets on Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2006, India’s Assistance Programme in Afghanistan, brochures on official visits of President and Prime Minister.

Foreign Service Institute (FSI)

The 2005 batch of IFS Probationers completed their training with the Institute in January 2007 and are now on training in the Ministry in various Divisions. The 2006 Batch of the IFS Probationers have commenced their one-year comprehensive training programme with the Foreign Service Institute from January 2007.

The Institute maintains regular contacts with other training institutions. A special training programme was organized for the first time for officers from the Cabinet Secretariat in May 2006. Since April 2006, four Basic Professional Courses have been organized by the Foreign Service Institute for the training of staff and officials of the Ministry. The First Orientation Course for IFS(B) Grade-I Officers was conducted by the Institute in July 2006.

The 40th and the 41st Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) were organized from 1 February-10 March 2006 and 4 October-10 November 2006 respectively. Twenty eight diplomats from 26 countries attended the 40th PCFD and twenty five diplomats from 21 countries participated in the 41st PCFD. A special four week course for 20 diplomats from Afghanistan was organized in April 2006.

FSI hosted the Deans of counterpart institutes in Croatia, Bulgaria and Mexico and issues such as mutual cooperation and exchange programmes were discussed with them.

Cultural Relations

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was formally set up in 1950, with the primary objective of establishing, reviving and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries.

The Festival of India in Japan was inaugurated by the Prime Minister in Tokyo in December 2006 and the ICCR is coordinating various events during the India-Japan Friendship Year, 2007 which will include business seminars, exhibitions, performing art events, fashion shows, a film festival, food festivals, seminars, talks/lectures by eminent personalities and souvenir shops. The Festival of India in Belgium was held for a period of four months from October 2006 to January 2007 at the Palais des Beaux-Arts. The ICCR also sponsored 67 cultural delegations to 54 countries covering all the continents of the world and in addition hosted a number of incoming foreign cultural delegations. As part of its scholarship programme, ICCR offered approximately 1300 scholarships under various Schemes.

Indian Council of World Affairs

During the period April-December, 2006, the Indian Council of World Affairs organized a number of events such as lectures, seminars, bilateral strategic dialogues and background briefings. On an average, between 80-150 persons attended each of the lectures while the seminars attracted between 50-100 persons each. ICWA's magazine '*India Quarterly*' was on track during 2006. Besides the above, the ICWA has signed Memoranda of Understanding with counterpart organizations in five countries: Malaysia, Tajikistan, Mexico, Portugal and Poland.

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

RIS, as an autonomous policy think-tank, conducted policy research on international economic issues and provided analytical support in preparations for major Summit meetings and other important negotiations such as the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN-India Summit, NAM Summit, IBSA Summit, WTO negotiations, the joint study group on comprehensive economic dialogue with Japan, India-ASEAN FTA negotiations, among others. It held policy dialogue on the relevance and the way forward for an Asian Economic Community 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.

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Afghanistan

The London Conference, held from 31 January-1 February 2006, produced the “Afghanistan Compact”, symbolizing international community’s continued commitment to Afghanistan’s reconstruction. The Interim-Afghan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS), finalized during this Conference, provided a five-year road map with benchmarks to monitor the progress of reconstruction of Afghanistan. The internal democratic consolidation continued, with Afghan Parliament playing more active role on issues such as approval of Cabinet ministers, nominees to Supreme Court and passage of annual budget.

The security situation worsened in the country particularly in South and South-Eastern Afghanistan, with total casualties reaching more than 4,000, almost three times the casualties in 2005. Around one third of the casualties were civilians. An unprecedented spike in the number of suicide attacks affected the civilian life in many parts of the country. The regrouping and resurgent Taliban elements continued to threaten the peace and law and order, despite major military operations launched by US led coalition forces and NATO led International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF). To review the situation in Afghanistan, a 10-member UN Security Council delegation visited Afghanistan from 11-17 November 2006. The UN continued to remain seized of the security situation in Afghanistan and renewed the mandate for the presence of international forces in Afghanistan. The opium production registered a record 59% increase over 2005. The continued insurgency attacks, spreading into hitherto relatively stable Provinces and severe drought conditions also impinged on the effective governance.

Following the decision of 13th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit at Dhaka in November 2005, Afghanistan’s participation in SAARC fora began with Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Dr Rangin Dajdar Spanta attending the 27th Ministerial

meeting in Dhaka on 1-2 August 2006. The formal admission of Afghanistan as a member of SAARC would be completed at the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi on 3-4 April 2007.

Bilateral Relations

High-level interactions, the hallmark of India-Afghanistan relations, continued during 2006. President Hamid Karzai paid a State visit from 9-13 April 2006 with a large delegation including six Cabinet Ministers and a number of senior officials. President Karzai had meetings with President of India and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. Three Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were signed as part of strengthening the bilateral cooperation which include MoU on Cooperation in the field of Rural Development, MoU on Cooperation in the field of Education, and MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Standardization between Bureau of Indian Standards and Afghan National Standardization Authority. Besides, India also agreed to provide a Line of Credit of US \$50 million to encourage bilateral business-to-business relations. Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Dr. Spanta paid an official visit to India from 29 June-1 July 2006.

President Karzai visited India again from 15-19 November 2006. He, along with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, inaugurated the Second Regional Economic Cooperation Conference (RECC) on Afghanistan on 18 November 2006 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. President Karzai also attended the concluding session of the parallel Regional Business Conference (RBC) on Afghanistan, which was hosted by three apex Indian business chambers, namely, Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), in association with Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) on 18 November 2006. High Level delegations from 20 countries, including 11 Ministers/Deputy Ministers, and 9 International Organisations attended the RECC.

President Karzai had meetings with President, Prime Minister and other senior officials of India, to review the bilateral relations. President Karzai was also presented with the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development during this visit. The External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee visited Kabul in January 2007 to invite President Karzai to the 14th SAARC Summit to be held in New Delhi.

India reiterated its firm commitment to the reconstruction and rebuilding of Afghanistan and stood by its resolve to continue with its assistance projects, despite security problems, including tragic killing of an Indian engineer Bharat Kumar in February 2006 and K. Suryanarayan in April 2006 by militants, three attacks involving lobbying of grenades into the premises of Indian Consulate at Kandahar and rocket attacks on the campsites of Indian road construction company.

India's assistance to Afghanistan

India increased its cumulative pledge of assistance by US\$ 150 million during the year, raising it to US\$ 750 million. Of this, the expenditure this year was about US\$ 90 million. The on-going projects of India's assistance showed positive progress. In April 2006, India handed over the 5000 tonnes cold storage facility in Kandahar to the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture. This cold storage facility is expected to boost the commercial viability of Afghan agro-products. In August 2006, India completed the new Jalalabad TV Studio, together with a TV transmitter, a mobile TV satellite uplink and five TV relay centers. The 220 KV Transmission Line from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul with a sub-station in Chintala, reconstruction of Salma Dam power project, reconstruction of Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health in Kabul in various phases, equipment and supervision of execution of power project in Faryab province, rehabilitation of Amir Ghazi and Quargah Reservoir dam and provision of training at the Common Facility and Tool Room Centre at Pul-e-Charkhi Industrial park were some other projects which showed progress. Designs and plans were advanced for the construction of the new Parliament building. Notwithstanding logistical difficulties and physical challenges, work on the 218 km road from Zaranj to Delaram made significant progress.

New projects

India has also undertaken new projects such as

construction of 5 toilet complexes in Kabul by Sulabh International Social Service Organization, expansion of TV coverage in twenty two provinces of Afghanistan by Broadcast Engineering Consultants of India Limited (BECIL), supply of 200 TATA mini buses to the Afghan Ministry of Transport, provision of 26 tube wells in six provinces (8 in Herat, 3 in Jawzjan, 3 in Samangan, 6 in Balkh and 6 in Baghlan) by Water & Power Consultancy Services (India) Ltd. India also gifted a set of musical instruments to Afghan Ministry of Information, Culture, Tourism and Youth and classical Indian music CDs to Radio & Television of Afghanistan. On 12 September 2006, Telecommunications Consultant India Ltd. (TCIL) signed an agreement with Ministry of Communication for setting up of 12 multi-purpose community tele-centres in Afghanistan. India also extended the tenures of Indian Medical Missions (IMMs) in Kabul, Herat, Jalalabad, Kandahar and Mazar-e-Sharif and that of 2-member banking team at Afghan Millie Bank. Under Small Developmental Projects Scheme (SDPS), projects in health, education, rural development, vocational training sectors were finalised for implementation. Project proposals were under finalization for solar electrification and rainwater harvesting of 100 villages. Under the hospitality programme of India's Tourism Ministry, five Afghan tour operators/journalists were sent to India for a familiarization tour. From 1 April-3 May 2006, Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi provided training to 20 diplomats from Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. India also extended training programme for a team of 20 doctors and paramedics of Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health, Kabul at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) from 1 February- 30 April 2006 and contributed US\$ 200,000 for the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund for the period 2006-07.

As part of project related work, several teams from India visited Afghanistan. Some of these visits were: 5-member team from Archaeological Survey of India from 16-25 January 2006 for preparing a report on Indo-Afghanistan Collaborative Project on 'Archaeology, Archive, Monuments and Museums', a 4-member team of Housing & Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) of India from 15-20 April 2006 for establishing an institutional framework for development of housing and urban infrastructure in Afghanistan, a 5-member team from Indian Ministry of Small Scale Industries from 15-29 April 2006 to undertake a study on development of rural



President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh receiving President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on 10 April 2006.



The Union Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee and the King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck in New Delhi on 8 February 2007.

enterprises in Afghanistan, a 5-member team from Department of Agricultural Research & Education of India from 22-29 April 2006 for preparing a Biennial Work Plan, a 2-member Planning Commission team from 6-10 June 2006 to present their Report on weaning away farmers from poppy cultivation, a 2-member team of Photo Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting from 28 October–6 November 2006 for digitization of negatives in Bakhtar News Agency archives, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) delegation from 2-14 November 2006 for undertaking pre-feasibility study for setting up Women's Vocational Training Centre at Baghe-Zanana, Kabul, and a CII team from 31 October–6 November 2006 for the Skills Development Project.

ICCR Scholarships and ITEC training programme

From April 2006, the implementation of 500 ICCR Scholarships and 500 ITEC training programmes for Afghan students and officials commenced. Under the 500 ICCR Scholarship Scheme, 402 Afghan candidates were accepted and are studying in various Universities throughout India. Under the ITEC Scholarship Scheme, 350 officials of Government of Afghanistan were covered for training courses in diverse fields such as Information Technology (IT), communications, English language proficiency, Planning and development of human resources, geo-informatics, textile mills management, journalism, women empowerment and promotion of micro enterprises. Twenty-two officers from Afghan National Army (ANA) also attended training courses in India.

Bangladesh

Relations with Bangladesh were guided by Ministry's consistent commitment to engage the Government of Bangladesh on the entire gamut of relations between the two countries. To this end, a number of high level visits and exchanges helped strengthen and contribute to the process of consolidating bilateral relations, including through meetings of the institutionalized bilateral mechanisms.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited India from 20-22 March 2006. During the visit she held comprehensive discussions with the Prime Minister of India on the entire gamut of bilateral relations. They also discussed regional and international issues of mutual interest. Two agreements were signed during the visit. These being the Revised Trade Agreement and the Agreement for Mutual

Cooperation between India and Bangladesh for Preventing Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Both sides agreed that the institutionalized bilateral mechanisms such as Joint Rivers Commission, Joint Economic Commission, Joint Boundary Working Groups and Home Secretary level talks would meet more frequently to ensure movement in a positive direction and their routine outcome monitored by the political leadership on a continuous basis.

The other meetings that took place during the year included, the meeting of Ministers of Water Resources of both the countries and their joint visit to sites along the common border rivers from 17-21 September 2006, the 7th Home Secretary level talks in Dhaka from 24-27 August 2006, the 3rd Joint Boundary Working Group on 16-17 July 2006, the 3rd meeting of the Joint Group of Customs in Dhaka on 3-4 May 2006, the 4th Joint Working Group on Trade in Agartala on 5-6 July 2006, and the 9th meeting of the Standing Committee on Inland Water Transit and Trade in Delhi on 27-28 September 2006.

In addition, the large number of SAARC related meetings, which were held in Dhaka, by virtue of Bangladesh holding the SAARC Chair, also afforded an opportunity for bilateral meetings on the sidelines. These include meetings of the Home Minister, Minister of State for External Affairs, Minister of State for Commerce, and Foreign Secretary with their respective counterparts. Similarly, visits by Bangladesh ministers to India for meetings of regional or multilateral fora, viz. BIMSTEC Council of Ministers, the UN-WHO, etc afforded an opportunity for bilateral meetings on the sidelines.

Pursuant to the decisions taken by the 36th Joint Rivers Commission, the Ministers for Water Resources of Bangladesh and India undertook joint visits to a number of sites along common border rivers. The visits enabled a better appreciation of each other's position on the need for embankment and bank protection works, ensuring drinking water supply through minor lift irrigation schemes and, undertaking dredging and de-siltation works to ease drainage congestion. Additionally, the Joint Committee on sharing of Ganga Waters at Farakka held its 32nd and 33rd meetings in Farakka/Kolkata from 5-8 February 2006 and in Dhaka on 3 May 2006. The Joint Committee finalized and signed the agreed annual report in New Delhi in July 2006. The Joint Committee reviewed the working

arrangement of sharing of dry season flows of Ganga from January to May 2006 and examined the field data collected in this regard. The releases made to Bangladesh were in line with the provisions of the 1996 Ganga Waters Treaty.

During the 7th round of the Home Secretary level talks, held in Dhaka from 24-27 August 2006, India reiterated its concerns on the activities of Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) operating from Bangladesh's territory. India expressed its deep concern with regard to growing anti-India activities of the ISI from Bangladesh soil and, in this context, pointed out that incidents of terrorism in India have revealed clear links with Bangladesh individuals/outfits like Harkat-ul-Jihad-i-Islami (HUJI). Besides, issues related to security, border management, illegal immigration, joint boundary, pending treaties and consular matters were discussed.

The 3rd meeting of the Joint Boundary Working Groups (JBWG) took place in Dhaka after a gap of nearly four years on 16-17 July 2006. The JBWG is tasked to deal with the completion of demarcation of the un-demarcated portions of the border, modalities relating to exchange of enclaves and territories in adverse possession, erection of permanent boundary pillars where necessary on the demarcated boundary, and other related matters of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement. The 3rd JBWG meeting was marked by two important procedural breakthroughs. Both sides agreed (a) to hold annual meetings of the JBWG and (b) to undertake joint visits to enclaves and territories under adverse possession at an early date.

On the economic and commercial side, the Ministry extended assistance to Bangladesh on rice supplies, computers training programme, etc. The Fourth meeting of the Joint Working Group on Trade was held in Agartala on 5-6 July 2006. Issues relating to Non and Para-Tariff barriers, Bilateral Free Trade Agreement and Revision of the Bilateral Trade Agreement were discussed. The Cotton Textile Export Promotion Council of India (TEXPROCIL) organized the 1st Indian Cotton Yarn & Fabric Show – 2006 in Dhaka from 9-11 July 2006.

In keeping with Government's commitment to enhance people to people contacts, India issued nearly 500,000 visas to Bangladesh nationals, enabling them to undertake visits to India for purposes of pilgrimage, medical treatment, tourism, education, etc. A large number of scholarships were given to Bangladesh students under

ICCR and related programmes under the Colombo Plan and the bilateral ITEC scheme.

Bhutan

India-Bhutan relations, which are based on shared historical and cultural linkages, were further consolidated in all areas.

Discussions were held between the two Governments to review and update the Treaty between India and Bhutan relating to the promotion of, and fostering the relations of friendship and neighbourliness which was signed at Darjeeling on 8th August 1949. Based on these discussions, India and Bhutan reached agreement on the text of an updated India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty to reflect the contemporary nature of their relationship and lay the foundation for their future development in the 21st century.

The finalization of the India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty coincided with Bhutan's transition to a democratic constitutional monarchy and reflected the desire of both governments to put in place the framework for the future growth of their relationship following the transfer of responsibilities of the Monarch by Jigme Singye Wangchuck to Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the Fifth Druk Gyalpo of Bhutan on 9 December 2006.

The then King of Bhutan Jigme Singye Wangchuck, accompanied by the then Crown Prince Trongsa Penlop Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, visited India from 26-31 July 2006. During the visit, the two sides signed three agreements-Agreement concerning cooperation in the field of Hydroelectric power; Protocol to the Inter-Governmental Agreement of 5 March 1996 on the setting up of the Tala Hydroelectric Project; and the Agreement on Trade, Commerce and Transit.

Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck paid his first visit abroad as the Fifth Druk Gyalpo to India from 7-12 February 2007. During his visit, the India-Bhutan Friendship Treaty was signed between the Fifth Druk Gyalpo and External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee on 8 February 2007. This marked a new stage in the further intensification of relations between India and Bhutan.

Prof. Saifuddin Soz, Union Minister for Water Resources visited Bhutan from 11-15 October 2006 and held discussions with Bhutanese leaders and officials. The Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee paid his

first visit abroad to Bhutan on 2-3 December 2006 during which he met the King of Bhutan and conveyed the invitation of the Prime Minister for the 14th SAARC Summit to be held in India.

The then Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran visited Bhutan on 18-19 April 2006. The Secretary, Department of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, Ranjit Issar visited Bhutan from 15-18 May 2006; Secretary (Culture), Badal Das from 22-26 May 2006; Secretary (Power), R.V. Shahi from 26-28 May 2006; and Member (Services), DoT, A.K. Saxena from 12-15 June 2006. The Foreign Secretary, Shivshankar Menon, visited Bhutan on 28-29 October 2006 and held discussions on bilateral issues.

Official exchanges were complemented by people-to-people contacts between the two countries. The India-Bhutan Foundation met in Delhi on 3-4 May 2006. The local Gelephu Chapter of Bhutan India Friendship Association visited Assam. The book 'Indo-Bhutan: Along the friendship trail' was translated in Dzongkha, and released by the Crown Prince of Bhutan Trongsa Penlop Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck on 11 November 2006.

India continued to be the largest trade and development partner of Bhutan. Bilateral development cooperation encompassed projects in the areas of health, education, roads and bridges, power, trade and industry, civil aviation, culture, urban development and housing, media, human resource development, Information Technology and telecommunications. Projects agreed for implementation under Bhutan's 9th Plan progressed satisfactorily. The hydro power sector constituted an important area for cooperation between the two countries. The 1020 MW Tala Hydroelectric Project commenced commercial operation on 31 July 2006 and is expected to be fully commissioned in 2007. The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the proposed Punatsangchu-I Hydroelectric Project was received, while agreements were signed for preparation of the DPRs for the Punatsangchu-II and Mangdechu Hydroelectric projects.

There was close cooperation between the two countries in the field of education. Scholarships were granted to 100 Bhutanese students at the undergraduate and post-graduate level during the year 2006 to study in Indian institutions. Ambassador's scholarship was granted to additional 100 students studying in India, including for

Buddhist studies. These scholarships were in addition to facilities extended under ITEC/Technical Cooperation Scheme (TCS) of Colombo Plan Schemes. A large number of Bhutanese students continued to study in schools and colleges in India contributing to greater awareness and understanding between the two countries.

Cooperation with Bhutan in the areas of security and border management was further strengthened at the Central Government level through Joint Working Groups and at State Government levels through coordination meetings with State officials. The last meeting of the Indo-Bhutan Border Management and Security Group was held on 22-23 September 2006 in Thimphu. Arrangements for regular coordinated patrolling by security forces of the two countries continued to function smoothly, and there was exchange of information between the two governments on matters of security and maintenance of peace.

China

The trend of development and diversification of India-China relations further intensified during the year. The continuing high-level political exchanges and the activities organised to commemorate 2006 as the Year of India-China Friendship helped to further enhance mutual understanding and cooperation. People-to-people contacts witnessed an increase with the increasing number of tourists visiting each other's country. The year also saw, for the first time, structured exchange of large and composite youth delegations. All this contributed to the mutual objective of the two sides to substantiate and add greater content to their strategic and cooperative partnership, which was established in April 2005. While working for a comprehensive and all-round development of India-China relations, the two sides continued their efforts to seek a resolution of their outstanding differences.

The State visit by President Hu Jintao of China from 20-23 November 2006 was the highlight of the India-China Friendship Year activities in 2006. During the discussions, the leaderships of the two countries reviewed recent developments in bilateral relations and discussed regional and international issues of mutual interest. They expressed satisfaction over the sustained positive momentum in the bilateral relationship. The Joint Declaration issued during the visit spelt out a ten-pronged strategy to upgrade India-China relations to a qualitatively new level and to further



The Vice President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat with the President of the People's Republic of China Hu Jintao in New Delhi on 21 November 2006.



The Union Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee with the President of Maldives Maumoon Abdul Gayoom in New Delhi on 29 January 2007.

substantiate and reinforce the strategic and cooperative partnership between the two countries. Thirteen agreements/MoUs were signed during the visit.

A number of initiatives were announced to consolidate institutional linkages between the two Governments. Both sides agreed to hold regular summit level meetings and decided to open new Consulates General in Kolkata and Guangzhou. The Protocol between the two foreign offices formalises the dialogue mechanisms between the two countries and provides for the establishment of a hotline between the Foreign Ministers. The two sides also decided to set up an expert-level mechanism to discuss interaction and cooperation on the provision of flood season hydrological data, emergency management and other issues regarding trans-border rivers. The longstanding issue of the property of Indian Consulate General in Shanghai was also resolved with the Chinese side agreeing to provide a plot of land for the construction of the Indian Consulate General in lieu of our original property.

Comprehensive economic engagement was a major thrust area with both sides deciding to fix a trade target of US\$ 40 billion by 2010 and mandating the Joint Task Force studying the feasibility and benefits of an India-China Regional Trading Arrangement to complete its work by October 2007. The signing of the Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement would encourage and facilitate bilateral investment flows. It was also agreed to enhance trans-border connectivity and cooperation through expansion of border trade by strengthening of existing routes and exploring additional routes. India has proposed to the Chinese side the opening of Demchok and Bumla for border trade.

Both sides underlined the need to broaden the relationship through enhanced cooperation in the areas of science & technology and culture, and greater people-to-people exchanges. The initiatives announced in these areas included: launching of India-China partnership in Science & Technology, with the two sides agreeing to undertake joint projects, decision to organise Festival of India in China and vice versa, celebration of 2007 as 'Friendship through Tourism Year', decision to establish an India-China Exchange Foundation to promote greater academic exchanges, Chinese readiness to participate in the regional initiative for redevelopment of Nalanda as a major centre of learning, and a five-year programme for exchange of youth delegations.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and President Hu Jintao exchanged views on the boundary question and agreed that an early settlement would serve the basic interests of both countries and should be pursued as a strategic objective. They asked the Special Representatives on the boundary question to intensify their efforts towards arriving at a mutually agreed framework for the settlement of the boundary question.

Besides the visit of President Hu Jintao, the year witnessed a number of high-level interactions between India and China. Chinese Minister of Commerce, Bo Xilai visited India on 15-16 March 2006 for the 7th meeting of India-China Joint Economic Group and the Chinese Finance Minister, Jin Renqing visited India from 3-6 May 2006 to attend the annual meeting of the Asian Development Bank. The then Defence Minister, Pranab Mukherjee paid a bilateral visit to China from 28 May-2 June 2006. Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora visited China from 14-16 June 2006 to attend the SCO Summit and subsequently from 13-18 December 2006 for the First Five-Country Energy Ministers' Roundtable Conference. Speaker of Lok Sabha, Somnath Chatterjee led an Indian Parliamentary Delegation to China from 3-8 July 2006. Minister for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Kapil Sibal paid a bilateral visit to China from 6-12 September 2006. Minister for Tourism and Culture, Ambika Soni visited China from 24-26 December 2006.

As part of the continued dialogue at the highest level, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao met on 14 January 2007 in Cebu on the sidelines of the ASEAN meeting. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh also had a Trilateral Summit with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Russian President Vladimir Putin in St. Petersburg on 17 July 2006. Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing is expected to visit India from 12-14 February 2007 for the India-China-Russia Foreign Ministers' Trilateral Meeting as well as bilateral interactions.

The growth of bilateral economic and commercial ties in recent years has been one of the most visible indicators of the developments in India-China relations. The pace of growth of bilateral trade was maintained during the year. As per Indian statistics, during the financial year 2005-2006 bilateral trade was US\$ 17.62 billion, representing a 38.65 percent increase over the previous financial year

during which it was US\$ 12.71 billion. The intensification and diversification of economic linkages between India and China was also reflected in the growing mutual investments in each other's countries. As per Chinese statistics, till September 2006, total contracted Indian investments in China reached US\$ 406 million, with a realized investment value of US\$ 136 million. During the same period, Chinese investments in India reached US\$ 48 million. Similarly, the value of Chinese project contracting in India was – i) total contract value (projects signed/under implementation): US\$ 6.9 billion; and ii) value of projects already completed: US\$ 1.4 billion. The Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement between the two countries would further facilitate and encourage flow of investments.

To further boost economic and trade ties, the Joint Economic Group (JEG) led by the Commerce Ministers of the two countries met on 16 March 2006 in New Delhi for its 7th session. The JEG undertook a comprehensive review of bilateral trade and economic relations and took decisions, which would contribute to the smooth and rapid expansion and diversification of bilateral trade and deepen economic ties. The JEG also called for the setting up of an India-China CEO Forum to provide inputs of the business communities to the government. The first meeting of the CEO Forum was held in Mumbai in November 2006 during the visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao. The year also saw the resumption of border trade through Nathula on 6 July 2006 in accordance with the Memorandum on Expanding Border Trade signed between India and China on 23 June 2003. According to reports, at the close of trade for the year on 30 September 2006 the total trade across Nathula was around Rs. 12 lakhs.

The Joint Task Force (JTF) examining the feasibility and benefits of India-China Regional Trading Arrangement (RTA) held its first and second meetings in March and September 2006 respectively. The second meeting finalised the structure of the proposed report and the methodology to be adopted for the proposed study. The third session was held in New Delhi in 2007. The JTF has been directed to complete its report by October 2007.

The first Financial Dialogue between India and China was held in New Delhi on 7 April 2006 in which the two sides exchanged views on global and Asian economic prospects, strategies for sustainable growth and

developments in their financial sectors. Separately, Securities and Exchanges Board of India (SEBI) and the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) signed an MoU, which provides a framework for increasing mutual understanding and exchange of regulatory and technical information. The State Bank of India became the first Indian bank in China to upgrade from a Representative Office when it started commercial operations in China during the year. The 4th Made in India Show was held in China in September 2006, with a thematic exhibition showcasing India's achievements in the high technology areas. Two business summits were also organised in China during the year.

The Special Representatives of the two countries on the boundary question continued their discussions towards a mutually agreed framework for the boundary settlement on the basis of the Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles. The Eighth Round of talks between the Special Representatives of India and China, was held in Xi'an and Beijing from 25-27 June 2006. During the visit of President Hu Jintao, the leaders of the two countries asked the Special Representatives to intensify their work. The two sides agreed that an early settlement of the boundary question will advance their basic interests and should be pursued as a strategic objective. It was also agreed that pending the resolution of the boundary question, peace and tranquillity will be maintained in border areas. The Ninth Round of talks between the Special Representatives took place from 16-18 January 2007 in New Delhi.

The continuing progress in bilateral defence ties manifested in a sustained level of defence exchanges, and mutual participation in training courses and joint activities. The then Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee paid an official visit to China from 28 May-2 June 2006. Defence Minister and the Chinese Defence Minister, General Cao Gangchuan signed a Memorandum of Understanding for exchanges and cooperation in the field of Defence. The MoU provides for an Annual Defence Dialogue, more frequent high-level exchanges between the two defence ministries and armed forces, and training exchanges. This is the first such document between the two countries.

To further strengthen confidence building in border areas, the Border Personnel Meeting (BPM) at Kibithu-Damai in the Eastern Sector of India-China border was

operationalised in November 2006. It may be recalled that the two countries had agreed in the Protocol on Confidence Building Measures signed in April 2005 for additional border personnel meeting points at Kibithu-Damai (Eastern Sector) and Lipulekh (Middle Sector). With the operationalisation of the BPM at Kibithu-Damai, there are now four BPM points in India-China border areas, the other three being at Spanggur (Western Sector), Nathula (Sikkim Sector) and Bumla (Eastern Sector).

Bilateral cooperation in the field of agriculture received a fillip when during the visit of Chinese Agriculture Minister Du Qinglin in March 2006, an MoU was signed for cooperation in the field of agriculture. In addition, an MoU on cooperation in the field of agricultural research between the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences was signed in November 2006 during the visit of the Chinese President. Cooperation in the oil and gas sector received a boost as a result of the visit of Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Murli Deora to China from 13-18 December 2006, which provided an opportunity for detailed discussions with Ma Kai, Chairman, National Development Reform Commission. An MoU was signed under which the two sides agreed to encourage their energy enterprises to cooperate in the fields of global oil trade and shipment, joint exploration and production, development of oil and natural gas resources in third countries, joint participation in existing oil and gas fields of either party, and bilateral cooperation in third countries in the field of oil and natural gas equipments.

Cooperation in the area of science and technology was further strengthened with the visit of Minister of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Kapil Sibal to China from 6-12 September 2006 during which he met his Chinese counter part, Xu Guanhua, Minister of Science and Technology and signed an MoU on Science and Technology Cooperation, which provides for the establishment of a Joint Steering Committee to be headed by the Ministers on both sides to coordinate and structure the development of cooperation in this area. Four areas were identified in which the two countries would undertake joint projects including: (i) earthquake engineering, (ii) climate change and weather forecasting, (iii) nano technology with focus on advanced materials, and (iv) bio-technology and medicine with focus on bio-nano.

The momentum of parliamentary exchanges was maintained during the year with the visit of Speaker of Lok Sabha, Somnath Chatterjee leading a Parliamentary delegation to Beijing, Zhengzhou and Shanghai from 3-8 July 2006 at the invitation of the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China (NPC), Wu Bangguo. During the visit, Speaker also met the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. An MoU was signed between the Lok Sabha Secretariat and the Chinese NPC to establish a mechanism for structured and regular exchanges between the two Parliaments. From the Chinese side, Liu Yandong, Vice Chairperson of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Minister of the United Front Work Department visited India from 7-13 January 2007 and had a useful exchange of views with Indian leaders. The visit took place under the exchange programme of the Ministry of External Affairs with the International Department of the Communist Party of China. Other visit under this programme was that of Member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, He Yong (6-12 April 2006). From the Indian side, Chief Ministers of Uttranchal N. D. Tiwari and Chief Minister of Haryana Bhupinder Singh Hooda visited China from 9-16 July 2006 and 26 November-2 December 2006 respectively.

The year 2006 was designated as the Year of India-China Friendship, and a series of cultural events were organised by the Indian side in China to celebrate the occasion. These included: a photo-exhibition on India in Beijing (May 2006); an 'India Cultural Festival' in Peking University (May 2006); an Indian Film Festival in Beijing, Shanghai and Luoyang (August–October 2006); National Book Trust of India participated in the Beijing International Book Fair (August-September 2006); and an academic seminar on Indian Literature in Peking University (October 2006). On 26 December 2006, Minister of Tourism and Culture, Ambika Soni and Executive Vice Foreign Minister of China, Dai Bingguo jointly inaugurated in Beijing, a major exhibition of rare specimens of ancient Indian art entitled "Treasures of Ancient India." The new Education Executive Plan (EEP) was signed between the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Chinese Ministry of Education in November 2006. Currently a maximum of 25 scholars on each side are exchanged under the EEP. The start of the

construction of Indian-style Buddhist shrine in Luoyang is another achievement of the Friendship Year. The groundbreaking ceremony took place in April 2006 and basic construction has been completed. The temple is expected to be completed in 2007. Renovation of Xuan Zang Memorial in Nalanda has been completed with the Chinese side providing assistance, and is to be inaugurated in February 2007. These two monuments are likely to be enduring symbols of the age-old bonds of friendship and exchanges between the two countries.

Hong Kong

Friendly and cooperative interactions with Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China continued. Hong Kong remained an important trade partner for India. Trade in 2006 registered a robust growth of 23 percent. A number of delegations from the Central and State levels, including a Parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha Rahman Khan, a delegation led by Chief Minister of Uttaranchal, Power Secretary and others visited Hong Kong for promoting trade, investment and tourism.

There was extensive representation from the Central and State Governments for the PATA Travel Mart 2006, at which Minister of Tourism of Meghalaya Robert G. Lyngdoh, Minister of Tourism of Pondicherry Malladi Krishna Rao, Minister of Tourism of Tamil Nadu Suresh Rajan, Minister of Tourism of Uttaranchal Lt. Gen. (Retd.) T.P.S. Rawat and Minister of State for Tourism of Gujarat C.D. Patel were present. Substantial business delegations were from the Apparel Export Promotion Council for the Hong Kong Fashion Week, from the leather sector for the Asia Pacific Leather Fair, from the Handloom and Handicrafts Export Promotion Council for the Houseware Fair, and from the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council for the Hong Kong Jewellery and Watch Fair. A large official and industry delegation also participated in the International Telecommunication Union's Telecom World 2006 on 4-8 December 2006.

During the year 2005-06 (for which trade figures for full year are available), Indian exports to Hong Kong have increased to US\$ 4.471 billion from US\$ 3.692 billion in 2004-05. Imports from Hong Kong in 2005-06 increased from US\$ 1.730 billion to US\$ 2.207 billion in 2004-05. Total bilateral trade in 2005-06 was US\$ 6.678, marking an annual increase of 23%. Trade balance is in India's

favour, with India almost exporting twice the value of its imports from Hong Kong. This trend continued into 2006-07. In the first quarter of April-June 2006, Indian imports and exports stood at US\$ 565 million and US\$ 1036 million respectively.

A large number of Indian cultural programmes, showcasing Indian music and dance were organised in Hong Kong as well as Macau. These included events like the recital by U.Shrinivas, Bollywood music director AR Rehman, Amjad Ali Khan, etc. In June 2006, the Consulate and the Hong Kong Leisure and Culture Department co-organized a programme "Culture in Motion" showcasing the various dance and music forms of India. A Kaleliya dance troupe from Rajasthan participated in the Macau International Youth Dance Festival.

Maldives

Our bilateral relations with the Maldives continued to be close and friendly. Both India and the Maldives were engaged in developing mutual understanding and closer cooperation through exchange of high level visits and organizing training programmes.

Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Maldives on 15-16 April 2006 to participate in the transfer ceremony of INS Tillanchang, a fast attack craft, to Maldives. Besides holding talks with Maldivian Minister of Defence and National Security, Defence Minister had also called on President Gayoom and Foreign Minister of Maldives Dr. Ahmed Shaheed. EAM visited Maldives on 10 January 2007 in the context of SAARC Summit to be hosted by India in April 2007. EAM met President Gayoom and discussed matters of bilateral interest. From the Maldivian side, Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, Foreign Minister paid an official visit to India from 23-28 October 2006. During his visit Dr. Shaheed called on the Prime Minister, Defence Minister and Leader of Opposition, Lok Sabha. Dr. Shaheed again visited India from 25-28 November 2006 on a private visit to attend an event organized by a think tank. Dr. Shaheed called on EAM on 27 November 2006 and exchanged views on matters of mutual interest. Ismail Shafeen, Minister of Defence and National Security of Maldives visited India from 7-10 January 2007. He met Defence Minister and EAM and discussed matters of mutual interest. President Gayoom of Maldives visited India from 27 January-1 February 2007 as the head of the

Maldivian delegation to attend the Satyagraha Conference.

The cooperation between the two countries in developing the human resource development and infrastructure facilities in Maldives got impetus with the signing of a MoU on 10 July 2006 for setting up the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies, a hotel management training institute, in Maldives with Indian assistance to the tune of Rs. 31 crores approximately. A 5-member Maldivian delegation led by Mohamed Waheeddeen, Minister of Atolls Development of the Government of Maldives visited Kerala from 16-18 July 2006 to study practices in local governance and decentralization procedures.

India continued to provide training facilities to Maldivian nationals in areas such as defence, police, education, etc. under its aid assistance programmes.

Myanmar

India's policy to develop ties with Myanmar was strengthened by the visit of President Dr.A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to Myanmar in March 2006. It was the first visit by an Indian President to Myanmar and first Head of State/ Head of Government level visit from India to Myanmar after Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit in 1987. The President had delegation-level discussion and also tête-à-tête with Senior General Than Shwe. During the delegation-level discussions, other attendees from Myanmar side were Vice-Chairman of the SPDC, Vice Sr. General, Mong Aung, Member of the SPDC Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Prime Minister General Soe Win, Secretary-I of the SPDC Lt. General Thein Sein, Foreign Minister U Nyan Win. Heads of State of the two countries witnessed the signing of - (i) Framework Agreement for Mutual Cooperation in the field of Remote Sensing between Government of India and Government of Union of Myanmar; (ii) Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Petroleum Sector between Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas of India and Ministry of Energy Myanmar; (iii) Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Buddhist Studies between the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Ministry of Religious Affairs of Myanmar. President also visited Mandalay.

The Sixth forum on Regional Economic Cooperation

among Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) was held in New Delhi on 30-31 March 2006. U Maung Myint, Deputy Foreign Minister of Myanmar attended the meeting. He held discussions with officials of the Government of India on matters pertaining to mutual interest.

Major General Hla Tun, Minister for Finance and Revenue led a Myanmar delegation to India from 3-6 May 2006 to attend the 39th Annual Meeting of Asian Development Bank. The delegation also attended the meeting of Vice-Governors of Central Banks of ASEAN+3 and Ninth Finance Ministers Meeting of ASEAN+3. Brig. General Tin Naing Thein visited India on 12-13 May 2006 to participate in the Second Joint Trade Committee Meeting held in New Delhi. Myanmar delegation led by Foreign Minister U Nyan Win participated in the Ninth Ministerial Meeting of BIMSTEC Member countries held in New Delhi on 9 August 2006.

A delegation led by Shyam Saran, the then Foreign Secretary visited Myanmar to attend the Seventh Foreign Office Consultations from 18-21 June 2006. The delegation-level talks were held on 18 June 2006 at Yangon. The two sides had comprehensive discussions on all areas of mutual interest and concern. Both sides expressed mutual resolve and commitment to further expansion and diversification of bilateral relations and, in this context, highlighted the importance of continuing bilateral high-level exchanges.

A Myanmar delegation led by Brig. General Phone Swe, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs visited India to attend the Twelfth National Level Meeting between the two countries. The Indian delegation was headed by the Home Secretary. The discussions focussed on effective border management between the two countries. The Fourteenth Sectoral-level Meeting was held from 28-30 May 2006 at Monywa and Mandalay in Myanmar. A ten-member Indian delegation participated in the meeting.

A goodwill delegation led by Defence Secretary visited Myanmar from 20-24 September 2006. He called on Vice-Chairman of the SPDC, Deputy Commander-in-Chief (Army), Vice Senior General Maung Aye and Deputy Minister Major General Kyi Win at Nay Pyi Taw.

A two-member delegation from Ministry of Finance visited Myanmar in May 2006 to hold first round of discussions



The President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam with the Senior General Than Shwe at the Parliament House building in Yangon on 9 March 2006.



The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh receiving the Prime Minister of Nepal G.P. Koirala in New Delhi on 6 June 2006.

to finalise the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement between India and Myanmar. Substantial work on the first draft was completed. A five-member delegation from Government of Mizoram led by the Secretary, Trade & Commerce Department visited Myanmar in May 2006 and had meetings with the Central Executive Committee members of Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce & Industry (UMFCCI), Myanmar Timber & Forests Products Merchant Association and Indian Association of Myanmar. A two-member delegation from TERI visited Myanmar from 31 July-3 August 2006 for installation of bio mass gasifier (phase-II) for generating electricity and water pumping in Kokke. A four-member delegation from Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry attended ASEAN Trade Mission for Business Linkages and Partnerships between ASEAN and India SME held in New Delhi from 22-25 August 2006.

The Sixth Meeting of Survey Departments of India and Myanmar was held in New Delhi on 27-28 November 2006. The Indian delegation was headed by Major General M. Gopal Rao, Surveyor General of India and the Myanmar side was headed by U Myint Thein, Director-General, Survey Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. Both sides discussed issues in respect of joint inspection, repairs, restoration, reconstruction and maintenance of boundary pillars on the India-Myanmar Boundary.

India remains committed to providing assistance in developing infrastructure within Myanmar. A number of projects are under consideration / implementation between the two countries including the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, Trilateral Highway Project, resurfacing of Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo Road, upgradation of Rhi-Tidim, Rhi-Falam Roads, Tamanthi Hydel Project.

Co-operation and exchanges in the defence sector continued through the mechanism of border liaison meetings. The highlight in this sector was visit of General Thura Shwe Mann, Chief of Joint Staff of Union of Myanmar from 4-9 December 2006.

Major General Maung Oo, Home Minister of Myanmar visited India from 17-22 December 2006. He held delegation-level talks with Shivraj Patil, Home Minister of India. He visited Bangalore and Hyderabad also.

External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Myanmar from 19-21 January 2007 at the invitation of U Nyan Win, Foreign Minister of Union of Myanmar.

Nepal

The year 2006 witnessed far reaching changes in Nepal and was a turning point in nation's history. The restoration of the House of Representatives and formation of a government consisting of the Seven Party Alliance under the leadership of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala in April-May, 2006, and subsequent political developments opened a new chapter in Nepal's political history. They were a tribute to the courage, sacrifice and determination of the people of Nepal to see a return of multi-party democracy in Nepal.

Soon after assuming office, the Seven Party Alliance and Government of Nepal began negotiations with the Maoists to end the 11-year old insurgency. The peace talks culminated in the signing of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Nepal and CPN (Maoist) on 21 November 2006. The Agreement addressed the major issues of arms management and political reforms leading upto elections to a Constituent Assembly by May-June, 2007. In pursuance of this, the interim Constitution was promulgated on 15 January 2007 and an interim Legislature, with inclusion of representatives of CPN (Maoist) has been constituted.

India closely followed the events in Nepal. India's approach was to support efforts which would restore political stability in the country and place Nepal on the path of economic recovery. India welcomed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement as a significant step in Nepal's journey towards a settled constitutional order in which the people of Nepal could realize their aspirations for peace and prosperity. The Government of India was of the view that the people of Nepal should have the right to freely choose and decide their future without the fear of gun. India conveyed its readiness to extend its support to the efforts of the Government of Nepal.

The year witnessed several high-level exchanges. Dr. Karan Singh, MP visited Nepal as Prime Minister's Special Envoy in April 2006. Following the establishment of the government of the Seven Party Alliance, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala paid his first visit abroad to India from 6-9 June 2006. India announced an economic assistance package of around Rs. 1000 crore to address

the immediate needs and priorities of the Government of Nepal. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, KP Sharma Oli paid a goodwill visit to India from 5-8 November 2006. Foreign Secretary S. Menon visited Nepal from 29 November-1 December 2006.

External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Kathmandu on 17 December 2006 to personally extend an invitation to the Prime Minister of Nepal for the 14th SAARC Summit in India.

The India-Nepal Treaty of Transit was renewed in April 2006 for a period of seven years. Discussions began on renewing the India-Nepal Treaty of Trade, due for renewal in March, 2007.

Bilateral mechanisms dealing with various aspects of our bilateral cooperation – border management and security, trade and commerce, transit, water resources and economic cooperation were revived and reinvigorated.

Bilateral trade continued to remain robust and was on the upswing. By the end of the Nepalese fiscal year 2004-05, bilateral trade with India of US\$ 1.8 billion accounted for 65.8 percent of Nepal's total external trade. India's share in Nepal's imports stood at 64.9 percent. India, on the other hand, absorbed about 67.7 percent of Nepal's exports.

India continued to contribute to the development efforts of Government of Nepal by undertaking development projects in the areas of infrastructure, health, rural and community development, education under the Small Development Project Scheme that already has more than 160 projects implemented or under implementation. Two big projects viz. Bir Hospital Expansion at the cost of Rs. 65 crores and Manmohan Adhikari Polytechnic at the cost of Rs 20 crores were under implementation, while the Mahendra-Nagar Tanakpur Road Link and Hetauda Polytechnic projects were at take off stage. The Government laid particular emphasis on the improvement of border infrastructure as well as initiating work on other infrastructure projects in Nepal in consultation with the Government of Nepal.

India-Nepal cooperation in the area of human resource development and training was strengthened further. Over 250 scholarships were provided to Nepalese nationals for undergoing various courses at the post-secondary level. Professionals and officials of the Government of Nepal

were invited for training programme in different sectors under ITEC, and the Colombo Plan. During 2006-2007, the number of scholarships/seats under the Mahatma Gandhi and Golden Jubilee Scholarship Scheme for meritorious students for pursuing undergraduate courses in Nepal was doubled to 1000 and 100 seats respectively.

Pakistan

Constructive Engagement

The Composite Dialogue on eight major subjects viz., Peace and Security including Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), Jammu & Kashmir, Terrorism and Drug trafficking, Friendly Exchanges, Economic and Commercial cooperation, Tulbul Navigation Project, Sir Creek and Siachen, gave a structural basis to deepen and expand the bilateral relations since 2004. The third round of the Composite Dialogue commenced with the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries in January 2006 and concluded in November 2006 when the Foreign Secretaries met again in New Delhi. The third round helped further the engagement between the two countries and resulted in the signing of a Revised Shipping Protocol and the initialing of an agreement on 'Reducing the Risk from Accidents relating to Nuclear Weapons'. A communication link established earlier between the Coast Guard of India and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency was operationalised. There was satisfaction at the implementation of the Agreement on the Pre-notification of the Flight Testing of Ballistic Missiles. The transport links established in the previous rounds of the dialogue continued to operate successfully, facilitating the movement of the people. While the Thar Express witnessed substantial growth in demand, the one-way passenger traffic per week at one point rising to more than a thousand, India renewed its request for opening this route for trade. Further links across LoC between Kargil & Skardu and Jammu & Sialkot were awaiting Pakistan's acceptance. Poonch-Rawalakot bus across the LoC came into operation on 20 June 2006. Efforts were also underway to start Srinagar-Muzaffarabad truck service across the LoC for trade.

Other important Developments

There were further discussions on issues such as Siachen and Sir Creek. On Sir Creek, Experts met in Islamabad in December 2006 and agreed on the coordinates of a Joint Survey to commence from 15 January 2007. It was

also agreed that the survey would verify the outermost points of coastline of both countries based on equidistance method. Further ideas on Siachen were also exchanged during the third round of the Composite Dialogue both at Defence Secretary and Foreign Secretary talks. A final determination on the Baglihar Hydroelectric Project by the Neutral Expert was scheduled to be delivered in February 2007. The two Governments also agreed in principle to expand the list of pilgrimage sites to be visited by pilgrims from both sides by revising the Protocol signed in 1974. India was awaiting a response from Pakistan to a suggested expanded list of such religious shrines. Revision of the Visa Agreement and of the Protocol on Consular Access was under consideration. All these developments were reflective of India's desire for a broad based relation with Pakistan so as to create an atmosphere of trust, peace, friendship and stability – a vision that was declared by the Indian Prime Minister in March 2006. The fourth round of the Composite Dialogue was scheduled to commence in March 2007.

Humanitarian Approach to Prisoners

Another achievement of the dialogue process was the continued commitment to the understanding that the prisoners issue would be dealt with on a humanitarian basis by notifying the arrests immediately, providing consular access within three months and releasing prisoners as soon as the prison term was over. Prisoners and fishermen were released in May/June and again in December 2006. There was disappointment, however, when Pakistan released only 20 fishermen in June 2006 though the national status of 240 fishermen had been confirmed by India. Foreign Secretaries during their talks in November 2006 agreed to release once again eligible prisoners in each other's custody by 25 December 2006 and to examine the release of prisoners charged with minor offences. Accordingly India, on 22 December 2006, released 24 Pakistani prisoners, along with three children, who had completed their sentence and all 30 Pakistani fishermen whose national status had been confirmed. India was disappointed a second time when Pakistan released only 50 of the 412 Indian fishermen whose national status had been confirmed and 20 prisoners on 23 December 2006. Pakistan released another 115 fishermen on 10 January 2007. There were 367 Indian fishermen still in custody in Pakistan.

Commerce and Trade

Promotion of commercial interaction was an important component of India's policy of engagement with Pakistan. The financial year 2006-07 witnessed substantial growth in bilateral trade, from US\$ 320 million during April-August of 2005 to US\$ 759 million during the same period in 2006, an increase of 137%. Exports from Pakistan registered a rise of 122% though the trade balance remained in favour of India. Pakistan expanded its positive list allowing import of Indian goods from 773 to 1075 items, though the Wagah land border continued to be opened by Pakistan only for a handful of select goods such as onions, tomatoes, potatoes, garlic, meat and a few others. When the Commerce Secretaries of the two countries met in June 2006, India renewed its offer to conclude a Mutual Recognition Agreement on standardization so that Pakistan's perceived concerns on non-tariff barriers could be addressed. Pakistan, however, continued with its policy of linking economic and commercial engagement to political issues. Pakistan also did not meet its obligations under South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) when it refused to extend tariff concessions under it to India. Pakistan also did not agree to transit for trade with Afghanistan and beyond.

The Summit Meeting in Havana

The Mumbai serial blasts on 11 July 2006 which claimed about 200 lives pointed towards cross-border terrorist groups. These blasts resulted in the postponement of the Foreign Secretary talks which were due in July 2006. In the aftermath of this, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met President Musharraf in Havana on 16 September 2006 in the margins of the NAM Summit and discussed the Mumbai blasts. While strongly condemning all acts of terrorism, they agreed upon an India-Pakistan counter-terrorism institutional mechanism. The two leaders also directed that the Composite Dialogue be resumed, and in pursuance of this directive the Foreign Secretary talks were held on 14-15 November 2006 in New Delhi. A 3-member joint anti-terror mechanism headed at Additional Secretaries level was put in place. India attaches considerable significance to this mechanism as the forward movement in constructive engagement with Pakistan would be pivoted on Pakistan's sincerity and commitment to cooperate with India in fighting terrorism.



The Union Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee calls on the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapakse in New Delhi on 28 November 2006.



The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh with the President of Pakistan Gen. Pervez Musharraf at Havana on 16 September 2006. The Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma is also seen.

EAM's Visit to Pakistan

Taking forward the constructive engagement with Pakistan, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Pakistan on 13-14 January 2007 to convey invitation to attend the 14th SAARC Summit in New Delhi on 3-4 April 2007 and also to review the progress achieved in the third round of the Composite Dialogue. He held delegation level talks on a wide range of bilateral issues and also called on President Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz. He extended an invitation to Pakistan Foreign Minister to visit India for the 5th Joint Commission meeting scheduled to meet in 2007.

Sri Lanka

India-Sri Lanka relations continued to be further strengthened with expansion in political, economic and cultural linkages. The period saw exchange of several visits at the highest political level between the two countries. President Mahinda Rajapakse visited India from 25-29 November 2006 and held discussions with the Prime Minister, Chairman UPA, Leader of Opposition, External Affairs Minister and other senior political leaders and officials. At the delegation-level talks headed by the External Affairs Minister and his counterpart, discussions were held on all aspects of bilateral relations. Several on-going economic projects between the two countries were also reviewed. Earlier, Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon paid a visit to Colombo on 23 November 2006 and held discussions with the President, Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition, Foreign Minister and senior officials. President Rajapakse and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh had also met on 16 September 2006 on the sidelines of the 14th Non-Aligned Movement Summit held in Havana. There were several other visits from either side. Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka paid visits to India in May, June and August 2006. The Leader of Opposition Ranil Wickremesinghe also visited India in April, July and November/December 2006 and met senior leaders. From the Indian side the visits included those of Finance Minister P. Chidambaram in September 2006 to attend Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting, Minister of Panchayati Raj and Youth Affairs & Sports Mani Shankar Aiyar in September 2006 to deliver the Annual Bandaranaike Commemorative Lecture and Minister for Water Resources Saifuddin Soz for attending an International Conference on Rainwater Harvesting in September 2006. The then Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran

visited the country in July 2006. EAM visited Colombo on 9-10 January 2007 to extend the invitation for SAARC Summit to the Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapakse. Besides President, he met Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayake visited India in January 2007 to attend Satyagraha conference. Newly appointed Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama visited India on 30-31 January 2007. The bilateral visits from both sides provided opportunities to review bilateral relations on a constant basis. The Sri Lankan side kept India briefed on the internal situation in Sri Lanka and the peace process. India reiterated its firm commitment to the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka and stressed the need for a negotiated political solution, which will meet the aspirations of all communities. India expressed its conviction that there cannot be a military solution to the ethnic problem and that political dialogue was the only way to resolve outstanding issues. India also offered to share its constitutional experience with Sri Lanka in its quest of resolving the ethnic issue. A delegation of the All Party Representatives Committee visited India from 25-30 October 2006 to study the Indian model of devolution of powers and Panchayati Raj.

On the economic side, the momentum generated by Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was sustained. Bilateral trade for the period April-October 2006 exceeded US\$ 1 billion. Negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which will widen and deepen the Free Trade Agreement by including trade and services and investments, continued. India became the 2nd largest overall investor in Sri Lanka. The major Indian investors include Indian Oil Corporation, ICICI, SBI, TATA, CEAT, Nicholas Piramal and VSNL. India has extended a number of credit lines to Sri Lanka in the past. The US\$ 31 million credit line for supply of wheat and buses and the US\$ 150 million credit line for purchase of petroleum products were fully utilized. India continued to play a role in developing infrastructure in Sri Lanka. The BSNL-Sri Lanka Telecom submarine cable was inaugurated augmenting the voice and data transfer capacity. Cooperation between India and Sri Lanka in civil aviation and tourism received a boost as the two sides agreed to further increase the number of flights between the two countries. During the bilateral civil aviation negotiations held in Colombo in October 2006, India

offered additional 7 weekly flights to Mumbai and Bangalore and 7 new weekly flights to Coimbatore and Pune. This is in addition to the permission to operate daily flights to six metropolitan cities and unlimited flights to 18 tourist destinations in India. India also accounted for the largest number of tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka. The exchange of information on the Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project continued. India also offered two berths to Sri Lanka for the next Antarctic expedition and agreed to cover Sri Lanka in the tsunami early warning system which will become operational in 2007. On 29 December 2006, NTPC and Ceylon Electricity Board signed Memorandum of Agreement in Colombo on setting up of a 2x 250 MW thermal power plant in Trincomalee.

India's development assistance to Sri Lanka was further sought to be expanded through the new initiative of providing assistance to Small Development Projects. India provided assistance to Sri Lanka in setting up 20 Nenasalas (computer centres). Another project on supplying fishing

boats and nets to Tsunami affected people is also under implementation. These projects would benefit all communities and would broadly conform to the Millennium Development Goals identified by the Government of Sri Lanka. A new scheme of awarding Mahatma Gandhi scholarships to 100 students each year from all the 25 districts of Sri Lanka has been instituted. The selected students will receive a financial assistance for a period of two years to enable them to successfully pursue their 'A' level courses. These scholarships are in addition to various other scholarships provided by India to meritorious Sri Lankan students.

On the cultural side, the regular activities of the Indian Cultural Center including visits by eminent persons from the world of art and culture and cultural troupes from India continued. Dr. Karan Singh, President, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), visited Colombo to deliver the first Lakshman Kadirgamar Memorial Lecture on 10 August 2006.



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South East Asia and the Pacific

Australia

India-Australia bilateral relations continued to develop further with several high level bilateral visits during the year.

Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dinsha J. Patel visited Australia in April 2006 for roadshows aimed at promoting investor interest in the petroleum and coal sectors in India. Minister of State for Non-Conventional Energy Sources Vilas Muttemwar visited Australia from 18 -21 September 2006 to attend the Global Wind Power 2006 Conference in Adelaide. Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi visited Australia from 15-18 October 2006. He had meetings with Minister for Immigration & Multicultural Affairs Senator Amanda Vanstone; Minister for Education, Science & Training Julie Bishop; and Lord Mayor of Melbourne, John So. The Minister participated in the Deepavali function at the Federal Parliament of Australia and interacted with Indian community members in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne, and invited them to attend the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Delhi. Finance Minister P. Chidambaram paid a bilateral visit to Australia from 15–17 November 2006, prior to attending the G-20 Ministerial Meeting in Melbourne. The Finance Minister called on Prime Minister John Howard and met Treasurer Peter Costello. The Finance Minister also interacted with Australian and Indian business and industry representatives in Sydney and Melbourne. Dr. Y.V. Reddy, Governor of Reserve Bank of India also attended the G-20 Meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors.

Other visits included a delegation of Chairpersons of State Public Service Commissions of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Nagaland in April 2006; a Legislative Assembly delegation from Chattisgarh in April 2006; a delegation from the National Defence College in May 2006; Dr. K. Kasturirangan, MP and Director, National Institute of Advanced Studies in July 2006 for the annual K. R. Narayanan Oration; a Legislative Assembly delegation from Maharashtra in October 2006; Chief of

Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal S.P.Tyagi from 6-10 December 2006; and Chief Minister of Uttaranchal N.D. Tiwari from 14-17 December 2006.

From Australia, Minister for Industry, Tourism & Resources, Ian Macfarlane visited India from 20-24 November 2006. The Minister attended an international mining exhibition in Kolkata and met several Indian leaders including Minister of Commerce and Industry and Chief Minister of West Bengal. Several delegations from the States of Australia also visited India.

India-Australia trade relations continued to grow. Bilateral trade was A\$ 8.2 billion in 2005. Indian companies continued to show investment interest in Australia particularly in the mining, chemicals and hospitality sectors. Business delegations from CII, FICCI and NASSCOM visited Australia. Indian companies also discussed the possibility of purchase of gas and investment in the oil and gas sector in Australia. There were visits of several business delegations also from Australia to India. Many Australian companies set up offices and offshore centers in India.

Relations between India and Australia in the field of defence continued to grow. Chief of Naval Staff and Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, Admiral Arun Prakash, visited Australia in May 2006. INS Tabar, a guided missile frigate, visited Australian ports in June 2006 and conducted exercises with Australian Navy.

The second resident Consulate General of India in Australia was opened in Melbourne in September 2006.

India and Australia continued to interact at international and multilateral organisations, including in the framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), East Asia Summit, WTO and Asia-Pacific Partnership on Climate and Clean Development.

Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam is the smallest country in ASEAN with

whom India enjoys cordial and friendly relations with active interactions in the political, defence and commercial fields.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs & Trade-II, Pehin Lim Jock Seng paid an official visit to India from 10-14 October 2006. He held meetings with Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed, Minister of State for Communications & IT, Dr. Shakeel Ahmad and Minister of Defence. He participated in a Roundtable at FICCI and also visited the Software Technology Park in NOIDA. He also called on the Leader of Opposition L.K. Advani.

Dr. Shakeel Ahmad, Minister of State for Communications & IT participated in the 2nd TELMIN + India Meeting which reviewed the ongoing partnership between ASEAN and India in the field of Information and Communication Technology. On the sidelines of the meeting, MOS (C&IT) also held bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Brunei, China, Japan, Myanmar and South Korea.

Two Indian Naval ships INS Rana and INS Kulish from the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy paid a goodwill visit to Brunei from 1-4 June 2006.

Cambodia

India's bilateral relations with Cambodia were further strengthened through regular interactions and exchange of visits. In the spirit of close and excellent political relations existing between the two countries, Cambodia continued to lend its support to India at international fora, most notably to India's candidature to the UN Human Rights Council. There were several high level exchanges between the two countries during the year.

The first meeting of the India-Cambodia Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was held in Phnom Penh on 25-26 May 2006. Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed, led a delegation of officials from the Ministries of External Affairs, Commerce & Industry, Agriculture, Finance, ICCR, and National Informatics Centre. Besides co-chairing the JCM, MOS called on Prime Minister Hun Sen and other Ministers. At the JCM, the two delegations discussed cooperation in the areas of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, tourism, civil aviation links, information technology, investment, trade and economic cooperation, water resources and meteorology, industry, mines and

energy, oil and gas, defence, education and training and cultural exchanges. The two sides also exchanged views on regional and international situations.

Defence cooperation between India and Cambodia entered an intense and productive phase. Coming close on the heels of the visit of General Ke Kim Yan, Commander-in-Chief, Royal Cambodian Armed Forces earlier in the year 2006, Vice Admiral Sureesh Mehta, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command visited Cambodia from 13-18 June 2006. He paid a courtesy call on Minister of National Defence Tea Banh. Simultaneously, two Indian naval ships INS Rana and INS Jyoti paid a goodwill visit to Sihanoukville Port from 15-19 June 2006. During the port call, the Indian Navy organized training exercises on INS Rana for the Cambodian Navy. Further high-level exchanges in the defence field including a return visit by Chairman, COSC, Air Chief Marshal S.P. Tyagi, are in the pipeline.

The Cambodia-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre was set up in Phnom Penh by India under IAI programme. The Centre has since been operationalised and two courses for training the Cambodian entrepreneurs have been completed.

Tourism Minister of Cambodia Lay Prohas led a six-member delegation to India from 16-20 July 2006 to organize 'road shows' in New Delhi and Bangalore to promote tourism from India to Cambodia. He met Ambika Soni, Minister of Tourism & Culture, for discussions on bilateral cooperation in the field of tourism and culture.

Prof. S.D. Muni, representative of the Ministry of External Affairs visited Cambodia from 20-22 October 2006 to take part in the Open Academic Forum organized on the occasion of the 15th Anniversary of the Paris Peace Agreements that brought the Cambodian conflict to an end. Prof. Muni presented a paper at the Forum highlighting India's role in the Cambodian peace process.

A twelve-member Kepemchim Kirnam cultural troupe led by Evaristo Cirilo Goes, sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, visited Cambodia from 24-27 September 2006. The troupe gave two performances at the prestigious Chaktomouk Convention Hall in Phnom Penh on 25-26 September 2006.

Seventy-six Cambodian officials were sent to India for training in various courses under ITEC programme during

the year 2005-06. The same numbers of trainees are expected to avail of ITEC scholarships during 2006-07 also.

Fiji

India's relations with Fiji go back to the year 1879 when Indian indentured labourers were brought to Fiji to work on sugarcane plantations. Their descendants now comprise 43 percent of the population. India's relations with Fiji have been steadily improving since the visit of the Prime Minister of Fiji to India in October 2005. There were several other high-level exchanges between India and Fiji leading to further consolidation of bilateral relations.

Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed paid a bilateral visit to Fiji from 26-28 October 2006 to coincide with the 18th Post Forum Dialogue Partners' Meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum in Nadi. MOS had meetings with Vice President Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi, Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase and Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade Kaliopate Tavola and discussed matters of mutual interest. A Memorandum of Understanding on Development Cooperation between the Republic of India and Fiji Islands was also signed during the visit of MOS.

Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs visited Fiji from 19-21 October 2006. The Minister interacted with the Fijian scholars and local eminent dignitaries at the round-table organized by the University of Fiji to understand and contextualize the particularities of the Indo-Fijian community. The Minister also met Vice President Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi and Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase. The Indian Cultural Centre in Suva was inaugurated by the Minister on 20 October 2006.

Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade of Fiji, Kaliopate Tavola led a high level trade and investment delegation to India from 20-29 November 2006. The delegation included the Minister of Commerce and Industry and the Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations. The delegation visited New Delhi, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Kolkata and held discussions with apex trade bodies as well as individual business houses. During his stay in Delhi, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade along with his Ministerial colleagues called on Minister of External Affairs, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Minister of Tourism and Culture and Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed.

Defence cooperation between the two countries received an impetus with the visit of Indian naval ship INS 'Tabar' to Suva on a goodwill mission from 13-16 July 2006. Fijian Navy conducted anti-piracy and search and rescue exercises with the Indian warship.

On cultural front, ICCR sponsored cultural troupes to perform Bharatnatyam and Veena recitals in Fiji in July 2006. Their performances were widely acclaimed by the entire cross section of the Fijian society. ICCR also deputed Prof. A. Gnanam for delivering a key note address and interaction with the local academicians.

On 5 December 2006, the Fiji Military staged a bloodless coup ousting the elected government led by Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase. Military Commodore Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama declared himself as the Acting President and assumed all executive powers. On 4 January 2007, Bainimarama returned power to President Ratu Josefa Iloilo and became interim Prime Minister on 5 January 2007. He has vowed to hold the elections for a new government soon.

Indonesia

Indonesia is the largest country in ASEAN with whom we share a maritime boundary, ancient cultural links, memories of recent colonization and strategic interests stretching well into the future. Indian businesses are well established in this country from the 1970's although a wave of new investments is being witnessed in the last few years.

Subsequent to the signing of a Joint Declaration between Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Indonesian President Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, which established a New Strategic Partnership between India and Indonesia in November 2005, the year 2006 witnessed a steady consolidation of our bilateral relations. The year also witnessed internal political consolidation and economic recovery for Indonesia.

There were several Ministerial and official visits from both sides including the visits of Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath and MOS for Agriculture, Dr. Akhilesh Prasad Singh to Indonesia and the Indonesian Minister of Finance Sri Mulyani Indrawati to Hyderabad, India in May 2006 for the ADB General Body meeting.

In the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Yogyakarta in May 2006, where nearly 6000 people lost

their lives, India announced US\$ 2 million as immediate humanitarian assistance. Two Indian Air Force IL-76 aircrafts carrying tents, blankets, food, relief supplies and medicines landed on 30 May and 1 June 2006 respectively at Solo in Indonesia. Further, two Indian naval ships viz. INS Rajput and INS Tabar arrived at Jakarta carrying a team of doctors, and relief and medical supplies. INS Rajput, which arrived on 30 May 2006, was the first naval vessel to arrive in Indonesia after the earthquake, carrying relief supplies. Two medical teams from INS Rajput rendered medical assistance in two villages of the worst devastated Bantul district and did commendable work in difficult conditions. Their work was commended by Minister of Health and the Dy. Governor of Yogyakarta. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh announced India's offer to send a team from the Archaeological Survey of India to help in the restoration of the damage caused to the Prambanan Temple Complex by the earthquake in May 2006. A team from ASI visited Yogyakarta in September 2006 and made a detailed survey of the damage.

A significant development in the year has been the frequent visits by Parliamentary delegations from Indonesia to India. The first was a 7-member delegation from House Commission I, led by Tosari Widjaja, which visited India from 14-17 August 2006. They met with Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha and Minister of Information and Broadcasting. The delegation also visited the Plant of Bharat Electronics Ltd. in Ghaziabad. Another 6-member delegation from House Commission VIII, led by Widada Bujowiryono, visited India from 11-15 September 2006. The delegation met with the MOS for Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation and visited Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and Aligarh Muslim University. A third delegation of the Indonesian Parliament visited India in December, 2006.

In 2006, defence ties between the two countries have strengthened further. The Chief of Army Staff Gen. J.J. Singh visited Indonesia in March 2006. He was received by the Defence Minister and held talks with his Indonesian counterparts. A month-long bi-annual India-Indonesia coordinated patrolling between the navies of the two countries was held in April and October 2006 respectively. INS Tir and INS Sujata made port calls at Port Belawan in Medan in October 2006. Indian delegations from the Army High Command Course, Naval High Command

Course and higher Defence Management Course visited Indonesia over the year. Several Indian Public Sector Undertakings including BrahMos Aerospace participated in the Indo Defence Expo held in Jakarta from 22-25 November 2006. A LEMHANNAS (Indonesian equivalent of NDC) delegation led by its Governor visited India in September 2006. Another delegation of 30 members from the Indonesian Police School of Administration and Leadership visited India in November 2006. Senior Indian Armed Forces officers underwent training in the Indonesian Staff College. Six Indonesian officers underwent training in India.

On commercial side, an 11-member delegation from Basic Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals & Cosmetics Export Promotion Council (Chemexil) and Pesticides Manufacturers & Formulators Association of India (PMFAI) visited Indonesia from 20-22 June 2006 and participated in a Buyer-Seller Meet. Subsequently, an 11-member Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council (Pharmexcil) delegation visited Indonesia from 28 June-4 July 2006. They held a Buyer-Seller Meet and called on Aburizal Bakrie, Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare.

Bilateral economic and commercial cooperation showed a distinct upward trend in 2006 as several prominent Indian companies continued to look at Indonesia for business opportunities. At the Indonesia Infrastructure Conference-cum-Exhibition 2006 held in Jakarta from 1-3 November 2006, four major Indian companies, namely BHEL, ESSAR, Punj Llyod and TCS, participated in both segments while a few others participated in the Conference alone. Bajaj Auto formally launched its CNG three-wheelers in Jakarta in August 2006. State Bank of India completed its acquisition of controlling shares of Bank Indomonex in Indonesia. Bilateral trade is expected to reach US\$ 4.3 billion in 2006 as against US\$ 3.93 billion in 2005.

For the first time, regional bodies, viz. the Investment Boards of Riau and Jakarta respectively, sent business delegations to India. Riau Investment Board was received by FICCI while the Jakarta Investment Board was received by CII. More than 40 Indian companies participated in the 7th Bandung Intertex 2006. Also for the first time two prominent Indonesian business houses Ciputra and Salim, invested in India. Adhi Karya won a railway contract in India.

India-Indonesia bilateral cooperation in science and technology continued to strengthen, especially in Space which remained the centerpiece of bilateral Science and Technology cooperation. ISRO expanded its facilities at Biak in the Papua Province of Indonesia by constructing a Second Telemetry, Tracking and Command Ground Station for satellites and GSLVs. This is now ready for inauguration. ISRO launched a piggy back of Indonesia's TUBSAT Micro Satellite in January, 2007.

India's two Cultural Centres in Indonesia (Jakarta and Bali) continued to play a prominent role in strengthening bilateral cultural relations. Several outreach programmes were conducted, including in Medan, Bandung, Batam and Lombok. Jawaharlal Nehru India Cultural Centre (JNICC) collaborated in presenting a dance programme "Bharata Katha". A 12-member Indonesian dance troupe from Taman Mini Indonesia Indah visited Gujarat in September 2006 at the invitation of the State Government to perform during the Navratri festivities. Two Indian authors were sponsored by ICCR to participate in the Ubud Literary Festival in October 2006. Painting exhibitions, musical performances hosted by the local Indian organizations and dance recitals continued to bring Indian art and culture to a wider audience

An Indonesia based NGO, The World Peace Committee, donated the World Peace Gong to India as a symbol of Peace and Friendship. The World Peace Gong was installed at the Gandhi Smriti Centre in New Delhi on 11 September 2006 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the launching of Satyagraha Movement by Mahatma Gandhi.

India continued to extend training and educational scholarships to Indonesia. A total of 147 ITEC training and scholarship slots were allotted to Indonesia under ITEC, Colombo Plan and GCSS schemes for 2006-07.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

The year 2006-2007 marks the 50th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Lao PDR. The occasion was marked by organization of several special events such as "Path of Compassion" – an exhibition of photographs of Buddhist art and heritage by Benoy Behl from 4-10 April 2006; performances by 12-member Goan folk and music troupe "Kepemchim Kirnnam" sponsored by ICCR on 22-23 September 2006

in Vientiane and friendly matches of the Indian National Football (U-20) team from 8-10 October 2006.

The 5th Indo-Lao Joint Commission meeting was held in Vientiane on 27 May 2006. The Joint Commission meeting was chaired by the Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed on the Indian side and Phongsavath Boupaha, Vice Foreign Minister, on the Lao side. The Joint Commission meeting discussed various proposals on bilateral cooperation in the areas of agriculture, grant aid and credit, trade and investment, mining and industry, transport and tourism, education and culture, ICT, defence and science and technology. MOS inaugurated the National Data Centre, which was set up with Indian assistance as part of the IT Centre, during the visit to Lao PDR. MOS also called on the Prime Minister of Lao PDR and discussed issues of mutual interest.

Secretary (East), Ministry of External Affairs, visited Vientiane to attend 9th India-ASEAN Working Group on 25-26 April 2006 and the 8th India-ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on 28-29 April 2006, which were organized by Lao PDR as Country Coordinator.

As part of its commitment under Development Partnership with Lao PDR, India continued to provide project assistance and aid to Lao PDR. Some of the prominent projects completed under this partnership are 115 Kv power transmission line constructed by Jaguar Overseas Limited, establishment of National Data Centre by NIC, continuing work on Lao-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre and human resource development and capacity building through ITEC programme. The National Data Centre is the state-of-the-art system, which will be the hub of major e-governance activities of Lao PDR.

Bilateral defence cooperation continued. The Indian Army Training Team on deputation at the Kayasone Phomvihane Academy of National Defence (KAND) continued its training programmes for Lao Army personnel. The Commandant of KAND visited India from 19-27 September 2006, which further promoted defence cooperation between the two sides.

Malaysia

An overview of bilateral activities since April 2006 indicates that bilateral relations in many aspects have been growing steadily. The exchange of visits at several levels

added momentum to the political, economic and defence relations between the two countries.

Secretary (East), visited Karambunai from 18-20 May 2006 for ASEAN Regional Forum Senior Officials Meeting and East Asia Summit Senior Officials Meeting. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Kuala Lumpur from 28-31 May 2006 in connection with the NAM-Coordinating Bureau meeting. Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for Defence Production, visited Kuala Lumpur from 26-29 July 2006 and represented India in the 13th ASEAN Regional Forum meetings. Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce and Industry, represented India at the ASEAN Economic Ministers meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, on 24-25 August 2006.

Minister of Science and Technology, Kapil Sibal, visited Kuantan to attend the informal ASEAN+India Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology from 27-29 August 2006. Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, visited Malaysia from 12-16 August 2006 to discuss the issue of migration of Indian workers with the Malaysian Government.

The bilateral trade for the period January-August, 2006 is US \$ 3,971.95 million, as against US \$ 3,161.08 million during the corresponding period of the previous year, and represented 25.65% increase.

Defence relations have been further strengthened with several high level exchanges. Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Dato' Najib visited India from 6-13 June 2006. He was accompanied by the Chief of RMAF Gen Tan Sri Dato Sri Nick Ismail. A 15 member National Defence College team visited Malaysia as a part of foreign country tour from 14-20 May 2006. The 5th Malaysia – India Defence Cooperation Committee (MIDCOM) meeting was held on 19 September 2006 in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). It was co-chaired by Shekhar Dutt, Defence Secretary and Dato Haji Ahmad Latffic bin Hashim, Secretary General, Ministry of Defence Malaysia. Defence Services Asia (DSA) 2006 was held from 24-27 April 2006 at Subang, Kuala Lumpur. India had a pavilion in which BEML, MDL, Midhani, GSL, OFB, GRSE, BEL, DRDO, DEO, HAL and ZEN technology took part. BRAHMOS AEROSPACE had a separate pavilion. The official delegation to the DSA 2006 was led by Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for Defence Production. Two Indian naval ships, INS Jyoti and INS Kirpan, visited Kota

Kinabalu, Malaysia from 31 May-4 June 2006.

New Zealand

India and New Zealand have enjoyed cordial and friendly relations rooted in the linkages of Commonwealth, parliamentary democracy and English languages. The bilateral relations have continued to improve on account of several high level exchanges.

The Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs Vayalar Ravi visited New Zealand on 20-21 October 2006. The Minister inaugurated the Diwali Celebrations in Wellington together with the Governor General of New Zealand Anand Satyanand. He held discussions with the Minister of Ethnic Affairs Chris Carter on further facilitating the flow of skilled Indian personnel and professionals into New Zealand.

P.Chidambaram, Minister of Finance visited New Zealand from 19 – 23 November 2006 at the invitation of New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Michael Kullen. He held talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister, and Minister of Trade and Defence. Chidambaram also had interaction with cross sections of New Zealand Trade and Industry.

The Chief Minister of Uttaranchal N.D. Tiwari led a six-member delegation to New Zealand from 17-21 December 2006. He held discussions with the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Jim Anderton and Minister for Conservation, Housing and Ethnic Affairs Chris Carter.

Anand Satyanand, a person of Indian origin from Fiji, was sworn in Governor-General of New Zealand on 23 August 2006. Both Prime Minister Helen Clark and the Governor-General, in their formal speeches, acknowledged Anand Satyanand's Indian origin.

Trevor Mallard, Minister for Economic Development visited India in May 2006 to attend Asian Development Bank meeting in Hyderabad. He used the opportunity to lead a delegation of educationists to promote the flow of students from India to New Zealand for tertiary education.

Foreign Office consultations between India and New Zealand were held in New Delhi on 21 September 2006. The consultations covered entire range of bilateral and international issues.

Cooperation in the field of Defence also showed an upward trend during the year. In June 2006, Rear Admiral David Ledson, Chief of the Royal Navy of New Zealand visited India and oversaw the joint exercises which the New Zealand Naval frigate “Te Mana” held with Indian Navy. The NZ ship called at Indian ports of Kochi and Mumbai. Indian naval ship INS ‘Tabar’ visited Auckland from 2-6 July 2006. Vice Admiral Sureesh Mehta, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Naval Command also visited New Zealand from 2-7 July and held discussions with Chiefs of Army, Air Force and Navy in Wellington, on matters of mutual interest.

On cultural front, 2006 Diwali celebrations were inaugurated in October in Auckland by the Governor-General Anand Satyanand and the Prime Minister Helen Clark, and in Wellington by the Governor-General and Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs. Diwali celebrations in Auckland attracted the participation of over 100,000 people, and in Wellington over 30,000.

Papua New Guinea

Bilateral relations between India and Papua New Guinea, which have been steadily growing ever since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1996, witnessed further consolidation. The opening of Papua New Guinea’s resident Diplomatic Mission in New Delhi is a witness of Papua New Guinea’s desire to enhance relationship with India. PNG currently has resident diplomatic Missions only in 13 other countries, which shows the importance it attaches to India.

The visit of Indian naval ship ‘INS Tabar’ to Port Moresby in the last week of July, 2006, was the first ever visit of an Indian Naval Ship to Papua New Guinea. The Governor General, Deputy Prime Minister, Defence Minister, Commander of Defence Forces, Foreign Secretary and several other dignitaries participated in the Reception on board the ship.

India’s assistance in the form of capacity building by training programmes under ITEC scheme received great appreciation from all quarters. Twenty slots are offered to Papua New Guinea under ITEC.

Philippines

Bilateral relations between India and the Philippines got a big boost with the state visit of President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul

Kalam to the Philippines from 3-6 February 2006. Agreement on Defence Cooperation, Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Tourism and MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture and Related Fields were signed during the visit.

As a follow up of the President visit, a NASSCOM delegation led by its President Kiran Karnik visited the Philippines from 3-7 September 2006. The delegation called on the President of the Philippines, participated in a briefing session organized by the Business Process Association of the Philippines (BPAP) and visited selected IT companies and institutions. NASSCOM and BPAP signed an MoU for cooperation.

Philippines hosted ASEAN Summit and East Asia Summit at Cebu from 13-15 January 2007. Summits were preceded by Senior Officials’ Meeting and Ministerial meeting. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh participated in the Summit Meeting while EAM participated in the Ministerial meeting.

Bilateral trade between India and the Philippines increased by 21.76% during 2005-2006 reaching US\$ 730 million from US\$ 599 million in 2004-05. Exports from India to the Philippines were valued at US\$ 494.66 million and imports US\$ 235.49 million.

India contributed US\$250,000 for relief and rehabilitation of communities affected by super typhoon “Reming” that struck Central Philippines in November 2006.

The Philippines is one of the largest beneficiaries of ITEC and Colombo Plan training with more than 90% utilisation of the allotted slots in the last three years. During 2005-06, out of 25 slots under ITEC, 22 slots were utilised and all the 43 slots under Colombo Plan were utilised. For the current financial year, 11 of the 25 slots under ITEC and 22 of the 43 Colombo Plans slots have been utilised so far.

Singapore

There has been a steady progress in existing friendly relations between India and Singapore in various fields. The bilateral trade has reached a figure of US\$10 billion. Singaporean companies have shown substantial interest in the infrastructure projects in India. Civil Aviation, water treatment, real estate development and transport sectors in India have received increased attention from the Singapore companies. There have been a number of

high-level exchanges both of officials as well as business delegations between the two countries. Substantive progress was witnessed in the fields of culture and education.

There were several bilateral high-level visits in the year. Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Kamal Nath paid official visit to Singapore in April 2006 for mid-term review of Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA). Minister of Home Affairs, Shivraj V. Patil paid a four-day visit to Singapore from 30 May-2 June 2006 to foster co-operation between Home ministries of the two countries and to discuss security and counter-terrorism issues. Union Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Dayanidhi Maran visited Singapore from 22-25 June 2006. The visit was aimed to explore investment opportunities from Singapore in the fields of IT and communications. The Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia paid a three-day visit to Singapore from 11-14 July 2006. He delivered the first of the Eminent Persons Lecture Series under the auspices of the National University of Singapore. Kapil Sibal, Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences visited Singapore on 13 September 2006. He met S. Iswaran, Minister of State for Trade & Industry and discussed the areas of mutual interest. Chief Justice of India, Y.K. Sabharwal paid a three-day visit to Singapore from 11-13 August 2006. He met Chief Justice of Singapore and other officials of the Supreme Court. Chief Minister of Haryana Bhupinder Singh Hooda visited Singapore on 2-3 December 2006. Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chauhan led an official and business delegation to Singapore from 10-12 December 2006 to participate in a Road Show titled "Destination Madhya Pradesh". Chief Minister of Uttaranchal N.D. Tiwari visited Singapore on 21-22 December 2006 and met representatives of Trade and Industry.

The Eighth India-Singapore Foreign Office consultations were held on 24 September 2006 at Singapore. Peter Ho, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Singapore led the Singapore side at the Consultations while Indian delegation was led by Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs.

There were several bilateral visits from Singapore also. Minister of State for Education and Manpower, Gan Kim

Yong led an Infrastructural Services Business Mission from Singapore to India in August, 2006. Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Balaji Sadasivan, accompanied by a high-level official, business and educationist delegation paid an official visit to India in September 2006. Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Defence, Dr. Ng Eng Hen paid an official visit to India in mid October 2006. Minister of State for Trade & Industry, S. Iswaran visited India in the month of October 2006.

Singapore had organized few prominent multi-lateral conferences which were attended by high-level Indian delegations. Pranab Mukherji, Defence Minister visited Singapore from 2-4 June 2006 to participate in the Shangri-La Dialogue, annual Asian Security Conference, coordinated by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). He delivered a lecture on "India: A Rising Global player" at the Conference. P. Chidambaram, Finance Minister led a high-level delegation including Y.V. Reddy, Governor of Reserve Bank of India to International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank's Annual Meetings held in Singapore in September 2006. Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce & Industry and Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission also participated in IMF/World Bank Meeting.

There was further strengthening of Security and Defence Cooperation between India and Singapore. 2nd India-Singapore Joint Working Group Meeting on Intelligence Cooperation on Combating Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crimes was held in Singapore on 13 April 2006. The 3rd Defence Policy Dialogue between the two countries, which is a subset of the Defence Co-operation Agreement, was held at Singapore on 10-11 October 2006, co-chaired by Shekhar Dutt, the Defence Secretary and Chiang Chie Foo, Singaporean Permanent Secretary (Defence). The annual Staff Talks between each of the three services were also conducted.

On cultural front, a number of Indian troupes performed in Singapore. Most of these events were organized on a commercial basis by local event organizers. The Indian High Commission, in collaboration with various local cultural organizations and sponsors, organized a week long cultural-cum-commercial event under the caption "Celebrating India 2006" from 10-16 April 2006. It was a gala soiree of lifestyle exhibitions, fashion extravaganzas,

art shows, cultural performances, cuisine and tourism fairs. A cultural troupe of 14 members led by Usha Venkateswaran and sponsored by ICCR visited Singapore in May 2006 performed a dance drama “Baliyatra” on 17 May 2006.

Nalanda Symposium was held in Singapore on 13 November 2006. President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam delivered the Key note address via live videocast from New Delhi. Opening Address at the Symposium was given by Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, George Yeo. N.K. Singh, Deputy Chairman, Bihar Planning Commission participated in the Symposium. The universal “mission” of the proposed Nalanda University is to serve as a seat of learning for “providing leadership in world peace,” said President at the inauguration of the symposium.

Thailand

India’s relationship with Thailand continued to strengthen and widen, despite Thailand’s preoccupation with adverse domestic political developments, through visits and deepening of economic, commercial and defence links. Foreign Minister of Thailand, Dr. Kantathi Suphamongkhon paid an official visit to New Delhi on 8 August 2006 ahead of the 9th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting. He had bilateral talks with E. Ahamed, MOS. Praful Patel, MOS for Civil Aviation, visited Bangkok on 15-16 April 2006 on the inaugural Nagpur-Bangkok flight of Indian Airlines.

Cooperation in Defence sector between India and Thailand has made steady progress. The second India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol was held from 24-28 April 2006 in Phuket. The Indian Naval Ship INS Trinkat visited Phuket from 24-26 April 2006 for the inaugural ceremony and thereafter sailed together with Royal Thai Navy Ship HTMS Khamronsin for the coordinated patrol in the Andaman Sea. For the first time, a Dornier aircraft participated in the patrolling. Three Indian naval ships INS Rajput, INS Kirpan and INS Kulish arrived in Bangkok on 16 June 2006 on a four-day goodwill visit. The Third Indo-Thai Joint Working Group Meeting (Navy) was held in Bangkok from 21-25 August 2006. An Indian Army – Royal Thai Army combined Counter Terrorism exercise was held in Lopburi, Thailand from 28 August-17 September 2006. Air Chief Marshal Chalit Pukbhasuk, Commander-in-Chief, Royal Thai Air Force

accompanied by his wife Phornthip Pukbasuk, Air Vice Marshal Prajin Juntong, Director of Intelligence and Flt Lt Sorawat Suchart visited India from 13-16 September 2006 at the invitation of Chief of the Air Staff, Indian Air Force.

Bilateral trade continued its steady growth. India’s exports to Thailand during January – September, 2006 amounted to US\$ 1.206 billion, a growth of 22.7 % compared to the same period last year, whereas Thailand’s exports to India during the same period reached US\$ 1.26 billion, representing a growth of 12.94 %. Trade delegations that visited Thailand included a joint trade delegation of the Basic Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetics Export Promotion Council (CHEMEXIL) and the Pesticides Manufacturers and Formulators Association of India (PMFAI) from 16-19 June 2006; a trade delegation of the Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council (PHARMEXCIL), from 4-9 July 2006. A Thai business delegation comprising officials of the Board of Trade of Thailand and representatives from 10 companies visited India in May 2006 and had interactions with the apex trade bodies including CII and FICCI. Inspector General in the Thai Ministry of Commerce led a business delegation to India from 19-23 June 2006. Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) along with the Embassy of India, organized a seminar titled ‘Destination India: Opportunities for Investment in Food Processing’ on 7 September 2006 at Bangkok. The seminar was inaugurated by Suriya Jungrungreangkit, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry, Government of Thailand.

Important cultural events included performance of the dance drama ‘Bali Yatra’, at the Thailand Cultural Centre, Bangkok, on 21 May 2006 by a 13-member troupe from Natyalakshana, led by Usha Venkateswaran. The Kalashetra gave a performance of the Ramayana on 1 October, 2006 as part of the Bangkok International Dance and Music Festival. India also participated in the Royal Flora Ratchaphruek, 2006, a horticultural exposition organized at Chiang Mai by the Thai Government from November 2006-January 2007 in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the King’s accession to the Throne. An Indian Garden has been constructed by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH).

Vietnam

India maintained its close and cordial relations with Vietnam. A four member delegation led by Vice Admiral JS Bedi, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff visited Vietnam from 15-20 May 2006. He called on Vice Admiral Nguyen Van Hien, C-in-C, Vietnam People's Navy and Lt Gen Nguyen Nang Nguyen, Deputy Chief of General Staff, Vietnam People's Army. Discussions were held on enhancing naval cooperation between the two countries. A three member delegation led by Shekhar Dutt, Defence Secretary, visited Vietnam on 12-13 October 2006 for the second meeting of India-Vietnam Security Dialogue. The Defence Secretary called on Col Gen Phung Quang Thanh, Minister of National Defence of Vietnam and held discussion with Col Gen Le Van Dung, Vice Minister of Defence and Chief of General Political Department and Col Gen Nguyen Huy Hieu, Vice Minister of National Defence.

The Vietnam-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre (VIEDC) was launched on 8 May 2006 in Hanoi by Ambassador of India and Vietnam's Vice Minister of Planning and Investment Nguyen Ngoc Phuc. The first Entrepreneurship Development Programme at VIEDC was conducted from 8 May-16 June 2006. Twenty-five participants successfully completed the programme.

Three Indian naval ships, INS Rajput, INS Kulish and INS Kirpan paid a goodwill visit from 8-11 June 2006 to Tien Sea Port at Da Nang city. Rear Admiral D. K. Joshi, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet led the ships.

Bilateral trade has maintained its growth. Bilateral trade during the period January-September 2006 was US\$ 727.68 million. India's exports were US\$ 625.36 million and imports were US\$ 102.32 million. The Embassy and the Consulate General of India organized various trade promotion activities and facilitated visits of various trade and industry delegations, including from industry associations. The Embassy of India in Hanoi organized a catalogue show at the Vietnam International Industrial Fair held from 17-21 October 2006 in Hanoi. More than 200 Indian companies sent their catalogues for this. Eleven Indian companies participated in the Fair. Production sharing contracts were signed on 24 May 2006 in Hanoi for Blocks 127 and 128, offshore Viet Nam in the Phu Khanh Basin, by ONGC Videsh Ltd of India and the Viet Nam Oil and Gas Corporation (PetroVietnam).

India donated HIV/AIDS medicines to the Vietnam Administration of HIV/AIDS Control at Bach Mai Hospital in Hanoi on 12 July 2006.

A Vietnamese cultural troupe visited India in September, 2006 on the occasion of Vietnam's National Day.

Pacific Islands Forum

India participated in the Post-Forum Dialogue (PFD) Partners' Meeting held after the conclusion of the Pacific Islands Forum Meeting. The PFD meeting was held on the forenoon of 27 October 2006 in Nadi. Indian delegation was led by Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed.

The Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), an organization of Heads of Government of independent and self-governing countries of the South Pacific Islands, comprises of 16 countries, namely, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Post Forum dialogue, which is held immediately after the PIF Summit gives an opportunity to have extensive interaction with small Pacific Island countries.

During the Post Forum Dialogue, MOS(EA) announced India's "Regional Assistance Initiative" for Pacific Island Forum members. Under this initiative over the coming years India will implement the following assistance package for Pacific Island countries:

- Grant aid of US\$ 100,000 each for 14 eligible Pacific Island countries for the supply of equipment and materials for social and economic programmes and for sustainable development.
- A 'Workshop on Sustainable Development' for officials of Pacific Island countries to be organized by the Tata Energy Research Institute in Suva (Fiji).
- A course for diplomats of Pacific Island countries in the Foreign Service Institute in New Delhi.
- A course on SME promotion in developing economies for officials from Pacific Island countries under the ITEC programme.
- The grant of one scholarship for undergraduate or post graduate studies to each Pacific Island country.



Japan

India values its close, friendly and cooperative relations with Japan. India-Japan relations have undergone a significant and qualitative shift in recent years, propelled by the successful visit of PM Koizumi in April 2005 and recently the visit of Prime Minister to Japan. The relations have been upgraded to a Global and Strategic Partnership during the transformational visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Japan from 13-16 December 2006. This would also involve closer political and diplomatic coordination on bilateral, regional, multilateral and global issues, comprehensive economic engagement, stronger defence relations, greater technological cooperation as well as working towards a quantum increase in cultural ties, educational linkages and people-to-people contacts. During the visit a Joint Statement was signed to upgrade our relations to a Strategic and Global partnership, initiate a series of measures for comprehensive economic engagement, including the launch of negotiations for Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, enhance S&T cooperation, set up consultation mechanism to facilitate high-technology trade and foster closer people-to-people linkages. Joint Ministerial Statement for CEPA negotiations, MoU on Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, two MoUs in Science and Technology cooperation, Memorandum between ICCR and Japan Foundation were some of the important documents signed during the visit. It was also agreed that the Japanese side would open a Consulate in Bangalore.

The year 2006 saw a substantial increase in the number of high-level exchanges. Finance Minister P. Chidambaram visited Japan from 17-20 January 2006. During his visit, he met Taro Aso, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Toshihiro Nikai, Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Kazuo Kitagawa, Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport and Shinzo Abe, Chief Cabinet Secretary. Finance Minister of Japan, Sadakazu Tanigaki visited India from 3-6 May 2006 to attend the 39th Annual General

Meeting of ADB in Hyderabad and had a meeting with his Indian counterpart.

Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Japan from 25-28 May 2006. He had detailed interactions with the Japanese Minister of State for Defence, Chief Cabinet Secretary, Foreign Minister and Minister for Land, Infrastructure and Transport. The Joint Statement signed during the visit states the objectives of India-Japan defence and security relations, identifies specific areas of cooperation, especially in the field of maritime security and spells out mechanisms of implementation. It was agreed to expeditiously finalise an annual calendar of cooperation and exchanges to implement the various decisions taken during the visit. A Joint Press Statement was separately issued with the Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Kazuo Kitagawa on cooperation between the two Coast Guards. A Memorandum of Cooperation between the two Coast Guards has since been signed on 13 November 2006 to establish a collaborative relationship to combat crimes at sea and to develop regional cooperation.

Minister of Commerce and Industry (C&IM) Kamal Nath visited Japan on 14-17 June 2006 to attend India-Japan Business Summit, World Economic Forum and East Asia Summit. During the visit, he held talks with Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade & Industry (METI), Minister of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries and Minister for Foreign Affairs. It was agreed to set up an India-Japan Energy Forum, the first meeting of which was since held in New Delhi on 6-7 December 2006. A Joint Statement was issued on action plan to promote Japanese investment in India with special focus on Small and Medium Enterprises. This included creation of an "India New Window" for investors in cooperation with Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) and CII and opening of JETRO office in Bangalore.

Minister of Power Sushil Kumar Shinde visited Japan on 21-28 June 2006 to promote Japanese companies'

investment in power sector particularly ultra mega power projects in India. During the visit, he held useful talks with METI Minister and representatives of Japanese companies and banks.

Minister of Environment & Forests A. Raja visited Japan during 23-27 June 2006 to attend ECO ASIA 2006. Minister of Chemical & Fertilizers and Steel Ram Vilas Paswan visited Japan from 9-16 July 2006 and met Japanese companies to promote investment in these sectors. Minister of State for Women and Child Development Renuka Chowdhury visited Japan from 30 June-1 July 2006 to attend 'East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting'. Minister of Science and Technology Kapil Sibal paid a visit to Japan for bilateral S&T Meeting at the invitation of Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan from 17-20 October 2006. Nirupam Sen, Minister of Commerce & Industry, West Bengal State Government visited Japan at the invitation of Japanese Government from 15-22 October 2006.

National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan visited Japan from 22-25 October 2006 and had interactions with Prime Minister of Japan, Foreign Minister, Chief Cabinet Secretary, Minister of Land, Infrastructure & Transport, Japanese Minister of State for Defence and Special Adviser to Japanese PM on security issues. This was followed by a visit of Principal Secretary to Prime Minister T.K.A Nair from 27-28 November 2006 in connection with the preparations for the PM's visit. A 5-member Parliamentary delegation led by Member of Lok Sabha Suresh Prabhu visited Japan from 12-19 November 2006.

From the Japanese side, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan Taro Aso paid an official visit to India on 3-4 January 2006. During the visit, the two sides agreed to launch a Joint Secretary/Director General-level Annual Dialogue on Disarmament and Non-proliferation, with the objective of promoting commonalities and enlarging areas of convergence for mutual cooperation. Yasuhisa Shiozaki, then Senior Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs and presently Chief Cabinet Secretary visited India on 25-28 July 2006 and had extensive discussions with the Indian side. Japanese Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Kazuo Kitagawa visited India from 25-27 July 2006. He called on the Prime Minister and had meetings with Tourism Minister, Urban Development Minister,

Railway Minister, Environment Minister, among others. Tsuneo Nishida, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan visited New Delhi on 13 November 2006 for the 13th round of Foreign Office Consultations. Masakazu Sekiguchi, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan visited India from 18-19 November 2006 to attend the "2nd Regional Conference on Afghanistan". Takumi Nemoto, Special Adviser to PM Abe visited India from 27-29 November 2006 to attend India Economic Summit held by the World Economic Forum.

Two-way trade between India and Japan increased from US\$ 4.37 billion in 2003-04 to US\$ 5.36 billion in 2004-05 and US\$ 6.01 billion in 2005-06. In 2005-06, India's exports to Japan increased by 15.5 percent to US\$ 2.46 billion, while its imports from Japan increased by 9.8% to US\$ 3.55 billion. Japan opened up its market for six varieties of mango exports from five states of India in June 2006. Japan is the third largest investor in India with a total investment estimated at about US\$ 2.12 billion between 1991 and March 2006. EXIM Bank of India successfully floated Samurai bonds in Japan for institutional investors in February 2006 and raised Japanese Yen 23 billion (US\$ 196 million). In October-November 2006, EXIM Bank raised a further Yen 26 billion (in US\$ 222 million). SBI arranged a US\$ 70 million export line of credit with Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for assisting Japanese companies while ICICI Bank arranged an untied loan of up to US\$ 200 million equivalent in yen without any government guarantee to promote trade between the two countries. TATA Asset Management raised funds to the tune of Yen 60 billion (US\$ 500 million).

During Prime Minister's visit to Japan, the two sides agreed to launch Special Economic Partnership Initiative (SEPI). The main elements include Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, setting up of multi product Special Economic Zones/Clusters, Free Trade and Warehousing Zones at select locations; encourage investment by Japanese companies in India, including through assistance in development of infrastructure relating to SEZs and Industrial Estates in India; support by JETRO for the rural business and industrialization initiatives of GOI under its "One Village One Product" programme; announcement on MoUs on some major projects; assistance by JETRO to small and medium enterprises to set up operations in India; enhanced cooperation in Financial Sector, including

Japanese participation in Indian capital market, such as business cooperation agreement between the JBIC and the ICICI Bank; involvement of Japanese private sector in training and quality control; collaboration towards Indian Institute of Technology for Design and Manufacturing (ITDM) and IIT, promotion of Japanese investment in the power sector, etc. India-Japan Business Leaders Forum would be set up to develop a roadmap for enhanced partnership and cooperation at the business level. An India-Japan Energy Dialogue would be set up to enhance the level and scope of cooperation in the energy sector.

A Memorandum of Understanding on Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor was signed during Prime Minister's visit to Japan. The industrial corridor, to be developed along the Delhi-Mumbai Dedicated Freight Corridor, will have several supporting infrastructure projects such as power facilities, rail connectivity to ports en-route and would also cover development of ports on the west coast of India.

Cooperation Agreement between the Government of India and Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) was signed during Prime Minister's visit to Japan. The Agreement provides for undertaking investment promotion activities in India in a sustained and coordinated manner by strengthening collaboration between Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance and JBIC.

An MoU was also signed to upgrade Japan-India Policy Dialogue (JIPD) from the existing JIPD to the level of Ministers. The JIPD will be co-chaired by Minister of Commerce and Industry from India and Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry from Japan.

The meeting of the India-Japan Joint Study Group on 5-6 June 2006 in Tokyo finalized its report. The JSG has, inter alia, recommended that India and Japan launch inter-governmental negotiations to develop an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) or Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) within a reasonable period of time. An announcement regarding setting up of a Joint Task Force for CEPA negotiations was made during PM's visit to Japan to conclude EPA/CEPA as soon as possible, within two years. EPA/CEPA would cover the entire spectrum of economic cooperation. The first meeting of the Joint Task Force was held in New Delhi from 29 January-2 February 2007.

An India-Japan Working Group on Urban Development at Secretary/Vice-Minister level was agreed to be set up during the visit of Japanese Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Kazuo Kitagawa in July 2006. The areas of focus would be water environment, urban development and urban transportation.

A 30-member delegation led by President, Japan Finance Corporation for Small and Medium Enterprise (JASME) visited India from 30 April-7 May 2006. A 50-member Japanese business delegation led by Chairman of Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry visited India on 30-31 October 2006.

An MoU between Department of Science & Technology and the Japan Science & Technology Agency in scientific cooperation programme and another MoU between Department of Science & Technology and RIKEN (Institute of Physical and Chemical Research) on cooperation in science & technology was signed during Prime Minister's visit.

The Centre for Advanced Technology (CAT), Indore was designated Core University from the Indian side for the collaboration on accelerator science with High Energy Acceleratory Research Organisation (KEK), which will be the Core University from the Japanese side.

An MoU on Cooperation in Science and Technology between India and Japan was signed by Minister of Science and Technology and Earth Sciences of India Kapil Sibal and Iwao Matsuda, Minister of State for Science & Technology Policy of Japan, on the sidelines of the 4th ASEAN Informal Ministerial Meeting on S&T in Kuantan, Malaysia on 28 August 2006.

Under India-Japan Joint Committee of Science and Technology, the Japan-India Science and Technology Initiative Meeting was held in Tokyo on 16 -17 October 2006 in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Japan Society of Science Promotion, and Department of Science and Technology of India. Along with this S&T Initiative Meeting, an extended Policy Dialogue was also held with the participation from policy makers, scientists and academia from both countries, and had comprehensive discussions with special emphasis on these three priority areas. In parallel, a Joint Workshop was also held on the

same dates in Tokyo on Biotechnology, Nanotechnology and ICT, which were recognized as priority areas in the last Joint Committee Meeting. In these three select areas, a total of 12 themes were prioritized.

Reiko Nishikawa Senior Vice-Minister of Economy Trade & Industry visited India from 15-19 January 2006. The 3rd India-Japan Joint Study Group was held in New Delhi on 23-25 January 2006. Mitoji Yabunaka, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs visited India on the occasion as the leader of the Japanese side. Osamu Watanabe, Chairman & CEO, JETRO led a business mission to India from 5-12 February 2006.

Protocol amending the convention between the two countries on avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion was signed on 24 February 2006 in Tokyo.

Fourth Comprehensive Security Dialogue (Politico-Military talks) was held at New Delhi on 22 February 2006. This was followed by the third Military-to-Military talks on 23 February 2006. General Tadashi Yoshida, Chief of Staff, Japan Air Self Defence, visited India from 5-8 April 2006, Air Chief Marshal S.P. Tyagi visited Tokyo on 30-31 August 2006 (transit halt).

General J.J. Singh, Chief of Army Staff visited Tokyo on 15-16 November 2006. Admiral Takashi Saito, Chief of Staff, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force visited India from 15-18 February 2006. General Tsutomu Mori, Chief of Staff, Japan Ground SDF of Japan visited India from 5-8 March 2006. General Tadashi Yoshida, Chief of Staff, Japan Air Self Defence Force of Japan visited India from 4-8 April 2006. Lt. Gen. Mandhata Singh, YSM, VSM, Director General, Defence Intelligence Agency visited Japan from 24-27 October 2006.

The 9th meeting of India-Japan Science Council was held at Bangalore on 10-11 March 2006. Dr. T. Ramasami, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology visited Japan to attend India-Japan S&T Initiative Meeting from October 15-19 2006. Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy visited Tokyo from 31 March-2 April 2006 to attend 6th Preparatory Meeting of International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER). Dr. R. Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, visited Japan as a Keynote Speaker

in a Seminar on Nuclear Fuel, hosted by Atomic Energy Society of Japan from 12-14 July 2006.

As agreed during the visit of Foreign Minister Taro Aso in January 2006, the first Joint Secretary/Director General-level Annual Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 1 May 2006. The talks covered the entire range of disarmament and non-proliferation related issues.

Ashok Jha, Secretary, DEA, Ministry of Finance visited Japan to attend the 4th JSG meeting from 5-7 June 2006. Ratan Tata, Chairman, Investment Commission led a delegation to Japan from 12-15 July 2006. Yutaka Kobayashi, Vice Minister, METI led an IT delegation to India from 3-9 September 2006. Nobuo Yamaguchi, Chairman, Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry led a business delegation to India from 22 September-2 October 2006.

The Indian Cultural Centre at Tokyo became operational with the commencement of Yoga classes at the Embassy of India from January, 2006. Bharatnatyam dance classes commenced from July, 2006. On 29-30 July 2006, an International Hindi Conference was organized at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. Three dance troupes visited Japan for performances at various events and conducted workshops at numerous institutions all over Japan. Fourteen television teams from Japan visited India for shooting documentaries.

Republic of Korea

India-Republic of Korea (ROK) relations have acquired positive momentum and have diversified in recent times, following the high-level visits of President Roh Moo-hyun to India in October 2004 and President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to the ROK in February 2006. The 'Long-Term Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity' signed during President Roh's visit provided the framework for consolidation and development of bilateral relations. The increasing number of Minister level visits, strengthening business linkages and expanding contacts in the fields of culture, art and education have provided a new dynamism to the growth of India-ROK bilateral ties.

President visited ROK from 6-9 February 2006 at the invitation of ROK President. This was the first ever visit of an Indian President to the ROK. Four agreements were signed during the visit, viz., Agreement concerning Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters;

Agreement on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology; Joint Ministerial Statement on the launching of a Joint Task Force to develop a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement; and a Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Science and Technology of the Government of India and the Korea Industrial Technology Foundation.

India and the ROK entered into an MoU on Cooperation in the fields of Defence Industry and Logistics in 2005. To further expand such cooperation Minister of State for Defence M.M.Pallam Raju led a six-member defence delegation to the ROK from 30 April-03 May 2006 and met with ROK Minister of National Defence and held detailed discussions on the areas in which two countries can cooperate for mutual benefit. An MoU was signed between the Indian Coast Guard and the Korean Coast Guard in March 2006.

The quantum of two-way trade has been going up steadily. The bilateral trade stood at US\$ 6.71 billion in 2005 and US\$ 6.76 billion during the period January-September 2006. As regards investments, ROK is now the 9th largest investor in India. More and more Korean companies have announced plans to set up operations in India and many of the Korean companies already present are expanding their operations. The Korean steel giant POSCO alone is investing US\$ 12 billion in an integrated steel project in Orissa.

To give a new thrust to wide-ranging economic cooperation, India and ROK have launched a Joint Task Force (JTF) to develop a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). The JTF has already held five meetings, last one was at Jaipur on 10-12 January 2007, and has made good progress in its work.

Minister for Communications and IT (MOCIT) Dayanidhi Maran visited the ROK from 19-21 June 2006 and held discussions with the Minister of Information and Communications of Korea Rho Jun-hyong on the steps that need to be taken for further expanding and strengthening Indo-Korean cooperation in the IT and Telecom Sectors. The ROK IT Cooperation Agency organized a seminar on the Indian IT sector, which was addressed by MOCIT as the keynote speaker.

Finance Minister P. Chidambaram visited ROK in September 2006 and met CEOs of major Korean

companies, addressed an “Investors’ Forum” and a “seminar on BRIC economies” with the aim to push for Korean investment in India.

The Second Meeting of the India-Korea Joint Committee on S&T was held in New Delhi on 8 November 2006. Korean Ministry of S&T delegation was led by its Vice Minister Dr. Young II Park participated in the meeting from Korean side. He also led the Korean delegation to the ‘Technology Summit’, where Korea participated as an ‘Observer Country’ on 6-7 November 2006.

Secretary (Power) R.V. Shahi visited Korea on 10-11 April 2006 to attract Korean investment in the Indian power sector in general and for the Ultra Mega Power Projects (UMPP) in particular. Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Dr. Ajay Dua visited Seoul from 12-15 June 2006 to participate in the 48th meeting of the Governing Body of the Asian Productivity Organisation (APO).

Major Ha Sung Woo from ROK Army is attending 62nd DSSC course at Wellington from June 2006-April 2007. A Korean Coast Guard ship visited Chennai from 3-6 July 2006 to conduct joint exercise with Indian Coast Guards. The Second India-ROK Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue (FDSP) was held in Seoul from 19-22 July 2006. A five-member Indian delegation led by Ashok K. Kantha, Joint Secretary (East Asia), Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi conducted the dialogue. A 17-member Korean National Defence University team visited India on a study tour from 17-20 September 2006. An Indian Army delegation led by Lt. Gen. R.K. Chhabra visited ROK to attend the “Defence Asia 2006 Exhibition” from 12-22 October 2006 held at Dajon. R.M. Sharma, TM, DIG from Indian Coast Guard is attending NDC course at Korean National Defence University from October 2006.

Secretary (Labour & Employment) K.M. Sahni led the Indian Government delegation to the 14th Asian Regional Meeting of the ILO, which was held in Busan, Korea, from 29 August – 1 September 2006.

A delegation from the State Government of Gujarat led by CEO & Managing Director of Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Ltd. P.K. Taneja visited Korea from 10-12 September 2006 to promote Korean participation in the Global Investors’ Summit 2007 to be held in Ahmedabad.

Sudhir Choudhary, DIG, National Human Rights

Commission, India, participated in the “National Institutions Partnership Building Programme” of the Korean National Human Rights Commission from 9-17 October 2006. B.N. Puri, Advisor (Transport), Planning Commission, led an Indian delegation to the UN ESCAP Ministerial Conference on Transport 2006 (MCT-2006), held in Busan from 6-11 November 2006.

Korean Minister of Commerce, Industry and Energy Sye kyun Chung visited Mumbai to participate in the “India-Korea Forum” from 21-24 November 2006. The 6th India-Korea Forum was organized in New Delhi from 10-14 December 2006. Kim Won-wung, Chairman of the Committee on Unification, Foreign Affairs and Trade of the National Assembly led the delegation.

A U.P. State delegation led by Minister for Urban Development, Poverty Alleviation and Parliamentary Affairs Mohd. Azam Khan visited ROK from 20-27 May 2006. Chief Minister of Uttaranchal N.D. Tiwari visited ROK in July 2006.

A number of cultural events under “Glimpses of India” were organized in Seoul and other cities of Korea from October to December 2006. The “Glimpses of India” included the following events:

- Manipuri Dance Performances: 13-15 October 2006
- Indian Folk Dance Performances: 27 October-5 November 2006
- Indian Food Festival: 28 October-12 November 2006
- Indian Film Festival: 23-26 November 2006
- Indian Handicrafts Exhibition: 27 October-3 November 2006
- Indian Puppet Exhibition: 2-12 November 2006
- India-Korea Contemporary Art Exhibition: 7 November-13 December 2006
- Symposium on Buddhism: 31 October 2006
- Photographic Exhibition “Path of Compassion”: 31 October onwards

An MoU on the establishment of sisterhood/twinning relations with Gyeonggi province of ROK and Maharashtra State for cooperation in economic (industrial) and cultural areas was signed in August 2006. The people-to-people contacts are also on steady increase

with visa requests from Koreans touching 45,284 during the period January-October 2006.

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)

The relations between India and DPRK continued to be cordial with a focus on humanitarian and human resource development assistance. India expressed its deep concern following DPRK’s nuclear tests on 9 October 2006.

A two-member Foreign Ministry delegation led by Director of 4th Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ma Chol Su visited India during 15-18 March 2006 to hold bilateral discussions on issues of mutual interest. A DPRK information delegation headed by the Vice-Chairman of the DPRK Information Committee visited India during 25-29 April 2006. An agreement on cooperation in the field of information between the two governments was signed on 26 April 2006.

India continued to provide human resource development and other forms of assistance to DPRK. DPRK received 2,000 MT of rice as humanitarian assistance in February 2006. India made a token gift of 5 computers, two printers, one TV and one DVD to the Korea-India Friendship School. India also agreed to supply of two trucks and two tractors with spare tyres to the Korea-India Friendship Farm.

India has been participating in the April Spring Friendship Art Festival and the Pyongyang International bi-annual Film Festival on a regular basis. In 2006, India participated in the 10th Pyongyang International Film Festival held from 13-22 September 2006. India’s only entry to the Festival “Meenakshi-A Tale Of Three Cities” produced and directed by M.F. Husain won two prizes (trophies) for the best cinematography and best production design.

For the current financial year 2006-07, thirteen ITEC slots were offered to DPRK. Out of thirteen slots, eight slots have been availed by DPRK in Proficiency in the areas of English Language and IT Skills, Certificate in Software Development Techniques and English for Professionals. Five slots are utilised in English for Professionals and for Advanced Diploma in Computer Aided Drafting and Designing. DPRK sent two participants for Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) course being organized by Foreign Service Institute.

A 16-member Korean Gymnastics team participated in the 13th Asian Senior Artistic & Rhythmic Gymnastics Championship from 29 July-3 August 2006 and two Judo coaches also visited India at the end of August 2006 to train Indian players for next Asian Games. Indian players participated in the Table Tennis Championship in Pyongyang in August 2006. A 16-member Korean team won the Asian Football Confederation Under-19 Soccer Championship held in India on 12 November 2006.

India and DPRK have continued cooperation at UN bodies and other international organisations.

Mongolia

India continued to accord priority to relations with Mongolia, which have traditionally been friendly and cordial. The relations have steadily improved, following the decision to elevate it to a “new level of Partnership” reached during the visit of Prime Minister Enkhbayar in 2004. The first ministerial visit to Mongolia in the field of defence and the first meeting of India Mongolia Joint Committee on Cooperation were held during the year. India continued to provide technical and economic cooperation to Mongolia in higher education, agriculture, Information and Communication Technology and human resource development.

Minister of State for Defence M.M. Pallam Raju paid an official visit to Mongolia from 3-6 May 2006. The visit has identified areas of cooperation in defence and security spheres and the mechanism for their implementation. The first meeting on Indian Mongolian Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation was held in Ulaanbaatar from 31 March-3 April 2006.

Chief Minister of Delhi Sheila Dikshit visited Mongolia from 10-13 July 2006 on the occasion of Naadam (Mongolian National Day) at the invitation of the Mayor of Ulaanbaatar city T.S Batbayar. On 7 March 2006, a street in Ulaanbaatar was named the Mahatma Gandhi Street. During her visit to Mongolia, Sheila Dixit unveiled a statue of Mahatma Gandhi on 11 July 2006.

The first meeting of India Mongolia Joint Committee on Cooperation, to review bilateral relations was held on 9

June 2006. It was agreed that the Joint Committee on Cooperation would meet once in two years. The Indian side was led by Secretary (East) Rajiv Sikri.

In the field of education, Government of India provides 30 scholarships for Mongolian nationals; 10 under CEP and 20 under GCSS; for pursuing higher studies in India. 4 students were granted scholarships to study Hindi language at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra in 2005-06. A Memorandum of Understanding for establishing a Chair on Sanskrit and Buddhists Studies at the National University of Mongolia was signed in April 2006 by the Indian Ambassador to Mongolia and the Mongolian Minister for Education, Culture and Sciences. A Chair for Sanskrit was established on 14 January 2006 with the deputation of Dr. Dash to Mongolia. Over 425 books on Sanskrit, Indian Philosophy and Buddhist philosophy were handed over to the National Library attached to the Chair.

Mongolia utilized 47 ITEC slots for the year 2005-06 to train Mongolian citizens in 11 disciplines including English language course, Hotel Management, Small Scale Business, Computer Hardware/Software, Management Development Programme, Oil and Gas Measurement, Floor Milling Technology, Textile Research, Standardization, Mass Communication and Applied Manpower. The Government of India had agreed to do solar electrification of Dadal Soum in Khentti Aimag. The project was executed by the Central Electronic Ltd. and jointly inaugurated on 29 April 2006 by the Mongolian Foreign Minister, Minister of Fuel and Energy, Minister for Profession Inspection and the Indian Ambassador.

The India-Mongolia Commemorative Postal stamp to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Indian-Mongolian Diplomatic Relations was released on 28 September 2006 jointly by the Mongolian Foreign Minister and the Indian Ambassador. In the sphere of cultural cooperation, Technical expert team from ICCR digitalised precious Buddhist manuscripts in Mongolia. The digitalisation was completed on 18 October 2006.

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The close, extensive and cooperative interaction between India and Eurasian countries continued through 2006-07. High-level bilateral visits were interspersed with the exchange of official, parliamentary and commercial delegations and cultural troupes. Cultural festivals, seminars, conferences and trade exhibitions were organized regularly; bilateral agreements in various fields were signed, training courses were offered and assistance provided to the countries of the region within the parameters of the ITEC Programme as well as through other channels. Country-specific developments are as follows:

Russia

The momentum of bilateral interaction was maintained at the same high level that has characterised it over the past 2-3 years. A large number of visits were exchanged, many of them with a view to promote economic and commercial cooperation, which is now a priority for both countries. Defence, energy, space, science and technology and culture were other important focus areas for the two sides. High-level bilateral visits included the following:

- President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin visited India for the India-Russia Annual Summit on 25-26 January 2007. Apart from bilateral meetings, he was the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations;
- Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation [Prime Minister] Mikhail Fradkov, visited India on 16-17 March 2006;
- Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Russia, Alexander Zhukov, visited Delhi on 28 June 2006 to co-chair an inter-session meeting of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission [IRIGC] on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation, along with Finance Minister P. Chidambaram. Zhukov also visited India from 7-10 December 2006 to lead the Russian delegation at the IRIGC Meeting;
- The Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, visited India on 17 November 2006 and met External Affairs Minister and called on Prime Minister for wide ranging discussions on issues of bilateral, regional and international interest;
- Murli Deora, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, visited Moscow from 30 October-1 November 2006 for a bilateral meeting with the Russian Minister of Energy and Industry and to participate in the conference “International Energy week”;
- National Security Advisor visited Moscow on 6-7 April 2006 and met the Russian Foreign Minister and Defence Minister. He also visited on 12-13 January 2007 for talks with the Russian side;
- Russian Trade and Economic Development Minister German Gref led a business delegation to India on 12-13 February 2007;
- Sheila Dikshit, Chief Minister of Delhi, visited Moscow to participate in the event, “Days of Delhi in Moscow”, from 28 May-1 June 2006;
- ‘RosAtom’ Director Sergei Kirienko visited India from 6-9 April 2006. He again visited India from 17-19 January 2007;
- On 8-9 December 2006, the Third Meeting of the Joint Task Force on Settlement of Mutual Financial Obligations took place in Delhi;
- Commerce Secretary visited Moscow in August 2006 to attend the first meeting of the Joint Study Group (JSG), which was formed to examine ways and means of enhancing bilateral trade and assessing the feasibility of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. The 2nd meeting of the JSG took place in Delhi on 23-24 November 2006.
- The three Chiefs of Armed Forces, Foreign Secretary, Defence Secretary, Scientific Advisor to Defence

Minister, Secretary [Steel] and Secretary [Space], among others, also visited Russia. Anatoly Safonov, Envoy of the Russian President on Cooperation on Counter-Terrorism visited India in October for the meeting of the Indo-Russian Joint Working Group on countering international terrorism. Sergey Kislak, Deputy Foreign Minister visited India for the India-Russia Strategic Stability Talks on 12 January 2007. India-Russia JWG on Energy, Culture, Trade and Military and Technical Cooperation also held their meetings during the year.

Several other visits also took place during the year in an essentially multilateral context, but were utilized for bilateral meetings and interaction. These included the following:

- Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh held a bilateral meeting with President Putin during the visit to St. Petersburg to participate in the meeting of leaders of G-8 and the Outreach countries, i.e., India, China, Brazil and Mexico, on 17 July 2006.
- Finance Minister P. Chidambaram visited St. Petersburg on 9 June 2006, for the meeting among the Ministers of G8 and 4 Outreach Countries.
- Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce & Industry visited St. Petersburg to participate in the 10th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum from 13-15 June 2006.
- D. Purandareswari, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, visited Russia in June 2006 to attend the G8 Education Ministers' meeting in St. Petersburg.

Armenia

Of the 300 tractors gifted to Armenia under the Aid to Central Asia programme, 240 were delivered this year (60 tractors were already sent in 2005). The Armenian government expressed deep appreciation for the gift.

An Armenian Parliamentary delegation, led by the President of the Armenian National Assembly, visited India in December 2006, at the joint invitation of Chairman, Rajya Sabha and Speaker, Lok Sabha. During its stay, the delegation called on the Vice President, Speaker and EAM, and attended the proceedings of the Lok Sabha.

India-Armenia International Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological, and Cultural and Educational Cooperation met on 19 January 2007 to discuss bilateral cooperation on the whole range of issues. Secretary (East) and the Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister chaired the meeting of the Commission. India-Armenian Foreign Office Consultation was also held on 19 January 2007.

Azerbaijan

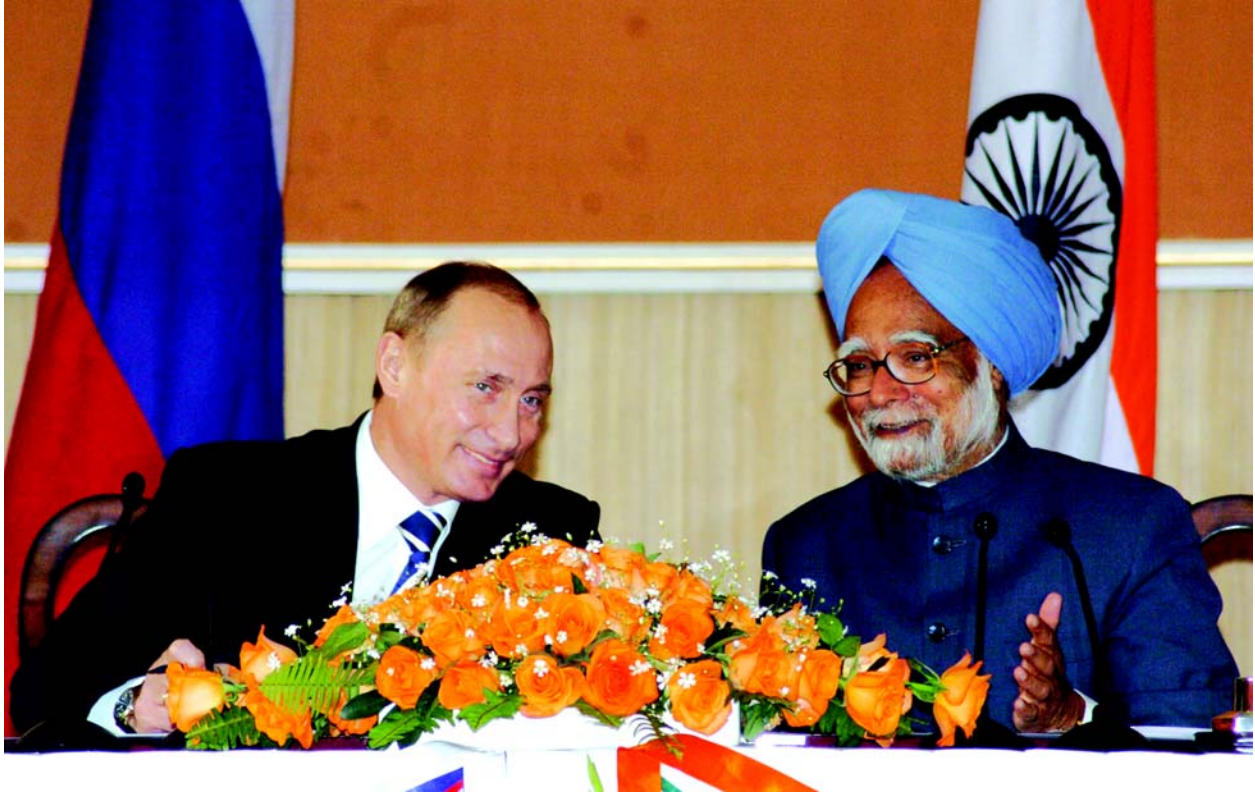
The Azerbaijan Finance Minister Avaz Alakbarov led a delegation to India from 9-12 January 2006. During the visit, he met Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, former MoS for Commerce Elangovan and Representatives of Exim Bank and other financial institutions. Both the sides discussed pending bilateral agreements on avoidance of double taxation and mutual investment protection.

Belarus

The Presidential elections in Belarus were held on 19 March 2006. As expected, the incumbent President A.L. Lukashenko won the election with an overwhelming vote share of 82.6% as against a mere 6% of joint opposition candidate Alexander Milinkevich and two other candidates. This was Lukashenko's third successive victory since 1994. Addressing a huge press conference after his election, President Lukashenko warned against US attempts to sabotage the 'democratic process' in Belarus and ridiculed West's claim of isolating Belarus by the international community. At the same time, he boasted of Belarus' friendship with Russia, China and India.

During the 2005, bilateral trade stood at US\$ 243 million as compared to US\$ 118 million in 2004. FICCI hosted the second meeting of India-Belarus Joint Business Council on 22 March 2006 in Delhi. On the joint invitation of Chairman, Rajya Sabha and Speaker, Lok Sabha, a Belarusian Parliamentary delegation led by G. Novitski, Chairman of the Council of Republic [Upper House] in the National Assembly of Belarus paid a goodwill visit to India from 25-30 July 2006. Novitski had earlier visited India in November 2002 as Prime Minister of Belarus. During his visit to Delhi, the Belarusian Speaker called on President, Vice-President and met Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The delegation also had a business interaction in ASSOCHAM.

The delegation also visited Agra and Bangalore (with



The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in New Delhi on 25 January 2007.



The President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh receiving the President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmonov at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on 7 August 2006.

which the Belarusian capital of Minsk has been 'twinned') where they met Governor, CM, Speaker of the State Assembly, and visited HAL, INFOSYS and BIOCON factories.

Kazakhstan

Dr Bulat Sultanov, Director of Kazakh Institute of Strategic Studies (KISS) and Dr. Leila M. Muzaparova, Deputy Director, Institute of World Economy and Politics (IWEP) visited India from 14-20 January 2006. Both KISS and IWEP are important strategic think tanks of Kazakhstan directly under the President's control. The visiting scholars had a series of meetings and discussions with various Indian think tanks involved with Central Asia as well as with Deputy National Security Advisor and Secretary (East). The outcome of the visit is likely to be institutional linkages between the Kazakh institutes and Indian think tanks and sensitization of the Kazakh establishment on India's capabilities and potential.

The 2nd meeting of the India-Kazakhstan Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism and Other types of Crime was held in New Delhi on 20-21 March 2006. At the end of the meeting a protocol for joint action was signed by the two leaders.

Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan visited India on 28 April 2006 as Special Envoy of President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan. Abdrakhmanov carried a letter of invitation for Prime Minister to attend the 2nd Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures (CICA) Summit which was held in Almaty on 17 June 2006. The Deputy Foreign Minister handed over the letter to Foreign Secretary. He also met with NSA.

The 6th meeting of the India-Kazakhstan Inter-Governmental Commission (IKIGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological, Industrial and Cultural Cooperation (IKIGC) was held on 12-13 October 2006 in New Delhi. The IKIGC was co-chaired by Murli Deora, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas on the Indian side and Baktykozha Izmukhambetov, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources on the Kazakhstani side. Before the IKIGC meeting, the Joint Working Groups working under the Commission met and signed Protocols in respective areas. The 1st meeting of the Joint Working Group on Information Technology was held in Almaty on 13-14 July

2006. The 1st meeting of the Joint Working Group on Military-Technical Cooperation of the IKIGC took place in Astana on 4-5 September 2006. The first meeting of the JWG on Hydrocarbons was held in Astana on 28 September 2006.

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora led the Indian delegation as Special Envoy of Prime Minister at the 2nd Summit of the CICA held in Almaty on 17 June 2006. A bilateral meeting was held on 17 June 2006 between Murli Deora and President Nazarbayev. The CICA Secretariat was formally established with the signing of the Statute of the CICA Secretariat during the Summit. The Statute was signed by Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan. India ratified the Statute in August 2006 and deposited the Instrument of Ratification of the Statute with the Chair country, Kazakhstan, on 11 September 2006, thus becoming the first CICA member state to ratify the Statute and deposit the Instrument of Ratification.

Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev had a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the G-8 Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia on 17 July 2006. Prime Minister invited President Nazarbayev to visit India.

India-Kazakhstan cooperation in Information Technology made significant progress this year. Apart from the successful meeting of the Joint Working Group on Information Technology, major Indian IT companies started operations in Kazakhstan. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) won government tenders. NIIT opened a chain of IT training centres in major cities of Kazakhstan. Infotech won contracts with major banks of Kazakhstan. STPI Bangalore, Infotech, TCS and other Indian companies participated in the opening of IT Park in Almaty. In his inaugural address, President Nazarbayev said that he had got the idea of IT Park during his visit to Bangalore in 2002. The largest number of specialists sent from Kazakhstan to India under ITEC programme was in the IT sector.

Three delegations from India representing Hinduism, Islam and Zoroastrianism religions participated in the second Congress of World Religions on 12-13 September 2006 in Astana. The leaders of delegation also had bilateral meetings with President Nazarbayev on the sidelines of the Congress.

An India-Kazakhstan Joint Armies Mountaineering Expedition successfully climbed Mount Nun on 18 September 2006. This was the first event of its kind in the history of India-Kazakhstan relations and was well received in Kazakhstan.

Bilateral trade crossed US\$100 million mark in 2006 reaching US\$117.16 million. Export Promotion Councils of India participated in exhibitions and buyer-seller meets in Kazakhstan. Among the bigger delegations, a delegation from Electronics & Software Export Promotion Council participated in KITEL-2006 (13th Central Asian International Exhibition “Telecommunications and Computer Technologies) from 30 May-2 June 2006 and a delegation from the Gems & Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India visited Kazakhstan on 25-26 August 2006 for trade promotion and participation in a buyer-seller meet.

In keeping with the official language policy of Kazakhstan, our Mission in Almaty brought out tri-lingual Kazakh-Russian-English edition of famous Indian books and themes. A Kazakh-English book on life of Mahatma Gandhi was brought out on 2 October 2006 to celebrate Gandhi Jayanti and 100 Years of Satyagraha. The papers presented during an International Seminar “Jawaharlal Nehru & Asian Cooperation” on 17 June 2005 were compiled in the form of a tri-lingual book “Jawaharlal Nehru & Asian Cooperation”. A week-long event on ‘Buddhism in India’ was held in the National Library of Kazakhstan in Almaty. The event included a photo exhibition, a film show and presentation of the first Kazakh edition of ‘Dhammapada’.

Kyrgyzstan

India’s relations with Kyrgyzstan continued to be close and friendly. Under the leadership of President Kurmanbek Bakiev, bilateral ties were reinforced, particularly with the signing of the MoU for setting up of the Indo- Kyrgyz Centre for Information Technology in March 2006. The centre will be a showpiece of India’s strength in information technology and is expected to start functioning in 2007. Foreign Office Consultations held in August in Delhi provided a useful forum for exchange of views on bilateral and international issues, thereby facilitating greater understanding.

Indo - Kyrgyz trade is limited. In 2005-2006, exports from

India amounted to Rs 122.96 crores, with around 80% comprising of readymade garments, apparel etc. In an effort to promote greater bilateral economic cooperation the 4th Session of the Joint Business Council was held in India in March 2006. Technical assistance under the ITEC program was fully utilized. In the cultural sphere, two successful Indian film festivals were organized in Issyk – kul (July) and Tokmok in June 2006.

Tajikistan

The first meeting of the Joint Working Group-Countering International Terrorism was held in Dushanbe on 9-10 January 2006. A protocol was signed at the end of the meeting detailing common positions and action points. The 2nd Meeting of the JWG on Terrorism was held in New Delhi on 3-4 August 2006.

A 12-member Tajik Parliamentary delegation headed by Saidullo Khairulloev, Chairman of the Lower House of the Tajik Parliament, visited India from 13-20 May 2006 at the invitation of Speaker, Lok Sabha. During the visit, the delegation called on the President, Vice President, Minister of State for External Affairs and Chairman, Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs.

The President of Tajikistan, E. Rahmonov was in India from 6-10 August 2006 on a State Visit at the invitation of Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. President Rahmonov had meetings with the President and Prime Minister. Vice President, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat and Minister of Mines, Sisram Ola also called on the Tajik President. The engagements in Delhi included paying homage at Rajghat and at the grave of renowned Indo-Persian Poet Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil. He also delivered a keynote address at India-Tajikistan International Seminar organized at the Indian Council of World Affairs. A Joint Declaration signed by the Tajik President and Prime Minister was issued at the end of the visit.

The 3rd Meeting of the India-Tajikistan Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic and Related Matters was held in New Delhi from 30 July -1 August 2006. The Tajik delegation was led by Minister of Economy, Hakim Soliev while the Indian side was led by G.K. Pillai, Special Secretary, Department of Commerce. At the end of the meeting a Joint Protocol detailing action for increasing economic cooperation between the two countries was signed.

Turkmenistan

E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs and co-chair of the India-Turkmenistan IGC on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation led the Indian delegation for the 1st meeting of the IGC held in Ashgabat on 2-3 October 2006. Minister was accompanied by a high level delegation with representatives from Ministries of External Affairs, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Departments of Commerce and Science and Technology, State Trading Corporation and Public Sector Oil and Gas companies, namely ONGC Videsh and Gail India Limited. Ahamed had extensive discussions with Meredov, Turkmen Foreign Minister on all aspects of the bilateral relationship as well as issues of regional cooperation such as India's participation in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) gas pipeline project. The Turkmen Foreign Minister conveyed the support of Saparmurat Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan to greater Indian involvement in various sectors in Turkmenistan, notably in the hydrocarbon sector. Meredov informed Ahamed that Turkmenistan supports India becoming a member of TAP. Ahamed addressed the plenary session of the IGC wherein he stressed the need for India to become a development partner for Turkmenistan. The IGC meeting was conducted through meetings of various sub-groups including the 1st meeting of the India-Turkmenistan Joint Working Group (JWG) on Hydrocarbons, which discussed possible areas of bilateral cooperation such as India's interest in participation in prospecting and eventual exploration and production in the offshore Caspian blocks of Turkmenistan.

Saparmurat Niyazov, President of Turkmenistan passed away on 21 December 2006. The Indian delegation to the state funeral held in Ashgabat on 24 December 2006 was led by Prof. Saifuddin Soz, Minister of Water Resources.

Ukraine

Relations between India and Ukraine remain close and friendly. India, as the world's largest democracy, remains supportive of Ukraine's efforts to establish democratic institutions. On its part, Ukraine has been sensitive to our concerns. Ukraine strongly condemned terrorist attacks in India. The Ukrainian President, Speaker of Parliament and Foreign Minister, condemned the bomb blasts on Mumbai trains in July, expressing deep

indignation and shock and recalled the necessity to jointly fight international terrorism.

Because of Ukraine's preoccupation with its Parliamentary election in March 2006 and with the formation of a government thereafter, there were no ministerial visits and only a few high-level visits between India and Ukraine: Air Chief Marshal S.P.Tyagi, as the head of a three-member Air Force delegation and Dr. Mano Ranjan, Secretary (Steel), accompanied by a team of officials from SAIL and Rourkela Steel Plant, visited Ukraine in June 2006. A four-member delegation led by K.D.Singh, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice, visited Ukraine in May. The draft text of a Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters between India and Ukraine, was finalized and initialed during the visit.

A 13 member Group of Experts from Ukraine visited India from 13-15 February 2006 for discussions with their Indian counterparts on the India-Ukraine Joint Action Plan (JAP) 2006-07. During the visit of President to Ukraine in May 2005, the two Presidents had decided that their countries would jointly formulate a JAP to promote bilateral cooperation in various sectors. During the visit of the Ukrainian experts, the draft JAP was finalized to a large extent, with a view to signing it at the meeting of the India-Ukraine IGC later in the year.

The Mission organized, in collaboration with the Ukrainian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, buyer-seller meets and meetings with Ukrainian companies/businessmen for several business and commercial delegations from India in different sectors: gem and jewellery (visit of Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council); agrifood business (FICCI); wool and woollens (Wool and Woollens Export Promotion Council); and herbals sector of PHARMEXCIL. Indian companies/business groups participated in several trade fairs in Kyiv: Tea Board, India, in the exhibition 'World Food Ukraine 2006' (October '06); Lohia group of industries, in the exhibition 'PlastUkraine 2006' (October '06); an *India Pavilion*, with the participation of 9 companies, was set up by the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council in the jewellery exhibition *Jeweller Expo* (November '06). Bilateral trade turnover during January-August 2006 was US\$7.75 million.

Indo-Ukrainian cultural associations organized several cultural events in Ukraine during the year. Four of these

were major events involving artists and cultural personalities from abroad, including India.

Uzbekistan

The 6th meeting of the India-Uzbekistan Inter Governmental Commission (IUGC) was held in New Delhi on 7 March 2006. The 13 member Uzbek delegation was led by A Shaykov, Minister of External Economic Relations of Uzbekistan. Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, was the Indian Co-Chair. A protocol detailing the programme of cooperation in between the two sides was signed at the end of the IGC. The Uzbek Minister called on Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Praful Patel, Minister of Civil Aviation and E Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs.

Prime Minister paid an official visit to Uzbekistan on 25-26 April 2006. The two sides had detailed exchange of views on the issues of further development of bilateral relations in political, trade and economic, scientific and technical, cultural and humanitarian and other spheres of cooperation, as well as on regional and international issues of mutual interest. Six MoUs and one Work Plan were signed during the visit for cooperation in different fields. Uzbekistan also accepted the Indian offers to set up satellite based tele-education and tele-medicine connectivity between India and Uzbekistan and financial support to establish Uzbekistan-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre in Tashkent. Uzbekistan reiterated its support to the permanent membership of India in an expanded UN Security Council. Prime Minister inaugurated the “Jawaharlal Nehru Center of Information Technology”, established with a grant of Rs.3 crores from the Ministry. The Uzbek President accepted invitation from Prime Minister to visit India.

Five scholars from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, took part in the Conference “Development of a Social Market Economy in India: Experience & Problems” held from 23-25 May 2006 at the University of World Economy & Diplomacy, Tashkent. The Conference was partly supported by the Eurasia Division.

E.V.K.S. Elangovan, Minister of State for Textiles, inaugurated the 3rd India Trade Exhibition in Tashkent on 6 October, 2006. The Exhibition features a wide range of products, goods and services. At the Exhibition, M/s

Kirloskar Brothers Limited donated two Pump sets to Government of Uzbekistan to be installed at Samarkand. During his visit, MOS held meetings with Uzbek dignitaries including Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Economic Relations.

The First Joint Working Group on Cooperation in Mining and Mineral Resources was held from 8-10 June 2006 in Tashkent. A Working Group Meeting on Cooperation in Hydrocarbon sector was held from 27-29 September 2006 in Tashkent. Air Chief Marshal S.P. Tyagi visited Tashkent on 7-8 June 2006. A delegation led by Chairman (Minister-rank) of Uzbek Light Industry, Rakhmatulla R. Ruzikulov, visited India from 13-17 November 2006. A Center of Indology named after Mahatma Gandhi was established at The Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies with a grant from the Ministry.

Defence cooperation with Uzbekistan expanded with training of Uzbek officers in India and training of a contingent of Uzbek Special Forces in India.

Regular dance, music, yoga, language and Indian studies classes were organized by the Lal Bahadur Shastri Centre for Indian Culture, Tashkent. Eighteen scholarships were awarded to Uzbek students under the General Cultural Scholarship Scheme for higher studies in Indian Universities.

India-Russia-China

A Summit-level meeting of India, Russia and China was held on 17 July 2006 in St. Petersburg which discussed international issues and trilateral cooperation among the three countries. A Foreign Minister level trilateral meeting also took place on 14 February 2007 in New Delhi.

6th Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit

The 6th SCO Summit held in Shanghai on 15 June 2006 was attended by Presidents of the Member states i.e. Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and host China. The Observer states were led by President Musharraf of Pakistan, Ahmedinejad of Iran and Nambaryn Enkhbayar of Mongolia. Murlu Deora, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas was India's representative. Afghan President Hamid Karzai was a special guest. Deora spoke at the plenary meeting which was preceded by a meeting restricted to Member states.

The Shanghai Declaration, which was finalized at the restricted Member only meeting, while applauding the achievements of the SCO in ushering in what was called the Shanghai Spirit of cooperation and good neighbourly relations amongst member states, *inter alia* called upon the need to “discard double standards in international discourse and allow coexistence of diverse civilizational and development models.” While reiterating the importance of the UN it said that “no time limit should be set for reform nor should a vote be forced on any proposal on which there are major differences.” The Declaration mentions that the next Secretary General should be from Asia. The Declaration reflected the interventions of SCO leaders at the plenary session who spoke of the need to combat three threats to peace and stability posed by extremism, terrorism and separatism.

The intervention of Deora focused on the principle SCO objectives and sought greater involvement within SCO as Observer. Deora expressed India’s interest in participating in SCO’s activities that promote economic and energy cooperation and cultural inter-exchanges and those directed against terrorism and illegal drug trafficking.

Prithviraj Chavan, Minister of State (PMO), represented India at the SCO Heads of Government (HOG) meeting held in Dushanbe on 15 September 2006. SCO HOG

meeting was attended by Prime Ministers of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Uzbekistan was represented by its Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. Amongst the observer countries, Pakistan was represented by Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, Iran by its first Vice President Parviz Davoudi and Mongolia by its Deputy Prime Minister. Special guest Afghanistan was represented by its Vice President. Other participants included Zhang Deguang, SCO Secretary General, Secretary General of Eurasian Economic Community and Chairmen of the SCO Interbank Association and Business Council. In his address at the plenary session of the meeting, MOS reiterated India’s position on greater involvement in SCO activities as Observer with particular reference to trade, financial relations, energy and cultural cooperation.

2nd CICA Summit

Murli Deora attended as Special Envoy of Prime Minister, the 2nd Summit of the Conference on Interactions and Confidence Building in Asia (CICA) held in Almaty on 17 June, 2006. India is one of the founding members of CICA which has 17 members including Russia, China, Pakistan, Israel, Egypt and Iran. CICA is an initiative of the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev. (Former Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee had attended the 1st CICA Summit held in June 2002.)



The Gulf

The year witnessed further consolidation of the warm and friendly ties that characterize the multifaceted relationship between India and the countries of the gulf region. There is considerable goodwill for India and expatriate Indians at all levels. Active steps were taken in cooperation with the countries of the region to promote the welfare of the Indian community especially expatriate workers. Bilateral interactions intensified further. On the economic front bilateral trade expanded further and relations were further consolidated and special emphasis was laid on promoting investment cooperation. Joint Commission Meetings were held with Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. The year was marked by the State visit of the Amir of Kuwait to India in June 2006. Agreements on the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and a Programme for Cultural and Information Exchanges (2006-08) was signed with Kuwait. An MoU on manpower was signed with UAE, a draft Labour Agreement was finalized with Kuwait as well as a protocol to the Labour Agreement with Qatar. An MoU on Scientific and Education Cooperation and another on Health Cooperation were signed with Saudi Arabia. The year was also marked by a number of exchanges in the field of defence. The second India-GCC Industrial Conference was held in Muscat on 25-26 March 2006 and the launch of GCC-India FTA plus negotiations helped to provide further impetus to bilateral relations. The situation in Iraq remained volatile. India welcomed the installation of the democratically elected Government in Iraq and hoped that it would achieve success in bringing peace, prosperity and stability to Iraq. India remains willing to continue its assistance in the reconstruction of Iraq and to cooperate with it in areas of mutual interest.

Bahrain

E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Bahrain on 22-23 April 2006 during which he called on

King Hamad and handed over a letter of invitation from the President of India. He also called on the Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and the Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed al Khalifa and discussed regional and international developments and issues of mutual interest.

Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs visited Bahrain on 3 May 2006 during which he had meetings with the Crown Prince and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces, Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa and Minister for Labour Dr. Majeed bin Mohsin Al Alawi.

Somnath Chatterjee, Speaker, Lok Sabha, alongwith a fourteen member Parliamentary delegation transited through Bahrain on 24 September and then on 28 -29 September 2006. He met the Chairman of Bahraini Parliament, Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Dhahrani and prominent MPs and exchanged views on the parliamentary system and electoral process.

Two training ships of the Indian Navy, “INS Tir” and “INS Krishna” paid a goodwill visit to Bahrain from 10-13 April 2006.

M.K.Narayanan visited Bahrain in December 2006 to participate in the Gulf Security Conference during which he held discussions with the Crown Prince and the Foreign Minister.

Iran

India-Iran relations are underlined by historical, civilisational and multifaceted ties. The bilateral cooperation has acquired a strategic dimension flourishing in the fields of energy, trade and commerce, information technology and transit. There is a regular mechanism of high level exchanges through the Joint Commission, Strategic Dialogue and Consultations of the National Security Councils of the two countries.

High-level bilateral exchanges

Dr. Mehdi Safari, Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia,

Oceania and Commonwealth of Iran visited India on 29 August 2006. The discussions covered bilateral and regional issues and focussed in particular on the nuclear issue and cooperation in the energy sector.

Manouchehr Mottaki, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran visited India on 16-17 November 2006. The Foreign Minister called on the Prime Minister of India and had meetings with External Affairs Minister, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the National Security Advisor. The discussions covered a wide range of bilateral and regional issues.

Joint Commission meeting

The 15th Session of India-Iran Joint Commission to be co-chaired by the Foreign Ministers of the two countries was scheduled to be held in March 2006 but had to be postponed as there was no External Affairs Minister at that time. The Joint Commission was set up in July 1984 and presently has seven sub-committees dealing with Petroleum and Natural Gas, Trade, Transport and Communications, Industry, Agriculture and Rural Development, Culture, Science & Technology, Information Technology, and Consular Matters.

The External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, visited Iran on 6-7 February 2007. Views were exchanged on regional and bilateral issues between the two countries.

Bilateral trade

India-Iran commercial relations are dominated by Indian import of Iranian crude oil (US\$ 4.12 billion in 2005-06). The total volume of annual bilateral trade was US\$ 5.98 billion in 2005-06 registering 43.7% growth over the previous year (US\$ 4.13 billion- 2004-05). India's exports to Iran have increased steadily in the last five years from US\$ 253 million in 2001 to US\$ 1177 million in 2005-06. Non-oil trade is in India's favour and reached US\$ 803 million, from US\$ 587 million in 2004-05; Iranian non-oil exports were about US\$ 686 million in 2005-06. During 2005-2006, total Indian exports to Iran were close to US\$ 1.17 billion, which included about US\$ 374 million of petroleum products.

Important Indian goods being exported to Iran are primary and semi-finished iron and steel, manufactures of metals, machinery and instruments, drugs/pharmaceuticals, processed minerals, inorganic/agro chemicals, yarn fabric, etc. India's imports from Iran include crude oil, fruits, nuts,

pulses, non-ferrous metals, organic and inorganic chemicals, metal scrap, iron, steel, and leather.

Cooperation in the energy sector

An MoU of cooperation in the hydrocarbons sector signed in 2003 underlines energy security as an important area in our bilateral relations. India is committed to ensure a cost effective, long term and secure mode of transfer of Iranian gas to India.

Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline project

In February 2005, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas was authorized by the Cabinet to conduct negotiations for an overland pipeline from Iran through Pakistan taking into account security concerns, cost effectiveness and assured supplies. We expect that the pipeline would lead to a widening of trade and economic relationship with both Iran and Pakistan. In pursuance of its mandate, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has been negotiating with both Iran and Pakistan in order to realise a "safe and secure world class project".

Three Secretary level trilateral meetings were held in February, May and August 2006 at Tehran, Islamabad and New Delhi respectively. Iran has been seeking a declaration of intent to be signed by the three countries affirming political commitment to the project. However, in the meetings differences have emerged over the pricing formula, project structure and framework agreement. At the last trilateral meeting it was decided to appoint an international consultant who would examine all relevant data and suggest a reasonable formulation on the price issue. The consultant Gaffney, Cline & Associates appointed by the Iran side worked out a price based on certain parameters given by the latter. The price was not found acceptable by India and Pakistan, and the consultant has been given revised parameters to work it out afresh.

LNG Deal

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Mani Shankar Aiyar visited Iran from 10-14 June 2005 and held discussions with his counterpart, Bijan Namdar Zanganeh. A Sale and Purchase agreement was signed between the National Iranian Gas Export Company and three Indian firms, Indian Oil Company (IOC), Gail (India) Limited and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited according to which India will purchase five million tonnes of LNG per

annum for 25 years from the second half of 2009. The Iran side has yet to ratify this agreement despite assurances. Iran has informed that it would like the price to be re-negotiated. We maintain that the agreement is legally binding and that Iran should honour its commitment.

Transit

India and Iran are cooperating in the development of an alternative access route to the sea for Afghanistan through the Chabahar port of Iran connecting to Afghanistan through the Melak-Zaranj-Delaram road stretch. The road construction project is in progress for which Iran has been providing material and logistic support by visa facilitation to personnel involved, sourcing raw materials from Iran, port and transit facilities.

Iraq

Prime Minister sent a letter of congratulations to Prime Minister Nouri Al- Malliki, consequent on the formation of a new Government in May 2006 following the general elections held in December 2005. He expressed the hope that the new Government would be successful in bringing peace, prosperity and stability in Iraq. He reiterated India's willingness to continue its assistance in the reconstruction of Iraq and to cooperate with Iraq in all areas of mutual interest. On bilateral front India remains committed to assist Iraq in its efforts for economic reconstruction and humanitarian needs. The official Spokesman had expressed the hope that the sentence of the former President Saddam Hussain will not be carried out and expressed disappointment after execution was carried out. He further expressed the hope that this event would not affect the process of reconciliation, restoration of peace and normalcy in Iraq.

Kuwait

Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait paid a successful visit to India from 14-19 June 2006. The delegation included Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr. Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Minister of Energy Sheikh Ahmad Fahd Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of Finance Bader Mishari Al-Homeidhi together with a high powered business delegation led by the First Vice Chairman of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry Hilal Mishari Al-Mutairi. The Amir addressed the business community

in New Delhi. During the visit Agreements on the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion; Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals and Related Matters; and an Executive Programme for the Cultural and Information Exchanges for the years 2006-2008 were signed. The Amir met the President, Prime Minister, UPA Chairperson, Leader of the Opposition and the Defence Minister. The two sides reviewed the existing bilateral relations and discussed regional and global issues of mutual concerns. The Joint Statement issued during the visit provides the future vision of our relations with Kuwait.

Earlier E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs had visited Kuwait on 16-17 April 2006 as Special Envoy and handed over a letter of invitation from the President of India to the Amir and also met the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kuwait

Dr. Ismail Khader Al-Shatti, Minister of Communications of Kuwait visited India on 28 June 2006 and met Praful Patel, Minister of Civil Aviation to discuss civil aviation issues. T.K.A. Nair, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister led an investment delegation to Kuwait on 28-29 October 2006 comprising senior officials representing various Ministries of the Government of India and the Public Sector Undertakings.

E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Kuwait on 26-27 November 2006 to co-chair the first meeting of the Kuwait-India Joint Ministerial Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation. The Kuwaiti side was co-chaired by Finance Minister Bader Meshari Al-Homeidhi. He called on the Amir, the Crown Prince, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait. An agreed draft of the Memorandum of Understanding on Labour, Employment and Manpower Development was initialled. It was decided to rename the Joint Ministerial Commission as the Kuwait-India Joint Ministerial Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation and to hold its second annual session in New Delhi in the last quarter of 2007.

Special Kuwait Cell

The main work in the Special Kuwait Cell from 1 April 2006 has been related to locating some 8000 claimants whose money had to be returned earlier to United Nations

Compensation Commission as these persons did not respond to the letters sent by Special Kuwait Cell and designated Banks within the time allowed by UNCC for distribution of funds. The list of untraced claimants received from UNCC was publicized through advertisements in the national and regional press, press briefings by the official spokesperson and Joint Secretary (SKC) advising these persons to provide their latest address to the Special Kuwait Cell so that communications could be sent to them again. The list was placed on the MEA website and also sent to the State Governments for contacting these untraced claimants using the state administration district by district. The last date for sending the list of traced claimants to UNCC initially ended on 30 September 2006, however, UNCC accepted the lists sent to them till October 2006.

As a result of the massive effort, Ministry succeeded in locating approximately 6000 claimants and forwarded their names to the UNCC for sending their compensation money which had been earlier returned to UNCC.

Oman

Minister of Commerce and Industry Maqbool Bin Ali Sultan led the Omani delegation to the 5th session of the India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting, held in New Delhi on 5 September 2006. The Indian side was headed by Minister of Commerce and Industry Kamal Nath. Omani Minister also met E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs, Prithviraj Chavan Minister of State in Prime Minister's Office, and Minister of Communications and Information Technology (C&IT) Dayanidhi Maran.

An eight-member Ministry of Home Affairs's delegation visited Oman from 10 -12 June 2006 to discuss the Extradition Treaty, Agreements on Mutual Legal Assistance in criminal as well as civil matters and Memorandum of Understanding on exemption of visa requirements in certain categories of passports.

A delegation headed by Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Ajay Prasad visited Oman on 15-16 November 2006 to discuss bilateral civil aviation issues with his counterpart.

Three Indian naval training ships, INS Tir, INS Krishna and INS Tarangini visited Salalah from 20-23 April 2006. On 9 August 2006, two vessels of the Indian Navy Task

Force 54 INS Brahmaputra and INS Betwa, made a small port halt at Salalah while on duty to evacuate Indians from Lebanon.

Qatar

C.R. Gharekhan, Prime Minister Special Envoy for West Asia attended the 6th Doha Forum on Democracy, Development and Free Trade from 11-13 April 2006. He visited Doha again from 21-23 August 2006 and met the Heir Apparent Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani and the Qatar's Assistant Foreign Minister, Saif Muqaddam al Bouinan.

The First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al Thani visited India on 18-19 April 2006 during which he called on the Prime Minister and met the Minister for Commerce and Industry. Discussions were held on strengthening bilateral economic ties.

Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Murli Deora attended the 10th World Petroleum Conference in Doha from 21 – 25 April 2006. He met the Qatari First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al Thani and Second Deputy Premier and Minister of Energy and Industry Abdullah bin Hamad al Attiyah and discussed bilateral cooperation in the energy sector. He also met his Qatari counterpart in Vienna in early September, 2006 and discussed energy cooperation.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister T.K.A. Nair visited Qatar on 6 May 2006 during which he met the First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al Thani to review the bilateral relations.

E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs led a four member delegation to the 5th Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue held in Doha on 23-24 May 2006. Ahamed also led a 4-member Indian delegation to the 6th International Conference of New or Restored Democracies held in Doha from 29 October – 1 November 2006 and had met the Qatari Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha Charanjit Singh Atwal led the Parliamentary delegation to the Conference during which he held discussions with the Speaker of the Qatari Advisory Council.

Chief of Staff of Qatari Armed Forces visited India on



The Union Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Islamic Republic of Iran Manouchehr Mottakki in New Delhi on 16 November 2006.



The Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed calls on the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahamad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during the Indo-Kuwait Joint Ministerial meeting in Kuwait on 26 November 2006.

23-24 August 2006 and discussed matters relating to defence cooperation between the two countries.

India and Qatar initialed a draft protocol to the Labour Agreement in New Delhi in September, 2006 during the visit of the Director of Asian and African Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State of Qatar Abdul Rahman M Al-Khulaifi to India.

The Qatari Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Economy and Trade visited India on 5 October 2006 during which he had fruitful discussions with Indian authorities on bilateral economic cooperation including investment cooperation.

M/s Petronet LNG and M/s Rasgas, Qatar reached an agreement in September 2006 on the supply of 2.5 mmtpa of LNG to India, starting in June 2009. This deal would complete arrangements for the supply of 7.5 mmtpa of LNG, the contracted quantity, between Petronet LNG and Ras Gas, Qatar

Qatari Second Deputy Premier and Minister of Energy and Industry Al Attiyah visited India on 23-24 November 2006 during which he called on the Prime Minister, Minister for External Affairs and Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Saudi Arabia

M.K. Narayanan, National Security Advisor (NSA) accompanied by Secretary (East) visited Saudi Arabia on 8-9 April 2006 during which he called on King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz and delivered a letter from Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to him. They also met the Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal and discussed issues of mutual interest.

A Saudi delegation headed by the Justice Minister Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Sheikh visited New Delhi to participate in the 45th session of legal advisory organization of Afro-Asian states, held in New Delhi from 3-6 April 2006.

Arjun Singh, Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister led a delegation to the Kingdom from 29 May-3 June 2006. The delegation comprised Chairman, University Grant Commission, Vice Chancellors of Hyderabad and Jamia Milia Islamia Universities apart from other members. HRD Minister called on the King and delivered a letter from the Prime Minister. The two leaders

discussed ways and means of further enhancing cooperation in the field of education. He also met the Minister of Higher Education, Minister of Education, Rectors of King Saudi University, King Abdul Aziz University and Imam Muhammad University.

Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs visited the Kingdom on 8-9 May 2006 during which he met the representatives of a number of Indian Associations and discussed issues related to the welfare of the Indian Diaspora in the Kingdom in general and the working class in particular besides meeting with M/s Saudi National Recruiting Company (SANARCOM).

E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Dammam in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom on 15-16 October 2006 during which he met with the representatives of various Indian community organizations in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom.

The Saudi Cabinet on 11 September 2006 approved the Agreement on Double Taxation Avoidance with India which was signed during the visit of King Abdullah to India in January 2006.

The Saudi Minister for Higher Education Dr. Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Angari led a high level delegation to India from 5-10 November 2006. Dr. Al -Angari and HRD Minister Arjun Singh signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Scientific and Educational Cooperation between the two countries on 6 November 2006. Dr. Al-Angari also met separately with Chairman of University Grant Commission, Director of Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and Vice Chancellors of Jamia Millia Islamia and Jawaharlal Nehru University. Dr. Al -Angari visited Bangalore on 8 November 2006, where he visited Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore and WIPRO. Dr. Al -Angari was in Hyderabad on a two day visit, where he visited International Institute of Information Technology, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad University and Satyam Computer.

The Saudi Minister of Health, Dr.Hamad bin Abdullah Al-Manea, accompanied by a 5-member delegation, visited India from 20-24 November 2006 at the invitation of the Minister of Health and Family Welfare. An Executive Programme in the field of Healthcare was signed during the visit.

The 7th Session of the India-Saudi Arabia Joint Commission was held on 18-19 January 2007 in New Delhi. Dr. Hashim Bin Abdullah Yamani, Minister of Commerce and Industry of Saudi Arabia led the 28-member official Saudi delegation which included the Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade and a 43-member business delegation and a 15-member ICT delegation. The Indian delegation was led by the Finance Minister P. Chidambaram.

Haj

The Haj Committee pilgrim quota was raised from 100,000 to 110,000 for Haj 2006-II. Another 47,000 pilgrims(appx.) performed Haj through the private tour operators, taking the total number of Indian pilgrims performing Haj 2006-II to 157,000, the highest ever Haj pilgrim quota for India. E.Ahamed, MOS(EA) led a 27-member Haj goodwill delegation that visited Saudi Arabia from 25 December 2006. Earlier he had visited the Kingdom on 20-21 June 2006 at the invitation of the Saudi Ministry of Haj during which he discussed Haj related matters and signed the Annual Haj Agreement. Haj Committee of India (HCoI) delegation visited the Kingdom from 17-25 June 2006 and interacted with various Saudi agencies related to Haj affairs and signed the subsidiary Haj Agreement. E. Ahamed, MOS(EA) inaugurated the All India Annual Haj Conference in New Delhi on 20 May 2006. The system of registration of Private Tour Operators, which had commenced from Haj 2003 has been continued for Haj 2006-II as well.

United Arab Emirates

Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi, visited UAE from 4-6 May 2006 and discussed labour related issues with Dr. Ali Bin Abdullah Al Kaabi, Minister of Labour.

T.K.A. Nair, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister visited UAE on 5-6 May 2006 for investment promotional purpose and reviewed the ongoing investment initiatives between the two countries.

Minister for Human Resource Development Arjun Singh visited U.A.E. from 3-6 June 2006 during which he held detailed discussions with Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and Dr. Hanif Hassan Ali, Minister of Education on bilateral cooperation in the field of education.

Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Suresh Pachouri visited UAE from 14--16 June 2006 and was the Chief Guest in the FICCI-IIFA Global Business Forum 2006 in Dubai. India International Film Academy Awards took place in June 2006 in Dubai.

E. Ahmed, Minister of State for External Affairs visited UAE on 18 October 2006 during which he met Mohammed Hussein Al Shaali, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and discussed bilateral and regional matters.

A two-member delegation from the Ministry of Finance visited UAE from 7-13 June 2006 to discuss the amendments to the existing India-UAE Double Taxation Agreement. The protocol amending the DTAA has since been initialled by the two sides in October, 2006.

An 8-member defence delegation from UAE visited India on 19-20 April 2006 for the First India-UAE Joint Defence Co-operation Committee meeting envisaged under the India-UAE Joint Defence Co-operation Agreement. Maj Gen Ali M Subaih Al-Ka'abi Chief of Staff of the UAE Land Forces visited India from 19-24 November 2006.

A UAE delegation led by Dr. Hamid Nasr, Mohammed, Economic Expert, Investments Department, Ministry of Finance and Industry visited India on 5-6 July 2006 and discussed amendments in the existing BIPPA between India and UAE.

Mohammed Hussein Al Shaali, UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs visited India to take part in the Second Regional Economic Cooperation Conference (RECC) on Afghanistan on 18-19 November 2006.

UAE Labour Minister Dr.Abdulla Al-Kaabi led a high level delegation to india from 12-16 December 2006. During the visit an MoU on manpower was signed.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

India- GCC relations continued to strengthen. The second India- GCC Industrial Conference took place in Muscat, Oman on 24-26 March 2006 in which GCC industry and trade ministers besides a large industrial delegation from each state participated. Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath led Indian delegation to the Conference. CIM during his visit to Oman called on Sayyid Fahad bin Mahmoud bin Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister and Maqbool bin Ali Sultan, Oman's Minister

of Commerce and Industry to discuss trade ties existing between the two countries. A large Indian business delegation also participated. A joint declaration was issued. The 3rd Industrial Conference is scheduled to take place in 2007 in India with a back to back Investment Summit. The first round of negotiations on India-GCC Free Trade Agreement also took place in Riyadh in March 2006. Ministry of Commerce and Industry also undertook consultations with the leading business organizations in May 2006 on the proposed Agreement. The next round of negotiations will take place in India.

West Asia and North Africa

The highlight of the year for WANA countries was the crisis in West Asia. India condemned the incident of Karem Shalom (25 June) wherein an Israeli soldier was kidnapped, and called for the immediate release of the soldier. India also expressed concern at the massive retaliation by Israel and expressed concern that this could escalate into a large scale military conflict. India also condemned the kidnapping by Hezbollah of the two Israeli soldiers on 13 July 2006 and had strongly condemned the use of disproportionate use of force by Israel. India had condemned the use of excessive force against civilians and civilian infrastructure.

India had donated an emergency humanitarian assistance of Rs.10 crores each to Palestine and Lebanon. In the wake of the crisis in Lebanon, India evacuated about 1800 Indian nationals from Lebanon alongwith nationals of Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Among important visits were the visit of King of Jordan alongwith Queen Rania to India from 30 November-2 December 2006 and the holding of the 5th round of Joint Commission Meeting with Egypt in New Delhi on 16 December 2006 co-chaired by EAM and Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit. The Moroccan Foreign Minister, Mohammed Benaissa visited India from 25-27 June 2006 and the Moroccan Parliamentary delegation – India-Morocco Parliamentary Friendship Group – visit led by Speaker of the Lower House from 27 November-1 December 2006. The Indo-Israeli Parliamentary Friendship Group also met for the first time in New Delhi during the visit of Prof. Slomo Breznitz on 3 November 2006. The Minister of Trade, Industry, and Labour of Israel, Eliyahu Ben Yishai visited India on 3-8 December 2006.

Minister for Agriculture Sharad Pawar, led a delegation for participation in the “Agritech Exhibition” in Israel from 9-11 May 2006. Minister of State for Industry Dr. Ashwini Kumar visited Morocco from 7-9 December 2006 in connection with India being selected as “Guest of Honour” for the International Conference “Fundamental of Investments”. Also Foreign Office Consultations were held at Algiers (June) and Cairo (November) 2006.

Bilateral trade with WANA countries has significantly improved. India has also invested in a major way in the Hydrocarbon, Fertilizers and Power sectors in WANA countries.

Algeria

India-Algeria relations date back to the days of the Algerian liberation struggle (1954-62) when India advocated the cause of Algerian independence at the United Nations and other international fora. Political relations between the two countries have been exemplary and Algeria and India have consistently supported each other on all vital issues of their national concerns.

Government of India had committed an assistance of US \$ 1 million as humanitarian assistance for victims of the earthquake of May 2003. Medicine worth half a million US dollars were handed over in April 2004 and the balance in the form of construction steel for the construction of houses for the victims was handed over in October 2006.

Secretary (East) led an Indian delegation to Algeria from 8-10 July 2006 for bilateral consultations with Algerian Foreign Ministry. Delegation level talks were held with the Algerian side. The two sides had detailed exchange of views on several bilateral, regional and multilateral issues.

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Murli Deora had a meeting on 13 September 2006 with the Algerian Minister of Energy and Mines Chakib Khelil in the sideline of 3rd OPEC Meeting held in Geneva. The Indian side proposed for joint collaboration between Sonatrach, Algerian National Oil Company and ONGC for joint bidding in Algeria as well as third countries, which was welcomed by the Algerian side which also promised to extend full support to the joint participation. Algerian side also agreed to favourably consider India’s request for LNG.

As a result of proactive discussions between Gas Authority of India Ltd (GAIL) and Sonatrach, GAIL succeeded in purchasing LNG from Sonatrach on spot purchase basis. This LNG cargo (the first shipment of LNG from Algeria) amounted to approximately US\$30 million. Essar Oil imported one million barrels of Saharan blend sweet crude from Algeria for its refinery at Vadinar in Gujarat.

Indian companies are now looking at Algeria as prospective trade partner. Indian automobile companies have entered the Algerian market. TATA, Maruti, Hyundai, Bajaj, Hero Puch, Kinetic already have their distributors in the Algerian automobile market. Some Indian pharmaceutical companies have shown interest in the Algerian pharmaceuticals market by registering their medicines in this country. Products of Ranbaxy, Dr Reddy's Laboratory, Cipla, Serum Institute, Unique and Famycare are available in the Algerian market. Around 50 Indian medicines have been registered in Algeria.

An Indian pharmaceutical company Hetero Labs Limited of Hyderabad (a Dr Reddy group of companies) and the largest pharmaceutical company in Algeria, SAIDAL Group, signed an agreement under which the Indian company will provide the Oseltamivir (Tamiflu, an anti-viral drug for bird flu) Active Ingredient in pure or premix form to Saidal and also transfer the technology or technical information to enable manufacturing of this product by the SAIDAL Group under their own brand. This is the first such agreement between an Indian and an Algerian pharmaceutical company for production of a pharmaceutical product under transfer of technology. The project is under implementation.

In addition to these, many companies from India, viz. TCIL, Engineers India Limited, Kalpataru Power Transmission Ltd, WELLSPUN – Gujarat, etc. are carrying out important projects in the power transmission lines, oil refineries, oil pipe line sectors.

Bilateral trade grew from US\$ 55 million in 2001 to US\$ 428.68 million in 2005. The trade figures for the January-September 2006 was US\$ 351 million.

Fourteen Indian companies participated in the 39th Algiers International Trade Fair held in Algiers from 1-8 June 2006. The last such participation was in 2004. The Indian companies transacted a business worth more than Rs 17 crore.

Under ITEC programme, five slots were allotted to Algeria. Four candidates have so far come to India for training.

Under Cultural Exchange Programme, a 5-member Bharatnatyam dance troupe led by Sonal Mansingh visited Algeria from 8-12 November 2006. The troupe gave two performances on 9-10 November 2006.

Djibouti

India's economic engagement with Djibouti has become closer in the last one year with trade figures increasing by 26 percent. Djibouti has signed an Agreement with TCIL for implementation of the Pan African e-Network Project on Tele-Medicine and Tele-Education.

The work of the Indian financed Ali Sabiyah Cement Plant is in progress and it is expected to be completed soon.

Ambassador of India participated in the 11th COMESA Summit in Djibouti in November 2006 and the entire Summit was appreciative of India's efforts in building closer ties with African nations.

Egypt

Minister of State for Industrial Policy and Promotion, Dr. Ashwini Kumar represented India at the WEF summit in Sharm El Sheikh from 20-22 May 2006. In the margins of the conference, Dr. Kumar had bilateral meetings with Egyptian Minister of Investment, Mahmoud Mohi El Din, Minister of Finance, Yossuf Boutros Ghali, and Minister of Foreign Trade and Industry, Rasheed Mohamed Rasheed.

During their visit to Egypt from 11-13 May 2006, Minister of Agriculture and Water Conservation, Government of Maharashtra, Balasaheb Thorat and Minister of Agriculture, Government of Orissa, Surendranath Naik called on the Egyptian Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Amin Abaza and visited the Cotton Research Institute in Cairo.

INS Betwa and INS Shakti paid a Port Call at Alexandria from 27-30 June 2006.

The first meeting of the Representatives of Defence Ministries (Joint Defence Committee) was held in Cairo on 21-22 August 2006. The Indian side was led by A.K. Jain, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Defence and the

Egyptian delegation by the Chief of the Operations in the Egyptian Defence Ministry.

The sixth session of the Foreign Office Consultations, held in Cairo on 19-20 November 2006 at the level of Secretary (East) and the Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, enabled a detailed review of the bilateral India-Egypt agenda, including preparation for the 5th session of the India-Egypt Joint Commission, and an exchange of views on regional and international issues of mutual interest. Secretary (East) also called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Ahmed Aboul Gheit and the Presidential Spokesperson, Soliman Awad. While in Cairo, Secretary (East) was also received by the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Amre Moussa.

Bilateral civil aviation talks were held in Cairo on 12-13 November 2006. The Indian delegation to the talks was led by Secretary (Civil Aviation) and the Egyptian delegation by the Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority. Secretary (Civil Aviation) also called upon the Minister of Civil Aviation of Egypt, Ahmed Mohammad Shafik. It was agreed to schedule the next round of talks in New Delhi to resolve pending issues.

The Egyptian Minister of State for Administrative Reforms Dr. Ahmed Darwish visited India from 19-23 November 2006 and the Minister for Communications and IT Dr. Tarek Kamel visited India from 27 November-1 December 2006 during which an MoU on cooperation in the field of IT was signed.

The Fifth round of India-Egypt Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on 16 December 2006. The Joint Commission was co-chaired by External Affairs Minister on the Indian side and by the Egyptian Foreign Minister from the Egyptian side. During the Joint Commission meeting the following agreements were signed :- (i) Agreed Minutes of the Fifth JCM, (ii) Partnership Agreement (iii) Executive Programme of Cultural, Educational and Scientific Cooperation for 2007-2009, (iv) Executive Programme of Scientific and Technological Cooperation for 2007-2009, (v) Work Plan between ICAR and Agricultural Research Centre, Cairo for 2007-2008, (vi) MoU for Cooperation in the field of Civil Aviation.

A delegation comprising senior executives of Egyptian IT companies, led by Dr. Khalid Ismail, Senior Advisor to

the Minister of Communication and Information Technology of Egypt, visited Bangalore and Hyderabad from 23-29 July 2006. Delegations from CHEMEXCIL (Mumbai Chapter) and the Tea Board of India visited Egypt from 3-5 September and on 12-13 September 2006, respectively. The National Research Development Corporation and the Social Fund for Development of Egypt signed an MoU on 10 September 2006 for setting up technology demonstration centres in Egypt. Over a hundred Indian companies were represented at the EEPC pavilion, "INDEE 2006" at the MACTECH Fair, held in Cairo from 23-26 November 2006.

Bilateral trade between the two countries for the first time crossed the US\$ 1 billion in 2005 valued at US\$ 1065 million from US\$ 628 million in 2004.

Israel

Bilateral relations with Israel continued to widen in a multifaceted manner including in the fields of science and technology, commerce, agriculture, cultural exchange, and people to people interaction. The continued exchanges in various fields helped consolidate the relationship that entered into its fifteenth year in 2006.

Sharad Pawar, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution, led a delegation consisting of the Chief Ministers of the States of Gujarat, Nagaland, and Rajasthan, along with eight other State Ministers, officials, and businesspersons, for participation in the "Agritech Exhibition" in Israel from 9-11 May 2006. He met with his Israeli counterpart, and an inter-Governmental Action Plan for cooperation in Agriculture was signed between the two sides. He also met with Vice Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Israel, Tzipi Livni.

Other official level exchanges included the fifth round of the talks on Joint Working group on counter terrorism, and the second round of dialogue on non-proliferation in March 2006 in Israel; visit of the former National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra at the invitation of the Tel Aviv University in June 2006; goodwill visit of the two Indian Naval Ships INS Mumbai, and INS Brahmaputra, to Israel in June 2006; the visit of the Chief of the Indian Air Force, and Vice Chief of Naval Staff in September 2006; and the meeting of the Joint Working Group on Defence in

November 2006 in which the Indian delegation was led by Defence Secretary Shekhar Dutt.

From Israel, former Foreign Minister, Shlomo Ben Ami, visited India in August 2006, and the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Friendship League between India and Israel in the Knesset, Prof. Shlomo Breznitz, visited India in November 2006. The National Security Adviser of Israel, Ilan Mizrahi visited India from 27-30 November 2006, and the Minister of Trade, Industry, and Labour of the State of Israel, Eliyahu Ben Yishai visited India from 3-8 December 2006.

A bilateral agreement on Cooperation in the field of health and medicine that was signed in September 2003 entered into force on 20 June 2006.

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics of Israel, the bilateral trade figures that stood at US\$ 2500.50 million at the end of year 2005, reached US\$ 1956.20 million during the period January-September 2006, an overall increase of 0.86% as compared to the corresponding period last year. As part of the Joint Working Group established at the recommendation of the Joint Study Group for enhancing bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries, Grisha Deitch, Commissioner of Standardisation, Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Labour of the State of Israel visited India from 31 October-1 November 2006 to discuss standardisation and related issues. The year witnessed an increasing number of visits by business delegations from India and Israel, including agriculture, and industrial delegations from the States of Rajasthan and Gujarat to Israel. The State Bank of India that was granted the License by the Government of Israel to open its branch in Tel Aviv has initiated the process of setting up its offices, and is expected to be operational by the beginning of year 2007.

Significant exchange at the level of the people is evident from the fact that about 30,000 tourists from Israel visit India every year for an extended stay of six months to one year. The demand for visas to visit India has been increasing steadily, and the Embassy in Tel Aviv has issued 25,409 visas during the period January – October 2006. Four Israeli youth of Indian origin participated in the “Know India Programme” organized by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in May-June 2006. An official from the Israeli Foreign Office participated in the 41st

Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats organized by the Foreign Service Institute held from 4 October-10 November 2006 in New Delhi. Separately, during the current year, within the framework of India-Israel Cultural Exchange Programme, ICCR has sponsored five students from Israel for pursuing year long study courses in the fields of Indian dance, Language (Hindi), Philosophy and Yoga in India.

The exchanges in the field of culture included the performances given by Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, and Priyadarshini Govind at the “Israel Festival” held in May 2006, and later the participation of Aparna Sen in the International Women’s Film Festival held in Israel in September 2006, in which three of her movies were also shown. An Israeli dance troupe “Kamea Company” participated in the ‘Navratri Mahotsav 2006’ held in Gujarat in September - October 2006. Malayalam poet Tachomm Poyil Rajeevan participated in ‘Sha’ar International Poetry Festival’ organized in Jaffa (Israel) in November 2006. A delegation from the Archaeological Survey of India, led by Director General C. Babu Rajeev, visited Israel in November 2006, and held discussions with the Antiquities Department of the State of Israel with a view to explore opportunities for cooperation.

Jordan

King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein and Queen Rania Al Abdullah paid a state visit to India from 30 November-2 December 2006, accompanied by Prince Talal Bin Mohammed, Advisor to the King, Minister of Industry and Trade Salem Khazaaleh and Minister of Information and Communication Technology Bassem Roussan. The King held discussions with President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh on the bilateral relations and the regional situations. Chairperson of UPA, Sonia Gandhi, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Lal Krishna Advani called on the King. King Abdullah II delivered a lecture at the Indian Council of World Affairs on “Jordan and India: Prospects for Cooperation” and addressed a business meeting jointly organized by CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM on business opportunities for Indian corporate sector in Jordan particularly in IT, telecommunications and alternative energy and mining sectors as also investment in Special Economic Zones of Jordan. During the visit, four agreements were signed at

Ministers' level on (i) Cooperation in Agriculture (ii) Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection (iii) Cooperation in Tourism and (iv) Cultural Exchange Programme. From the Indian side, the agreements were signed respectively by Sharad Pawar, Minister of Agriculture, P. Chidambaram, Minister of Finance and Ambika Soni, Minister of Culture and Tourism.

A significant development during the year was holding of the 8th session of Indo-Jordan Joint Trade and Economic Committee, in New Delhi from 21-23 August 2006. It was co-chaired by Secretary General, Jordanian Ministry of Industry and Trade, Muntaser Al Uqla and S.N. Menon, Secretary (Commerce). Key issues in trade and economic matters were discussed during the joint session including promoting Indian Investment in Jordanian potash and phosphate industry, establishment of a car assembling plant in Jordan, modernizing the aviation services, cooperation in shipping, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, information technology, tourism, customs and railways. An MoU was signed between India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) and Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation (JEDCO) for joint efforts to step up trade between the two countries.

Another important bilateral development was the visit of an eight member official delegation led by Madhukar Gupta, Secretary (Fertilizer) to Jordan from 21-23 June 2006 and the delegation's meetings with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Minister of Industry and Trade, First Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Chairman of the Privatization Commission, President of Jordan Phosphate Mining Company, Secretary General in the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the Chairman, Jordanian Businessmen Association. Following the discussions, the delegation identified several potential areas for joint ventures between the two countries based on economic complementarities and synergy.

On the Mumbai blasts, King Abdullah II sent a message to President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam on 2 July 2006, strongly condemning the "heinous criminal acts which claimed lives of innocent civilians" and expressing condolences to the President and families of the victims.

C. R. Gharekhan, Special Envoy for West Asia and the Peace Process visited Jordan on 23-24 August, 2006 and met the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Amman

on 23 August 2006 and discussed the situation in the Palestinian territories and means of assisting the Palestinians to overcome their current difficulties. The Special Envoy also met Jordanian Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Al-Khatib on 24 August 2006 and discussed the bilateral relations as well as the situation in the region.

India trains 15 nominees from the Jordanian Government under the ITEC programme.

India's exports to Jordan increased by 25 percent over the previous year. Jordan's export to India increased by 14 percent in the same period.

Lebanon

Lebanon was caught in a devastating war with Israel following the capture of two Israeli soldiers by Hizbullah on 12 July 2006. The ensuing 34 days of hostilities saw over a thousand civilians killed and most of Lebanon's infrastructure – houses, roads, bridges, factories - destroyed. The war was brought to an end with the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1701 calling for an end to hostilities effective from 8 am of 14 August 2006. The Resolution mandated the deployment of the Lebanese army in the erstwhile Hizbullah stronghold of South Lebanon for the first time. UNIFIL, beefed up from 2000 to 15,000, has been charged to support the Lebanese army in keeping the peace. The 672-strong Indian battalion under UNIFIL performed valiant service during the conflict by risking their own safety to rescue and relocate the Lebanese civilian population caught in the conflict.

The Government of India strongly condemned the irresponsible and indiscriminate bombing of Lebanon by the Israeli military killing innocent civilians and called for immediate and unconditional ceasefire. Parliament also passed a resolution unanimously on 1 August 2006 condemning the Israeli aggression and calling for immediate and unconditional ceasefire. In his suo moto statement on Lebanon in Parliament, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh announced US\$10 million for humanitarian aid and reconstruction.

The Government of India launched a major operation to evacuate Indian nationals in Lebanon, pressing into service four Indian navy ships that were in the vicinity, as also Air India. The Embassy in Beirut arranged and coordinated the evacuation of 2341 persons including 1836 Indians, 433 Sri Lankan and 65 Nepalese were



The Union Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee calls on the King of Jordan Abdullah II Bin Al-Hussein in New Delhi on 1 December 2006.



The Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed addressing the annual conference for Haj-2006 in New Delhi on 20 May 2006.

evacuated by ships to Larnaca in Cyprus and from there by Air India chartered flights to India. One flight carrying Sri Lankan nationals landed at Colombo itself. About a hundred Indian nationals were also evacuated by road via Damascus. An Indian Air Force plane carrying relief material such as tents, blankets and sheets also landed in Beirut. C.R. Gharekhan, Special Envoy for West Asia and Middle East Peace Process visited Lebanon from 24-26 August 2006 to express India's support for and solidarity with Lebanon. He met President Emile Lahoud, Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, Speaker Nabih Berri, Water and Energy Minister Mohammed Fneich, Foreign Minister Fawzi Salloukh and Leader of Free Patriotic Movement Gen. Michel Aoun.

Libya

With the removal of Libya by the US from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism on 29 June 2006 and announcement of restoration of full diplomatic relations by the US in May, 2006, the country has improved its relations with the West considerably. Bilateral relations between India and Libya has improved tremendously. The Libyan Minister for Higher Education, Dr. Ibrahim Al-Zarruq Al-Sharif visited India from 18-22 September 2006.

Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement

The text of Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) has been finalized, and will be signed during next high level visit.

MoU on Political Consultations

Both sides have finalised an MoU on Political Consultations, which is expected to be signed during high level visit.

Ministerial Visits

Minister for Higher Education of Libya Dr Ibrahim Al-Zarruq Al-Sharif, accompanied by a 5-member delegation, visited India from 18-22 September 2006.

Visit of Indian Navy Ships

INS Betwa and INS Shakti visited Tripoli from 3-6 July 2006 on a three-day goodwill mission. Capt. Murthy of INS Betwa called on the Libyan Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Hamdi Sweiheli on 3 July 2006 and Mohammed al-Burrani, Minister for Asian Affairs on 4 July 2006.

Bilateral Trade and Commerce

Indian companies especially in Hydrocarbon, Power, and IT sector have several ongoing projects in Libya. The presence of Indian companies in Libya has risen significantly in the last three years (total of 17). Among the new companies are major PSUs like IOC, Oil India, OVL and EIL and private companies Punj Lloyd, DS Constructions, Dastur, Global Infrastructure holdings (ISPAT) and Dodsai.

ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) and Oil India- IOC consortium are currently participating in the third round of exploration and production sharing agreement (EPSA). Both OVL and Oil India-IOC have exploration blocks in Libya. Punj Lloyd has recently bagged US\$ 300 million pipeline construction project with Sirte Oil Company.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) is finishing its prestigious 600 MW Gas Turbine Power Project with General Electricity Company (GECOL). BHEL has also submitted proposals for other power projects with GECOL. Electrical Construction Company (ECCO), a joint venture between Government of India and GECOL, is executing power projects worth of US\$ 124 Million. KEC is active in transmission sector in Libya. KEC and Kalpataru are jointly bidding for a 2000 km transmission line project. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) participated in 2nd Arab-African Aviation Exhibition in December 2006.

I-flex Solutions is implementing a project on core banking solutions with Central Bank of Libya and other five banks. Also over the past three decades, Indian companies have executed projects worth more than US \$ 2.5 billion. These included building hospitals, houses, schools, roads, power plants, airports, dams, transmission lines, etc.

As per latest statistics for the year 2005-06 the bilateral trade stood at US \$ 115.23 Million. The bilateral trade began showing significant upward trend since 2004-05 - US \$ 187.14 Million as compared to US \$ 29.12 Million for the year 2003-04. The main items in India's export basket during the year 2005-06 are turbines, electrical components, metals, machinery and instruments, glass, ceramics, refractors, manmade yarns, fabrics, tea, coffee and tobacco.

Morocco

The multi-faceted ties between India and Morocco

continued to remain cordial and friendly, reinforcing strategic partnership in key areas. Mohammed Benaissa, Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation visited India from 25-27 June 2006 and held wide ranging discussions with MOS(EA) E. Ahamed on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. He had separate meetings with Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar and Tourism Minister Ambika Soni and explored bilateral cooperation in the fields of agriculture and tourism respectively. When he called on the Prime Minister, he highlighted the potential for improvement of bilateral relations in various spheres including the economic sector. On UN reforms, the Moroccan Foreign Minister said that his country firmly held the view that 'India should be a permanent member of the UN Security Council without any reservation'.

The bilateral trade and economic relations made steady progress during the year, the two-way trade exceeding US\$ 615 million in the year 2005. India was selected as 'Guest of Honour' for the Annual International Conference on 'Fundamental of Investments' held in Rabat from 7-9 December 2006. This was recognition of India's growing influence in Morocco and a reflection of Morocco's goodwill towards India. In connection with the preparation of the Conference, Moroccan Delegate Minister in charge of Economic and General Affairs, Talbi Alami visited India from 1-3 November, 2006 and had meetings with Minister of Industry & Commerce Kamal Nath and Minister of Heavy Industries Santosh Mohan Dev as well as captains of Indian industry and commerce. MOS (Industry), Ashwini Kumar led a business delegation to Morocco from 7-9 December 2006 and delivered a key-note address at the Conference, highlighting India's success story of economic growth. During the visit, he called on Prime Minister Driss Jettou and had one-to-one meeting with Delegate Minister for Foreign Affairs & Cooperation, Tayeb Fassi Fihri, reiterating India's commitment to strengthen bilateral ties with Morocco.

Moroccan Parliamentary delegation led by Abdelwahad Radi, President of the House of Representatives (Lower House of Moroccan Parliament) visited India from 27 November-1 December 2006. The Moroccan delegation met Speaker of Lok Sabha, Somnath Chatterjee and other Indian leaders. Bilateral cooperation between the legislative bodies of both countries, besides other issues of mutual concern were the focus of

discussions during the visit. Radi also called on the President.

The Moroccan Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation visited India and held bilateral discussions with Secretary(East) and Dean (FSI) on 28 December 2006. During the meeting, means to invigorate bilateral interactions, both in the political as well as economic areas, were discussed.

An 8-member traditional folk dance troupe of Brij Lok Kala Manch, led by Vishnu Dutt Sharma participated in the 41st National Popular Arts Festival at Marrakech in July 2006 and held performances. Morocco continued to benefit from specialised training offered in India under ITEC Scheme, fully utilising the training slots.

Palestine

India announced humanitarian assistance of Rs.10 crores (US\$ 2.3 million) on 13 May 2006 to Palestine, to alleviate the suffering of Palestinian people following the freezing of aid by US, EU countries and non-transfer of taxes amounting to over US\$50 million a month by Israel which it collects on behalf of Palestine, consequent on the formation of Government by Hamas after elections to Palestine Legislative Council in January 2006. As a part of the humanitarian assistance India sent life saving drugs identified by the Palestinian authorities. The first batch of medicines weighing 2500 kgs were handed over to the Palestinian authorities on 10 August 2006. The second batch of medicines weighing 8,500 kgs were handed over to the Palestinian authority on 28 September 2006. The third batch of medicines weighing 10,500 kgs. were handed over to the Palestinian authorities on 14 November 2006. The fourth batch of medicines was handed over to the Palestinian Authority on 17 December 2006.

Sudan

Sudan celebrated fifty years of independence on 1 January 2006. President Omar Al-Bashir, First Vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit and Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha led the nation-wide celebrations.

After several months of on-off negotiations, the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was signed in Abuja on 9 May 2006 between the Government of Sudan and one faction of the rebel Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/

A) led by Mini Arkoi Minawi. The other SLM faction and the second major insurgency (Justice and Equality Movement) refused to sign. Mini Minawi was appointed Senior Assistant to the President to head the Darfur Transitional Authority.

India-Sudan bilateral trade have improved significantly during the year. India's exports apart from traditional items included Tata buses, Bajaj rickshaws, and (since mid-2006) Maruti cars. The first batch of 1150 Maruti vehicles (Zen and 800 CC) rolled on the road in August 2006.

At US\$ 491 million, India's exports from January - September 2006 were up 106 percent, making India the second largest exporter to Sudan after China.

Of India's US\$ 100 million concessional Line of Credit announced at the April 2005 Oslo Donors Conference, US\$ 48 million will be disbursed in 2006-07. Projects under the US\$ 10 million grant are being worked out.

The first-ever exclusive Indian exhibition "Enterprise India Advantage Sudan" was held in Sudan in August 2006 in which 78 Indian small and medium companies participated. Business worth US \$ 150 million was reported.

Several Indian companies are now active in Sudan including TCIL, RITES, IRCON, Progressive Construction Ltd, Mohan Exports, Jaguar Industries, Angelique International and L&T. Others like Reliance Industries and Mahindra & Mahindra have expressed interest.

In early 2006, Central Electronics Limited (CEL), New Delhi commissioned a solar photovoltaic (SPV) module manufacturing plant near Khartoum for Sudan's Ministry of Science & Technology. India also gifted a solar electric system (inaugurated in April 2006) to a remote village called Khadarab (that has never had electricity) two hours north of Khartoum.

On 1 September 2006, BHEL signed a Letter of Intent with the National Electricity Corporation of Sudan for the US\$ 457 million 125 x 4 MW Kosti Power Project (partly funded by a US\$ 350 million Exim Bank concessional loan), the largest single electricity project in Sudan. Exim Bank also approved a US\$ 41.9 million soft loan for the 200 KM Sinja-Gedaref 220 KV double circuit transmission line. In April 2006, Exim Bank agreed

US\$ 26.44 million suppliers credit for a 2000 TPD dry process cement plant to be set up by Thyssen Krupp Industries India. In November 2006, Exim Bank approved a US\$ 150 million soft loan 203 KM US\$ 252 million Port Sudan-Haiya railway link (to be done by IRCON)

In 2005-2006, Sudan's ITEC quota was increased from 60 to 100, and to 130 in 2006-07. This programme is one of the most active elements in our bilateral relationship.

Two ITEC experts from India, in food processing technology and Small Scale Industry, visited Sudan from 13 April-7 June 2006 to advise the Sudanese Government in their respective fields.

Syria

The dominant concerns in Syria's foreign policy were to fight isolation and pressure on account of its perceived or alleged role in the Middle East, especially Lebanon, and its efforts to ensure that its vital concerns, such as the return of the Occupied Golan Heights, could be brought back to the international agenda as part of a just and comprehensive peace process in the Middle East.

The major developments that provided the setting for Syria's external relations were: (i) the continuing UN investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri in February 2005 and moves to constitute a predominantly international tribunal to try those responsible for it; (ii) the continuing deadlock over Israeli and international funding for the Palestinian Authority as a result of January 2006 parliamentary elections that brought a Hamas-led Government to power, and efforts to form a National Unity government bringing together Hamas and Fatah; (iii) the June 2006 Israeli offensive in the Gaza strip after the capture of an Israeli soldier by Palestinian militants; (iv) the 34-day Israel-Lebanon war in July-August 2006 and UN Security Council Resolution 1701 that brought it to an end; (v) the deteriorating security situation in Iraq raising fears of a full-fledged civil war and a possible de facto partition of Iraq; (vi) its impact on the November 2006 US Congressional elections which resulted in a loss of Republican majority in the Congress and the Senate and a growing clamour for fresh approaches to Iraq crystallized in the bipartisan Congressional report of the Iraq Study Group signalling of changes in US policy to the region, as well as calls in US and Europe for a new initiative for

peace in the Middle East and engaging Syria (and Iran) in finding solutions to the Iraq crisis; and (vii) the Iran nuclear issue before the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

India-Syria bilateral relations have a strong, sentimental and political basis rooted in history and post-colonial challenges. In the political sphere, the highlights in the development of bilateral relations during the year were Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) presided over by Secretary (East) Rajiv Sikri and Deputy Foreign Minister Farouk Taha, in India on 20-22 April 2006, the first such consultations in three years, and the first in India. Special Envoy for West Asia, Chinmay Gharekhan, held consultations on the situation in the region in the aftermath of the 34-day war in Lebanon in July-August 2006 with Vice President Farouk Sharaa, Foreign Minister Walid Muallem, Vice Foreign Minister Feysal Mekdad and Deputy Foreign Minister Ahmed Arnous during a visit to Damascus as part of regional tour which included Doha, Amman and Beirut.

In the area of trade, there were signs of increase in momentum. Trade is expected to exceed US\$ 300 million in 2006-07, up from US\$ 276 million in 2005-06. A major delegation from the Federation of Chambers of Commerce of Syria undertook an 8-day visit to India in December 2006 in the course of which they signed an MoU on cooperation with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI). The Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (Videsh) (OVL) stationed a representative as part of the ONGC-CNPC joint investment in Al Furat Oil Company in Syria on January 2006, ONGC's second investment in the hydrocarbon sector in Syria. A delegation from the CHEMEXIL held buyer-seller meets in Aleppo, Homs and Damascus in December 2006. Representatives of ONGC, Claris Pharmaceuticals, TCIL, APTECH, Mahindra & Mahindra, PEC, Issar, Apollo International, RITES and a few other private trading companies also visited Syria in the course of the year in pursuit of business interests. Claris Pharmaceuticals also opened a representative office in Damascus.

In the area of economic, technical, scientific and education cooperation and cultural exchanges, Syria availed of 43 slots under the ITEC programme during the

period April-December 2006, already significantly higher than previous years. The supply of equipment as part of a US\$ 1 million grant for the Syrian General Commission on Biotechnology announced during former Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's visit to Syria in November 2003, was completed. A 10-member Gondwanaland multi-disciplinary scientific-cum-adventure road expedition traversed through Syria en route to South Africa on 9-10 April 2006 and handed over a message from Prime Minister to President Bashar Assad to the Syrian Prime Minister Mohammed Najji Otri. A 3-member delegation from the Educational Consultants India Ltd. (EdCIL) participated in the education fair, 'Academia Syria' in Damascus from 11-16 April 2006. Eight Syrian students were admitted to colleges and universities in India as part of the scholarships offered by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) in the sphere of higher education in India under the Cultural and Education Exchange Programmes. A handful of Indian students are also studying Arabic literature or Islamic studies at Damascus University.

An exhibition of contemporary Indian art featuring 25 Indian artists was also hosted in Damascus on 17-24 July 2006 under the Cultural Exchange Programme. Mission also organized art exhibitions and film screenings in Homs, Latakia and Tartous as part of its information and cultural promotion in Syria. A 4-member Indian writers delegation from the Sahitya Akademi exchanged literary ideas with the Syrian Arab Writers Union during the course of a 10-day visit to Syria in December 2006 as part of an MoU on cooperation between the Sahitya Akademi and Arab Writers Union. D.M. Mulay, Minister and Sadhna Shankar Mulay published a book on their experiences in Syria that was officially released by the Tourism Minister of Syria and was well received.

People-to-people relations in the form of Shia pilgrims visiting Shia pilgrimage centres, notably the shrine of Sayeda Zeinab in Damascus continued. Some 10,000 pilgrims, mainly from Western India, visited Syria. A handful of Shia students are also pursuing theological studies in Damascus. Customary links between the Syrian Orthodox Church of Syria and Kerala also continued. With the cooperation of the Syrian authorities, Mission also assisted over 100 Indian nationals affected by the war in Lebanon transiting through Syria en route to India.

Tunisia

Minister for Science & Technology & Ocean Development, Kapil Sibal, visited Tunisia from 26-29 April 2006. A Programme of Cooperation (POC) in the field of Science and Technology for the period 2006-07 was signed. During his visit to Tunisia, besides discussing bilateral matters with his Tunisian counterpart, Dr. Taieh Hadhri, Minister of Scientific Research, Technology and Competency Development, Minister also called on the Prime Minister and had talks with Dr. Montassar Ouaili, Minister of Communication Technology and Dr. Ridha Kechrid, Minister of Public Health. A programme of Cooperation in Bio-technology was also signed.

A five-member survey delegation of Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals visited Tunisia from 9-15 April 2006.

Three Tunisia Pharma officials visited India from 8-21 April 2006 and inspected a number of Indian drugs and pharmaceuticals laboratories to allow import of their products into Tunisia.

A US\$ 200 million India-Tunisia joint venture company, "Tunisian Indian Fertilizer SA (TIFERT S.A.)" was launched. It is the first Indian investment in Tunisia. In

this joint venture, the Tunisian partners are (i) Groupe Chimique Tunisian (GCT), and (ii) Compagnie des Proosphates de Gafsa (CPG). Indian partners are (i) the Coromandal Fertilizer Ltd. (CFL) and (ii) the Gujarat State Fertilizers & Chemicals (GSFC). Tunisian companies will hold 35% of equity capital cash and the Indian companies will hold 15% each. The joint venture will produce about 360,000 tons of phosphoric acid per annum, out of which 1.8 lakh tons will be earmarked for import by CFL and another 1.8 lakh tons per annum by GSFC. The project is planned to be completed by December, 2008 and is scheduled to be commissioned by March, 2009.

J.P. Batra, Chairman¹, Railway Board visited Tunisia from 16-19 November 2006 for attending a Seminar on Euro-Maghreb Freight Corridor being organized by the Tunisian National Railways.

India participated in the Tunisian International Fair held at Tunis from 10-18 November 2006.

India's bilateral trade with Tunisia was to the tune of US\$ 213.2 million from January-November, 2006 as compared to US\$ 183.52 million in the previous year, registering a growth of 16.17%.



East and Southern Africa

Several initiatives were taken to upgrade relations with our traditional partners of Eastern and Southern African region, at the bilateral, regional and Pan-African levels.

There was a growing recognition in the region that India can be an ideal partner in economic development and a reliable source of affordable products, services and technologies in sectors as diverse as agriculture and small industries on one hand, and IT and space technology on the other. Countries of the region overwhelmingly supported India's candidature to various international fora, including Human Rights Council.

India hosted several high level visits from the region:

- Festus G. Mogae, President of Botswana's State visit to India from 7-13 December 2006;
- Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Deputy President of South Africa's official visit to India in September 2006;
- Abdoul Raouf Bundhun, Vice-President of Mauritius's visit to India from 7-16 May 2006; and
- Marine Barampama, the 2nd Vice President of Burundi's official visit to India from 6-11 October 2006.

The Foreign Ministers of Comoros, Namibia, Uganda, and Tanzania visited India during the period June – December 2006. A multi-ministerial delegation from Malawi led by Foreign Minister, Davies Katsonga visited India in May, 2006.

From the Indian side, President visited Mauritius in March 2006 as the Chief Guest for its National Day celebrations. Prime Minister visited South Africa in September-October, 2006, in connection with the Centenary celebrations of the launch of Satyagraha Movement by Mahatma Gandhi.

India hosted Parliamentary delegations from Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya, Namibia, Lesotho and South Africa.

Other important visits to India in the year 2006 included:

- Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development of South Africa (April)
- Housing Minister of South Africa (April)
- Minister for Science and Technology of Zimbabwe (April)
- International Trade Minister of Zimbabwe (April)
- Deputy Prime Minister (who is also the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development) of Ethiopia (May)
- Foreign Minister of Comoros (May)
- Foreign Minister of Malawi led a delegation of 4 Ministers (May)
- Minister for Education and the Minister for Agriculture of the State of Eritrea (June)
- Minister of Education of Rwanda (July)
- Minister of Science and Technology of Mozambique (July)
- Minister in the Prime Minister's office of Ethiopia (July)
- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Republic of Mauritius (August)
- Minister of Energy and Mineral Development of Uganda (August)
- Minister for Roads and Public Welfare, Kenya (September)
- State Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Ethiopia (October)
- Minister of Trade and Industry of Ethiopia, (October)
- Agriculture Minister of Mozambique, (November)

From India

- Union Minister for Shipping visited South Africa in March, 2006 to sign the Bilateral Agreement on Maritimes and Merchant Shipping
- Minister of State for Human Resource Development visited Ethiopia (May) to attend the First Pan-African Conference on Information and Communication Technology
- Minister for Health and Family Welfare, visited Johannesburg, South Africa (June) to participate in the African Traditional Medicine Workshop
- MOS for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension, visited South Africa (June) for signing of a bilateral MoU on Governance, Administration and other related areas
- Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs visited Uganda and Kenya (August)
- Minister of Small Scale Industries paid an official visit to Rwanda and Uganda (August-September)
- MOS for Agriculture visited Ethiopia and Namibia (November)
- MOS(AS) Anand Sharma visited the Republic of South Africa on 24-25 March 2006. MOS also visited Rio de Janeiro to attend the 3rd IBSA Trilateral Commission Ministerial Meeting from 28-30 March 2006. He also visited South Africa and Namibia in April, 2006, the latter for the launch of the India- Southern African Development Community (SADC) Forum.
- MOS for Education visited South Africa.

India upgraded its relations with regional organizations:

- India - Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Forum was launched in Namibia in April 2006.
- The first India - Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) Ministerial meeting was organized in New Delhi in October 2006 in which five ministers from member countries of COMESA participated.
- India-EAC (Eastern African Community) Ministerial meet planned for first quarter, 2007.

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)

program including training, deputation of experts and project assistance continued to be extended to the countries of the region. A separate training programme on "Industrial Development" was organized by the Ministry along with CII. Over 1000 officials from the region received training in India under the ITEC programme.

The Ministry also provided direct assistance to a number of countries in response to humanitarian emergencies or in the context of longer term development projects. The Ministry's 'Aid to Africa' programme provides the resources for these projects.

In the area of human resource development, India continued to contribute to the region. Over 10,000 African students studied in India and several Indian engineers, doctors, accountants, teachers went on secondment to several African countries.

India continued to be one of the largest contributors to peacekeeping in Africa. We currently have 3000 troops in Sudan, 3,500 in Democratic Republic of Congo and over 1,000 on Ethiopia-Eritrea border.

India continued to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) objectives. Lines of Credit of US\$ 7.08 m to Senegal, US\$ 20.62 m to Mali, US\$ 33.5 m to DR Congo, US\$ 6.7 m to Gambia, US\$ 17.0 m to Niger and US\$ 20 m to Mozambique were extended/approved during the year 2006 mainly for infrastructure development. Several Agreements/MoUs were signed in the fields of Defence, Agriculture, Small Scale Industries, Science and Technology, Mines and Minerals, Shipping and Transport, Health and Medicine, etc., with a number of countries.

The Ministry led the Indian industry in the promotion of public and private sector project partnerships with the countries of the region. Two regional conclaves on India-Africa Project Partnership were organized in April taking Lusaka as the hub for Southern Africa (23-25 April) and Addis Ababa as the hub for Eastern Africa (28 April). These were followed by a Pan-African Conclave in New Delhi from 9-11 October 2006. 326 delegates (including 30 Ministers) representing 32 countries, 4 regional organizations and 6 banking and financial organizations participated in the event. 386 Indian industry members

participated at the Conclave discussing projects in a variety of sectors. CII signed an MoU on Cooperation with COMESA. EXIM Bank signed Line of Credit (US\$ 10 million) agreement with PTA Bank of COMESA. Over 300 projects worth US\$ 17 billion were discussed in over a thousand one-to-one meetings. A number of Memorandum of Understanding and Letters of Intent were inked. The special focus on SMEs helped promote the SMEs from India and gave them an opportunity to look at Africa as a destination where they can play a substantial role in its developmental process.

Botswana

President of the Republic of Botswana, Festus G. Mogae, paid a State visit to India from 7-13 December 2006. He called on the President and met the Prime Minister for detailed discussions. EAM called on him. He also addressed a Business Luncheon Meeting organized by CII/FICCI/ASSOCHAM. Agreements/MoUs on Double Taxation Avoidance, Bilateral Cooperation, Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2007-2010, and Country Agreement for the Pan-African e-Network were signed during the visit. Prime Minister announced offer of US \$ 11million spread over 5 years as grant assistance in education and health sections and Government to Government Line of Credit of US\$ 20 million for infrastructure development projects. Prime Minister also offered to raise ITEC slots from 25 to 50. Assistance in Defence Training, Science and Technology and Education was offered.

The President formally opened the resident Botswana Mission in New Delhi. He also announced that Botswana Development and Investment Agency (BEDIA) will open an office in India to promote trade and investments. He attended a presentation by TCIL on Pan-African e-Network Project. He visited Chennai and Mumbai. At Chennai he visited Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI) and had a meeting with the Council for Leather Exports. An MoU on co-operation in the Leather sector was signed between Council for Leather Exports and Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA). In Mumbai, he met the Governor of Maharashtra and had meetings with the Indian Merchants Chamber, Pharmaxcil and Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council.

Burundi

The 2nd Vice President of the Republic of Burundi, Marine Barampama paid an official visit to India from 6-11 October 2006. She attended the COMESA-India Ministerial Meeting held in New Delhi and was also the Chief Guest at the India-Africa Partnership Conclave organized by CII at New Delhi from 9 – 11 October 2006. During the visit she had meeting with the Minister of State for Agriculture, Kantilal Bhuria and discussed bilateral cooperation in the agriculture area. She also visited National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) to explore possibility of cooperation in the small scale industry area.

Comoros

Presidential elections were held in the Union of Comoros in May, 2006. Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi assumed Presidentship of Union of Comoros on 14 May 2006 and appointed other Ministers in his cabinet.

Ahmed Ben Said Jaffar, Foreign Minister of Comoros visited India from 25-27 July 2006. He called on MOS, Anand Sharma, and requested for India's assistance in some of the urgently required sectors of Comorean economy. MOS responded positively and suggested identification of specific areas of cooperation requiring special emphasis. In this context, he suggested training, setting up of an International Conference Centre and a Vocational Training Centre in Comoros. This was the first foreign visit by him after formation of the new Government.

An expert, Prof. V. Padmanand from Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Ahmedabad visited Madagascar in July 2006 to carry out a feasibility study for a GOI financed project for establishing a Vocational Training Institute in Comoros.

Eritrea

India-Eritrea relations received impetus during the year with the visits of Eritrean Minister of Education Osman Saleh and Minister of Agriculture, Arefaine Berhe G. Medhin from 13-16 June 2006, to hold talks with their Indian counterparts for bilateral cooperation. The Ministers discussed possibilities of co-operation in the fields of education and agriculture during these meetings. The Education Minister discussed Indian assistance for development of school curriculum in Eritrea, extension

of Pan-African e-network Project to Eritrea, recruitment of Indian teachers for Eritrea and linkage of Eritrean educational institutions with Indian institutions. Both the Ministers also had a joint meeting with MOS for External Affairs, Anand Sharma.

An Indian Naval team visited Eritrea to discuss bilateral naval cooperation.

Ethiopia

The year 2006-07 was a turning point in Indo-Ethiopian relations. Ethiopia looked at India as a model for democratic development and appreciated the partnership with India. During the year, several ministers from Ethiopia, including two Deputy Prime Ministers, visited India. An 8-member Ethiopian Parliamentary delegation, including opposition parties, visited India in August, 2006. The visit was followed by adoption of several practices into their own system of parliamentary governance and parliamentary procedures.

India's relationship with Ethiopia acquired greater economic momentum with the grant of a line of credit of US\$65 million for rural electrification during the year. Nearly US\$80 million of private Indian investment flowed into Ethiopia, mainly in floriculture taking total Indian investment into Ethiopia to nearly US\$ 400 million. A similar amount of contracts were earned by Indian companies under internationally funded infrastructure projects.

The first ever regional Conclave for Eastern Africa was held in Addis Ababa in April 2006 with the participation of Indian companies and the support of CII and Exim Bank. The conference was addressed by the Prime Minister of Ethiopia Meles Zenawi and was attended by 300 delegates and added impetus to the development of the Indo-Ethiopian economic partnership.

The first phase of the Pilot Project in Ethiopia, in respect of the Pan African e-Network Project for tele-education and tele-medicine, was successfully tested in October 2006 when the links established in Addis Ababa University and Black Lion Hospital became operational for the two way audio visual communication with the participating Indian institutions.

From India, M.A.A.Fatmi, MOS (Human Resources Development) visited Ethiopia from 24-26 May 2006 to

attend the First Pan-African Conference on Information and Communication Technology. Kanti Lal Bhuria MOS (Agriculture) visited Ethiopia from 6-8 November 2006. Director General Military Operations also visited Ethiopia during the year 2006.

India contributed the largest number of troops (about 1500) to the UN peace keeping force (UNMEE) stationed at Ethiopia-Eritrea border.

School books worth Rs. 25 lakhs were also donated to Ethiopia.

Kenya

On 27 April 2006, India and Kenya agreed on a revised Air Services Agreement. Seat restrictions on routes between the two countries have been removed. Two airlines from each country can now operate on the Kenya-India sector, instead of one each at present. Indian carriers may also operate to one more city in Kenya, besides Nairobi.

A number of visits were exchanged by both sides. Simeon Nyachae, Minister for Roads and Public Works paid an official visit to India from 3-8 September 2006. Petkay Miriti, Assistant Minister for Industry, led a 4-member Kenyan delegation to the India-Africa Project Partnership Conclave in New Delhi from 8-11 October 2006. A Kenyan delegation participated in the India-Africa Project Partnership Mini-Conclave organized by CII, EXIM Bank of India and the Government of India for the East African region in Addis Ababa on 28 April 2006. A delegation from the Kenyan Public Service Commission, led by its Chairman, visited India in August, 2006 and held discussions with the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances.

Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Sarang' paid a goodwill visit to Mombasa from 2-6 June 2006 and held joint exercises with Kenyan Coast Guard vessels. Indian Naval Ship 'INS Mumbai' paid a goodwill visit to Mombasa from 8-12 October 2006. A 14-member delegation from the Tea Board of India visited Kenya from 11-20 October 2006 to interact with their counterparts and study the local situation regarding small tea growers. The Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, and 13 of its affiliated Colleges held an Education Fair in Nairobi on 11 April 2006.

With 26 companies, India was the biggest exhibitor at

PlastPack Africa 2006, held in Nairobi from 5-8 July 2006.

CHEMEXCIL organised a Buyer-Seller Meet in Nairobi on 3 September 2006.

Indian companies won three tenders floated by the Kenya Power and Lighting Co., one tender from Telkom Kenya, and an order for geospatial mapping from the Ministry of Natural Resources. State Bank of India received regulatory approval for its acquisition of Kenya's Giro Bank. A leading Indian company, M/s Plethico Pharmaceuticals, commenced construction of a US\$ 96 million factory in Nairobi, due to be completed soon. Mahindra & Mahindra launched its Scorpio range in Kenya. Tata Sons opened an office in Nairobi.

Some Indian cultural troupes also visited Kenya during the year. A 5-member Kathak dance group led by Sonal Mansingh performed in Nairobi on 28-29 October 2006. The visit was sponsored by ICCR. Renowned director Shyam Benegal visited Kenya in July, 2006 and gave talks on filmmaking.

Lesotho

India's relations with Lesotho continued apace aided by the presence of the Indian Army Training Team (IATT) whose contribution to the development of the Lesotho Defence Forces was warmly acknowledged by the Lesotho leadership. Maj. Gen. R.P.S. Malhan, Additional Director General Staff Duties, Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (Army), visited Lesotho from 4-6 September 2006. He paid courtesy calls on the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Principal Secretary of National Security and Defence and the Commander LDF.

A 2-member delegation from the National Assembly of Lesotho, led by Deputy Speaker, S.E. Motanyane, paid a study visit to India from 11-14 December 2006.

It was decided to set up an IT Training Centre in Lesotho at Government of India's cost.

Madagascar

INS Mumbai paid a goodwill port call to Toamasina harbour of Madagascar from 9-12 September 2006. The Malagasy Minister of National Defence, General Petera Behajaina was the guest of honour at the well-attended cocktail reception hosted on-board the ship on 9 September 2006.

A four member official delegation, led by Henry Roger Ranaivoson, Chief of Staff, Office of the President of Madagascar paid a successful visit to India from 20-28 February 2006. During this visit the delegation visited Kirloskar facilities at Pune and Kirloskarvadi, Mazagon Docks Ltd in Mumbai, Bharat Earth Movers Ltd. and Infosys Campus in Bangalore. The delegation also visited Delhi and had discussions with WAPCOS, Ministries of Agriculture and Food Processing, Director General, ICAR and Ed.Cil on issues of mutual interest.

On the request of Government of Madagascar, Government of India sent Alka Panda, and Gaurav Gupta as Election Observers for the Malagasy Presidential elections held on 3 December 2006. The gesture of the Government of India was duly acknowledged and highly appreciated.

Malawi

A Malawi Ministerial delegation led by the Foreign Minister Davies Katsonga and including the Ministers of Finance, Transport and Public Works and Local Government and Rural Development visited India from 8-12 May 2006. Bilateral discussions at the official levels and Ministerial levels were held and several areas of cooperation were identified. ITEC slots for Malawi have been increased from 5 to 10. Malawi sought US\$ 30 million Government-to-Government Line of Credit for rural development projects.

Mauritius

The President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, visited Mauritius from 11-13 March 2006 as the Chief Guest for the National Day celebrations for marking the Independence of Mauritius. His visit evoked tremendous interest among the Mauritian general public and intelligentsia. Apart from participating in the National Day celebrations, the President also had meetings with the political leadership of Mauritius, including the President, Sir Anerood Jugnauth; the Prime Minister, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam; the Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Rashid Beebeejaun; the Leader of Opposition, Paul Berenger; the Speaker of the National Assembly and the Chief Justice. He addressed a prestigious gathering of Mauritian Members of Parliament and intellectuals within the premises of the National Assembly of Mauritius. He also interacted with university and school students, with

CEOs of Information Technology enterprises working in Mauritius, and with members of the local fishing community. During the visit, two important bilateral agreements were signed - the Country Agreement for Pan-African e-Network project and a Memorandum of Understanding on Exploration and Exploitation of Petroleum Resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Mauritius.

The Vice President of Mauritius, Abdool Raouf Bundhun, visited India on the invitation of his counterpart from 7-16 May 2006. Apart from meeting Vice President, he also had meetings with the President, Prime Minister, and with Minister of State for External Affairs. He visited Ajmer Sharief, Shimla, Mumbai and Kochi. In Shimla, the Mauritian VP visited the Institute of Advanced Studies, and in Kochi he visited the University of Kochi.

The year saw continuation of the long-standing cooperation between the two countries in matters of defence and security. After its extensive refit and repairs in Mumbai dockyard, the Mauritian Coast Guard Ship 'CGS Guardian' was delivered back to the Mauritian authorities in April 2006 by the Indian Naval Ship, INS Suvarna, which tugged the Mauritian vessel from Mumbai to Port Louis. Later, the Indian Coast Guard vessel 'Sarang' paid a goodwill visit to Mauritius from 14-18 June 2006, and carried out joint training exercises with the Mauritius National Coast Guard.

Five rounds of meetings of the high-powered negotiating teams from both sides for finalizing a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) between India and Mauritius were held. It also includes a Preferential Trade Agreement.

Four meetings of India-Mauritius Joint Working Group to stop misuse of Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) were held during the year.

The State Trading Corporation of Mauritius and the Indian PSU, Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd signed an agreement on 14 June 2006 for the supply of Petroleum Products to Mauritius for the year 2006-2007. It was estimated by the Government of Mauritius that this agreement would allow Mauritius to realise savings for the country to the tune of around 350 million Mauritian Rupees.

Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi, visited

Mauritius on 21-23 November 2006. During his stay in Mauritius, he also inaugurated a Conference on PIO languages, organised by the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origins.

Prime Minister of Mauritius participated in the International Conference on "Peace Non-Violence and Empowerment : Gandhian Philosophy in the 21st Century" held on 29-30 January 2007 in New Delhi.

Mozambique

Several initiatives were taken to give greater content to bilateral relations in diverse fields

The Defence Minister of Mozambique Joaquim Dai visited India from 5-11 March 2006 and signed a Bilateral Agreement on Defence Cooperation. This was followed by the first meeting of the India-Mozambique Joint Working Group at Maputo from 10-13 July 2006 to identify areas of cooperation and assistance in the field of defence.

A Programme of Cooperation was concluded during the visit to India of Mozambican Minister of Science and Technology, Prof. Dr. Eng. Venancio Simao Massingue in July 2006.

Minister of Agriculture, Tomas Frederico Mandlate visited India in November 2006 to finalise an Action Plan in the field of Agriculture.

The Minister of Mineral Resources, Esperanca Laurinda Bias visited India to attend the CII Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership 2006 in October 2006.

A working group from ¹ the Ministry of Health visited Mozambique in November 2006 for bilateral interaction and cooperation.

A Memorandum of Understanding in the field of coal was signed on 26 May 2006. Another MoU for co-operation in the field of mineral resources has also been negotiated and will be signed soon. A cashew processing plant was gifted by Government of India, which has been shipped by HMT (I) Ltd. in November 2006.

Namibia

Bilateral relations between India and Namibia continued to be warm and friendly characterized by mutual appreciation of a strong tradition of cooperation before and after Namibian independence in 1990. High-level

interactions were maintained during the year. MOS (AS) visited to Namibia on 26-27 April 2006 in connection with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Consultative Committee meeting and first India-SADC Forum meeting. During the visit he called on the President of Namibia and also held discussions with the Namibian Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Education, Defence, Work, Transport and Communications and Mines and Energy.

Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshall V.K.Yajurvedi visited Namibia from 3-5 April 2006 and held discussions with the Namibian authorities for exploring and further strengthening defence cooperation between India and Namibia including training of Namibian Defence personnel in India.

K.L. Bhuria, Minister of State for Agriculture, visited Namibia from 8-11 November 2006. A comprehensive revised Work Plan for cooperation in Agriculture for the years 2007-09 was signed during the visit.

Marco Hausiku, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Namibia visited India from 26-30 October 2006 for review of overall bilateral cooperation.

A seven member delegation of the office of the Election Commission of Namibia visited India from 21-30 July 2006. The delegation also visited Bharat Electronics Ltd.(BEL), Bangalore and expressed interest in electronic voting machines for use in Namibia.

T.C.Venkatsubramanian, Chairman and MD of EXIM Bank of India led a delegation to Namibia from 6-8 September 2006 to deliver lecture at the Afrexim Bank Conference held at Windhoek. He also held meetings regarding possibility of use of US\$ 200 million credit facility under NEPAD Project.

A two member team visited Namibia from 11-19 September 2006 for repair of SPV systems and biogas plants and for providing training to Namibian technicians under ITEC programme.

A 9-member Parliamentary delegation from the Republic of Namibia visited India from 11-15 December 2006. It was led by Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, Speaker of the National Assembly. They had meetings with the Vice-President; Speaker of Lok Sabha; Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Information and Broadcasting; Standing Committee on

External Affairs and MOS (AS). The delegation also visited Mumbai.

A feasibility study was done for setting up of the Faculty of Engineering, Mining Technology at University of Namibia, at Government of India cost. A draft MoU for setting up two Hole-in-the-Wall projects in Windhoek at GOI cost, was also conveyed to the Namibian side for approval.

Rwanda

A delegation led by Mahavir Prasad, Minister of Small Scale Industries paid an official visit to Rwanda from 30 – 31 August 2006. An MoU on Cooperation in the Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in Rwanda was signed on 30 August 2006.

Rwandan Minister of Education, Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya, visited India from 22-28 July 2006. An Educational Exchange Programme (EEP) was signed between the two countries.

Rwandan Minister for Industry, Commerce, Investment Promotion, Tourism and Cooperatives, Mitali Kabanda Protais visited India from 4-11 October 2006 as leader of the COMESA delegation and sought India's technical and financial assistance for power generation projects, setting up of Vocational Training Centres and Rural Development Projects in Rwanda. The Government of India responded positively to the requests. He also participated in the CII Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership 2006.

Seychelles

President James Alix Michel completed two years in office on 14 April 2006 and won the presidential election 2006 (53.73 % by SPPF), against SNP (Wavel Ramakalawan)–DP (new leader Paul Chow) alliance (45.71 %) and became the President of the Republic of Seychelles on 1 August 2006.

INS Sarvekshak conducted free hydrographic survey of Seychelles waters on the approaches to Mahe and Coetivy island for 35 days in March - April 2006.

The Goan Troupe “Kepemchim Kirnnam” participated in the 30th Anniversary celebrations of Seychelles.

A four member delegation from Forensic Lab and Narcotics Control Bureau conducted feasibility studies to set up a Forensic lab in Seychelles.

Government of India has written off US\$ 5 million Government to Government loan and is in the process of providing US\$ 8 million Exim Bank LoC for purchase of goods from India.

India accepted Seychelles' offer of two satellite slots to India.

South Africa

There was a steady consolidation of our close, friendly and strategic ties with South Africa, both bilaterally and through the trilateral IBSA Dialogue Forum.

Political interaction between India and South Africa, marked by a high degree of understanding, mutual trust and confidence, gained content and momentum through continued high level visits and close consultation on major global issues, especially those relating to the reform of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. The two countries maintained their active co-operation at multilateral forums such as NAM, Commonwealth, IOR-ARC, G-77, G-20 and the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP) with a view to jointly addressing global challenges.

Dialogue at the highest political levels was sustained through bilateral interactions between Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and President Mbeki. They met in Brasilia at the historic IBSA Summit on 13 September 2006 and in South Africa during Prime Minister's visit from 30 September-3 October 2006. The first leg of the visit was in Durban for the joint celebration of the centenary of Satyagraha, which Mahatma Gandhi had launched, in Johannesburg on 11 September 1906. A Tshwane Declaration was signed on reaffirming and deepening the strategic partnership between India and South Africa and laying down benchmarks in numerous areas of cooperation including health, science & technology, trade & investment, defence, culture, education, atomic energy etc. Lauding the efforts of the South African Government for promoting broad-based economic and social development through the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA) and the Joint Priority Skills Acquisition Initiative (JIPSA), PM reaffirmed that the Indian Government was ready to be a partner in these initiatives and to provide assistance in building up scarce and critical skills identified by the South African Government.

Following Prime Minister's visit, the number of ITEC slots allocated to South Africa was increased from 55 to 100, with 50 of these slots earmarked specifically for the JIPSA. Two bilateral agreements on cooperation in the fields of railways and education were signed during the visit. Prime Minister also addressed the third meeting of the India-South Africa CEO's Forum, chaired by Ratan Tata from the Indian side, which met on 2 October 2006. He inaugurated a permanent exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi in the Old Fort prison in Johannesburg where Gandhiji was incarcerated at one time. He also had a meeting with former President Nelson Mandela.

To lend more substance to bilateral relations, it was decided to hold the Ministerial Joint Commission Meeting early. The last JCM was held in New Delhi in December, 2005.

The South African Deputy President, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka visited India from 10-13 September 2006 at the invitation of Vice President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat. The visit of the Deputy President helped identify further avenues through which India could contribute to ASGISA and JIPSA. She also delivered the Fifth Alfred Nzo Memorial Lecture on Satyagraha at the Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) on 11 September 2006.

The President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam was selected to be the recipient of the 2nd Phillip Tobias Award instituted by the South African Government for outstanding contributions to science and technology. At the request of President Thabo Mbeki, President Kalam delivered the Phillip Tobias Lecture on 27 September 2006 through a video link from Rashtrapati Bhavan, as part of the Award Ceremony. In his address, President Kalam called for greater co-operation between scientists of South Africa and India in meeting the challenges of development, including in partnership in the Pan African e-Network and the World Knowledge Platform.

Other important visits to South Africa included those by MOS, Anand Sharma in March-April 2006, Union Minister for Shipping and Transport, T.R. Balu for signing Bilateral Agreement on Maritime and Merchant Shipping (March-April 2006) and Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Suresh Pachouri from 9-12 June 2006 during which he signed an Agreement on Cooperation in Governance, Administration and Related Matters. Several important delegations also visited South



The Vice President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat with Vice-President of Mauritius Abdool Raouf Bundhun in New Delhi on 8 May 2006.



The Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma with the President of Botswana Festus Mogae at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat in Delhi on 8 December 2006.

Africa in 2006-07. These included five State Public Service Commission Chairpersons from Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh from 2-9 April 2006, Secretary, Science & Technology, Dr. T. Ramasamy in September, 2006, Vice Admiral S.S. Byce, FOC-in-C, Western Naval Command from 21-27 September 2006 and Revenue Secretary KM Chandrasekhar in November, 2006 for the first meeting of the IBSA Heads of Revenue Administrations. From South Africa, there were visits by the Housing Minister, Lindiwe Sisulu in May 2006 during which an MoU on Cooperation on Human Settlements was signed, and by the Premiers of Limpopo and Western Cape in October and November 2006 respectively, to study different aspects of cooperation. Three important Parliamentary Portfolio Committees also visited India.

An Indian Naval ship, INS Mumbai, visited Cape Town from 19-25 September 2006 in conjunction with the Africa Aerospace and Defence Exhibition (AAD) 2006.

Bilateral trade which has now crossed US\$ 2 billion (excluding India's imports of gold which are routed through the international gold bourse), grew by nearly 75% in 2005 and showed an impressive increase in the first half of 2006-07. Interaction visits of businessmen, both ways, and trade promotion measures including participation in trade fairs, etc. continued to be intensive. India was a partner country at the South Africa Industry and Trade Exhibition (SAITEX) held in Johannesburg from 10-13 October 2006. The Third Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership organized by CII in New Delhi in October 2006 saw good representation from South Africa, including the Premier of Limpopo and the Mayor of Durban. In a significant development, the International Marketing Council (IMC) of South Africa opened an office in Mumbai, only its third office abroad, after Washington and London.

Indian investments in South Africa grew in quantity as well as diversity. Investors include the UB Group of India (beer manufacture, hotels) Tatas (vehicles, IT, new investment in a ferrochrome plant), Mahindras (utility vehicles) and a number of pharmaceutical companies, including Ranbaxy, CIPLA etc. An important initiative under negotiation between the two countries is the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), eventually leading to a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)/Comprehensive

Economic Co-operation Agreement (CECA) between India and the South African Customs Union (SACU).

Under the Cultural Exchange Programme, the first major exhibition of Indian contemporary art "Visual Trajectories" travelled to South Africa from April-September 2006 and was a great success. ICCR sponsored artists such as Odissi dancer Reela Hota, Bharatnatyam danseuse Urmila Satyanarayanan and a Qawwali troupe led by Mohd. Idris performed throughout South Africa. Ustad Amjad Ali Khan visited Durban to perform at the Satyagraha celebrations in Kingsmead Stadium on 1 October 2006. An Indian Film Festival was organized in Durban, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town from 20 October-14 November 2006. In addition major theme expositions on various facets of Indian culture through the Indian Experience programmes were organized in South Africa in November, 2006.

Swaziland

Indian delegations interacted with Swaziland in the framework of cooperation with SADC (Southern African Development Community) and SACU (Southern African Customs Union) of which Swaziland is a member.

Tanzania

The friendly bilateral relations between Tanzania and India were maintained with useful functional exchanges and pursuit of agreed items of co-operation.

A 16-member delegation from the National Defence College of India was on a 7-day study tour to Tanzania from 15 May 2006. The delegation called on the Deputy Minister of Defence and National Service Omar Yussuf Mzee, Chief Minister of Zanzibar Shamsi Vuai Nahoda and Chief of Defence Forces Gen. George Waitara.

At a simple, but symbolic ceremony on 7 June, the Chief Minister of Zanzibar Shamsi Vuai Nahoda and the Zanzibar Minister for Education and Vocational Training Haroun Ali Suleiman, accepted a gift of 75 computers from the Government of India.

Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro, Tanzanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation paid a working visit to Delhi from 20-25 November 2006. She inaugurated the new Chancery building of the Tanzanian High Commission in New Delhi. Dr. Migiro had meetings with

the EAM and Minister of State for External Affairs and Minister of State for Commerce.

India-Tanzania official talks on air services took place in Dar es Salaam on 24-25 April 2006.

A three-member team of IT experts from the Ministry of Communications & IT and the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) visited Dar es Salaam from 17-26 July 2006 for conducting the feasibility study for the setting up an IT Centre in Dar es Salaam at GOI cost.

The Chief General Manager of National Small Industries Corporation Ltd., visited Dar es Salaam in November 2006 to discuss the operational details of the Small Industry Information Centre Project which is expected to be implemented soon at GOI cost.

In March 2006, RITES was awarded the concession for operating the Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC). However, the operational details are still being negotiated.

A team of National Mineral Development Corporation Limited (NMDC) - engaged in gold prospecting in Bulyang'Ombe and Siga Hills in Igunga and Kahama districts in north-west Tanzania – visited Tanzania from 13 – 23 August 2006. An agreement of confidentiality/non-disclosure between NMDC and National Development Corporation of Tanzania (NDC) was signed during the visit.

In the private sector, Tata Chemicals Limited (TCL) signed an MoU with the National Development Corporation (NDC) of Tanzania for development of a US\$ 30 million soda ash manufacturing plant at Lake Natron in Arusha region. Preliminary feasibility studies have been made. A Norwegian firm NorConsult was contracted to undertake a one-year environmental and social impact assessment in connection with the project.

Tanzania continued to be one of the largest beneficiaries under the ITEC programme (75 slots). Self-financed Tanzanian students were admitted to Indian institutions in large numbers to pursue higher education. India continued to be the major destination for affordable and effective medical treatment for Tanzanians.

Two ICCR-sponsored cultural troupes visited Tanzania and Zanzibar; a seven-member Mohiniattam dance troupe led by Jayaprabha Menon visited Zanzibar from 13-21 July

2006 and a 10-member Gujarati folk dance troupe “Rang Bahar” from 29 October – 2 November 2006.

Uganda

India-Uganda relations were energised in a multi-sectoral manner.

Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi, visited Uganda from 26-29 August 2006.

The Minister for Small Scale Industries, Agro and Rural Industries, Mahabir Prasad visited Uganda from 31 August -2 September 2006.

Foreign Minister of Uganda, Sam Kutesa paid an official visit to India from 29 October-2 November 2006. He was accompanied by Hope Mwesigye, Minister of State for Local Government. During talks with EAM both sides discussed a broad agenda of bilateral cooperation in areas like human resource development, energy, Pan-African e-network, technical training and transport. Kutesa apprised EAM about the energy shortages in the country and sought GOI assistance for one such project of 200-300 mw for which Government of Uganda has signed an MoU with BHEL. He sought assistance for training of young Ugandans in the fields of IT and entrepreneurship and invited Prime Minister and EAM to visit Uganda for the next CHOGM Summit to be held in Kampala in November 2007.

Kutesa also met the Minister of Small Scale Industries and the Chief Minister of Delhi. In Mumbai and Bangalore on 30 October 2006 he met with business CEOs during which he invited them to invest in Uganda in sectors like hydro-power, textiles and motor-bikes. On 31 October 2006, he met H.D. Kumaraswamy, Chief Minister of Karnataka, Ugandan students studying in Bangalore and visited Ashok Leyland plant at Hosur near Bangalore.

Daudi Migereko, Minister of Energy and Minerals Development of Uganda, visited India on 4 August 2006.

Minister of State for Trade, Nelson G. Gagawala Wambuzi participated in the India-COMESA Ministerial meeting in October 2006 and also in the CII Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership 2006.

Zimbabwe

Historically Zimbabwe and India have close and friendly bilateral relations. Zimbabwe through its ‘Look East’ policy,

sought closer relations with India for investment and technology transfer including exploitation of its mineral resources.

To assist Zimbabwe in its capacity building efforts to turnaround its economy and in the spirit of enhancing South South Cooperation, India signed an MoU with Zimbabwe on 14 June 2006 to provide a grant of US \$ 5 million for the development of SME sector. Under this grant, an 'Indo-Zimbabwe Technology Centre (IZTC)' at the premises of Harare Institute of Technology, and an 'India Technology Centre' (ITC) at the premises of Bulawayo Polytechnic, Bulawayo will be established.

Zimbabwe's Minister of Science & Technology, Dr. Olivia Muchena visited India in April, 2006 to study Information & Communication Technology (ICT) in India to enable Zimbabwe to finalize its ICT policy.

Obert Mpfu, Minister of Industry & International Trade of Zimbabwe visited India in April, 2006 and travelled to the 'Ispat Industries' plants. He was also part of the Ministerial team for the Common Market for Southern & Eastern Africa (COMESA) meeting on 5-6 October, 2006 in Delhi and called on Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs.

Oppah Charm Muchinguri, Minister for Women's Affairs, Gender and Employment Creation of Zimbabwe also visited India in November 2006 at the invitation of Gem Group of Companies, largest exporter of granite of India. Some Zimbabwean company's representatives also participated in the 'INDIA SOFT' Exhibition at the invitation of the Electronics & Software Exports Promotion Council of India.

An Indian scientific and friendship mission, 'Gondwanaland Expedition' to Zimbabwe was received by President Mugabe in June 2006 and flagged off by Vice-President Joice Mujuru.

In the cultural field, India continued to participate in the annual Harare International Festival of Arts (HIFA). The 10-member Odissi dance group led by Reela Hota enthralled the audience and received standing ovations at 3 performances in Harare and one in Bulawayo. India also continued to participate in the annual Zimbabwe International Film Festival (ZIFF) in August-September, 2006 and in the International Images Film Festival for

Women (IIFF) in Harare in November, 2006 during which two Indian entries 'Laaz' (Assamese) and 'Hasina' (Kannada) were screened and well acclaimed. India's participation in these film festivals received wide publicity in print and visual media.

India continued to maintain strong presence in the pharmaceutical sector with Ranbaxy and Torrent representations based in Harare. An Indian company, 'Surface Investments' has set up a multiple seed edible oil producing plant near Harare to produce 100,000 bottles of edible oil with an investment of US\$ 10 million. Another Indian company, 'Grafax Cotton' had built a similar edible oil plant in Zimbabwe. Four Indian companies have successfully set up cotton ginning factories in Harare. Apollo Tyres has invested US\$ 200 million in Dunlop South Africa, which owns Dunlop Zimbabwe. Some Indian companies are supplying transformers and power equipment to Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA).

India continued to interact and attend the meetings of the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) based in Harare - a premier African institution for sustainable development and poverty alleviation in Africa. India became the first Asian country to be the full member of ACBF.

Zambia

Tripartite elections for President, Parliament and Local Councils were held in late September 2006. The Ruling MMD was returned to power along with President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, who was elected for the second and last term in office as the President.

Lt. General I.S.A. Chisuzi, the Army Commander of Zambia visited India from 28 May – 30 June 2006, while Major General RPS Malhan, Assistant Director General, Army Headquarters visited Lusaka from 31 August – 2 September 2006 to inspect the functioning of the IMAT Team in Lusaka.

The Zambian electric supply company ZESCO awarded to Kalpataru Power Company from India the contract for the construction of a transmission line valued at US\$13 million.

President Mwanawasa inaugurated an important project of the Tatas in Ndola set up to assemble Tata trucks and

buses and bicycles. The Tatas are also in negotiation for a US\$120 million power project.

The CII in collaboration with our Ministry organized a successful regional conclave for Southern Africa on India-Africa Project Partnership in Lusaka on 24-25 April 2006. Zambia also participated at the CII conclave in New Delhi from 9-11 October 2006

COMESA

India-COMESA relations progressed well with the visit of a high level COMESA delegation of four Ministers led by the Rwandan Minister of Trade and Industry as Chairman of COMESA Council of Ministers along with Ministers from Zimbabwe, Mauritius and Uganda and the Secretary General of COMESA from 5-10 October 2006. Fruitful meetings and discussions took place when the delegation called on our President and Minister of Commerce & Industry besides the delegation level meetings led by our Minister of State Anand Sharma. A Joint Communiqué was issued at the end of the visit and several areas of assistance by India to COMESA were identified. The COMESA delegation also prominently participated at the CII India-Africa Project Partnership conclave that took place in Delhi simultaneously. COMESA Secretariat invited Indian delegation to its Lusaka Headquarters for detailed discussions for an agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation.

SADC

In a significant development, India upgraded its relations with the 14-member Southern African Development Community (SADC) and launched the India-SADC Forum in April, 2006. MOS for External Affairs Anand Sharma participated in the SADC Consultative Conference on 26 – 27 April 2006 in Windhoek. On 28 April 2006, he co-chaired the Inaugural Session of the SADC and Government of India Forum which discussed various priority areas proposed for cooperation between SADC and India and agreed to cooperate in the spirit of south-south cooperation and on the basis of both India and SADC's comparative and competitive advantages. India emphasized that SADC constitutes one of the most important regional organizations in Africa and it attaches great importance to further strengthen its relationship and ties with it in different sectors. The Forum agreed to focus on cooperation in the sectors of trade, industry, finance

and investment, food, agriculture and natural resources, human resources development, health, water resources management and information and communication technology.

ACBF

India joined as a full member of the Harare-based African Capacity Building Foundation with a contribution of US\$1 million towards skill development and poverty alleviation programmes.

West Africa

In recent years India has intensified its traditionally warm and cordial links with the countries of West Africa. This year witnessed some important visits which have further deepened our ties with the region at not only the bilateral level but also at a regional and institutional level. Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare, Chairperson of the Commission of the Africa Union visited India in December 2006 which was the first ever visit of Chairperson of AU Commission to India. A high powered Delegation from ECOWAS visited India to secure India's participation in infrastructural development of West Africa.

As an important part of our economic diplomacy during the year, Ministry of External Affairs continued its active participation in the India- African Project Partnership Conclaves organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry. A CII India-Africa Regional Conclave was held in Accra on 25 May 2006 to give a boost to our economic and commercial relations with West Africa. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Ghana as head of a six member delegation for this conclave. The 2nd Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership-2006 was held in October, 2006 in New Delhi in which besides the various business delegations, more than a dozen ministerial level delegations from West Africa participated.

The TEAM-9 Initiative, a techno-economic cooperation venture between India and 9 countries of West Africa, continues to provide an effective impetus to deepen India's relations with several important countries of West Africa. Projects of a value of over US\$ 200 million are under implementation under Lines of Credit (LoC) in the TEAM-9 countries. A new initiative was undertaken in 2006 when during his visit to Ghana, Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs, announced a new

LoC for US\$ 250 million which would result in increased opportunities for our companies in key sectors of the economy in West Africa. An agreement to extend a US\$ 250 million LoC by GOI to the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development was signed. The impact of these initiatives on our relationship with countries of West Africa region was evident in the visit of President of Gabon and Foreign Minister level visits that India received from countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Benin, Senegal, Ghana, Angola, Republic of Congo and DR Congo.

West Africa Division continued the work for implementation of the Pan-African e-Network project announced by the President during his address to the Pan African Parliament in September 2004. In consultation with African Union, Dakar (Senegal) was chosen as the site for establishment of the hub for the project. Work for implementation of this ambitious project has been given to TCIL, which has already signed separate agreement with Senegal. MoUs for participation in the project have already been signed with 20 countries in Africa.

Angola

Bilateral relations between India and Angola have been close and friendly and they continued to grow this year. João Miranda, Foreign Minister of Republic of Angola paid an official visit to India from 10-13 May 2006. He had meetings with MOS(AS), Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas. Official talks were held to exchange views on various bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. A Protocol for Consultations between Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of External Relations of the Republic of Angola was signed by the two sides. The two sides also agreed in principle to sign the agreements for the Promotion and Protection of Investments and Creation of Bilateral Commission for Cultural, Technical, Scientific and Economic Cooperation.

Dr. Mario Calada, Director general of ENDIAMA led a delegation that visited India from 2-8 October, 2006. ENDIAMA, the Angolan government Agency responsible for handling mining and commercial issues related to the Diamond sector in Angola, is one of the largest producers of Diamonds. The delegation had meetings in Delhi, Mumbai and Surat to explore means of closer cooperation

between the two countries in the fields of Diamonds and other key minerals.

Benin

India's friendly relations with the Republic of Benin continued to gather momentum. India gifted 60 tractors to the Government of Benin in Cotonou in March 2006.

Mariam, Aladji Boni Diallo, the newly appointed Foreign Minister of Benin visited India on 26-27 June 2006 and had a meeting with MOS(AS) to discuss issues of mutual interest, including future assistance by India to Benin.

Burkina Faso

Jean de Dieu Somda, Deputy Minister for regional Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation was in New Delhi from 11-14 December, 2006. Somda had an interaction with members of the Business Community and held discussions in MEA on bilateral economic and political relations, including new projects for Team-9 financing.

Cameroon

Relations between India and Cameroon are developing. India gifted 60 tractors to the Government of Cameroon in April 2006 to assist in developing its agriculture sector.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Ramazani Baya, Foreign Minister of DRC visited India from 2-7 May 2006. Official talks covered bilateral, regional and international issues with specific interest in cooperation in mining, energy and agriculture. Ramazani Baya sought Indian assistance in several key areas including Defence and appreciated the role of Indian Peace keeping troops in DRC.

India formally handed over a gift of 60 tractors to the Government of DRC in March 2006 and 250 TATA buses under US\$ 12.5 million LoC extended by GOI in June 2006.

Ghana

Bilateral ties with Ghana maintained their strong momentum and received a strong impetus with ministerial level visits by both sides.

Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External affairs visited Ghana from 24-26 May 2006. A CII India-Africa

Regional Conclave was held in Accra on 25 May 2006 to give a boost to India's economic and commercial relations with West Africa. A 42 member Business delegation from India was present and had interactions with their African counterparts. MOS(AS) had meetings/interactions with counterparts from Team-9 countries in the region which attended the Conclave to discuss measures to develop closer economic and political partnership with this grouping.

President Kufour laid the foundation stone of the new Presidential Office Complex in Accra in May 2006, a project being undertaken under a US\$ 30 Million LoC provided to Ghana under the Team-9 programme.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo paid an official visit to India from 9-11 June 2006 and held discussions with Government and Indian business community.

Ivory Coast

As part of the efforts at strengthening bilateral cooperation between Republic of Cote d'Ivoire and India, Youssouf Bakayoko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Cote d'Ivoire led a 110 member Ivorian delegation to India for the Second Meeting of the Indo-Ivorian Joint Trade Commission in August 2006.

During the visit, Bakayoko held talks with Minister of State for External Affairs of India, Anand Sharma. The Ministers exchanged views on how to strengthen bilateral, political, trade, economic and cultural relations between the two countries in an institutional manner in future. The two sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Foreign Office Consultations.

Mali

Relations between India and Mali continued to be warm and friendly. Abdoulaye Koita, Minister of Equipment and Transport of Mali, was on a working visit to India from 11-17 July 2006 for bilateral cooperation in Railways. The Mali Minister of Energy visited India in August for discussions on a Power Transmission Project under TEAM-9 credit.

Niger

India's relations with Niger continued to grow with special emphasis on cooperation in agricultural sector. Ali Laninai

Zens, Minister of Economics Affairs, Republic of Niger visited India in February 2006. Two Agricultural experts were deputed by GOI to Niger from June, 2006 to conduct a feasibility study / project report on co-operation in the field of Agriculture between India and Niger.

The Foreign Minister of Niger, Aichatou Mindaoudou came on a private visit to India in July/August 2006, during which issues of mutual interest were discussed.

Nigeria

Relations with Nigeria continued to be warm and cordial during the year with continued cooperation in the political and economic spheres. The Foreign Minister of Nigeria Oluyemi Adeniji visited New Delhi on 19-20 May 2006. During a meeting with MOS (AS), FM Adeniji conveyed President Obasanjo's desire to establish a strategic partnership with India. He also informed that Government of Nigeria had decided to award two important Petroleum blocks to ONGC-Mittal Energy Ltd.

Active defence cooperation with Nigeria continued during the year. Indian Chief of Army Staff's visit to Nigeria last year was followed by Nigerian Defence Minister's visit this year. Dr Rabi Kwankwaso, Defence Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria led a delegation to India in February 2006.

Republic of Congo

The Foreign Minister of the Republic of Congo Rodolphe Adada, was on an official visit to India from 24-29 October 2006. During his official meeting, EAM offered to extend cooperation to the ROC in capacity building and specialized training and consider providing assistance in Agriculture, Railways and Technical areas.

A large gift of Anti malarial medicines was formally handed over to the Government of ROC in March 2006 under Aid to Africa programme.

Republic of Gabon

The President of Gabon El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba paid a friendly visit to India from 3-7 May 2006. He led a delegation which included Jean Ping, Senior Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs, the Senior Minister in charge of Economy, Finance, Budget and Privatization, the Minister of Mining, Energy, Oil and Water Resources and the Minister of Commerce and Industrial development.

The ministers had separate meetings with their Indian counterparts to discuss issues of mutual interest. During the visit, the Gabonese President conveyed Gabon's desire to open a resident mission in New Delhi.

Senegal

India's relations with Senegal witnessed significant growth during the year. A delegation headed by Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, senior Minister of Foreign Affairs visited India from 22-25 March, 2006. Bineta Ba Samb Minister of Industry and Crafts and Ousmane Ndiaye, Director General of Chemical Industries were members of the delegation. During its visit, the delegation held Meetings with Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External affairs and Ram Vilas Paswan, Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers and discussed issues of bilateral interest as well as International Affairs.

Mahammed Dionne, Minister and Chief of Staff in the Senegalese PM's office and Karim Wade, Special Advisor to the Senegalese President visited New Delhi from 13-15 June 2006. The visit was a sequel to Senegalese Foreign Minister Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio's visit in March and was aimed at discussing the long term restructuring plans for the revival of the Industries Chimiques du Senegal (ICS), a phosphoric acid plant in which IFFCO has a stake. The team held meetings with MEA, Department of Fertilizers and IFFCO for revival/rehabilitation of ICS.

Habib Sy, Senior minister of Infrastructure, Equipment, Surface and Local Maritime Transports of Senegal, accompanied by 9 senior officials related to the Transport sector undertook an official visit to India from 18-25 June 2006 during which discussions were held with Ministry of Railways and Indian companies for cooperation in this sector.

ECOWAS

A high-level delegation from Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) visited India from 4-8 April 2006. The delegation was led by Aichatou Mindaoudou, Foreign Minister of Niger and included Dr.

Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Ministers for African Integration and NEPAD from Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal and the President of ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID).

The delegation called on to the President and PM, had meetings with Finance Minister and Minister of Commerce and Industry, discussions with Railway Authorities and interactions with CII and FICCI. The Delegation conveyed strong interest in securing Indian participation in West Africa Rail Network, West African Power Pool and other major infrastructure projects in the region.

The African Union

India has been formally accredited to the African Union since March 2005. Close interaction with the African Union on political and developmental issues has been maintained. This year, however, saw significant progress in our relations and interactions with AU. India participated in the Banjul AU Summit in June-July 2006.

A two-member delegation led by Dr. Nagia M. Essayed, Commissioner for S&T and HRD, African Union (AU) Commission visited Delhi from 26 November-3 December 2006 on a study visit. The Commissioner had meetings with a wide cross-section of scientific institutions. During the visit the status of Science & Technology and HRD in Africa was discussed and avenues to explore closer cooperation between the AU and India in these areas examined.

Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union paid an official visit to India from 19-21 December 2006. This was the first ever visit by AU Chairperson to India. During the visit, he called on the President and EAM. The visit laid the foundations of developing an institutional relationship with AU and Africa. Prof Konare conveyed the desire of the AU to expand Africa's relations with India and proposed an India-Africa Summit.



India attaches considerable importance to its relationship with Europe - the European Union (EU) collectively and its Member States individually. India's engagement with Europe is not only important in the bilateral and India-EU contexts but in trying to develop common approaches to addressing various global challenges. India shares a strategic partnership with the 27-member¹ European Union, an evolving and expanding entity. India also has a strategic partnership with France, Germany and the UK. During the year, India's engagement with the EU and individual countries in Europe intensified and diversified further.

Among the highlights of the engagement with Europe have been Summit level interactions with the EU, UK, Germany, Spain and Belgium and a growing exchange of visits at other Ministerial levels. This is indicative of India's steadily growing cooperation with this part of the world over a wide range of areas from political to trade and investment, culture, science and technology.

In keeping with the deepening engagement with the EU, the 7th India-EU Summit held in Helsinki on 13 October 2006 took some far-reaching decisions.

India-EU relations have grown exponentially from what used to be a purely trade and economic driven relationship to one covering all areas of interaction. In order to carry forward their strategic partnership in these areas, India and the EU adopted a comprehensive Joint Action Plan in 2005, the first time that India has adopted such an Action Plan with any of its partners. Trade, investment and technology links continued to intensify between India and the countries of Europe and showed excellent growth.

India's relations with the non-EU European countries of central and eastern Europe have also seen an upward movement. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the countries of central and eastern Europe commenced

shedding communist-era planned economies for market economies. They also looked towards the US, and sought to enter NATO and EU. In 2004, an additional 10 members joined the EU. India's relations with the majority of the new entrants to the EU in 2004 as well as potential candidates such as Romania, Bulgaria and the countries of the former Yugoslavia has had to be redefined in the context of the new realities confronted by these countries as well as by India- their moving away from communist era socialist planned economies to market economies and India undergoing liberalization. However, the relatively high rates of economic growth in India as opposed to Europe, the availability of skilled technologists and technicians at very competitive costs, the huge Indian middle class market available, and niche areas of excellence including IT and Pharmaceuticals, and the capacity of Indian companies to invest in different sectors of the economy in their respective countries, taken together with the prospect of aging and populations and shrinking academic and labour force, all led to renewed interest of central and eastern European countries in India. Trade with most of these countries is increasingly at a fast pace, moving away from traditional commodities to engineering goods and value-added items. Investments from India are also increasing. The 7 million outbound Indian tourist market is also being viewed by many of these countries as an area of potential growth, as is the possibility of Indian films being shot in locales in these countries. These economic benefits are also attracting the attention of India's longstanding trade and investment partners such as the countries of the Nordic group, Switzerland and Turkey. The potential for high technology manufacturing in India, cooperation in petroleum, non-conventional energy, biotechnology and nanotechnology and engineering, together with more areas like deep-sea fishing and food processing are raising new possibilities for collaboration in trade and investment. Scandinavian

¹ Bulgaria and Romania have joined the EU on January 1, 2007.

countries are also beginning to view the Indian stock market and financial instruments as safe and remunerative investments for their large investable funds, and have commenced investing in India. The relatively high growth rates in the former East Europe, coupled with the new possibilities arising from a dynamic and economically vibrant India is boosting activity between India and Europe to mutual benefit.

Austria

The fourth round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Austria was held in New Delhi on 23 May 2006.

General Elections were held in Austria on 1 October 2006. No Party has emerged in majority. Talks on the formation of a coalition Government ran into difficulties. But now a “grand coalition” consisting of the two major political parties namely Socialist Party of Austria (SPO), and People’s Party of Austria (OVP) headed by Dr. Alfreed Gusenbauer of SPO had formed the new Government on 11 January 2007 in Austria.

Belgium

Relations between India and Belgium are warm and cordial. Belgium co-sponsored the G-4 framework resolution on UNSC.

Belgium is India’s 2nd largest trading partner in EU, with bilateral trade reaching around Euro 7.6 billion in 2005. Gems and Jewellery (especially diamonds) constitute about 75 percent of bilateral trade. Investment from Belgium into India is low (around US\$ 155 million during August 1991-October 2006). There is growing Indian investment by Indian companies into Belgium, exceeding that by Belgian companies into India.

Prime Minister of Belgium, Guy Verhofstadt visited India from 2-7 November 2006. He was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Didier Reynders, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Karel de Gucht. Belgian PM also visited Chennai, Bangalore and Mumbai. One of the objectives of the Belgian Prime Minister’s visit was to attract investments from India.

In a significant development, a Social Security Agreement between Belgium and India was signed during the visit by Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium. An Agreement on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology was also signed

by Deputy PM and Finance Minister of Belgium and Minister of Science & Technology.

Finance Minister P. Chidambaram visited Brussels from 11-13 June 2006. He met his Belgian counterparts and addressed an investors Conference.

The Festival of India [October 2006-January 2007] organized by ICCR in collaboration with Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels was launched by the Queen at Palais de Beaux arts (Bozar) in Brussels. This was followed by the formal inauguration of the nearly four-month long event by Dr. Karan Singh, President, ICCR and Etienne D’Avignon, President of Bozar in the presence of the Queen.

Sonia Gandhi, inaugurated the ‘TEJAS’ Exhibition, the central theme of the Festival of India on 11 November, 2006. She was accompanied by Minister of Tourism and Culture, Ambika Soni and Dr. Karan Singh, President, ICCR.

Bosnia & Herzegovina

The second session of India-Bosnia Joint Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation meeting was held in New Delhi on 11 September 2006. During the meeting, both sides held discussions on strengthening bilateral economic and commercial relations between the two countries.

Following the general elections held on 1 October 2006, newly elected three Members of the Presidency of Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH) -Nebojsa Radmanovic [Serb], Zeljko Komsic [Croat] and Haris Silajdzic [Bosnian], took oath on 6 November 2006. Nebojsa Radmanovic of the Party of Independent Social-Democrats took over the Chairmanship of the BiH Presidency for 8 months from 6 November 2006. The Council of Ministers of BiH is yet to be formed as the negotiations between the parties are still going on.

Bulgaria

The fourth round of Foreign Office Consultations was held on 27 April 2006 in New Delhi.

On invitation from Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister of Bulgaria, MOS (AS) visited Bulgaria from 15-17 June 2006. He had delegation-level talks with Bulgarian Foreign Minister. He also called on Bulgarian

PM, Chairman of National Assembly, and Minister of Economy and Energy.

Croatia

A four-member delegation from Croatia, led by Dr. Radovan Fuchs, Assistant Minister for International Cooperation in the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports visited India from 19-21 April 2006 to participate in the first meeting of the India-Croatia Joint Science and Technology Committee and signed the "Agreed Minutes". An Educational Exchange Programme (EEP) was signed during the visit.

The seventh round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Croatia was held on 27 June 2006 in New Delhi.

Cyprus

The President of the Republic Tassos Papadopoulos, accompanied by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism as well as a 21-member business delegation paid a four-day state visit to India from 11-16 April 2006. The President delivered a lecture at the Indian Council for World Affairs on "Cyprus as a bridge between India and EU". He visited Agra, Bangalore, and Mumbai where he addressed a large business meeting at the Bombay Stock Exchange. During the visit a joint stamp was released.

Parliamentary elections in Cyprus were held on 21 May 2006. The 59 members of the House of Representatives were elected for a five-year term. The ruling DIKO party headed by President Papadopoulos has emerged as the biggest winner in the elections by gaining two additional seats and a gain of impressive 3 percent of the popular vote. The results of the elections indicated an endorsement of President Papadopoulos and his Cyprus policy. The DIKO and AKEL (Democratic Communist Party and principal coalition partner in the present government) combination has emerged stronger after the above elections.

Czech Republic

Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek was elected leader of the Social Democratic Party on 13 May 2006 in an internal party election, with 90 percent of party members voting for him. The general elections were held in Czech Republic in June 2006.

As no party had emerged victorious to form the government, President Vaclav Klaus met with the leaders of political parties and held talks in an effort to end the political stalemate. President Vaclav Klaus appointed the Civic Democratic Party leader, Mirek Topolánek, as the next Prime Minister-designate.

The newly appointed Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Mirek Topolánek and his new Cabinet were sworn in by President Klaus on 4 September 2006. The Civic Democratic Government led by Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek (ODS), appointed by President Klaus on 4 September 2006, failed to win the vote of confidence in the Parliament on 3 October 2006. In the 200-member Lower House, 99 members voted against the government and 96 in favour. President Klaus has said that he would appoint a new Prime Minister only after the Senate and local elections in end-October 2006.

President Vaclav Klaus re-appointed the leader of the Civic Democratic Party, Mirek Topolánek as the Prime Minister on 8 November 2006, thus giving the Civic Democratic leadership a second chance to form a government. The leader of the Social Democratic Party, the former PM Jiri Paroubek, said his party is willing to hold constructive talks, but has given no indication of how a resolution of the stalemate could be achieved. Thus, Czech Republic continues to have a caretaker government for the sixth month since the general elections.

Estonia

Presidential elections in Estonia were held on 23 September 2006, where Toomas Hendrik Ilves, has been declared elected as next President of Estonia for a period of five year term. He received 174 votes (one vote more than the required majority of votes) in the 345 member electoral college. Ilves was nominated for President by the Pro Patria, Res Publica Union, Reform Party and the Social Democratic Party.

The fourth round of Foreign Office Consultations with Estonia was held in New Delhi on 24 November 2006.

Finland

A delegation led by Speaker of Lok Sabha visited Finland from 1-4 June, 2006 to attend the centenary celebration of Finnish Parliamentary Reforms held in Helsinki. During the visit, Speaker had call on PM and President of Finland.

PM paid an official visit to Finland from 12-14 October 2006. Prime Minister's bilateral visit coincided with the 7th India-EU Summit held in Helsinki. Prime Minister held bilateral talks with his counterpart apart from delegation-level talks. The Prime Minister's visit highlighted the increasing engagement and substantive economic and political content of the bilateral relationship. On the recommendation of the High Level Trade Group, it was decided to commence negotiations for the conclusion of a Trade and Investment Agreement between India and the EU. An India-EU Business Summit was also held which provided an opportunity to reinforce the message of India as a secure and profitable trade and investment destination.

Tarja Halonen, President of Finland visited India from 19-24 January, 2007 in connection with the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) to be held in New Delhi on 22 January 2007 organized by The Energy & Resources Institute (TERI).

France

India and France have a strategic partnership since 1998, spanning cooperation across various important sectors including civilian nuclear energy, space and defence. France co-sponsored the G-4 Framework Resolution on reform of the UNSC.

France is the 5th largest economy in the world; its technological strengths make it the leader in sectors such as aviation, space, food processing, transport, railways and agricultural research. France is ranked 4th in the list of India's trading partners among EU countries (after the UK, Belgium and Germany). Indo-French bilateral trade has been growing over the years and stood at Euro 4.4 billion in 2005.

The actual inflow of FDI from France is of the order of US\$ 834 million (August 1991-October 2006). France is the eighth largest foreign investor in India during this period (2 percent of total FDI inflows).

Following President Chirac's successful visit to India in February 2006, there have been several visits at Ministerial and official levels.

Minister for Science & Technology, Kapil Sibal visited France from 30 April – 4 June 2006. Kamal Nath, Minister for Commerce and Industry led the Indian delegation to

the 14th meeting of the Indo-French Joint Economic Committee on 31 May 2006. He also addressed a business and investors meet "Destination India" organised by the Movement of the French Enterprises (MEDEF). P. Chidambaram, Finance Minister visited France on 13-16 June 2006.

Minister of Railways, Lalu Prasad Yadav accompanied by MOS for Railways R. Velu led a six-member delegation to France from 26-29 June 2006. Both sides agreed to increase institutional cooperation between the two Ministries and the French National Railway Company (SNCF) International. The Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Ashwani Kumar visited France on 11-12 July 2006. An MoU on Cooperation in Intellectual Property Rights was signed during the visit.

The then Defence Minister, Pranab Mukherjee accompanied by a high level delegation of senior officials and CEOs of Indian defence companies visited France from 3-5 September 2006. He had discussions with his counterpart, French Minister of Defence Michèle Alliot-Marie and visited various defence establishments. Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Vayalar Ravi visited France from 5-6 October 2006. He met the French Minister Delegate for Social Security, Elderly, Disabled & Family, Philippe Bas.

Minister for Food Processing Industries Subodh Kant Sahay visited France from 22-27 October 2006. He attended the Salon International d'Alimentation (International Food Fair) and met Nicolas Forrisier, French Interdepartmental Delegate for Agro-Food & Agricultural Processing Industries.

The French Foreign Minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy visited India from 30 November-1 December 2006. He met EAM. The French Minister of Foreign Trade, Christine Lagarde visited India from 1-6 December 2006. She attended a series of business meetings where a large number of business persons from France also participated.

The 16th round of the Strategic Dialogue took place in New Delhi on 8 September 2006 between NSA and Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, Diplomatic Counsellor and Special Representative of the French President.

The Indo-French Forum (IFF), set up in 1997, consists of eminent persons who recommend ideas to promote engagements in areas like trade and investment,



The President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam receiving the President of the Republic of Cyprus Tassos Papadopoulos at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on 12 April 2006.



Speaker of the Lok Sabha Somnath Chatterjee with the Prime Minister of Finland Matti Vanhanen in New Delhi on 14 March 2006.

education, culture, science & technology. The 11th session of the IFF was held in Paris on 27 October 2006.

Defence Secretary led a delegation to Paris for 9th High Level Committee on Defence (HLCD) from 8-10 November 2006.

Germany

Germany will hold the EU Presidency during the first half of 2007; it will also hold the G-8 Presidency during 2007.

India and Germany have a Strategic Partnership since 2001. Germany is the world's 3rd largest economy; and strongest economy within the EU. It is a significant trading partner and a source of investment and technology collaboration for India. India and Germany cooperated closely in the context of the G-4 framework resolution on expansion of permanent membership of the UNSC.

Germany is India's 3rd largest trading partner in Europe, with bilateral trade of • 7.6 billion in 2005. During the first seven months of 2006, bilateral trade grew further by 36 percent over the corresponding period in 2005. During the visit of Chancellor Schroeder to India in October 2004, the two heads of Government had set a target to double trade from • 5 billion to • 10 billion by 2010. As per present indications, this is likely to be achieved in the course of 2007. Germany is the 6th largest investor in India with actual FDI inflow of US\$ 1.6 billion during August 1991- October 2006 (4 percent of total FDI inflows).

There was strong focus on India in 2006. India was the Partner Country at the Hannover International Trade Fair; Guest of Honour Country at the Frankfurt Book Fair and the focus country at the Bonn Biennale Art festival.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Germany from 22-25 April 2006. He jointly inaugurated with German Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel, the prestigious Hannover Industrial Trade Fair, where India was the Partner Country for the second time. During their talks at Hannover, Prime Minister and Chancellor Merkel discussed a wide range of issues including trade and economic cooperation, energy security, multilateral and regional issues. A Joint Statement was issued. PM also met Chancellor Merkel at the G-8 Summit in St Petersburg on 17 July 2006.

The then Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee accompanied by a high level delegation comprising senior

officials and CEOs of Indian defence companies visited Germany from 5-8 September 2006. During the visit, Defence Minister and his German counterpart, Franz Josef Jung, signed a bilateral Defence Agreement, which could pave the way for closer defence and security cooperation between the two countries. Defence Minister also had bilateral meetings with Jung as well as the Federal Minister for Economics and Technology, Michael Glos.

The German Federal Minister for Economics and Technology Michael Glos, accompanied by a high-ranking business delegation from Germany comprising about 50 companies visited India from 29-31 August 2006. Glos also attended a ceremony in Mumbai marking the 50th anniversary of the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce.

Vilas Muttemwar, Minister of Non-Conventional Energy Sources visited Germany from 15-18 June 2006. He met Sigmar Gabriel, German Minister of Environment and also Heidemarie Wiecezorek-Zeul, Federal Minister of Economic Cooperation.

The Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Somnath Chatterjee visited Germany from 26-30 June 2006 at the invitation of the President of the Bundestag. Minister of Railways, Lalu Prasad Yadav, accompanied by Minister of State for Railways, R. Velu and senior officers of the Railway Ministry visited Hannover, Goettingen, Frankfurt, Cologne, Salzgitter and Minden from 4-7 July 2006.

Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises Santosh Mohan Dev led an official and business delegation to Hannover from 20 – 23 September 2006 to visit the IAA Automobile Fair for Commercial Vehicles held in Hannover. Arjun Singh, Minister for Human Resource Development and Ambika Soni, Minister of Culture visited Germany in connection with the inauguration ceremony of the Frankfurt Book Fair from 4-8 October 2006.

Defence Secretary led a delegation to Germany from 6-7 November 2006 for the meeting of India-Germany Defence Committee. Sushil Kumar Shinde, Minister of Power led a delegation to Germany from 7-12 November 2006.

Two German Parliamentarians, Erich G. Fritz (CDU/CSU) and Marina Schuster (FDP) from the German Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs of the German Bundestag visited India from 1-10 October 2006.

They had a meeting with the Standing Committee on External Affairs. Fritz visited India again in January 2007, accompanied by Andreas Schockenhoff, Vice Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee in the Bundestag. They participated in a seminar organized by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Institute for Peace & Conflict Studies (IPCS).

Sebastian Edathy, Chairman of the Indo-German Parliamentary Friendship Group visited India from 13-16 November 2006. He called on E. Ahamed, MOS for External Affairs and also the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir during his visit to Jammu.

The Indo-German Consultative Group (IGCG), a group of eminent persons from India and Germany held its 15th meeting at Wiesbaden, Germany from 14-17 September 2006. The group has a strong business orientation.

An Indo-German Energy Forum at senior official level and including the private sector has been set up in April 2006. It addressed strategic energy concerns including energy security, efficient use of energy, promotion of renewable energy sources and environmentally friendly technologies, taking into account the environmental challenges of sustainable development.

Dr. Christoph Heusgen, German Foreign Policy and Security Advisor visited India from 31 October-1 November 2006 for discussions with NSA.

Greece

A delegation led by Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs, Anand Sharma, visited Greece from 27-29 August 2006 and held discussions with the Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis on matters of bilateral interest. India's candidate for the post of UNSG also came up for discussion. Sharma also held talks with the Greek Minister of Tourism Fanny Palli-Petralia, on measures to boost cooperation in the field of tourism between the two countries.

A six member Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of the Lok Sabha Somnath Chatterjee, paid a visit to Greece from 24-28 September 2006. The delegation met the President of the Hellenic Parliament, Prof. Anna Benaki-Psarouda, the President of the Republic, Karolos Papoulias, and had a separate meeting with the Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis.

Hungary

Ambika Soni, Minister of Tourism and Culture attended the Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution held in Budapest from 22-23 October 2006. The Minister for Tourism and Culture and the Foreign Minister of Hungary, jointly released the book containing 'Documents from the Archives of Ministry of External Affairs of India relating to 1956 Hungarian Revolution'. During the visit, a bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2007-10 was signed.

Following the general elections in Hungary in May 2006, a new government under the leadership of Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany took oath of office on 9 June 2006. Dr. Kinga Goncz was appointed as the Foreign Minister of Hungary. In September 2006, Hungary witnessed considerable political turmoil after Prime Minister Gyurcsany admitted that he had lied about the true state of the economy during the election campaign.

The Foreign Minister of Hungary Dr Kinga Goncz paid an official visit to India from 2-6 November 2006. She called on the Speaker, Lok Sabha and held talks with EAM on 3 November 2006. The Hungarian Foreign Minister also met Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. She visited Agra and Khajuraho before leaving for Pakistan on 6 November 2006.

Iceland

There was a political turmoil for nearly two weeks following the announcement by Prime Minister Halldor Asgrimsson to resign. This development has led to formation of a new Cabinet with the former Foreign Minister Geir H. Haarde being appointed as Prime Minister of Iceland and Valgerdur Sverrisdottir as new Foreign Minister.

Vilas Muttemwar, Minister for Non-conventional Energy Sources visited Iceland on 12-13 June 2006.

The Icelandic Parliamentary Delegation headed by Sólveig Pétursdóttir, President of Althingi (Parliament) paid an official visit to India from 18-24 November 2006. She called on President and Vice President. She also had meetings with Lok Sabha Speaker and EAM.

The second round of Foreign Office Consultation (FOC)

between Iceland and India was held in Reykiavik on 21 June 2006.

The Icelandic President Dr. Ólafur Ragnar Grimsson, was in India from 20-25 January, 2007 in connection with the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS).

Ireland

India-Irish relations have received momentum following the visit of Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern in January 2006.

Common historical experiences, positive interaction over the years, and a shared appreciation on major issues in recent times have underpinned the bilateral relationship.

Bilateral trade was of the order of Euro 250 million in 2004 and has grown strongly in 2005-06. FDI inflow from Ireland into India is US \$ 34 million (August 1991-October 2006).

Italy

India's relations with Italy during the period have been marked by a new momentum following the visit of then Italian President, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi to India in February 2005. The exchange of high level visits has continued in the build up to the forthcoming visit of the Italian Prime Minister Prodi to India in early 2007.

Bilateral trade has been growing and reached Euro 3.88 billion in 2005. Italy has the world's 7th largest economy and India's 5th largest trading partner within the EU (after UK, Germany, Belgium and France). Italy is the 11th largest investor in India (FDI inflows from Italy is US \$ 531 million from August 1991–October 2006; 1.4 percent of total FDI inflows over this period).

Senator Gianni Vernetti, Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs paid a visit to India accompanied by a delegation on 6-7 July 2006. During the visit, he held meetings with MOS for External Affairs, Anand Sharma, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath and Ambika Soni, Minister for Culture and Tourism. He visited New Delhi again on 17-18 November 2006 to attend the second Regional Economic Cooperation Conference (RECC) on Afghanistan.

Anand Sharma, MOS visited Rome from 14-16 November 2006. During the visit, he held wide ranging discussions

with Italian political leaders including Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Culture, Francesco Rutelli, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Senator Gianni Vernetti, and Defence Minister, Arturo Parisi. MOS also met Senator Lamberto Dini, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate and other Senators at the Senate. MOS also delivered a talk on the theme "India and Italy on the Global stage" at a Round-Table in the Chamber of Deputies. Italian Minister of Interior Giuliano Amato presided.

Emma Bonino, Minister for International Trade and European Affairs visited India from 3-7 January 2007. She held discussions with Minister for Commerce and Industry.

Italian Under Secretary for International Trade, Mauro Agostini visited India for India Chem 2006, which was held in Mumbai from 8-10 November 2006. Italy was a partner country at the event. Under Secretary of State for Defence, Giovanni Lorenzo visited India from 14-17 November 2006 and met Pallam Raju, MOS for Defence. He was Guest Speaker at the CII-AIAD (Italian Industries Association for Aerospace & Defence) Symposium on 15 November. A 16-member of the National Defence College, Delhi delegation visited Italy from 20-26 May 2006.

Lalu Prasad Yadav, Minister of Railways visited Rome from 1-4 July 2006. He was accompanied by R. Velu, MOS (Railways). A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Railways and the Ferrovie Dello Stato (Italian Railways) was signed on 3 July 2006. It was decided to set up a Joint Working Group (JWG) on cooperation in Railways.

Kamal Nath, Commerce and Industry Minister (CIM) visited Italy from 5-7 November 2006. The Minister was accompanied by a large 120-member business delegation. The 17th session of the Indo-Italian Joint Commission meeting was held in Rome on 6 November 2006. Both sides agreed to set up a JWG on Infrastructure. A Destination India event, organized by FICCI, Confindustria and the Department of Industrial Policy, was held in Rome on 6 November 2006.

Earlier, Minister of Commerce and Industry visited Italy from 31 August-3 September 2006. During the visit, he met Emma Bonino, Minister for International Trade and European Affairs and Letizia Moratti, the Mayor of Milan.

Shankersinh Vaghela, Minister of Textiles, visited Italy from 29 October-1 November 2006. Akhilesh Prasad Singh, MOS for Food and Public Distribution visited Italy from 30 October -2 November 2006 to attend the 32nd Session of World Food Security organized by Food and Agricultural Organization. Subodh Kant Sahai, MOS for Food Processing Industries visited Italy from 6-10 November 2006. MOS met Paolo De Castro, the Italian Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies on 9 November 2006. A meeting of the Joint Working Group in the Food Processing sector was held in Parma on 7 November 2006.

Minister of Tourism of Uttar Pradesh Kawkab Hameed visited Italy from 9-11 March 2006. Chief Minister of Sikkim Pawan K Chamling led a high-level delegation to Italy from 18-20 March 2006. The Chief Justice of India Y.K. Sabharwal visited Italy from 20-24 April 2006 at the invitation of the President of the Constitutional Court of Italy, to attend the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of the Constitutional Court of Italy.

A high-level delegation led by Tarun Gogoi, Chief Minister of Assam and including Sushil Kumar Modi, Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar and Dr. A.K Walia, Minister of Finance of the Government of Delhi visited Rome from 8 -11 June 2006 for studying VAT related issues. The Speakers of the Legislative Assemblies of Mizoram, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu visited Rome in September, 2006.

A life size statue of Mahatma Gandhi, gifted by ICCR, was unveiled in the Italian port city of Genoa on 22 June 2006 on the 201st birth anniversary of Giuseppe Mazzini, a national leader of Italy, by the Ambassador and Genoa city Mayor Giuseppe Pericu.

Latvia

At the invitation of Minister for Tourism and Culture, Latvian Culture Minister Helena Demakova and a 7 member delegation visited India from 27 May – 2 June 2006. During the visit a Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) for 2006-2008 between Latvia and India was signed. Visiting Minister and delegation also visited Agra and Mumbai.

Lithuania

Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas resigned on 31 May 2006 following the decision by the Labour Party to

withdraw from the coalition government. The Labour Party's decision came after President Adamkus said on 30 May 2006 that he had lost faith in the two Ministers belonging to the Labour Party – Health Minister Zilvinas Padaiga and Culture Minister Vladimiras Prudnikovas. Though not entitled constitutionally to do so, Adamkus suggested a reshuffle in the government followed by a vote of confidence in the Seimas (Parliament).

The Lithuanian Defence Minister Gediminas Kirkilas was voted on 4 July 2006, by the Lithuanian Seimas (Parliament) as next Prime Minister of Lithuania. Former PM had submitted his resignation to President on 31 May 2006. The resignation came in the wake of the decision of the Labour Party to withdraw from the ruling coalition due to the fact that the authorities alleged that the Labour party had received funds from foreign companies controlled by the Russian intelligence agencies.

The third round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) with Lithuania was held in New Delhi on 26 October 2006.

Luxembourg

India's relations with Luxembourg continued to develop and diversify during the year. Political and economic interaction was marked by a mutual desire to consolidate a dynamic relationship.

Bilateral trade during 2005-06 was at US\$ 26.77 million and Foreign Direct Investment from Luxembourg into India amounted to US\$ 69 million from August 1991-October 2006.

Foreign Secretary of Luxembourg, George Santer visited India on 3-4 April, 2006 and held discussions with the Foreign Secretary.

Ram Vilas Paswan, Minister of Steel, Chemicals and Fertilizers visited Luxembourg from 13-15 September 2006. He called on the Prime Minister and held meetings with Minister of Economy and Commerce.

Montenegro

Following a successful referendum held in Montenegro on 21 May 2006, Montenegro, which was earlier a part of the State Union of Serbia & Montenegro, became a sovereign independent country on 3rd June, 2006. The name of the former State Union of Serbia & Montenegro

changed to 'Republic of Serbia' as on 5th June, 2006. The Republic of Serbia will continue its international responsibilities including membership of the UN.

The Government of India has recognized the Government of the Republic of Montenegro. A communication to this effect was sent in a letter dated 2 August 2006 from Anand Sharma, MOS, addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Miodrag Vlahovic. Following the step, formal establishment of diplomatic relations has been initiated. The Indian Ambassador in Belgrade will be concurrently accredited to the Republic of Montenegro.

Norway

The second session of the Strategy Advisory Group (SAG) on Norway-India Partnership Initiative (NIPI) on MDG4 was held in Oslo on 26-28 June 2006. From India, Secretary Health & Family Welfare and Secretary, Bio-Technology participated in the meeting. Prime Minister Stoltenberg reiterated Norwegian commitment to fund the NIPI programme worth about US\$ 80 million over next 5 years.

Foreign Secretary visited Norway on 24 August 2006 to hold discussions on NSG related issues.

A 12 member Norwegian Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour and Social Affairs headed by Karin Andersen, Chairman visited India from 4-7 September 2006.

The Norwegian Crown Prince Haakon and Princess Mette-Marit accompanied by the Ministers of Petroleum & Energy, Trade & Industry, and the Deputy Minister in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as well as a 130-strong business delegation paid an official visit to India from 29 October-4 November, 2006 at the invitation of the Vice President. He called on President and met the EAM.

Kapil Sibal, Minister of Science & Technology visited Norway from 13-15 November 2006. During the visit, an Agreement on Science & Technology was signed which established a Joint Working Group (JWG) to implement the bilateral programme of action. Minister, Science & Technology had a meeting with Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Store apart from his counterpart Djupedal, and addressed a polar conference in Arctic City of Tromso.

The Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Store paid an official visit to India on 14-15 December 2006 in connection with the Second Session of the Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) between India and Norway. The Foreign Minister of Norway led the delegation from the Norwegian side and External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee from the Indian side. Apart from bilateral meeting with EAM, the visiting Foreign Minister also had meetings with Minister of Science & Technology and Minister of Environment and Forests.

During the JCM, an Arrangement between the Government of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway on Gainful Occupation for Family Members of a Diplomatic Mission or Consular Posts; and a Terms of Reference (TOR) for establishing the Indo-Norwegian Joint Working Group on Environment were signed. Also Agreed Minutes of the 2nd JCM were signed.

Poland

Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce & Industry visited Poland from 19-20 May 2006 along with business delegation. During the visit, Minister had call on Polish PM and had meetings with Foreign Minister and Economy Minister. During the visit, an agreement on Economic Cooperation between India and Poland was signed on 19 May 2006. In addition, two agreements were also signed by the Business delegations between Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Polish Chamber of Commerce (PCC) and an MoU between World Trade Centre, Mumbai and World Trade Centre, Warsaw.

Cabinet has approved an Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Tourism between the Government of the Republic of India and Government of the Republic of Poland.

Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Poland from 12-15 June 2006. During the visit, he had delegation level talks with Anna Fotyga, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland. He also met with Defence Minister Radoslaw Sikorski, Secretary of State in PM's Chancellery Zbigniew Derdziuk, Vice Marshal of the Sejm Marek Kotlinowski, Vice Marshal of the Senate Marek Ziolkowski, Undersecretary of State in Foreign Ministry Witold Wyszczynski, and Undersecretary of State in President's Chancellery Andrzej Krawczyk. Minister also

visited Krakow. During the visit MOS (AS) had chaired the meetings of HoMs of the regions on 15 June 2006 in Warsaw.

On 9 May 2006, Anna Fotyga, Secretary of State in Foreign Ministry and former Member of European Parliament, was elevated to the post of Foreign Minister. With Fotyga's appointment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will come under the full control of the President's Chancellery - Fotyga and Kaczynski worked closely during the Solidarity days.

With the resignation of former Prime Minister of Poland Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz on 9 July 2006, Polish President Lech Kaczynski appointed his twin brother Jaroslaw Kaczynski as the new Prime Minister of Poland on 10 July 2006. Subsequently, the new Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski won the confidence vote of the Sejm (lower house).

A month long political turmoil in the ruling coalition parties was ended in October, 2006 with the return of the dismissed Deputy PM and leader of the Self Defence Lepper on his reappointment to the same post. The ruling conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party has returned to the majority coalition with Self Defence and League of Polish Families (LPR) parties rejoining as the ruling coalition partners.

Polish Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Rafal Wisniewski visited India from 18-22 November 2006 in connection with the inauguration of Polish cultural programmes associated with "Days of Poland in India 2006-2007".

Portugal

In substantive preparation for the visit of the President of Portugal, Dr. Anibal Cavaco Silva from 11-17 January 2007, the first HOS/HOG level visit from Portugal in nearly 15 years, the India-Portugal Joint Economic Commission held its 3rd session in New Delhi on 12 December 2006.

President Silva was accompanied by four Ministers – Minister of Culture Isabel Pires de Lima, Minister for Economy and Innovation Manuel António Gomes de Pinho, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Joao Cravinho, and Minister of State for Science, Technology and Higher Education Prof. Manuel Heitor. Members of Parliament,

a senior official delegation, around 70 senior Spanish businesspersons and a large media delegation will accompany the Portuguese President.

Portugal will take over the EU Presidency in the 2nd half of 2007.

Business links presently are short of potential. Bilateral trade with Portugal is modest at almost US\$ 290 million (2005). Indian exports accounted for most part of the bilateral trade and stood at US\$ 258 million (2005). Investment from either side is also minimal. Total FDI inflow from Portugal to India is US\$ 1.4 million (August 1991-October 2006).

Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on 21 November 2006. MOS (AS) led the Indian delegation while Joao Cravinho, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Portugal led the Portuguese delegation.

Another positive development has been the launching of a Portugal-India Chamber of Commerce in Lisbon on 17 November 2006. There is also a Joint Business Council between the two countries.

Carlos Pascoa, a Member of the Portuguese Parliament representing the Portuguese Diaspora outside Europe, visited India from 27 October- 3 November 2006. He met the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Vayalar Ravi in Delhi besides visiting Goa. A 16-member Parliamentary Goodwill Delegation led by Minister of Parliamentary Affairs & Information & Broadcasting, Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi visited Portugal on 6-7 November 2006 and met with the President (Speaker) of the Parliament, Dr. Jaime Gama and the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs of Portugal, Dr. Augusto dos Santos Silva.

Romania

Iuliu Winkler, Minister for Commerce paid an official visit to India from 3-9 June 2006. During his visit, he called on Ministers in charge of Power, Science and Technology, Commerce and Industry and Secretary, Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy.

At the invitation of Romanian Foreign Minister, Anand Sharma, MOS, paid an official visit to Romania from 29 August 2006-1 September 2006 to attend the Annual Reunion of Romanian Diplomacy. Apart from a one-to-one meeting and delegation-level talks with the Romanian

Foreign Minister, MOS also had meetings with Romanian President, Vice- President, and Prime Minister.

Romanian President, Traian Basescu, paid a State Visit to India from 22-24 October 2006. During his visit, Romanian President had meetings with President, Prime Minister, Vice-President and Chairperson of UPA, Sonia Gandhi. The Romanian President was accompanied by a high-level delegation which included Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Economy and Commerce, and Minister of Telecommunications and IT. Four Agreements/MoUs were signed during the State Visit.

Cabinet approved Protocol for amending the Agreement between the Government of India and Romania for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments signed in New Delhi on 17 November 1997.

Slovak Republic

General Elections were held in the Slovak Republic on 17 June, 2006. The opposition SMER party won 50 seats in the 150-member Parliament. It was followed by the SDKU party of Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda with 31 Parliamentary seats. The Slovak National Party gained 20 seats, followed by SMK(20 seats), HZDS(15 seats),and Conservative Christian Democratic Movement(14 seats).The elections were necessitated following withdrawal of support to the Government of Prime Minister Dzurinda by the Christian Democratic Movement. Talks are on for the formation of a coalition Government.

The Slovak Minister of Economy, Lubomir Jahnotek, paid an official visit to India from 13-15 November 2006. The Minister was accompanied by a large and high level business delegation. The visit coincided with the Sixth Session of the Indo-Slovak Joint Economic Committee which took place in New Delhi on 13 November 2006.

Slovenia

Priyadarshi Thakur, Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industry and Public Enterprises, has been elected for a 4 year term, with the support of the Slovenian Government, as the Director General (Executive Director) of the International Centre for Promotion of Enterprises (ICPE) situated in Ljubljana in the elections held in ICPE Council on 9 June 2006.

Slovenia joined the Euro zone on 1 January 2007. An

exchange rate of 239.64 Slovenian Tolar (SLT) against a Euro has been fixed. Slovenia became the thirteenth country to have Euro as the legal tender. Twelve countries had adopted Euro from 1 January 2002; and Slovenia is the first among the ten new entrants to join the zone.

The fourth round of Foreign Office Consultations with Slovenia was held on 6 October 2006 in New Delhi.

Spain

There is a growing exchange of Ministerial and business delegations between India and Spain over recent years. Spain has the 5th largest economy in the EU and the 8th largest economy in the world with a GDP of around US \$ 1 trillion. The Spanish economy has registered rates of growth among the highest in the EU in recent years. Bilateral trade has grown by 35 percent in 2005 to touch US\$ 2.7 billion. FDI inflow from Spain to India has been low (US\$ 60 million during August 1991-October 2006).

The Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Zapatero made an official visit to India on 3-4 July 2006, the first Head of Government level visit from either side in 13 years. It took place on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The last such visit was that of Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez in 1993.

The Spanish Prime Minister was accompanied by Foreign Minister Moratinos, Minister for Industry, Tourism and Trade, Montilla and around 60 Spanish companies. Zapatero was supposed to have visited Pune (where several of the Spanish joint ventures in India are based) and Mumbai, besides Delhi, however, he had to cut short the visit after the Delhi leg, following news of a subway accident in Valencia.

A Joint Statement was issued during the visit, declaring the intention of both sides to substantially enhance the existing relationship. The two Governments agreed to work actively together to realize the full potential of economic linkages between the rapidly growing Indian and Spanish economies and took special note of the convergence of views on cooperation in fight against terrorism.

An MoU on Institutionalising the Political Dialogue, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty and an MoU on Technology Transfer and Industrial Research were signed during the visit.

In the run up to the Spanish Prime Minister's visit, Foreign Office Consultations (Secretary level) were held in May 2006 in Spain.

MOS (AS) visited Spain from 11-14 November 2006 for the inauguration ceremony of the Casa de la India (*India House*) in Valladolid and discussions with Spanish External Affairs Minister Miguel Moratinos and MOS for External Affairs D. Bernardino Leon Groos. He also met Spanish Minister of Education and Science Dr. Mercedes Cabrera. He visited Barcelona for discussions with Casa Asia and also addressed the El Cano Institute on India's Foreign Policy and the Instituto de Impresa on business opportunities opening up in India.

K. Rahman Khan, the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha visited Spain in June 2006 and had a meeting with Javier Rojo, President of the Senate of the Spanish Parliament, where it was agreed that Parliamentary exchanges between the two countries should be encouraged. A Goodwill delegation of Indian Parliamentarians led by Priya Ranjan Dasmuni, the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Information & Broadcasting visited Spain from 8-10 November 2006.

MOS for Food Processing visited Spain from 25-26 October 2006. A Statement of Intent was signed with the Government of the region of Castilla y Leon.

The 2nd India-Spain Dialogue Forum (civil society dialogue) was organized by ICWA in New Delhi on 16-17 October 2006. The Spanish participants included prominent writers, journalists, academicians and representatives from political parties besides the senior officials. A Joint Declaration was signed by the Forum. The delegation also called on MOS (AS).

The Chief Minister of Haryana, Bhupinder Singh Hooda visited Spain from 17-19 October. He met the President of the Madrid region.

Sweden

Foreign Secretary visited Sweden on 23 August 2006. He met Swedish Foreign Minister Jan Eliasson and State Secretary Hans Dahlgren, and held discussions on NSG related issues.

Minister for Water Resources, Prof. Saif-ud-din Soz visited Stockholm, Sweden from 23-27 August 2006 to attend the World Water Week.

Switzerland

Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs visited Switzerland on 10 – 11 September 2006 to interact with the Indian community to evolve an agenda for future strategy as well as Publicity for the next Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to be held in January, 2007 in New Delhi.

Minister of Commerce & Industry Kamal Nath visited Zurich on 2 October 2006 at the invitation of Swiss-Indian Chamber of Commerce (SICC). He addressed the Swiss business at a function organized by SICC. The other panelist was the CEO of Holcim, Paul Hugentobler. He also met the Federal Councillor for Economic Affairs, Doris Leuthard.

Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath visited Geneva from 30 November-2 December 2006. He announced the establishment of a Joint Study Group on the FTA between India and the EFTA.

S. Regupathy, Minister of State for Home (in charge of Disaster Management), visited Switzerland from 30 October 2006- 3 November 2006. This was a follow-up to President visit to Switzerland in 2005 as well as to identify specific areas/programmes/projects of cooperation between the Government of India and the Swiss Confederation.

Kapil Sibal, Minister of Science & Technology paid a visit to Switzerland from 15-18 November 2006. During the visit a Programme of Cooperation within the framework of Science & Technology Agreement of 2003, was signed.

Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Panabaka Lakshmi visited Geneva, Switzerland on 9 November 2006 to attend the Special Session of world Health Assembly.

The protocol amending the Air Services Agreement (ASA) between India and Switzerland was approved by Cabinet on 23 November 2006.

The fourth round of Foreign Office Consultations with Switzerland was held in New Delhi on 6 November 2006.

The Netherlands

Bilateral relations have strengthened and intensified over the year. High level ministerial visits from the Netherlands have imparted further momentum to our relationship.

Bilateral trade between India and The Netherlands has been growing to the tune of Euro 2 billion. Cumulative

Dutch investment into India is of the order of US\$ 2.4 billion (August 1991-October 2006; over 6 percent of total FDI inflows). This makes The Netherlands the 3rd largest investor in India and the largest from the EU.

Following the visit of the Dutch Prime Minister to India in January 2006, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Dr. Bernard Rudolf Bot visited India on 5-6 November 2006 and held meetings with Minister of External Affairs and National Security Adviser. Earlier, the second round of Foreign Office Consultations were held at The Hague in June 2006.

Minister of Foreign Trade, Karien van Gennip visited India from 2-8 September 2006 accompanied by a strong business delegation. She held discussions with Minister of Commerce and Industry, Minister of Finance and had meetings with business and industry houses in Delhi, Chennai and Hyderabad.

Turkey

A 5-member Turkish delegation led by Turkish Treasury Undersecretary Ibrahim Halil Canakci visited India to attend the 39th Annual Meeting of Asian Development (ADB) Board of Governors in Hyderabad from 3-6 May 2006.

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan, on his way to Indonesia to attend the D-8 Conference in Bali, made a refuelling technical halt at Indira Gandhi Airport in New Delhi on 12 May 2006. Joint Secretary, Central Europe had received him and had a brief meeting with the Turkish PM.

A Turkish Parliamentary delegation visited India from 13-17 September 2006. The delegation had meetings with members of India-Turkey Parliamentary Friendship Group. They also had meetings with Special Secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Employment, as well as with the MOS in the Ministry of Finance.

Ambassador Rafet Akgunay, Special Envoy of the Turkish Prime Minister visited India from 18-20 October 2006. The purpose of his visit was to hand over a letter from Turkish Prime Minister to Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh seeking India's support for Turkish candidature for non-permanent membership of UNSC for the term 2009-2010 for which elections will be held in UNGA in 2008.

Turkish Minister of Culture and Tourism Atilla Koc, on invitation from our Minister of Culture and Tourism, paid

an official visit to India from 22-25 November 2006. During his visit, Second Session of India-Turkey Joint Committee on Tourism was held in New Delhi.

Prof. Dr. Besir Atalay, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in the Turkish Foreign Office led a 6 members delegation to attend the Second Regional Economic Cooperation Conference (RECC) on Afghanistan held in New Delhi on 18-19 November 2006.

United Kingdom

India and the UK share a strategic relationship that is multifaceted and has developed substantially over the past few years. Close ties with the UK are a priority for India given our political and civilisational ties, increasing economic linkages and the large Indian Diaspora in the UK. The UK, in turn, attaches high priority to developing close ties with India, as reflected in the frequent high-level interactions.

The UK, with the 5th largest economy in the world, is India's 4th largest global trading partner and the largest in the EU, with annual two-way trade in goods in 2005 at £ 5.6 billion and of services in 2004 of £ 1.827 billion. With a figure of £ 3.4 billion, the UK continues to be the largest cumulative investor in India and the 5th largest post 1991, with US\$ 2.14 billion (5.3 percent of total FDI inflows) (August 1991- November 2006). Since 2004, Indian investment in the UK has exceeded British investment into India.

Prime Minister visited UK on 9-11 October 2006 for the 3rd India-UK Summit since the comprehensive strategic partnership between India and the UK was launched in September 2004. He was accompanied by the Commerce & Industry Minister, Kamal Nath, Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma and NSA. This was the fifth meeting of the two Prime Ministers since 2004. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh had earlier met Prime Minister Tony Blair at the St. Petersburg G-8 Summit in July, 2006.

Cooperation in counter-terrorism, clean energy and trade and investment figured among the key issues during the visit. Prime Minister was conferred an honorary doctorate by the Cambridge University on 11 October 2006.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Prime Minister Blair addressed an India-UK Investment Summit on 10



The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh with the Prime Minister of United Kingdom Tony Blair in London on 10 October 2006.



The Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma calls on the Prime Minister of Spain Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero in New Delhi on 3 July 2006.

October 2006, organized by the Indo-Business Partnership Network. The event was also addressed by Commerce & Industry Minister and Alistair Darling, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. Around 100 CEOs attended the event, which focused on energy, infrastructure, manufacturing, financial services and venture capital/innovation.

Margaret Beckett, UK Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs visited India (2-3 November) three weeks after PM's visit to the UK. Earlier, Dr. Kim Howells, MoS for Foreign Affairs visited India on 28-29 September 2006, a few days before PM's visit to UK.

In 2006, four leading Parliamentary Committees, led by their Chairmen, visited India: Trade & Industry, Home, Treasury and Foreign Affairs.

Foreign Office Consultations were held on 3 April 2006 in New Delhi. Foreign Secretary led the Indian delegation. The India-UK Security Dialogue was held on 4 April 2006 in New Delhi. NSA led the Indian delegation.

The UK Leader of the Opposition David Cameron visited India on 3-7 September 2006. He was accompanied by George Osborne, Shadow Chancellor of Exchequer. The Prince of Wales (26 March-3 April 2006) and a large number of senior U.K Ministers have visited India. There have also been visits of several Ministers from our side. Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, visited India (28 October- 4 November 2006) as the Special Representative of the UK for Trade & Industry.

Peter Hain, MP and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland visited India (9-13 April 2006). Other visits from the UK side have included Home Affairs Committee team led by Chairman John Denham, MP (April); Treasury Select Committee led by Chairman John McFall (20-23 June); MOS for Sport, Richard Caborn (15-16 November); MOS Trade, Ian McCartney, MP (23-27 November).

The visits from the Indian side have included Dr Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission (26-27 April); Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers (1-3 June); Vilas Muttemwar, Minister for NES (June 14); Lalu Prasad Yadav, Minister for Railways (23-26 June); Kamal Nath, CIM for India UK Business Summit (26-28 June); Subodh Kant Sahai, MoS for Food Processing Industries to attend the Royal

Agriculture Show (3-7 July); Santosh Mohan Dev, Minister for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises (4-8 July); Dayanidhi Maran, Minister for Communications & IT (14-16 July); Vayalar Ravi, Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs (2-3 October).

The India-UK Strategic Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 2 May 2006.

International Conference: Peace, Non-Violence and Empowerment: Gandhian Philosophy in the 21st Century.

To commemorate the Centenary of the Satyagraha movement, an international Conference was organised on "Peace, Non-Violence and Empowerment-Gandhian Philosophy in the 21st Century". The conference was attended by eminent leaders and dignitaries from countries in Central Europe including Dr. Janez Drnovsek, President of the Republic of Slovenia, Maud Olofsson, Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden, George Papandreou, Former Foreign Minister of Greece, and Former President Lech Walesa of Poland and Noble Laureate. Delegates from Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, and Switzerland also attended the Conference.

European Union (EU)

The highlight of rapidly intensifying India-EU relations in the period under review was the 7th Summit in Helsinki on 13 October 2006. During the Summit, both sides agreed to launch negotiations on a broad-based India-EU trade and investment agreement.

The EU, a strong economic player with a single market comprising its 27 member states, is India's largest trading partner accounting for one-fifth of India's total external trade. Bilateral trade has steadily grown between 2001 and 2005 at over 10 percent on average to reach Euro 40 billion in 2005. India and the EU are also important investment partners. Total FDI inflows from the EU to India are US\$ 8 billion (20 percent of total FDI inflows August 1991-October 2006). Indian companies have also begun to invest in the EU in recent years. UK, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy and The Netherlands are important trade & investment partners for India.

At the 7th India-EU Summit, Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen of Finland lead the EU delegation (Finland held the rotating Presidency of EU during the second half of

2006) that included Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, Dr. Javier Solana, EU Secretary General and High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Dr. Benita Ferrero Waldner, EU Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Erkki Tuomioja, Finnish Foreign Minister and Peter Mandelson, Commissioner for Trade. Prime Minister led the Indian delegation and was assisted by Minister of Commerce & Industry, Minister of State for External Affairs and NSA.

The Summit was preceded by an India-EU Business Summit and a CEO Round Table on 12 October 2006.

Among the areas of primary focus were the economic aspects of the India-EU relationship, cooperation in counter-terrorism, energy, closer security dialogue and political understanding on issues of mutual interest such as non-proliferation issues and cooperation in the field of civil nuclear energy. A Joint Statement and Joint Action Plan Implementation Report were issued at the Summit, in a comprehensive overview of the progress achieved in various sectors for engagement and cooperation identified in the Joint Action Plan finalised at the 6th Summit a year ago.

The highlight of the 7th Summit was the acceptance by the leadership of both sides of the recommendation of the bilateral High Level Trade Group (HLTG) to launch negotiations on a broad based Trade and Investment Agreement with the maximum coverage possible and to work towards a quick conclusion of this Agreement within the next two years. The HLTG, set up under the Joint Action Plan, was mandated to explore ways and means to deepen and widen the bilateral trade and investment relationship. It finalised its Report and recommendations in less than a year, for presentation to the 7th Summit.

The India-EU Round Table provides a forum for civil society cooperation and contributes to the enhancement of bilateral relations between India and the EU. The 10th Meeting of the India-EU Round Table (RT) was held in Vienna on 7-8 June 2006. The two sides were led by the co-Chairpersons N. N. Vohra and Anne-Marie Sigmund, President of EESC (European Economic & Social Committee) respectively. The members of the Round Table (around 30 from the two sides) are eminent persons who represent various sections of civil society. The 10th

meeting focused on energy, social development and minorities.

The 16th India-EU Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) was held on 18 September 2006 in Brussels.

The India-EU Energy Panel, set up in follow up to a decision taken at the 5th India-EU Summit at The Hague in November, 2004 to identify areas for greater cooperation in the critical sector of Energy and Energy security, held its 2nd meeting in New Delhi on 7 April 2006. The Panel, after its first meeting in June, 2005, had set up three Working Groups on Coal and clean coal conversion technologies, Energy efficiency and renewable energies, and Fusion energy including India's participation in the ITER nuclear fusion project. India has since joined the ITER project. The Working Groups on Coal and Energy Efficiency met on 22-23 March 2006 in New Delhi. The Working Group on Fusion Energy met on 1 February 2006 in Ahmedabad. The 2nd meeting also decided to set up another Working Group on Petroleum & Natural Gas and to conduct 5 techno economic studies.

An Energy Business Conference was held in New Delhi a day earlier on 6 April 2006. This was addressed by the EU Commissioner for Energy, Piebalgs and the Minister of Power, Sushil Kumar Shinde.

The 11th meeting of the India-EU Joint Working Group on Consular Issues was held in New Delhi on 8 December 2006. The 10th meeting was held on 14 June 2006. The 1st round of India-EU Dialogue on Migration and Consular issues was held on 27 June 2006 in Brussels.

The 1st round of India-EU Security Dialogue that was envisaged under the Joint Action Plan was also held on 22 May 2006, following the 11th Senior Officials Meeting. An India-EU Dialogue on Human Rights was held in New Delhi on 12 December 2006.

There was a series of high level exchanges at the level of parliamentarians during this period. These included visits by the President of the European Parliament Josep Borrell (30 September- 6 October 2006) at the invitation of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha; Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, Elmar Brok (4-7 January); and a 5-member delegation of MEPs, led by Charles Tannock, Head of the Friends of India group in

the European Parliament visited India (28 October–3 November 2006).

Sajjad Karim, Rapporteur of European parliament's 'own initiative report' on EU's economic and trade relations with India, visited India in April, 2006.

Neena Gill, Chairperson of the South Asia Delegation of the European parliament visited India in July and April 2006.

Baroness Emma Nicholson, MEP, Vice Chairperson of the

Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament and the Rapporteur of the Own Initiative Report on Kashmir visited India from 26-30 June 2006.

The Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir Ghulam Nabi Azad visited Brussels on 19-20 September 2006. He met the President of the European Parliament, Josep Borell and Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Elmar Brok and addressed a group of MEPs at the European Parliament. Sachin Pilot, MP visited Brussels and Strasbourg from 3-12 September 2006.



United States of America

The transformation in the US- India bilateral relationship was marked by a consolidation of efforts by both sides to broaden the India-US agenda. Close and frequent contacts at political as well as at official levels coupled with wide-ranging dialogue on global, regional and bilateral issues of mutual interest reflect the changed quality of the bilateral discourse. The India-U.S. interaction today encompasses strategic and security issues, defence, counter-terrorism, science and technology, health, trade, space, energy, maritime cooperation, and environment.

President Bush's Visit

Following the landmark visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to USA in July 2005, President George W. Bush came to India on a state visit from 1-3 March 2006. He was accompanied by First Lady Laura Bush, Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice, Chief of Staff Andrew Card, National Security Advisor Steve Hadley, and US Trade Representative Rob Portman. President Bush had a meeting with the Prime Minister and the two leaders issued a Joint Statement outlining the main elements of understandings reached during the visit. Both countries announced joint initiatives in agriculture, science and technology, space and maritime cooperation. The visit also saw an agreement on India's nuclear separation plan under the bilateral civil nuclear understanding. The India-US CEO Forum set up during Prime Minister's visit in July 2005 submitted its report which aimed at substantially broad-basing and accelerating India-U.S. economic and trade relations. President Bush also called on President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and received UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and the Leader of Opposition L.K. Advani.

President Bush's public appearances included an address at Purana Qila in New Delhi, a visit to the Acharya N.G. Ranga University and the Indian School of Business in Hyderabad. The visit took place in the backdrop of the

key understandings forged during the July 2005 visit of Prime Minister to Washington DC.

Prime Minister met President Bush again in St. Petersburg on 17 July 2006 on the margins of the G-8 Summit. The two leaders reviewed several aspects of the bilateral relationship and, amongst other things, discussed cross-border terrorism and the Indo-US civil nuclear cooperation initiative.

Civil Nuclear Energy

Several steps were taken by both sides to implement the understanding on resumption of civil nuclear energy cooperation that was reached in July 2005. It represents an important landmark in the evolving bilateral ties between the two countries.

Under this understanding, India finalized its Separation Plan in March 2006 which was tabled in Parliament by the Prime Minister on 7 March 2006. The Separation Plan lays down the schedule for placing India's nuclear reactors under safeguards beginning from 2007. It is envisaged that 14 out of the current 22 thermal power reactors would be placed under IAEA safeguards.

The Hyde Act, that legally enables resumption of full civil nuclear energy cooperation between India and U.S., was passed by the U.S. Congress on 8-9 December 2006 and signed into law by President Bush on 18 December 2006. Both sides are working on a bilateral civil nuclear agreement to determine the parameters of such cooperation. U.S. has initiated discussions with the Nuclear Supplier's Group to adjust its guidelines. In addition, India is engaged directly with various NSG countries. India will be engaging the IAEA to negotiate an India-specific IAEA safeguards agreement.

The U.S. Government has supported India's inclusion in several significant international initiatives. In April 2006, India and United States concluded a Framework Protocol under which India has joined the Government Steering

Committee of FutureGen, an international public-private partnership to develop new, commercially viable technology for a clean coal near-zero emission power project. India was also admitted to the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) initiative as a full member during the meeting of ITER negotiators on December 6, 2005 held at Jeju, South Korea.

Trade and Economy

India's economic partnership with the U.S. is growing rapidly. U.S. is India's largest trade partner and leading foreign investor. The total trade in merchandise and commodities stood at US\$ 26.76 billion in 2005, an increase of 23.6% over 2004. For the first ten months of 2006 (January-October), bilateral trade stood at US \$26.55 billion. During President Bush's visit, both sides set the goal of doubling bilateral trade within three years. In June 2006, Commerce and Industries Minister Kamal Nath visited Washington D.C. for a meeting of the Indo-U.S. Trade Policy Forum. This was followed by a meeting in November 2006 in New Delhi led by Commerce Secretary and US Deputy Trade Representative Karan Bhatia

The CEO Forum, set up in July 2005 by India and US as an innovative mechanism to strengthen trade and economic inter-linkages between two countries, submitted its recommendations during the visit of President Bush to India in March 2006. The Forum met on 25 October 2006 in New York to discuss the implementation of the recommendations. The India-US Economic Dialogue co-chaired by Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia and the Director of the National Economic Council and Assistant to the US President on Economic Policy, Allan Hubbard, has been tasked with following up expeditiously with the CEO Forum on implementation of the recommendations.

The Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture launched in July 2005 was further advanced during the visit of President Bush in March 2006 with an announcement for a three-year financial commitment to link universities, technical institutions, and businesses to support agriculture education, joint research, and capacity building projects including in the area of biotechnology. U.S. Agricultural Secretary Mike Johanns paid a visit to India from 18-22 November 2006. The 4th Meeting of the Knowledge Initiative Board also took place in November 2006.

Defence

The India-US Defence Policy Group, which is the apex institutional dialogue mechanism for defence, held its eighth meeting in New Delhi on 15-16 November, 2006 during which the entire gamut of bilateral defence relations including military-to-military contacts, joint exercises, exchange of visits, issues of procurement and joint production and research and development were reviewed. The sub-groups under the DPG also held their separate meetings. The Defence Procurement and Production Group met for the second time in New Delhi on 12-13 November 2006. The Senior Technology Security Group met in September 2006 in Washington while the Military Cooperation Group held a meeting in New Delhi in October 2006.

Malabar 2006, the annual bilateral naval exercise between the Indian and the US navies, took place towards the end of October 2006.

Energy & Environment

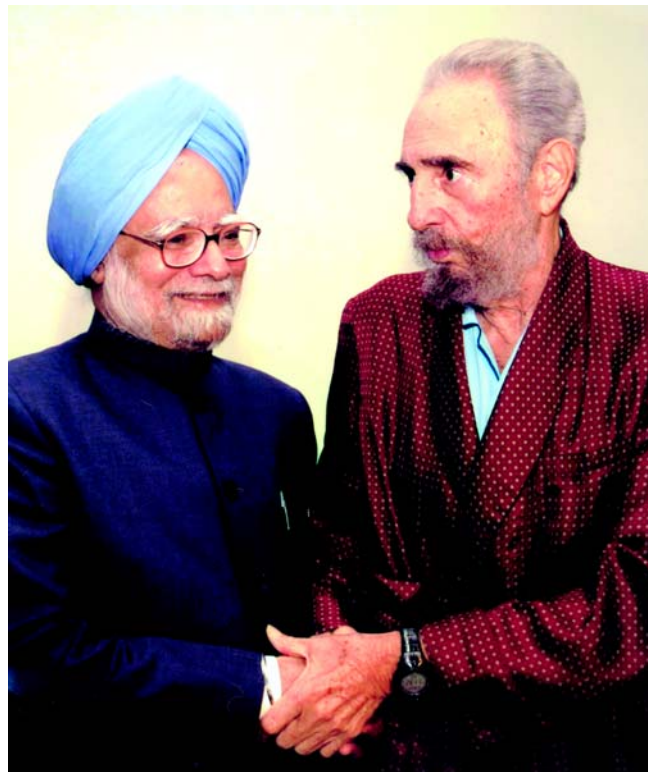
The Five Working Groups under the India-US Energy Dialogue – Oil & Gas, Power & Efficiency, New Technology and Renewable Energy, Coal and Civil Nuclear Energy- carried out a series of collaborative activities and initiatives. The Working Group on Oil and Gas met in July 2006; the Working Group on Coal met in April 2006; and the Working Group on New Technology and Renewable Energy met in May 2006.

A number of bilateral energy-related agreements were concluded establishing such as the agreement on establishing a coal bed methane and coal mine methane clearing house in India in November 2006, agreement on exchange of safety standards in the hydrocarbon upstream sector in July 2006 and on alternative mining technologies with the USTDA in March 2006. Workshops/conferences, on energy efficiency in May 2006, on natural gas in May 2006, on underground coal gasification in November 2006 and on wind and solar power in November 2006, were held.

India and U.S. have been collaborating actively in the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate, which is a multilateral initiative launched in January 2006. James Connaughton, Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality at the White House with oversight of APP, visited India in August 2006 during which he interacted with key officials of the APP on our



The President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam with the President of the USA, George W Bush at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi on 2 March 2006. Laura Bush is also seen.



The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh with the President of Cuba Fidel Castro in Havana on 17 September 2006.

side including Deputy Chairman Planning Commission and heads of Ministries involved in the APP task forces.

Science & Technology

The Indo-US Science & Technology Forum held its Eighth Governing Body Meeting on 7 December, 2006 in New Delhi. Dr. Arden Bement, Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF), led a high level delegation to India in October 2006. The delegation met with a wide cross-section of scientists, academics and students in India to explore ways to increase bilateral interaction in Science & Technology.

The 2nd meeting of the India-US Information & Communications Technology Working Group was held on 13 December, 2006.

Canada

General Elections were held in Canada in January 2006, which brought the Conservative Party led by Stephen Harper into power. Prime Minister Harper's Government have prioritised trade and investment, S&T and environment technology as specific areas of cooperation with India. The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, in a document tabled in Canadian Parliament in September 2006, highlighted the need for Canada to 'further develop its relations with rising powers such as India'.

Science & Technology

Pursuant to the bilateral Agreement on Science & Technology signed in November 2005, both sides have identified Expert Area Coordinators and decided that bilateral workshops in the areas of nano-technology and biotechnology would be organised in Canada and India respectively. Dr. R A Mashelkar, Director General, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, (CSIR) visited Ottawa in June 2006 and held discussions with Dr. Arthur Carty, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Prime Minister of Canada for launching a bilateral industrial research programme, developing a strategic partnership between the National Research Council of Canada and CSIR of India to undertake technology development aimed at global markets, and launching a programme of networking young scientists from the two countries.

Foreign Office Consultations

Official level discussions were held in Ottawa in

September 2006 to carry forward the dialogue on nuclear issues that began the previous year during the then External Affairs Minister's visit to Canada in September 2005.

Defence Cooperation

India and Canada agreed to consider resumption of defence contacts with official level exchanges between Staff Colleges and exchange of invitations to observe air exercises in the two countries.

Canadian Participation in the Regional Conference on Afghanistan in New Delhi

Deepak Obhrai, Parliamentary Secretary to the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, led the Canadian delegation to the Regional Conference on Afghanistan held in New Delhi in November 2006.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The relations with Latin America and Caribbean region were strengthened and diversified with exchange of visits, high level visits, Joint Commission meetings and Foreign Office Consultations. The visit of the Prime Minister to Brazil and Cuba was the first ever visit to the region after a gap of 20 years. The trade has continued to increase. A number of Indian companies have started seriously pursuing investments and joint ventures in the region. Most of the countries in the region saw deepening of the academic, cultural and educational linkages.

Argentina

The visit of Minister of External Relations, International Trade and Worship of Argentina, Jorge Enrique Taiana to India from 2-8 July, 2006 was the first ever visit from Argentina in the last several years. He was accompanied by a large business delegation besides officials. The Joint Commission Meeting held on the occasion of the visit, reviewed the ongoing cooperation and explored new avenues such as railways and mining.

Brazil

The high point in the relations in 2006 was the visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Brazil from 11-14 September 2006. During the visit, the two sides agreed to upgrade the relations to a 'Strategic Partnership'. Prime Minister was accompanied by Commerce and Industries Minister, Kamal Nath, Minister of State for External

Affairs, Anand Sharma and senior officials. A 50-member business delegation also traveled to Brazil on the occasion and had meaningful interactions with their Brazilian counterparts. Eight agreements/MoUs - six at government level and two commercial agreements - were signed during the visit in areas such as Civil Aviation, Culture, Agriculture, S&T, Standardization, Human Settlements, Plant Health Protection, Energy, etc. In order to enhance the cultural ties, India and Brazil announced that both countries would shortly be opening Cultural Centres in Sao Paulo and in New Delhi respectively.

Other visits too indicate a very healthy state of India-Brazil relationship. Chief of Army Staff of India, General J. J. Singh was in Brazil from 11-14 May 2006 and visited defence establishments in Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia and Manaus. He also met Defence Minister of Brazil, Waldir Pires. This was followed by the visit of MOS, Defence Production, Rao Inderjit Singh, to Brazil from 24-28 June 2006. A National Defence College team went to Brazil from 14-21 May 2006 and visited Brazilian Army, Navy and Air Force establishments in Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro and Manaus. The Brazilian Army Chief paid the return visit to India from 3-9 December 2006.

Other Ministerial visits were that of Science and Technology Minister Kapil Sibal from 1-4 September 2006 to Angra dos Reis (Rio de Janeiro) to participate in the Science and Technology Ministerial Meeting and that of Minister of State for Food Processing Industries Subodh Kant Sahai from 17-21 July 2006 to preside over a seminar organized by Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority.

In the first nine months of 2006, bilateral trade figures touched US\$ 1803 million with US\$ 1170 million accounting for Indian exports and US\$ 725 million for imports from Brazil.

Indian Companies continued to pursue investment and joint ventures in Brazil. ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) acquired an off-shore oil block for over US\$ 400 million from Shell. Indian sugar and oil companies have sought acquisition of sugar and ethanol plants and sugarcane estates in Brazil.

Chile

The momentum of bilateral relations was maintained

especially in the defence front. General J.J. Singh, Chief of Indian Army visited Chile from 7-10 May 2006. Defence Attaches were appointed in India's Mission in Santiago and Chilean Embassy in Delhi on a reciprocal basis in June 2006. This is the first appointment of a Defence Attache in the Latin American region. Bilateral trade is on the rise.

Colombia

MOS, Defence Production, Rao Inderjit Singh, went to Colombia in June 2006 to boost defence cooperation between the two countries. In September 2006, OVL and a Chinese company jointly purchased 50% shares of Omimex, an oil company of Colombia. OVL's investment in Colombia is over US \$ 400 million.

Cuba

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Havana to attend the NAM Summit from 15-17 September 2006. On the sidelines of the Summit, Prime Minister met President Fidel Castro and Acting President Raul Castro. Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma, who was accompanying the Prime Minister, had a meeting with Foreign Minister of Cuba, Felipe Perez Roque. The Ministers also had met in Putrajaya, Malaysia during the NAM Ministerial Meeting held from 27-30 May 2006. Foreign Office consultations, an integral part of bilateral interactions, were held on 20-21 July 2006.

The Government of India has set up an IT training centre in Havana. It is named as India-Cuba Knowledge Centre. This was inaugurated during the NAM Summit. The cost of the project is about US\$ 700,000. Cuba utilized the entire 40 ITEC slots offered last year and this has now been increased to 45.

ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) signed a Production Sharing Contract on 10th September, 2006 in Havana with CUPET, the Cuban State oil company for two offshore exploration Blocks N-34 and N-35 located in Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Cuba. Earlier in May 2006, OVL signed an International Economic Association Agreement with oil major from Spain, Repsol, for 30% stake in the company's deep sea exploration in six blocks in the Cuban EEZ sector.

Indian pharmaceutical firms' interest in Cuba is also on

the rise, as a new facility of the Indo-Cuban Joint Venture “Biocon Pharmaceuticals” for production of antibodies to be used in cancer treatment was inaugurated in Bangalore in April 2006.

Dominican Republic

Dominican Republic upgraded its relations with India and opened their resident Mission in New Delhi in May 2006. With this the number of resident Missions of Latin American and the Caribbean countries has gone up to 16.

Ecuador

Ecuador’s interest in India, which started with the opening of their Embassy in New Delhi last year, was again reinforced with the first-ever visit of the Foreign Minister from Ecuador, Francisco Carrion, from 17-19 July 2006. Five Agreements were signed on cultural and educational cooperation, and an MoU was reached between OVL and Ecuadorian state owned oil company PetroEcuador. Ecuadorian side agreed to facilitate the entry of Indian companies in the oil sector.

Mexico

India’s relations with Mexico acquired a new momentum in 2006 with a series of activities and exchange of visit from both sides. MOS Anand Sharma represented India in the Swearing ceremony on 1 December 2006 of the newly elected President Felipe Calderon. Science and Technology Minister Kapil Sibal paid an official visit from 17-20 June 2006. The visit was reciprocated by his counterpart from Mexico in October 2006.

A large number of business delegations were exchanged between the two countries including a delegation led by the Vice Minister for the Small and Medium Enterprises of Mexico that visited India from 24-27 September 2006. During the visit a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between the Mexican National Chamber of IT and Electronics (CANIETI) and the Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC) was signed.

Given the increasing commercial linkages between the two countries, the India-Mexico Business Chamber (IMBC) was formally launched on 27 October 2006 in Mexico City.

Peru and Bolivia

MOS, Defence Production, Rao Inderjit Singh visited Peru in June 2006 to give an impetus to defence cooperation. The new Presidents of both the countries have shown interest in expansion of cooperation with India. Bolivia has signed a Letter of Intent for purchase of two Advanced Light Helicopters from HAL.

The high point in India’s relations with Bolivia was the US \$2.3 billion Mutan iron ore and steel project won by Indian company Jindal Steel and Power Ltd. This is the biggest project ever awarded to an Indian company in Latin America.

Venezuela

The Vice Foreign Minister of Venezuela, Alcides Rondon visited India from 21-23 May 2006. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh met President Chavez on the sidelines of NAM Summit in Havana. India imported crude oil from Venezuela amounting to US\$ 535.5 million during January-October 2006.

CARICOM

The presence of large Indian diaspora in the region and traditionally close relations of most countries with India has prompted India to extend credit lines and provide higher education facilities for students from Caribbean countries through Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme. At international fora, this region has shown understanding and support to India’s point of view on various issues.

Guyana

The relations with Guyana were intensified with the Foreign Office Consultations on 17-18 July 2006 in Georgetown where India agreed to help with services of experts for flood forecasting/disaster management, for security related training, for training of Guyanese Diplomats and also for developing an ICT programme for the Country.

This was followed by the visit of Vice President of India to Guyana from 6-9 November 2006 to inaugurate the cricket stadium in Guyana built with India’s financial assistance of US \$ 25 million including a grant component of US \$ 6 million.

In Guyana, four other agreements were also signed during

the visit, namely, renewal of Cultural Exchange Programme, establishment of Rabindranath Tagore Resource Centre at the University of Guyana, arrangement for employment of dependents of diplomats/officials, and Line of Credit of US \$ 2.1 million for traffic signaling system in Georgetown.

The Bahamas

MOS (PMO) Prithviraj Chavan visited The Bahamas to attend the Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Conference from 23-26 May 2006. The Bahamas has sought assistance in recruiting high level IT consultants from India. They have also appointed an Honorary Consul in India effective from 5 October 2006 with jurisdiction in New Delhi.

Trinidad and Tobago

Vice President also visited Trinidad and Tobago from 9-11 November 2006. He had the opportunity to meet a large cross-section of people besides the President, Prime Minister and other senior leaders and share India's developmental and Parliamentary experiences. The visit helped in deepening India's relations with these Caribbean countries.

Panama and Guatemala

Government of India set up two IT training centres in the region costing US\$ 5,62,000 each. The first one is located in the City of Knowledge in Panama City was inaugurated on 24 August 2006. The other centre, set up in Guatemala City, became functional on 7 September 2006.



9

United Nations and International Organizations

India continued to play an important and effective role on the gamut of issues under consideration in the United Nations system. These include peace-keeping and peacebuilding issues, disarmament, economic, social, environmental, humanitarian, legal affairs and issues relating to the management and administration of the UN Secretariat itself. India's constructive and active contribution was visible in the implementation of last year's World Summit Outcome Document, which encapsulates the issue of UN reform.

The issue of UN reform is currently the dominant theme in the activities of the Organization. It includes elements such as the reform of the Security Council, revitalization of the General Assembly, reform of ECOSOC, efforts to conclude and adopt a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, create new institutions to better manage post-conflict peace building processes, to provide effective emergency relief for natural disasters, and to more equitably manage international human rights issues. Apart from these elements, the reform process includes an effort to bring to the UN improved management and budgetary practices.

However, since agreement on the Outcome Document was made possible through a broad endorsement of several substantive proposals without adequate elaboration, the process of evolving operational and functional details has been discussed principally in the year under review. India played an important role in the culmination of several of these processes, such as:

- Establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission (June 2006),
- Launch of the Central Emergency Response Fund (March 2006)
- Establishment of the Human Rights Council. (May 2006)

However, agreement on the more challenging issues, such as the completion of the planned reform of the UN

Secretariat and the management of the UN, reform of the Security Council and the adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism is yet to be achieved.

61st Session of UN General Assembly

The External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee led the Indian delegation to the General Debate of the 61st Session of UN General Assembly in New York from 19-27 September 2006, in his capacity as the then Defence Minister. The main issues covered in his statement at the General Debate on 27 September 2006, included, inter alia, the need to address the inequities in the global economic and financial order and for a lead role by the UN in this context; call for resumption of international trade negotiations without deviation from the existing mandate including the overarching principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries; MDGs; target of 0.7% of GDP for ODA by developed countries; India's development cooperation initiatives for other developing countries; comprehensive reform of the United Nations, particularly the revitalization of the General Assembly and the reform and expansion of the Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories; international terrorism and universal disarmament.

Defence Minister had bilateral meetings with President of Croatia; Prime Minister of Solomon Islands; Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal; US Secretary of State; Minister for European Affairs of France and the Foreign Ministers of Benin, Belize, China, Eritrea, Greece, Guatemala, Jordan and Montenegro. He participated in the 30th Annual Meeting of Foreign Ministers of G-77; informal luncheon meeting of Foreign ministers of SAARC countries (hosted by FM of Bangladesh); Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' (CFMs') Meeting; Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Ministers' Meeting; and, the meeting of Foreign Ministers of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China). He also met the UN Secretary General, the President of the 61st General

Assembly, Secretary General of NATO and representatives of Jewish Organisations in USA . His programme also included a lecture at the Harvard University on the topic “India’s Security Perspective”.

Prior to Defence Minister’s visit, E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs, participated at the UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration (14-15 September 2006). Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs, participated in the mid-term comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the LDCs, which was held in New York from 18-21 September 2006.

Non-official Delegation to UNGA

A seventeen member non-official delegation led by Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, former Union Home Minister and former Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, including Members of Parliament participated in the 61st Session of the UN General Assembly. The delegation members articulated India’s vision on important international political, economic and social issues at the UN.

The Security Council

India made interventions in the Security Council on specific issues of concern, such as on the Middle East, on peace consolidation in West Africa, and on the situation in Afghanistan.

Political, Economic and Social issues in the Security Council and General Assembly

India made statements in the UNGA plenary on agenda items relating to the Report of the Secretary General on the Work of the Organization; the revitalization of the GA, peacekeeping, migration and development issues, Mandate reviews, peacekeeping, and social & humanitarian issues. India also intervened on political issues such as the Middle East, the Afghanistan, Oceans and the Law of the Sea and on the reform and expansion of the Security Council.

Middle East

India has remained engaged in the UN’s consideration of the Middle East issue in the UN General Assembly (both in the Fourth Committee and at the Plenary), and where feasible, at the Security Council. India’s views on the need for a return to the process of dialogue, and for an early end to the cycle of violence and counter-violence have been underlined repeatedly. Several statements were made

by India, including at the resumed 10th Emergency Session of the General Assembly in November 2006, and at Plenary sessions under Agenda Item 13: The Question of Palestine. India also contributes funds annually to the UN Relief Works Agency for its involvement in Palestine.

Afghanistan

India has been closely involved in consideration of this issue in the UN, in both the General Assembly and the Security Council. India participated in negotiating the annual General Assembly resolution on Afghanistan (Agenda Item 16) on 28 November 2006, and in a discussion in the Security Council on 7 December 2006.

Terrorism

Counter-terrorism remains a priority issue for India in the United Nations. India remains in the forefront of the effort to secure agreement on a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT). In the absence of progress on this issue, informal consultations began at the GA on a draft Counter-Terrorism Strategy in May 2006, which was adopted by the General Assembly in September 2006. Even though India strongly believed that the CCIT should be adopted prior to agreeing on a Counter-Terrorism Strategy, it went along the latter’s adoption. The Strategy categorizes four operational elements to combat terrorism:

- Measures to Address the Conditions Conducive to the Spread of Terrorism
- Measures to Prevent and Combat Terrorism
- Measures to Build States’ Capacity to Prevent and Combat Terrorism
- Measures to Ensure Respect for Human Rights of All and the Rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism

The text contains a number of elements that could contribute to countering terrorism, though some of them could have been further strengthened.

India continues its active engagement with other member states for an expeditious adoption of CCIT.

Visit of UN Counter-Terrorism Experts to India

A 14-member delegation of UN Counter-Terrorism experts visited India from 6-13 November, 2006. The delegation was led by the Executive Director of the Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) of UNSC’s Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and

comprised representatives of CTED, Monitoring Team of UNSC's 1267 Committee related to Al Qaeda/Taliban, INTERPOL, United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC) and World Customs Organisation (WCO). The main purpose of the visit was to make an assessment of GoI's fulfilment of its obligations under various UNSC resolutions on counter-terrorism, especially 1267 (1999) and 1373 (2001). The visit was also utilised by both sides for an extensive exchange of views on a wide range of issues related to counter-terrorism.

Peacekeeping

India remains the third-highest contributor of troops to UN peacekeeping missions, with 9246 troops (including 326 policemen) having been sent by India. Indian troops participated in 10 out of 18 UN Peacekeeping Operations in areas as diverse as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lebanon, the Ethiopia-Eritrea border and had also contributed the first Female Formed Police Unit in the UN Mission in Liberia. India had also contributed personnel for some of the senior most peacekeeping positions including the Force Commander of the UN Mission in Sudan, the Deputy Force Commander of the UN Force in Lebanon, as well as the Military Adviser in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations at the UN in New York.

Peacebuilding Commission

As a follow-up of the 2005 World Summit, Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was set up in December, 2005 as an inter-governmental advisory body through which the international community can help countries in the process of post conflict, peacebuilding, recovery, reconstruction and development. India was selected as a member of the Organisational Committee of the PBC under the category of the top five providers of military personnel and civilian police to the UN peacekeeping operations. India has contributed US \$2 million to the Peacebuilding Fund set up under the PBC and has paid this amount in full.

India's candidature for non-permanent seat for UN Security Council

At the end of December, 2006 India presented its candidature for a non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council that becomes available to the Asian Group for the term 2011-2012. The election for this seat is to take place at the 65th UN General Assembly Session in 2010. India has earlier served as a non-permanent member of

the Security Council during 1950-51, 1967-68, 1972-73, 1977-78, 1984-85 and 1991-92.

UN Security Council reform

A Plenary debate on the issue of UNSC reform took place in UN General Assembly on 20-21 July 2006 in which 86 countries participated. There was a wide acceptance that without UN Security Council reform, there could be no genuine UN reform. No participant supported maintaining the status quo in the UN Security Council while many favoured an "open-minded" approach, noting that it was time to undertake serious negotiations so as to bring to a conclusion the discussion on UNSC expansion and reform in its working methods.

India continued consultations on this issue within the G-4 (Brazil, India, Germany and Japan) as well as with the larger UN membership.

A two-day General Assembly debate on Security Council reform was held in New York on 11-12 December 2006. 75 countries, including the P-5 and the G-4 countries participated in the debate. No country spoke for maintaining the status quo in the Security Council. There was an overall recognition that the reform of the Security Council was an essential ingredient of genuine UN reform which involved both its enlargement and improvement in its working methods. Majority of the countries supported expansion in permanent as well as non-permanent categories.

Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies

India participated in the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies (ICNRD) held in Doha, Qatar from 29 October-1 November 2006. E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs led the Indian delegation to the Governmental Meeting. Charnjit Singh Atwal, Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha participated in the Parliamentary Forum held in conjunction with the Governmental Meeting of ICNRD.

Economic issues

The challenge in the year 2006-2007 was to build on agreements reached at the 2005 World Summit and implement areas of agreement. India contributed actively in debates on development-related issues, which led to the adoption of a resolution on follow-up to development as well as a resolution for the strengthening of the

Economic and Social Council. As part of the follow-up process, a separate meeting was organized with a specific focus on Development at the Plenary of the 61st General Assembly.

A High-level meeting of the General Assembly was convened on the mid-term comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for Least Developing Countries (LDCs) in New York from 18-21 September 2006. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs led the Indian delegation. The meeting adopted a Ministerial Declaration, which emphasized the need for continued focus on the commitments made in the Brussels Programme of Action for the LDCs.

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

The substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for 2006 was held in Geneva from 3-28 July 2006. The theme of this year's high level segment was "creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all". The Ministerial Declaration adopted by the ECOSOC emphasized the need for macro-economic policies to support employment generation. The work of the ECOSOC during the session mainly focused on the implementation of and follow up to the outcomes of major UN Conference and Summits, including the 2005 World Summit.

The Spring High-Level Meeting of the ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organisations and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was held in New York on 24 April 2006. The theme for the meeting was "Coherence, Coordination and Cooperation in the context of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the 2005 World Summit Outcome". India was represented at the meeting by Ashok Jha, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance. He also participated in the round table on the sub-theme "Implementation of and support for the development strategies, towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals"

Other resolutions adopted during the Session included, follow-up on the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Information

Society and the review of the Commission on Science and Technology for development. A Resolution on smoke-free UN premises, sponsored by India was adopted unanimously.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

Minister of Commerce and Industry, Kamal Nath led the Indian delegation to the Sixty Second Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) held in Jakarta, Indonesia from 6-12 April 2006. The theme topic of the Session was "Enhancing Regional Cooperation in Infrastructure Development, including that related to Disaster Management". The Commission adopted 12 resolutions including the Intergovernmental Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway.

14th Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-14)

The 14th session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development was held in New York from 1-12 May 2006. Dr. Prodipto Ghosh, Secretary, MoEF, led the Indian delegation. Two outreach events for SIDs were organized by India on the margins of CSD-14. One was an India presentation at the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) and another was a targeted presentation on rain-water harvesting, solid waste management and renewable energy sources, which was done for the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) countries.

UN Framework Convention on Climatic Change

The 12th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-12) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 2nd Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP 2) took place at the UN Offices in Nairobi, Kenya, from 6-17 November 2006. Namo Narain Meena, Minister of State for Environment and Forests attended the High-Level Segment of the COP from 14-17 November 2006.

Asia Pacific Partnership for Clean Development & Climate (APPCDC)

Two meetings of the Partnership were held during the year. The first was in Berkeley, USA, from 18-21 April 2006 and the second in Jeju in Republic of Korea on 12- 13 October 2006. The Action Plans prepared by the eight task forces have been prepared and adopted by the Partnership.

Human Rights

The evolution of the new Human Rights Council remained a focus of activity and interest. Unlike the lapsed Commission on Human Rights which used to meet once a year for a six weeks session in March/April, the Human Rights Council has now become a standing body with activities spread over the entire year. This includes no fewer than three sessions per year, a total duration not less than ten weeks, as well as special sessions and inter-session meetings.

Anand Sharma, MOS led the Indian delegation to the first Human Rights Council's session held in Geneva from 19-30 June 2006. The Council, inter alia, adopted a Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous people as well as Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances. India participated actively in deliberations of the Council, including in the Special Sessions convened in July, October, November and December, 2006 to discuss issues relating to crisis in Palestine, Lebanon and Darfur.

The UNGA adopted by consensus two Conventions entitled 'International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' (13 December 2006) and 'International Convention for the protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance' (20 December 2006).

The report of the High Level Panel set up by the UN Secretary-General on UN System-wide coherence in the areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment was presented on 9 November 2006.

India signed the UN Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their property on 12 January 2007.

India, on behalf of the Group of 77, coordinated an action on resolution on 'International Cooperation on Humanitarian Assistance in the field of natural disaster, from relief to development'.

2006 UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS

The Minister of State, Oscar Fernandes led the Indian delegation to the UNGA High Level Meeting and Comprehensive Review of the Progress Achieved in Realising the Targets set out in the 2001 Declaration of Commitments on HIV/AIDS' held in UN headquarters

from 31 May-2 June 2006. A Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS was adopted at the end of the High Level Plenary Meeting.

Migration

The High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development was held at the UN General Assembly in New York on 14-15 September 2006. Minister of State for External affairs, E. Ahamed led the Indian delegation.

A Special International Conference of developing countries with Substantial International Flows was held in Lima on 15-16 May 2006. The goal of the Conference was "to encourage the international community to give content to the principle of shared responsibility in migration issues, as a basis to finding common political solution to the current problem of international migration". India played a pivotal role in drafting the Lima Declaration.

International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

India signed the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance on the day when it opened for signature in Paris on 6 February 2007

Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU)

Somnath Chatterjee, Speaker of Lok Sabha led the Indian delegation to the 115th IPU Assembly held from 16-18 October 2006 in Geneva. The Assembly adopted a resolution on Cooperation between Parliaments and the United Nations in promoting world peace. The Working Group on IPU reforms submitted its recommendations to the Assembly for its inclusion to the IPU Statutes and Rules.

Geneva Convention-Third protocol

The 29th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was held in Geneva on 20-21 June 2006. During the Conference, the statutes of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement was amended to include an additional symbol for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Our Mission in Geneva and officers from the Indian Red Cross Society participated in the Conference.

UN-Habitat

Kumari Selja, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for

Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, led the Indian delegation to the 3rd World Urban Forum held in Vancouver, Canada from 19-23 June 2006.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres visited India on 7-8 December 2006. He called on Minister for External affair, Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for Home affairs, Shivraj V Patil, Foreign Secretary, Shivshankar Menon and Acting Chairman, NHRC.

Elections

India was elected to Human Rights Council on 9 May 2006 by securing the highest numbers of votes of 173 out of 190, among contested seats.

India was elected to Intergovernmental Cultural Heritage of UNESCO held on 29 June 2006.

India's nominee P N Bhagwati, Former Chief Justice of India was elected to UN Human Rights Committee held on 9 September 2006.

Interpol elections were held in Brasilia, Brazil on 19 September, 2006. India's nominee, Vijay Shankar, Director (CBI) was elected for one of the two seats for Asia.

Narinder Singh, Joint Secretary (L&T), Ministry of External Affairs, was elected for a 5-year term to the International Law Commission, securing the second highest number of votes in the Asian Group held on 16 November 2006 in New York.

India was elected to the Executive Council during the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) plenipotentiary Conference held from 6-18 November 2006 in Antalya, Turkey. PK Garg, Wireless Adviser, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology was also elected as a member for the Radio Regulation Board (RRB) of ITU in the same Conference.

Group of 77

Pranab Mukherjee, the then Defence Minister, participated in the 30th Annual Ministerial Meeting of the G-77 held in New York on 22 September, 2006. He expressed the need for more intense international cooperation for development, and, in the context of South-South cooperation, reiterated India's willingness

to share its expertise with other developing countries. The meeting adopted a Ministerial Statement, which inter alia, called for early resumption of Doha round of trade negotiations as well as implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and Global partnership for development.

A Special Ministerial meeting of the Group of 77 and China was held in Putrajaya, Malaysia on 29 May 2006 on the margins of the Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs led the Indian delegation.

The Minister for Science and Technology, Kapil Sibal participated at the Ministerial Meeting of the Group 77 on Science and Technology held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 3 September 2006.

Specialized UN Agencies & Conventions/Conferences

World Health Assembly (WHA)

Dr. Anbumani Ramdoss, Minister of Health & Family Welfare led the Indian delegation to the 59th World Health Assembly (WHA) held in Geneva from 22-27 May 2006. Minister chaired the prestigious Committee "A" which deliberated on the substantive health issues. The issues which dominated the debate at the WHA included, disease of the poor and reorientation of R&D in the health sector to provide easy and affordable access to essential drugs, destruction of variola virus stocks, adoption of a 10-year framework, outlining a strategic direction for improving public health, health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory and application of International Health Regulations on a voluntary basis.

Secretary, Ministry of health & Family Welfare participated in the Global Fund Coordination Board Meeting from 12-15 September 2006 which discussed the funding for ongoing global programmes on TB, Malaria and HIV/AIDS.

International Labour Conference (ILC)

Minister of State for Labour and Employment led the tripartite Indian delegation to the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference held in Geneva from 31 May-16 June 2006 and the Secretary (L&E) participated in the ILO Governing Body meeting held back to back with the ILC from 12-16 June 2006. The Minister, in his statement, inter alia, emphasized that while

globalization has contributed to the rate of economic growth and investment in India, our focus was on economic growth with a human face and prosperity with social justice and that growth of a few without participation of the many would not be sustainable. N.M Adyanthaya, the Indian workers representative was elected as the Vice President of the ILC. He was first Indian worker to receive this honour. India played an active role during the deliberations on issues which included eradication of forced labour in Myanmar and non-observance of Recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry by Belarus.

UNESCO

UNESCO continued its activities in its key mandates of Education Culture, natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences and Communication. India played a crucial role in these discussions at the Executive Board at 174th Session (28 March – 13 April 2006) and 175th Session (26 September – 13 October 2006) and was often instrumental in evolving consensus on difficult and contentious issues. For the first time in 40 years, the Asia Pacific Group nominated India to co-chair the Drafting Group to negotiate the draft programme and budget for next biennium. India also, for the first time in 30 years, chaired the Executive Council of the International Bureau of Education.

UNIDO

Dr. Kandeh K. Yumkella, Director General, UNIDO visited India in March-April 2006 at the invitation of Minister of Commerce and Industry. He also called on PM and discussed further strengthening of cooperation between the two sides. Subsequently, in July 2006, the Government of India approved the proposal for UNIDO Centre for South-South Industrial Cooperation at a total project cost of US\$ 4.5 million for a period of 5 years.

Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)

The 49th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) was held in Vienna in March 2006 with the thematic debate on “Alternative Development as an important Drug Control Strategy and Establishing Alternative Development as a Cross-cutting Issue”.

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)

The 15th session of CCPCJ was held in Vienna in April

2006 with thematic discussion on “Maximising the Effectiveness of Technical Assistance provided to Member States on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice”. The Indian delegation attending the meeting played an important role in the discussions and negotiations on the various resolutions.

World Food Programme (WFP)

John M. Powell, Deputy Executive Director, WFP visited India on 22 August 2006.

As a part of India’s commitment to provide food assistance, through WFP, of 1 million tonnes of wheat (equivalent to US\$ 100 million) to Afghanistan, India committed to supply of 4th tranche of 15,189 tonnes of biscuit to meet the requirement of biscuits for the school-feeding programme in 2006. Till August 2006, 6811 tonnes of biscuits were delivered. Under the programme, around 1 million Afghan school children are receiving a package of 100 grams of biscuit every day.

Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

The Central Emergency Response Fund was launched at the UN in March 2006. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs, led the Indian delegation. India pledged US\$ 2 million to CERF.

Disarmament and International Security Affairs

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. India’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.

At 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 the Indian perspectives on disarmament issues.

India has been exercising control over exports of sensitive goods and technologies which can have direct or indirect application for weapons of mass destruction or their means of delivery. The enactment in June 2005 of Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act reflects India's responsible attitude as well as its commitment to contributing to the objective of global peace and security.

At the Havana Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh said that in 1988 Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had presented to the UN General Assembly a detailed and credible Action Plan for Nuclear Disarmament. He expressed his belief that the time had come for NAM to once again assume an active and leading role in advocating nuclear disarmament. Announcing that India had prepared a Working Paper on Nuclear Disarmament, which would be presented at 61st UNGA Session, he invited fellow members of NAM to join India in its efforts to achieve universal nuclear disarmament and a world free of all nuclear weapons.

The then Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee and Leader of the Indian Delegation, in his address to the 2006 UNGA, called for revival of momentum for achieving what late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi called 'a nuclear weapons free and non-violent world', to be achieved through negotiations in a time bound manner. He added, "in recent years, new dangers have emerged due to the link of proliferation of WMD related materials and technologies to non-state actors and terrorist groups. The international community needs to meet these challenges. India's record in this regard is impeccable and we have instituted effective measures to ensure that technologies developed by us are not leaked in any way".

India continued to play an active role at the 61st Session of the UN General Assembly's First Committee that deals with disarmament and international security issues. With a view to spur a dialogue on both the need and the means to Nuclear Disarmament, India presented in the UN General Assembly a Working Paper on Nuclear Disarmament, which sought to:

- Reaffirm the unequivocal commitment of all nuclear weapon States to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons;

- Reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines;
- Reduce nuclear danger, including the risks of accidental nuclear war, by de-alerting of nuclear-weapons to prevent unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons;
- Negotiate a global agreement among nuclear weapon States on 'no-first-use' of nuclear-weapons;
- Negotiate a universal and legally-binding agreement on non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States;
- Negotiate a Convention on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;
- Negotiate a Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and on their time-bound destruction, leading to the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons.

In recognition of growing international concerns about the serious global threats posed by the possibility of non-State actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction and using it, India's resolution on 'Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction' was adopted by consensus, as during previous four Sessions.

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 has been adopted annually since 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.

India signed International Convention on Suppression for Acts of Nuclear Terrorism on 24 July 2006.

UN Disarmament Commission

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 Commission was convened from 10-28 April 2006. It has been mandated to consider in a cycle of three Sessions two agenda items: (i) Recommendations for achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation; and (ii) Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. The Commission was also mandated to consider at its 2006 Session measures for improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the Commission. India actively participated in the deliberations underlining India's abiding commitment to nuclear disarmament

UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

The Board, comprising members nominated by the Secretary General on the basis of equitable geographical representation, makes recommendations to the Secretary General on the issues related to disarmament and international security. It also acts as a board of trustee for the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). It holds two Sessions annually, one each in New York and Geneva. India, in its capacity as a member of the Board, attended both the Sessions.

The Conference on Disarmament

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is the 'sole multilateral disarmament treaty negotiating body' and comprises 65 militarily significant States. In 2006 Session, it met at Geneva on 23 January-31 March, 15 May-30

June and 31 July -15 September. Besides the usual formal and informal plenary meetings, the Conference held this year structured and focused discussions on the issues on CD's existing agenda and new issues, additional to its agenda. India actively participated in these meetings and in deliberations on various proposals. During 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.

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

India continued to play an active role at the Organization for the Prohibition of the Chemical Weapons (OPCW) at The Hague. India is an original State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) since its entry into force in April 1997. India continued to fulfill all its obligations under the Convention in line with its commitments. India's record on the destruction of its chemical weapons in accordance with the timelines set by the Convention is well known and widely recognized.

India played a key role at the Eleventh Conference of States Parties to the CWC at The Hague (5-8 December 2006) as well as at the forty-fifth, forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions of the 41-member Executive Council, where it has been an active member since the inception of the Organization in 1997. India highlighted all issues of interest and concern to it and to other developing countries. India also actively participated in various subsidiary bodies of the organization.

Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)

The Sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BTWC) concluded its three-week session on 8 December 2006 adopting a final declaration on the various articles of the Convention, and a series of decisions and recommendations on various issues related to the effective implementation of Convention.

The Indian delegation participated actively in the deliberations. In his statement, the leader of the Indian delegation reiterated India's commitment to working towards further strengthening of the Convention and its full implementation. He *inter alia* expressed India's support for creation of an institutional mechanism and for the

launch of new inter-sessional process of annual meetings of experts and State Parties.

India circulated to State Parties a paper including suggested text relating to each of the articles of the Convention for the article by-article section of the Review Conference's Final Declaration. India played an active role in the negotiation and adoption of the text.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)

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, including the Amended Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and other Devices and Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War. India has also ratified the Amendment to Article 1 of the Convention. India, on behalf of the NAM Group, coordinated six Sessions of the Working Group on Explosive Remnants of War in 2004-05.

The third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on CCW was held at Geneva from 7-17 November 2006. India was nominated by the NAM Group to chair the Drafting Committee. India actively and constructively participated in the work of the Conference, underlining India's commitment to the humanitarian principles that the CCW Convention embodies and to fully abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law.

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 6 November 2006. 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 attended, as an observer, the 7th Annual

Meeting of the State Parties to the Ottawa Convention at Geneva. While India shares the humanitarian concerns arising out of indiscriminate use of APLs, it is not a party to the Ottawa Convention, as the Convention 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 (SALW)

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.

The first United Nations Conference to Review Progress made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held from 26 June-7 July 2006, failed to reach consensus on its final declaration. There was also no agreement on convening of another Review Conference. India underlined that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons poses a great danger to the security of a state and called for a complete prohibition on transfer of these weapons to terrorists. India stressed the priority that it has attached to full implementation of the Programme of Action as a means to combat transnational terrorism and organized crime and highlighted the steps that it has taken to implement the programme.

International Atomic Energy Agency

This year marked the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Indian Prime Minister sent a special message recalling the important contributions of the IAEA and highlighting India's close and active association with the Agency in its endeavour to promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology. Prime Minister's message was delivered at the 50th IAEA General Conference held at Vienna from 18-22 September 2006 by Dr Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), and Head of the Indian delegation to the Conference.

India offered Bhabatron, an indigenously designed and fabricated, cobalt 60 teletherapy unit for the Agency's "Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy – PACT". At a special event organised in the margins of the General Conference on "the New Framework for the Utilization of Nuclear Energy in the 21st Century: Assurances of Supply and Non-Proliferation", Chairman, AEC presented a paper on the utilisation of thorium for meeting the twin challenges of energy and non-proliferation.

India participated at a special exhibition organised by the Agency to mark the 50th anniversary, which included a working model of an indigenously developed PWRH reactor, highlighting India's three stage nuclear power programme and important achievements in the field of application of nuclear technology for general welfare and development.

The Indian delegation played an active role in the discussions and negotiations on the various resolutions adopted by the General Conference especially relating to nuclear power; technical cooperation; nuclear S&T and applications; safeguards and verification. Along with the other members of the group called 'Friends of Nuclear Energy', India played a leading role in the adoption of an important resolution on nuclear power applications. India also underlined its commitment to the Agency's safety and security related activities by joining the IAEA's "Illicit Trafficking Data Base (ITDB)" in April 2006.

India continued to organise training programmes for participants from other member-States in a variety of fields relating to nuclear Science & Technology, applications, safety & security, etc.

Outer Space Affairs

India participated in the 49th session of the UN Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS), held in Vienna from 7-16 June 2005.

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) contributed US\$ 20,000 towards the establishment of Disaster Management International Space Coordination Organisation (DMISCO) under the UN Office of Outer Space Affairs, Vienna.

Dr. B.N. Suresh, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram was appointed as the Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for the year 2006.

India played an active role in the formulation of the Terms of Reference for the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite System (ICG), which were adopted at ICG's first meeting held at Vienna in November 2006. The ICG also unanimously accepted the Indian invitation to host its second meeting in Bangalore during the second half of 2007.

Non-Aligned Movement

The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Indian delegation to the 14th Summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Havana from 11-16 September 2006. The Summit adopted a political declaration, on the "Purposes, Principles and Role of the Non Aligned Movement in the Current International Juncture", a Final Document that reflects positions of the Movement on important regional and international issues, and a Declaration on Palestine. Apart from these documents, it also adopted a document on Methodology of the Movement, a Statement on the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Issue and an Action Plan to implement the various actionable elements listed in the Final Document.

The Ministerial segment before the Summit Conference was led by Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs, who also led the Indian delegation at the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM-CoB) held in Putrajaya, Malaysia on 29-30 May 2006, in preparation of 14th NAM Summit. Prime Minister in his statement at the Plenary Session, reaffirmed India's conviction that the Non Aligned Movement remains particularly relevant in the current international scenario. Calling for NAM to define itself as the "voice of moderation, harmony and reason", the Prime Minister underlined that NAM is uniquely placed to play the role of a bridge of understanding. He emphasized the fact that the cooperative worldview of NAM was in itself a rejection of the notion of a "clash of civilizations". Prime Minister's speech touched upon several of India's long-standing core concerns, including international terrorism, the continued conflict in West Asia, the inequitable processes of globalization, nuclear disarmament and energy security. He also proposed a NAM initiative on energy security and a separate NAM

initiative on Africa that would focus on human resource and agricultural development.

The Prime Minister's participation at the XIV Summit was received very warmly by the Cuban hosts as well as the NAM membership at large. In an overwhelming gesture, President Fidel Castro of Cuba, still convalescing and hence unable to participate in the Summit, received Prime Minister for a bilateral meeting on 16 September 2006. The response of NAM member countries to the statement made by Prime Minister at the Plenary was highly positive, with a number of them supporting his ideas and proposals in their statements. On the sidelines of the Summit, Prime Minister also had a number of bilateral meetings including with HoG/S of Pakistan, Iran, Venezuela, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Mauritius; Crown Prince of Qatar; Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal and UN Secretary General.

Commonwealth

India is the largest among the 52 members of Commonwealth and is its fourth largest financial contributor. India has increased its annual contribution to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, which provides technical assistance to the Commonwealth developing countries, from GBP 800,000 in 2005-06 to GBP 850,000 in 2006-07. India is the largest contributor (with commitment of Euro 1 million) to the Commonwealth Connects Special Voluntary Fund, created by the Heads of Government at Malta CHOGM in November 2005 to bridge the digital divide in the Commonwealth countries and is a member of the Steering Committee established to carry forward its action programme. To further enhance India's technical assistance to the Commonwealth developing countries through the Commonwealth Secretariat, India has decided to offer 50-70 slots in select courses under ITEC and SCAAP and will provide up to five ICT experts for periods upto six months under Commonwealth Connects Programme. India will also jointly conduct training programmes for Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Managers from Africa and South Asia.

India continues to be one of the principal supporters and contributors of the Commonwealth Joint Office in New York, which facilitates participation by Commonwealth small states in UN activities through an effective presence at the United Nations Headquarters.

The fourth event of the first phase of joint Commonwealth-India Small Business Competitiveness Development Programme was held in Chennai in April 2005 and the first event of the second phase of the Programme was held in Noida in November 2006.

A five-day workshop, jointly organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat with the India's Ministry of Commerce and the United Nations Development Fund for Women South Asia Regional Office, was held in New Delhi from 28 August 2006 on 'Gender, Trade Policy and Export Promotion for South Asia'.

India remained a member of key Commonwealth bodies, including the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Standing Committee on Terrorism, and the Commonwealth Advisory Board on Sports. India rejoined the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Foundation and was elected to become a member of the Accreditation Committee of the Commonwealth Secretariat and Grants Committee of the Commonwealth Foundation. India actively participated in the meetings of these Committees and those of the Board of Governors of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation.

Pranab Mukherjee, former Defence Minister (now Minister of External Affairs) represented India at the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' Meeting during UNGA in New York on 22 September 2006. P. Chidambaram, Minister of Finance attended the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting in Colombo from 12-14 September 2006. India also participated in the Commonwealth Youth Ministers meeting in the Bahamas in May 2006, Commonwealth Health Ministers' Meeting in Geneva in May 2006 and Commonwealth Public Services Ministers Meeting in Sydney in October 2006. Florence Mugasha, Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth, visited India in September-October 2006.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) at its annual conference in Abuja, Nigeria elected Somnath Chatterjee, Speaker, Lok Sabha as the President of the CPA and Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister as Vice-Patron of the CPA for a period of one year. India will host the 53rd annual Conference of CPA in New Delhi in September 2007. H.A Halim, Speaker of West Bengal Legislative Assembly

continues to remain the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) for 2005-08.

At Malta CHOGM in November 2005, the Heads of Government endorsed the Commonwealth Action Programme for the Digital Divide (renamed as Commonwealth Connects). They also endorsed establishment of a Steering Committee and a Special Fund to enable implementation of specific activities under the action programme. India is the largest contributor to the CAPDD Special Fund and is a member of the Steering Committee. India had announced a contribution of Euro 1 million for the programme out of which Euro 350,000, has been disbursed. An International e-Partnership Summit of the Commonwealth Connects Programme will be held on 23-24 March 2007 in New Delhi.

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

The 13th ARF Ministerial Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 28 July 2006. India was represented by Rao Inderjit Singh, Minister of State for Defense. The Ministerial Meeting *inter alia* adopted a Concept Paper on ties between Track I and Track II in the ARF, and between the ARF and Other Regional and International Security Organizations. Pursuant to the decision taken at the ARF Ministerial Meeting, India hosted ARF Workshop on Cyber Security from 6-8 September 2006 in New Delhi.

India participated in the ARF Intersessional Group Meeting held in Manila, Philippines in March 2006 and Senior Officials' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in May 2006. India also participated in the Defense Officials Dialogue and ARF Security Policy Conference which took place, along with the above two meetings, respectively.

India participated in the Confidence Building Measures (CBM) related activities organized by the Member States viz. ARF Seminar on Energy Security, in October 2006 in Brussels; ARF Workshop on Stockpile Management Security in October 2006 in Bangkok; ARF Workshop on Communicable Diseases in Vietnam in September 2006. India also participated in the Inter-sessional Group Meeting on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime in Beijing, in March 2006; Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Management in Chingdao in September 2006; first intersessional-group meeting of the 14th ARF held in Batam, Indonesia in November 2006.

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

India is a founding member of CICA. Murli Deora, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, represented India, as special envoy of the Indian Prime Minister to the Second CICA Summit, held in Almaty on 17 June 2006. The Summit adopted a Declaration and Statute of the CICA Secretariat was signed in presence of the Heads of the delegations. India deposited the Instrument of ratification on 12 September 2006.

International Law and Developments

Report of the Sixth Committee:

Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT)

The Ad hoc Committee on International Terrorism set up under Resolution 51/210 adopted the following three conventions: International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, 1997; International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, 1999; and Convention on Suppression of Nuclear Terrorism, 2005. Since October 2000, it has been considering the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism proposed by India, which had been proposed as an umbrella Convention dealing with terrorist acts committed by any means as against the present sectoral Conventions dealt with specific offences only, either as regards the means of their commission, (eg. terrorist bombings) or the objects of the acts (e.g. civil aviation, or attacks against diplomats). The substantive provisions of the Draft Convention have been agreed. However, further progress on the Convention has been stalled by the insistence of some countries (the OIC group) which have introduced proposals for excluding from the scope of the Convention acts carried out in the course of "people's struggles against foreign occupation", in response to proposals to exclude the acts of "armed forces of a State" which are subject to other rules of international law.

In view of the rigid, inflexible positions of delegations, no breakthrough could be achieved in the February Session of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Oceans and Law of the Sea

At its 61st session, the United Nations General Assembly discussed the matters related to implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and

related agreements; capacity building of States in the economic, legal, navigational, scientific and technical fields for full implementation of these instruments; exploration and exploitation of marine resources in the Area; effective functioning of the International Seabed Authority; extended claims of States to the continental shelf; maritime safety and security; marine environment; and international cooperation in carrying out lawful marine activities.

The Review Conference on the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, that was held in New York earlier this year, provided a useful forum for assessing the effectiveness of the Agreement. The Conference noted with concern that Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks were over exploited and depleted. Over fishing and over capacity are seen to undermine efforts to achieve the long-term sustainability of these stocks. Therefore the Conference recommended urgent reduction of the world's fishing capacity to levels in commensurate with the sustainability of fish stocks. In this context the legitimate right of developing States to develop their fisheries for Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in accordance with article 25 of the Agreement was recognized.

The theme of the seventh meeting of the UN Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea was "Ecosystem approaches to oceans". The meeting exchanged views on areas of concern and actions needed, including on issues discussed at previous meetings, the definition and implementation of ecosystem approaches; scientific research; high seas governance; cooperation and coordination; capacity building; and threats to marine biodiversity. The text adopted at the seventh meeting recognized that, by its very nature the ecosystem approach does not easily lend itself to mandatory "one-size-fits all" measures. It contains sections on the guiding principles for the application of the ecosystem approach, its possible constituent elements, and the implementation and improved application of the approach. In this context it has been recognised that capacity building, technology transfer and greater consideration of developing countries' experiences in

implementing ecosystem approaches in marine management also need to be given due consideration.

Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations

The Committee this year approved the proposal on improvement in its working methods. This proposal aims to enhance the efficiency of the Committee and seeks inter-alia, avoid duplication of work of other UN bodies by establishing a cut-off mechanism to prevent prolonged and ineffective discussion of some proposals.

Under the agenda item "Peaceful Settlement of Disputes", a new resolution entitled "Commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the International Court of Justice", was adopted by the General Assembly.

The Russian proposal on effective implementation of Article 50 relating to Assistance to Third States affected by the application of sanctions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and Peacekeeping Operations under Chapter VI of the UN Charter remains on the agenda.

Further, the Special Committee is also considering several other proposals relating to: the maintenance of international peace and security; the Trusteeship Council; coordination with other committees/bodies that are also involved in work related to the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular with regard to assistance to third states adversely affected by sanctions.

At its 61st session, the General Assembly considered proposals concerning these agenda items. Regarding the proposal for assistance to third states adversely affected by sanctions under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter under the agenda item of maintenance of international peace and security, 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. India supported proposals aimed to bring transparency in the functioning of the UN organs and greater democratization therein. India has also supported all efforts towards the continued publication and updating of the *Repertory of Practice of the UN Organs* and the *Repertoire of Practice of the Security Council*, as these documents are very important sources of reference.

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

During the 39th Session of the UNCITRAL, the

Commission: approved the key objectives and major policies of the draft legislative guide on secured transactions; adopted revised legislative provisions on interim measures of protection to be integrated into the UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration; and adopted recommendation on form of arbitration agreement (*compromise*) as part of interpretation of articles II (2) and VII(1) of the 1958 New York Convention on Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards.

The Legal & Treaties Division participated in Working Group meetings of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) relating to Transportation and Security Interests. It also participated in the 39th Annual Session of UNCITRAL held in June this year at Vienna. The main achievements of the 39th session were the approval in principle of the key objectives and major policies of a draft legislative guide on secured transactions and adoption of revised legislative provisions on interim measure of protection and the form of the arbitration agreement.

The Legal & Treaties Division further participated in the seventeenth and eighteenth sessions of Working Group III (Transport Law) of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), held respectively at New York, USA from 3-13 April 2006 and at Vienna, Austria from 6-17 November 2006. The Working Group is negotiating a new convention, with a view to review the existing laws relating to the international carriage of goods by sea and other modes, to cope with the practical changes in this field that emerged due to technological developments. At the seventeenth session, discussions were held on provisions relating to the right of control; transfer of rights; delivery of goods; scope of application and freedom of contract; and shipper's obligations. At the eighteenth session, the working Group deliberated on issues concerning the transport documents and electronic transport records, delay in delivery, limitation of liability, rights of suit and time for suit, final clauses, including relationship with other conventions and general average.

IMO Legal Committee

The IMO's Legal Committee meeting was held in Paris, at UNESCO building, as its headquarters building in London is undergoing refurbishment. The Legal

Committee discussed many issues placed on its agenda that *inter alia* include: Draft Convention on Wreck Removal; *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Liability and Compensation regarding claims for death, personal injury and abandonment of seafarers; Revision of Athens Convention relating to the Carriage of Passengers and their Luggage by Sea 1974; Fair Treatment of Seafarers; and Monitoring and implementation of HNS Convention. In particular, the Committee finalized the text of the Draft Wreck Removal Convention that could be adopted by the IMO in its forthcoming Diplomatic Conference to be held in Nairobi, Kenya in the April 2007.

International Hydrographic Organization (IHO)

The work on the reorganization of the International Hydrographic Organization ended with the convening of the eighth and final meeting of the Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) held in Busan, South Korea, from 2-4 May 2006. A list of documents were finalised which shall be considered by the IHO conference to be held in Monaco next year. Also participated at the SPWG Legal Experts Meeting held in Monaco in June 2006. This meeting vetted and cleared the IHO Documents finalised at Busan.

International Sea Bed Authority

The Legal & Treaties Division also participated in the Finance Committee meeting held during the 12th Session of the International Seabed Authority held from 7—11 August 2006 at Kingston, Jamaica. During the Session, the Committee recommended establishment of the International Seabed Authority Endowment Fund whose corpus will be drawn from the existing Pioneer Fund.

AALCO

The Golden Jubilee Session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) for the year 2006 was held in New Delhi from 3-8 April 2006. During the Session, the organization discussed the following issues of international law: Report on matters relating to the work of the International Law Commission at its Fifty-seventh Session; International Terrorism; emerging issues on Law of the Sea; Establishing Cooperation against Trafficking in Women and Children; The International Criminal Court and its Recent Developments; Report on the Work of the UNCITRAL and Other International

Organizations in the field of International Trade Law; Environment and Sustainable Development; and Expressions of Folklore and its International Protection.

SAARC

The Legal & Treaties Division participated in the 6th Meeting of SAARC Sub-Group on International Arbitration held in Kathmandu on 19—20 September 2006 which finalized the SAARC Arbitration Rules.

BIMSTEC

The second BIMSTEC Joint Working Group (JWG) CTTC Sub Group on Law and Enforcement measures was held in New Delhi from 4-6 September 2006. It discussed issues relating to harmonization of laws of members states in the field of international terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. It also considered the Indian revised draft text of an agreement on “Cooperation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Transnational Organized Crime.

Regional Convention on combating Piracy & Armed Robbery (ReCAAP)

The First Governing Council Meeting of the ReCAAP was held in Singapore from 27-30 November 2006. The representatives, Tay Lim Heng of Singapore and VADM RF Contractor from India declared elected unanimously, as the Chairperson and Vice chairperson of the First Governing Council respectively for a period of two years. The Meeting considered and discussed various issues leading to the establishment of a new institution namely, the Information Sharing Centre (ISC) having its permanent Secretariat in Singapore. Yoshiaki Ito from Japan was elected as the Executive Director of the ISC unanimously. The ISC under the leadership of Ito and other staff would collectively monitor and effectively implement the laid down objectives of the ReCAAP.

Antarctica

The Legal & Treaties Division participated at the XXIX Antarctic Treaty Consultative Committee Meeting (ATCM)’s Legal and Institutional Working Group held in Edinburgh from 12-16 June 2006. The Meeting adopted a number of technical and legal decisions dealing with environmental monitoring, the amendment to the Annex VI of the Environmental Protocol of 1996, building a new Indian station at Larsemann Hills at Antarctica and above

all, arrangements for holding the next ATCM in New Delhi in April/May 2007.

Private International Law

India deposited the Instrument of Accession to the Hague Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extra judicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters, 1965. The Convention will enter into force for India from 1 August 2007. India is also actively considering becoming a party to the Hague Convention on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters, 1970 and for becoming a member of the Hague Conference, as well the 1980 Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. These measures would help the Indian courts and parties to civil suits in a great way in seeking international cooperation *inter-alia* for the service of documents in and in the taking of evidence from a large number of foreign countries, which are States parties to these conventions. The Convention on Child Abduction facilitates the return/access of children wrongfully taken abroad in violation of a custody order to one of the parents. The L&T Division has participated in the Regional Workshops jointly organized by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and the National Commission for Women on the Problems of NRI Marriages.

Humanitarian Law

The Legal & Treaties Division has participated in the 3rd Informal High-Level Expert Meeting on international humanitarian law held in Montreux, Switzerland on 22-24 May 2006. During this meeting the expert group, among other things, considered the draft manual on Air Warfare modeled on San Remo Manual on Naval Warfare.

Investments

Bilateral investment promotion agreement (BIPA) negotiations were held with Slovakia, Jordan, Trinidad & Tobago, Romania and UAE. Further, investment negotiations were held with Canada and Mexico. Agreements with China, Slovakia, Jordan, and North Korea were signed during the year.

Extradition & Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters

The Legal & Treaties Division participated in bilateral negotiations for concluding extradition treaties, agreements on mutual legal assistance in criminal and in

civil matters with foreign countries. The Division examined extradition requests and other requests for international cooperation received from the domestic as well as foreign jurisdictions and rendered legal advice therein.

Cabinet Notes

Several cabinet notes were examined and cleared from legal angle which inter alia include: Proposal for becoming a party to the Inter-Governmental Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway Network; Acceding to the Hague Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extra judicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters, 1965; amendments to existing Merchant Shipping Act, for implementing the ISPS Code which is developed by the IMO as a part of mandatory obligation under the SOLAS Convention, 1974; UNESCO Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions; WIPO's Madrid Agreement on Registration of Marks and Designs; Implementing legislation to the UN Convention on Corruption; Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the India Ocean and South East Asia; Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia. Further, Cabinet Notes relating to BIPA with China, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, Democratic Republic of Korea, Jordan, amendment protocol to the investment agreement with Mozambique and Mexico were examined. Cabinet notes relating to double taxation avoidance agreements with UAE and Myanmar and preferential trade agreement (PTA) with Mauritius were also examined and cleared.

The Legal & Treaties Division has prepared briefs on various topics for the 61st session of UNGA and also briefs for the annual session of the Asian African Legal Consultative Organization held in New Delhi 2006. It provided opinion on matters relating to the Commonwealth, Antarctica, acceding to Hague Conventions on Private International Law; UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity; Parliament questions; international humanitarian law, human rights; refugees; 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. Rendered legal opinions on several property and project matters, agreements, etc., and also court cases involving sovereign and diplomatic immunities & privileges.

The Legal & Treaties Division has examined and cleared several defence Cooperation agreements, that inter alia included: Agreement with Russia on Joint Exercise by India and Russia; draft Protocol with Russia for Conduct of Indo-Russia Joint Exercise (EX INDRA 06); MoU on Defence Cooperation with Chile; Letter of Exchange for the Renewal of Treaty of Transit with Nepal; Agreement on Defence Cooperation with Peru; Framework Agreement on Defence Cooperation with Thailand; MoU on Military Cooperation with Rwanda; MoU on Defence Cooperation with Colombia.

The Legal & Treaties Division has examined and cleared the agreement between India and China for opening up of Consular Missions in Kolkata by the Chinese side and in Gongzhou (China) by India. 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 with foreign countries during the year. These *inter alia* include: Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts Which Can Be Fitted and/or Be Used on Wheeled Vehicles; International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism; Statute of the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia; Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit (ASEAN Countries); Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA); SAARC Agreement on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters; Framework for Co-operation on the Information Society between the Governments of the Republic of India, the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of South Africa. A comprehensive list is placed at Appendix X. A list of Instruments of Full Powers issued during the year 2004 is at Appendix XI and a list of Instruments of Ratification is at Appendix XII.

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SAARC

The Thirteenth SAARC Summit, held in Dhaka on 12-13 November 2005, decided that India would host the Fourteenth SAARC Summit in 2007. The Summit took place on the eve of SAARC entering into the third decade of its existence. There was recognition amongst the Leaders that the time has come to move SAARC from a declaratory phase into implementation. Emphasizing on the need for greater connectivity in the region, Prime Minister, during the Summit, stated “if we wish the next 20 years in SAARC to be different, we should take the first decision to reconnect the countries of the subcontinent... and then to reconnect the subcontinent to the larger Asian neighborhood”. India expects the Fourteenth SAARC Summit in New Delhi on 3-4 April 2007, to carry forward this theme of connectivity.

The Fourteenth SAARC Summit will witness, for the first time in its history, an enlargement in its membership, to include Afghanistan. This will complete the regional identity of SAARC. The modalities for Afghanistan’s entry into SAARC were finalized at the 27th SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting held in Dhaka on 1-2 August 2006. The President of Afghanistan and Heads of State/ Government of the existing SAARC member countries would sign a Joint Declaration at the Fourteenth SAARC Summit. By signing the Joint Declaration, Afghanistan would become party to all existing SAARC Agreements, Declarations and legal documents.

The 27th Council of Ministers Meeting has also decided the Guidelines for Observers into SAARC. For the first time five Observers – China, Japan, European Union (EU), Republic of Korea (ROK) and the United States of America — would be invited to attend the Fourteenth SAARC Summit. SAARC will benefit from these external linkages and help its economic integration with the international community.

India has made a number of proposals to reinvigorate SAARC. India’s proposal for a regional centre on disaster

management and risk reduction was approved and the SAARC Disaster Management Centre has become operational from the premises of the National Institute of Disaster Management, New Delhi from 10 October 2006. The other proposals made by India at the Thirteenth Summit - a South Asian University, a Tele-medicine network for the region, organization of a SAARC Car Rally in the run up to the Fourteenth SAARC Summit, and setting up of a SAARC Museum of Textiles and Handicrafts – have also been approved by the 27th Council of Ministers. All these proposals are intended to enhance regional cooperation. The modalities for implementing these proposals are under discussion

The SAARC Car Rally will symbolize vividly South Asia’s regional identity and draw attention to the urgent need to improve regional transport infrastructure. It will highlight the geographical and cultural diversity of the region. It is intended to promote people to people contact, tourism and business opportunities in the region. The Car Rally will start from Bangladesh and arrive in New Delhi on the eve of the Summit. The Leaders of SAARC countries will flag off the Rally on 3 April 2007.

SAFTA has entered into force from 1 January 2006. Despite ratifying the SAFTA Agreement, Pakistan, in its customs notification on SAFTA has singled out India from the agreed and negotiated “Sensitive List”, restricting trade with India to the existing bilateral “Positive List”. India regards this as a violation of the Agreement and raised its concerns at the 27th Council of Ministers Meeting. It was decided that this issue would have to be resolved by the SAFTA Ministerial Council (SMC) before the next Council of Ministers Meeting with a view to ensure a smooth implementation of the Agreement.

Agreements on (i) Promotion and Protection of Investment, (ii) SAARC Arbitration and SAARC Conciliation Rules are under discussion. There is only one outstanding issue relating to the Most Favored Nation (MFN) clause. Pakistan is not prepared to accept a

formulation on MFN in the Investment Agreement. India maintains that MFN is the cornerstone of the Agreement.

During the first meeting of SAARC Home Ministers in Dhaka on 1 May 2006, member countries were called upon to provide enabling legislation for the Convention on Suppression of Terrorism. The SAARC Secretariat was also asked to prepare an Annual Status Report on the implementation of the Convention and the Additional Protocol on terrorism. Other important decisions taken at the Home Ministers' meeting included exploring the possibilities of establishing SAARCPOL and networking arrangements among Police Authorities in member states. India offered to host two Workshops to strengthen the SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk (STOMD) and the SAARC Drug Offences Monitoring Desk (SDOMD). The Meeting further called upon Member States to share information amongst one another on the best practices in eradicating drug abuse, drug trafficking and money laundering on an annual basis. It also discussed the establishment of a Regional Task Force for the implementation of the Convention on Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.

The First Meeting of the SAARC Finance Ministers which was held in Islamabad on 11 July 2006, drew up a Framework and a roadmap for the SAARC Development Fund (SDF). The SDF will be an umbrella financial institution for SAARC development funding, in place of the South Asia Development Fund (SADF). It will have three windows – Social, Economic and Infrastructure. The SDF will hold its first Governing Board Meeting in January 2007.

India is a very strong advocate of collaboration in regional projects, particularly in areas such as infrastructure, poverty alleviation and dealing with cross border challenges such as natural disasters, pandemics like HIV AIDS, and Avian Flu, and terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. India's offer of US \$ 100 million would be utilized for projects in other SAARC countries on poverty alleviation once the SDF is operationalised. Along with SAFTA, the SDF has the potential to move SAARC into an implementation phase bringing tangible benefits to the people in the region.

An Intergovernmental Expert Group (IGEG) on financial issues has also been set up to develop a roadmap for

achieving the South Asian Economic Union (SAEU) in a gradual and phased manner.

ASEAN-India Relations

Taking forward its "Look East" policy, which was initiated in 1992, India continued its efforts to increase its integration with the world economy, particularly with the countries of the East. India also played an active role in furthering the economic interests of developing countries in various international organizations and in multilateral, regional and sub-regional groupings.

Substantial progress was achieved, insofar as implementation of specific projects under the ASEAN-India Cooperation is concerned. At the ASEAN-India Joint meetings, India's efforts to provide assistance to Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam have been appreciated. Entrepreneurship Development Centres have been established by the Government of India in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam and efforts are being made to establish one in Myanmar.

The 12th ASEAN-India Technology Summit was organised in New Delhi on 6 – 7 November 2006. Science and Technology Ministers from ASEAN countries participated.

India conducted a Special Diplomatic Course for ASEAN countries in August/September, 2006. 22 young ASEAN diplomats participated in the course. At the conclusion of the course MOS (AS) awarded Diplomas to the participants.

India participated in the 3rd ASEAN-India Working Group meeting on Transport and Infrastructure. The meeting was held at Chiang Mai, Thailand on 16 May 2006. Likewise, India also participated in ASEAN-India Consultations on Agriculture which was held at Bohol, Philippines on 28-29 August 2006. Consultations were held back-to-back of the Special Senior Officials Meeting of the 27th ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry.

A 3-day Workshop on Information Systems Security for System Administrators from ASEAN Countries was organized at Manesar, Gurgaon on 29 – 30 August 2006. 21 ASEAN participants attended the Workshop.

Twenty-seven entrepreneurs from ASEAN countries made a visit to India to attend ASEAN-India Small and Medium Enterprises Conference on Business Linkages and

partnerships. Entrepreneurs also held one-to-one meetings with the Indian industry.

ASEAN-India Working Group, Joint Cooperation Committee and ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting at the Joint Secretary and Secretary level met to review progress of the on-going ASEAN-India projects and to discuss future cooperation.

A 2-day Seminar to provide a platform to share the experiences of ASEAN countries in the area of e-learning and e-learning technologies was organized at Hyderabad on 6-7 November 2006.

A 3-day Workshop of ASEAN countries on Bioinformatics Human Resource was organised in Delhi on 14-16 December 2006.

The Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources organized a 2-day workshop on Renewable Energy for ASEAN Member countries on 18-19 December 2006 in New Delhi.

A 2-day India-ASEAN Seminar on Shrutu Drishti, an integrated Text-to-Speech (TTS) and Text-to Braille (TTB) System for Visually Impaired persons was organized at Pune on 18-19 January 2007.

An FTA between ASEAN countries and India is currently being negotiated. 14 meetings of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) have been held so far, including the one held in Jakarta from 16-18 November 2006. India-ASEAN Trade Ministers' met in Cebu (Philippines) on 12 January 2007 to discuss issues relating to exclusion lists and tariff concessions. The India-ASEAN FTA is expected to be finalized by July, 2007.

ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference was held at Kuala Lumpur in July, 2006 with ASEAN Dialogue Partners, including India, to exchange views on international issues. MOS (Defence) headed the delegation.

Prime Minister participated in the 5th ASEAN-India Summit held in Cebu, Philippines on 14 January 2007.

East Asia Summit

Foreign Ministers of East Asia Summit (EAS) countries met in Kuala Lumpur in July. The 2nd EAS was held at Cebu, Philippines on 15 January 2007 in which Prime Minister participated.

The Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security was signed during the Summit. It was agreed to establish an EAS Energy Cooperation Task Force. Singapore would be hosting next EAS Energy Ministers Meeting to consider ways to enhance energy cooperation. India's proposal to revive Nalanda University received positive response. To deepen economic development and regional integration, EAS agreed to launch a Track Two Study on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia (CEPEA) among EAS participants.

Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (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. Tourism, education, culture and transport and communications have been identified as thrust areas for cooperation.

A museum of Traditional Textiles of MGC countries is being set up in Siem Reap, Cambodia by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Under MGC, India offers 10 culture-based scholarships to each of the MGC countries. India has also offered to host 100 pilgrims from MGC countries in the year 2007.

India took over the chairmanship of MGC from Thailand on 12 January 2007 at a specially convened meeting called for this purpose on the margins of the ASEAN Summit in Cebu where the Indian delegation was led by the EAM.

G-8 Summit

Prime Minister participated in the 8th G-8 Summit held in St. Petersburg, Russia on 17 July 2006. He was joined by the leaders of Brazil, China, Mexico and South Africa, who also participated, as outreach countries, like India. President of Congo in his capacity as AU Chairman and President of Kazakhstan in his capacity as Chairman of CIS States attended the Summit. Heads of International Organizations, namely, UN Secretary General, WTO Director General, IAEA Director General, World Bank President and EU Commission President were also present. The main themes of the Summit were, Energy Security, Education and Challenge of Infectious Diseases and Pandemics.

During the Russian Presidency of G-8, several meetings at Ministerial level were organized in some of which, the

Indian side participated at the level of Finance Minister and MOS (Education).

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.

MOS (AS) headed a delegation to participate at the XIII G-15 Summit. The Summit was held at Havana, Cuba under the Chairmanship of Algerian President on 14 September 2006. Leaders of Iran, Venezuela, Malaysia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Jakarta and Sri Lanka participated at the Summit. The Summit was held on the margins of the XIV Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement. The theme of the Summit was Rural and Agricultural Development and the Management of Water Resources. At the end of the Summit a Joint Communiqué was issued by the Leaders.

Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

At 6th ASEM Summit meeting that was held in Helsinki on 11-12 September 2006, India along with other Asian members, was welcomed to join ASEM. On receiving formal invitation from the Asian-ASEM Coordinators, China and Brunei, India accepted membership of the 45-member group of ASEM. An Indian delegation led by Secretary (East), participated in the Asian-ASEM Senior Officials Meeting held in Brunei Darussalam on 20-21 December 2006, and the ASEM Senior Officials Meeting held in Berlin, Germany, on 24-25 January 2007.

Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)

The first BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Culture was held in Bhutan from 23-25 May 2006 preceded by Expert Group Meeting on 22 May 2006. Paro Initiative was adopted at the Meeting which articulates a set of vision, opportunities, drivers and strategies that will serve as a roadmap for socio-economic development, driven by creative cultural industries for the BIMSTEC region. It was agreed to set up a BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission and the BIMSTEC Cultural Observatory in Bhutan. Bangladesh would be hosting the 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Culture in April 2007. The Ministerial

Meeting would be preceded by a BIMSTEC Cultural Festival.

The 2nd Meeting of the Sub-Group of Intelligence Sharing of BIMSTEC under the Joint Working Group of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crimes was held in Colombo from 24-25 July 2006.

The First Inter-Governmental Expert Group Meeting to examine the establishment of the permanent BIMSTEC Secretariat was held in Bangkok from 25-26 July 2006. This was followed by the 2nd Meeting held in Bangkok on 26-27 October 2006.

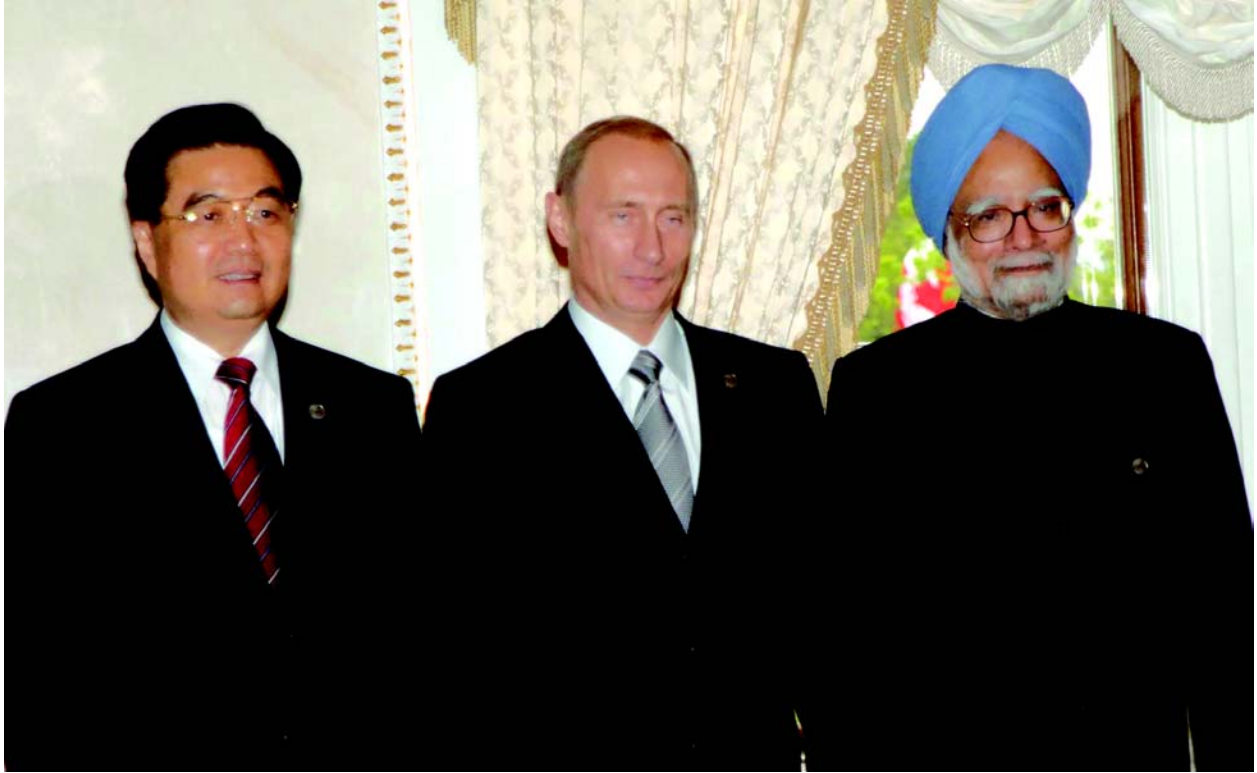
The 12th Meeting of the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) in the context of the Framework Agreement on BIMSTEC FTA was held in Colombo from 25-28 July 2006. Further, the 13th Meeting of TNC was held in Myanmar on 6-10 November 2006.

The Asian Institute of Transport Development (AITD), New Delhi, conducted training courses for participants from BIMSTEC countries in the transport sector. The 3rd Meeting of the CEOs of Railway set-ups in BIMSTEC countries was held in Yangon on 8-9 December 2005.

The 9th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting was held on 9 August 2006 in New Delhi and E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs (EA) led the Indian delegation. A Joint Statement was issued at the end of the Meeting. It was agreed to enhance cooperation in various sectors under BIMSTEC, i.e. trade and investment, transport and communication, tourism, energy, technology, fisheries, poverty alleviation, culture, agriculture, counter-terrorism and trans-national crimes, environment and disaster management, public health, people-to-people contact, BIMSTEC Website and BIMSTEC Secretariat. It was urged that the negotiations on trade in goods under the FTA be concluded before the next Summit. The 2nd BIMSTEC Summit is proposed to be held in India in 2007.

The 9th Ministerial Meeting was preceded by the 11th Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) on 8 August 2006. Secretary (East) led the Indian delegation. The Lead Countries presented progress reports on the respective sectoral activities. A Report was adopted at the end of the Meeting.

India assumed Chairmanship of the BIMSTEC at the 9th Ministerial Meeting held in New Delhi on 9 August 2006.



The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh with the Presidents of Russia and China, Vladimir Putin and Hu Jintao at a tripartite meeting, at G-8 summit in St. Petersburg on 17 July 2006.



The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh with the Foreign Affairs Minister of South Africa, Nkosazana Aladini Zuma, the Foreign Affairs Minister, Brazil, Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim, the MoS for External Affairs Anand Sharma, the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki and the President of Brazil, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in Brazil, on 13 September 2006.

India participated at the 2nd BIMSTEC Tourism Ministers Round Table and Workshop held in Kathmandu from 28-30 August 2006.

The following activities have been undertaken in the energy sector, in which India has participated:

- First meeting of trans-BIMSTEC gas pipeline task force, Thailand in June 2006.
- BIMSTEC meeting on Small Hydro projects, 21 September 2006.
- Second Task Force Meeting for trans-power and development project on 17-18 October 2006.
- Workshop on sharing of experiences in developing hydro projects, New Delhi on 30 – 31 October 2006

A two day workshop on regional cooperation for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management among the BIMSTEC countries was held in New Delhi on 30-31 October 2006.

IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa)

Prime Minister led the Indian delegation for the 1st IBSA Summit held in Brasilia on 13 September 2006. President Lula of Brazil and President Mbeki of South Africa also participated.

The Summit was preceded by a Business Event. This had impressive participation from all three countries.

A Joint Declaration was issued at the conclusion of the Summit.

It was agreed that the three countries would explore the possibilities for concluding an agreement for collaborative research and development of AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis diagnostic tools, drugs and vaccines.

The IBSA website was inaugurated during the Summit (www.ibsa-trilateral.org)

Five trilateral agreements in the areas of maritime transportation, biofuels, agriculture, information technology and trade facilitation were signed during the Summit.

The 3rd Trilateral Commission Meeting, preceded by Focal Points and Working Group Meetings was held from 28-30 March 2006. The Indian delegation was led by Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs.

The 6th and 7th Focal Points Meetings of IBSA were held in Brasilia on 21-22 June 2006 and 17-18 August 2006 respectively.

The Working Group Meetings on Energy was held in July 2006 and Maritime Transportation and Other Related Matters in August 2006, both in New Delhi. The Working Group Meeting on Trade was held in August 2006 in Brasilia to formalize the text for Action Plan for Trade Facilitation, Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment Procedures.

The 4th meeting of the Trilateral Commission will be hosted by India in 2007.

Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)

The 5th ACD Ministerial Meeting was held in Qatar on 23-24 May 2006 preceded by a consultative meeting of various Prime Movers and Co Prime Movers on 22 May 2006. During the meeting, the progress in the 19 sectors of cooperation under ACD framework was reviewed.

Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)

The Sixth Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) of Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) and other related meetings were held from 16-22 February 2006 in Iran. The Indian delegation to the COM was led by E. Ahamed, Minister of State for External Affairs (EA).

A Buyer Seller Meet was held from 1-3 November 2006 in Mumbai for enhancing cooperation in the area of Agro Food Processing and Fisheries.

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Technical & Economic Cooperation and Development Partnership

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The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme or ITEC continued to play a vital role in the conduct of India's diplomacy with the developing world. Visiting Ministers and dignitaries from Asia, Africa and Eurasia in their interaction with Indian Ministers and senior functionaries conveyed their continuing interest in drawing upon the programme, given its contribution to the developing world in capacity building and human resource development. Requests were also made for increasing the quantum of assistance under the programme.

Under ITEC and SCAAP or the Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Programme, the core of the programme is the civilian training programme, which has empowered and continues to empower thousands of participants from the developing world. In 2006-07 some 4000 participants from 156 ITEC/SCAAP partner countries (list of ITEC/SCAAP partner countries at Appendix-XV) were accepted to the 220 courses in various and diverse disciplines of use and value in their countries. 39 institutions were empanelled to conduct the courses (list at Appendix-XIV).

The value of the courses was reflected in the interest shown by regional and multilateral groupings to also be associated with and avail of the programmes conducted under ITEC. Training slots were, therefore, provided to participants from the Association of South East Asia Nations (ASEAN) member countries, G-15, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC), the African Union (AU), the Afro-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO), the Pan African Parliament, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Commonwealth. In response to special requests, specialized courses including on Capacity Building on the World Trade Organization (WTO) for African countries was conducted by the Indian Institute

of Foreign Trade (IIFT); a special programme for African Cotton Exporters was conducted by South India Textile Research Association (SITRA), Coimbatore for 30 participants from Africa; a special programme on Government and Finance was conducted by Institute of Government Accounts Finance (INGAF) for South African Municipal CEOs and CFOs and a Special Course on Prevention of HIV-AIDS in the Work-place by the V.V. Giri National Labour Institute. Also to be conducted in the last quarter of 2006-07 is a Special Course on Management Development for SME Managers at the request of the Commonwealth Secretariat. Special courses for BIMSTEC and MGC countries on (i) Trans-Asian Railway Network; and (ii) Information Technology and its Application for Railways were arranged during the year. A special course will be conducted for the Pacific Island countries on SMEs by National Institute of Small Industry Extension Training (NISIET), Hyderabad in March 2007. A delegation from the Upper Nile Province of Sudan attended a study tour and training course conducted by the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training (BPST) in November 2006.

In the field of Defence Training too the rate of utilization of some 350 slots offered to the developing world remained high particularly in courses at the National Defence College (NDC) and the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) which also allows participation from the developed world, on a self-financing basis.

The year under review also saw 58 experts being deputed overseas at the request of various countries during the year. The fields covered by these experts are Information Technology, Dairy Farming, Town Planning, Defence, Fisheries, Agriculture, Legal Affairs, and Telecommunications

Assistance was extended to Guyana during the visit of the Vice President of India Bhairon Singh Shekhawat,

who gifted books, computers and printers for a new Resource Centre named after Rabindranath Tagore at the University of Guyana. India also gifted seeds to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, extended assistance for transporting books to Ethiopia, assisted Fiji in agro analysis, gifted medicines to Vietnam and computers and peripherals to Grenada.

Development Partnership and Projects Cooperation

In advancing further and strengthening India's 'development partnership' with other developing countries, increasing emphasis is being placed on the delivery of development projects as part of India's overall economic development cooperation programme. Simultaneously, further progress is being made in developing in-house expertise in project delivery and related cooperation work, with a view to ensuring maximum cost-effectiveness, expeditious delivery, and optimum coordination.

During this year, a training centre in IT sector was established in record time of 3 months at Havana, called

'India-Cuba Knowledge Centre', which was inaugurated by MOS Anand Sharma in September 2006, on the occasion of the XIV NAM Summit. The centre would impart training to over 400 Cubans every year. Among the major ongoing projects are an 'India-Maldives Friendship Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies' at Male, Maldives, at an estimated cost of about Rs.35 crore, development of SMEs sector in Zimbabwe (Rs.22.50 crore), conservation and restoration of the World Heritage Ta Prohm Temple at Siem Reap in Cambodia, and a multidimensional project for the development of information technology sector in Laos. There are other projects at various stages of consideration and implementation for Vietnam, Indonesia, Timor Leste, Mongolia, Laos, etc., in various sectors such as tele-medicine/tele-education, archaeology, IT, and specialty medical treatment.

Aid for Disaster Relief

India's cooperation programme for providing prompt and effective relief for disaster-struck people around the world was maintained continuing from past years.



The ITP Division has prepared its annual publication “Dynamic Business Partner: Investor Friendly Destination” which will soon be under print. The publication has been developed with the intent of providing the reader a comprehensive picture of India’s economic growth, sectoral developments, social and legal background and potential business and investment opportunities. With the intention of a wider reach and making it user friendly, the publication will be accompanied by a CD version.

The ITP Division continues to provide to entrepreneurs and policy makers global perspectives on the trends in trade and opportunities for exports and advise on market strategy through the medium of its detailed Investment and Business Brief. The Brief also serves as a handy and useful document for all our Missions abroad in equipping them with the latest developments in the Indian economy along with facts and figures relating to our trade and investments and helps them in their own promotional activities.

The Division’s website <www.indiainbusiness.nic.in> which is devoted exclusively for the economic and commercial aspects of India’s diplomacy is being revamped with new features and hyperlinks with the aim of providing comprehensive and latest information for global investors and businessmen about the opportunities in India. The website has emerged as a useful and reliable source of information which is evident from the number of business and investments related queries received by the Division.

In its external publicity, the Division in collaboration with the XP Division of the Ministry has successfully projected the image of India as an established economic power with attractive potential for investment and business through special supplements, brochures, CD ROMs, films, etc.

The Division participated and contributed actively in the meetings of Foreign Investment Promotion Board, Reserve Bank of India, Board of Trade and other policy meetings

concerning reforms and liberalisation of the economy and simplifying of investment procedures and expeditiously processed proposals relating to opening of Liaison/Branch offices by foreign companies in India.

The Division took active part in Governmental/non-Governmental meetings on Energy issues and through its network of Missions facilitated the work of Indian companies.

The Division interacted with Export Promotion Councils, Trade and Industry bodies, such as CII, FICCI, NASSCOM, ASSOCHAM, etc., Department of Commerce and DIPP for promotion of India’s exports and investment initiatives. Periodicals, Journals and other relevant information brought out by these organizations and concerned Government agencies were regularly circulated to Indian Missions abroad to keep them abreast of various developments in knowledge based industries such as IT, Biotechnology and Pharmaceuticals.

As part of its efforts to enhance greater air-connectivity between India and different regions of the world with a view to making India as an attractive business and investment destination, ITP Division actively participated and made positive contributions in the bilateral civil aviation talks held with several countries, including, inter alia, Tanzania, UAE, Singapore, Spain, Egypt and Oman.

As the nodal point for Energy Security in MEA, the Division was actively involved in the preparation and organisation of India-Electricity 2006, an International Exhibition-cum-Conference held in New Delhi in May 2006, showcasing the energy sector of the country. A Representative of the Division was also part of the Indian delegation led by the Union Minister for Power that visited USA and Canada in April/May 2006 for promoting the above Exhibition-cum-Conference.

As part of the overall drive to promote FDI inflows into India, the Division has been actively associated with the Sub-Group on Investment from West Asian countries

established by the Department of Economic Affairs. A key mandate of the Sub-Group, among other areas, is to study the opportunities for investments by West Asian countries in India. In this connection, a delegation of the Sub-Group, including a Representative from this Division visited UAE and Saudi Arabia from 15-19 November 2006. The visit was successful as it provided the opportunity for one-to-one interaction with potential investors. Areas of Interest indicated by them for equity investment, included real estate, power and fertilizer.

The Division actively pursued the policy of using Lines of Credit on concessional terms for promotion of India's

political, economic and commercial interests. During the period April-November 2006, agreements on LoCs amounting to US\$ 1200 million approx. have been approved for disbursal. The LoCs have helped Indian companies to obtain project contracts and orders for supply of goods and services in number of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The ITP Division provided financial assistance to the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi for organizing a Seminar on "Indo-US Knowledge Initiative in Agriculture" held in New Delhi on 16 January 2007.



The Policy Planning and Research Division serves as a nodal point for interaction with 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-XIII.

A Foreign Policy Coordinating Committee (FPCC) has been constituted in the Ministry. The Committee will function under the supervision of EAM and PP&R Division, and will provide the Secretariat for FPCC. FPCC will work on themes such as India's relations with its neighbours, global issues, relations with major regions and countries, economic issues, and case studies/historical research. The FPCC met twice during 2006 and deliberated on important foreign policy issues. A computerized database of experts and institutions specializing in policy research and analyses has already been developed by the PPR Division and is updated on regular basis.

The Policy Planning and Research Division continued issuing 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 serves 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 facts 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.

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India's increasing engagement with the international community has resulted in a large number of visits to India by foreign dignitaries. This trend has amplified considerably in the past two years during which the number of incoming VVIP/VIP visits has almost doubled. A similar trend has emerged in terms of increase in Foreign Resident Diplomatic Missions in Delhi. Their number has increased from 116 in 2003 to 130 in 2006. The number of foreign Representatives of Diplomatic Missions in Delhi is also increasing with about 150 posts added annually. USA, Brazil, Australia, Germany, Malaysia, Japan and

Spain have opened their Consulates General in Hyderabad, Chennai, Bangalore and Mumbai in 2006. This trend is expected to continue, with the International community viewing India as an emerging global player.

The Conference Cell organized/assisted 8 Conferences from 1 April – 5 December 2006. Conference Cell also assisted the Territorial Division concerned in organizing the Conference of Indian Heads of Mission from countries of East and South East Asia from 1-4 September 2006 and India-Myanmar SOM Meeting on 27-28 September 2006.

Visits for 2006

State Visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

S. No.	Dignitary	Dates
1.	Custodian of the two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia	January 24-27
2.	H.E. Mr Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic	February 19-21
3.	H.E. Mr George W Bush, President of USA	March 1-3
4.	The Hon'ble John Howard, PM of Australia	March 5-8
5.	H.E. Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister of Bangladesh	March 20-22
6.	H.E. Mr Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan	April 9-13
7.	H.E. Mr Tassos Papadopoulos, President of Cyprus	April 11-16
8.	H.E. Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of Kuwait	June 14-19
9.	H.E. Mr. Emomali Sharifovich Rehmanov, President of Tajikistan	August 6-10
10.	H.E. Mr. Traian Basescu, President of Romania	October 22-24
11.	H.E. Mr. Hu Jintao, President of China	November 20-23
12.	H.M. King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein, King of Jordan	November 30-December 2
13.	H.E. Mr. Festus Gontebanye Mogae, President of Botswana	December 7-13

Official/Working visits by Head of State/Government/Vice President and equivalent level

1.	The Taoiseach Mr Bertie Ahern, PM of Ireland	January 16-21
2.	H.E. Dr Jan Peter Balkenende, PM of Netherlands	January 17-20

3.	H.H. Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, First Lady of the State of Qatar	February 6-13
4.	H.E. Mr Matti Vanhanen, Prime Minister of Finland	March 10-15
5.	H.E. Mr Mikhail E Fradkov, Chairman of the Government of Russian Federation (Prime Minister)	March 16-17
6.	H.E. Mr Abdool Raouf Bundhun, Vice President of Mauritius	May 7-16
7.	H.E. Girija Prasad Koirala, Prime Minister of Nepal	June 6-9
8.	H.E. Mr. Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, President of Government of Spain [Prime Minister]	July 2-5
9.	H.M. Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan	July 26-31
10.	Crown Prince of Bhutan	August 26-31
11.	Deputy President of South Africa	September 9-13
12.	H.H. the Aga Khan	September 19-23
13.	Vice President of Burundi	October 6-10
14.	Crown Prince of Norway	October 29-November 2
15.	Prime Minister of Belgium	November 2-7
16.	H.E. Mr. Mahinda Rajapakse, President of Sri Lanka	November 25-29
17.	Crown Prince of Bhutan	November 26-30

Official visits by Foreign Minister and equivalent level

1.	H.E. Mr Taro Aso, Foreign Minister of Japan	January 3-4
2.	H.E. Mr Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuck, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bhutan	January 15-16, 2006
3.	H.E. Mr Frederick Mitchell, Foreign Minister of the Bahamas	January 22-29
4.	H.E. Dr Carlos Morales Troncoso, Secretary of State for External Relations of the Dominican Republic	February 16-23
5.	H.R.H. Prince Saud Al-Faisal Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia	February 21-22
6.	H.E. Mrs Thorgerdur Katrin Gunnarsdottir, Minister of Education & Acting Foreign Minister of Iceland	February 26-Mar 3
7.	H.R.H. Prince Saud Al Faisal Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia	February 21-22
8.	H.E. Mr Dai Bingguo, Special Representative on the Boundary Question of PR of China	March 10-14
9.	H.E. Dr Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Foreign Minister of Senegal	March 22-25
10.	H.E. Dr Artis Pabriks, Foreign Minister of Latvia	March 20-24
11.	H.E. Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al-Thani, Deputy PM and Foreign Minister of Qatar	April 18-21
12.	H.E. Mr Raymond Ramzani Baya, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Democratic Republic of Congo	May 2-7
13.	H.E. Mr Mangala Samaraweera, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka	May 6-9
14.	H.E. Mr Davies Katsonga, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malawi	May 9-14

15.	H.E. Mr Joao Bernardo De Miranda, Foreign Minister of Angola	May 9-14
16.	H.E. Mr. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo, Foreign Minister of Ghana	June 9-11
17.	H.E. Mr. Mohamed Benaissa, Foreign Minister of Morocco	June 25-27
18.	H.E. Ms. Mariam Aladji Boni Diallo, Foreign Minister of Benin	June 26-27
19.	H.E. Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan	June 29-July 1
20.	H.E. Mr. Jorge Enrique Taiana, Foreign Minister of Argentina	July 2-8
21.	H.E. Mr. Francisco Carrion Mena, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador	July 16-20
22.	H.E. Mr. Ahmed Ben Said Jaffar Foreign Minister of Union of Comoros	July 25-28
23.	Foreign Minister of Ivory Coast	August 3-8
24.	Foreign Minister of Thailand	August 7-9
25.	Foreign Minister of Mauritius	October 5-10
26.	Foreign Minister of Brunei Darussalam	October 10-15
27.	Foreign Minister of Maldives	October 23-28
28.	Foreign Minister of Congo	October 25-29
29.	H.E. Mr. Marco Hausiku, Foreign Minister of Namibia	October 26-30
30.	H.E. Mr. Sam Kutesa, Foreign Minister of Uganda	October 29-November 2
31.	Foreign Minister of UK	November 1-9
32.	Foreign Minister of Hungary	November 2-6
33.	Foreign Minister of Nepal	November 5-11
34.	Foreign Minister of Netherlands	November 6
35.	Foreign Minister of Iran	November 15-18
36.	Foreign Minister of Russia	November 16-17
37.	Foreign Minister of Fiji	November 20-22
38.	Foreign Minister of Pakistan	November 25-28
39.	Foreign Minister of France	November 30-December 1
40.	Foreign Minister of Norway	December 13-15
41.	Foreign Minister of Egypt	December 15-17
42.	AU Chairperson Konare	December 19-22

Private/Transit visit of Heads of State/Government/Vice President and First Ladies and equivalent level

1.	Transit visit of Vice President of Indonesia (Delhi)	January 17 & January 22
2.	Private visit of the First Lady of Kazakhstan	January 31-February 2
3.	H.R.H. Princess of Morocco	

4.	Eldest Queen of Bhutan	February 5-15
5.	H.R.H. Prince El Hassan Bin Talal & Princess Sarvath El Hassan	February 1-6, 2006
6.	Private Visit of HE Dr Janez Drnovsek, President of Slovenia (Bangalore)	February 16-18
7.	H.E. Mr Gilbert Bukenya, Vice President of Uganda	February 28-March 5
8.	H.E. Mr Francis Albert Rene, Former President of Seychelles	February 27-March 6
9.	Private Visit of HE Mr Gerard Schroeder, Former Chancellor of Germany	March 10-11
10.	Mrs Varshnie Jagdeo, First Lady of Guyana	March 5-16
11.	Private Visit of HH Lalla Latiffa, Queen Mother of Morocco	March 20-28
12.	Private visit of HRH Prince of Wales and Duchess Camilla Parker	March 26-31
13.	Transit visit of the President of Gabon (Delhi)	May 3-7
14.	Transit visit of Prime Minister of Turkey (Delhi)	May 12
15.	Private visit of Ms Aisha Gaddahfi, Daughter of Libyan Leader Muammar Gaddhafi	May 16-22
16.	Transit visit of HE Mr Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup, PM of Bhutan – Delhi	June 2-3 & June 6
17.	Prime Minister of Tanzania	September 1
18.	Crown Prince of Thailand (Mumbai)	September 10
19.	King of Malaysia	September 20-22
20.	Czech President (Mumbai)	October 5
21.	Royal Thai Princes	October 10-13
22.	President of Slovak	October 18
23.	Duke of York	October 20-November 4
24.	President of Rwanda	November 1-2
25.	President of Uganda	November 2-3
26.	President of Madagascar	November 4-5
27.	Royal Thai Princes	November 8-11
28.	Queen of Belgium	November 24-December 3
29.	Former US President Bill Clinton	November 29-December 1
30.	President of Cyprus	December 4 & 9

Visits abroad of President/Vice President/Prime Minister of India

1.	Vice President's visit to Dubai (UAE) for funeral of Prime Minister of UAE	January 5-6
2.	President's visit to Singapore, Philippines and Republic of Korea	January 31-February 9
3.	President visit to Myanmar and Mauritius	March 8-14
4.	Prime Minister's visit to Germany and Uzbekistan	April 22-26
5.	Prime Minister's visit to St. Petersburg	July 16-18

6.	Prime Minister's visit to Brazil	September 10-14
7.	Prime Minister's visit to Cuba	September 14-18
8.	Prime Minister's visit to UK	October 9-14
9.	Vice President's visit to Guyana and Trinidad & Tobago	November 5-13
10.	PM's visit to Japan	December 13-16

List of Foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners who Left India during the period 01.04.2006 to 30.11.2006 on Completion of Assignment

Name	Date of Departure
H.E.Mr.Benjamin Ruiz Ambassador of Peru	01.04.2006
H.E.Mr.Jaromir Novotny Ambassador of Czech Republic	05.04.2006
H.E.Mr.Dr.Oleh Semenets Ambassador of Ukraine	30.04.2006
H.E.Mr. Tran Trong Khanh Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam	22.05.2005
H.E.Mrs. U.C.Dwarka Canabady High Commissioner of the Republic of Mauritius	31.05.2006
H.E. Mr. Karna Dhoj Aadhikary Ambassador of Royal Nepal	05.06.2006
H.E.Mr.Walid A. NASR Ambassador of Lebanon	07.07.2006
H.E.Mr. Michael Sternberg Ambassador of the Royal Danish Embassy	10.07.2006
H.E.Ms. Lucie Edwards High Commissioner of Canada	02.08.2006
H.E.Mr. Elyes Kasri Ambassador of Tunisia	20.08.2006
H.E.Dr. Kheir Eldin A. Latif Mohamed Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt	31.08.2006
H.E.Mrs. Igna Erikson Fogh Ambassador of Sweden	10.09.2006
H.E. Dr. Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem Mohammad Ambassador of the Republic of Sudan	12.09.2006
H.E.Mr. See Chak Mun High Commissioner of the Republic of Singapore	28.09.2006
H.E.Mr. Donnilo Anwar Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia	30.09.2006
H.E.Mr. Mr.Sturla Sigurjonsson Ambassador of Iceland	12.10.2006

H.E.A.G.Abdullahi, mni High Commissioner of the Federal Republic of Nigeria	12.11.2006
H.E.Mr. Aziz Ahmed Khan High Commissioner for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan	30.11.2006

List of Foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners WHO Presented their Credentials during the period 01.04.2006 to 30.11.2006

Name	Presentation of Credentials
H.E.Mr. Antonio Fwaminy Dacosta Ambassador of the Republic of Angola	05.04.2006
H.E.Dr. Noureddine Bardad-Daiidj Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria	05.04.2006
H.E.Mr. Mustapha Ahmed Mohamed Noman Ambassador of the Republic of Yemen	05.04.2006
H.E.Mr. Abdulla Ebrahim A.Alzoy Al Shehhi Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates	05.04.2006
H.E.Mr. Halil Akinci Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey	05.04.2006
H.E.Mr. Sturla Sigurjonsson Ambassador of the Republic of Iceland	05.04.2006
H.E.Mr. John Bentum- William High Commissioner of the Republic of Ghana	05.04.2006
H.E.Mr.Bernd Mutzelburg Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany	05.04.2006
H.E. Mr. Carlos Abad Ambassador of the Republic of Ecuador	19.06.2006
H.E. Ms. Gennet Zewide Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia	19.06.2006
H.E.Mr. Salohiddin Nasriddinov Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan	19.06.2006
H.E. Mr. Kemal Muftic Ambassador of Bosnia & Herzegovina	19.06.2006
H.E. Mrs. Irina A. Orolbaeva Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic	19.06.2006
H.E. Mr. Frank Hans Dannenberg Ambassador of Dominican Republic	19.06.2006
H.E. Mr. Mookhesswur Chonee High Commissioner of the Republic of Mauritius	19.06.2006
H.E.Mr. Vu Quang Diem Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam	12.09.2006

H.E.Mr.Saydakmal S.Saydaminov Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan	12.09.2006
H.E.Mr. David Malone High Commissioner of Canada	12.09.2006
H.E.Mr. Ole Lonsmann Poulsen Ambassador of Denmark	12.09.2006
H.E. Dr. Mohamed Abd El Hamid Higazy Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt	12.09.2006
H.E.Mr. Calvin Eu Mun Hoo High Commissioner of Singapore	13.11.2006
H.E.Mr. Tarcisiuss Adrian Eri High Commissioner of the Papua New Guinea	13.11.2006
H.E. Dr.Hynek Kmonicek Ambassador of the Czech Republic	13.11.2006
H.E.Dr. Sayed Makhdoom Raheen Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	13.11.2006
H.E. Ms. Dorcas Kgosietsile. High Commissioner of Botswana	13.11.2006
H.E.Mr. Mpumelelo Joseph Ndumiso Hlophe High Commissioner of the Kingdom of Swaziland	13.11.2006

The following countries opened their resident missions in Delhi during the period 1/4/2006 to 30/11/2006

1	Dominican Republic	Embassy	01.05.2006
2	Papua New Guinea	High Commission	10.10.2006
3	Republic of Botswana	High Commission	02.11.2006

List of Conferences organised/assisted by the Conterence Cell (from 01.04.2006 to 05.12.2006)

1. 11th BIMSTEC Senior Officials Meeting SOM, New Delhi, 8 August 2006.
2. 9th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting, New Delhi, 9 August 2006.
3. Second Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Legal and Law Enforcement Issues, New Delhi, 4-6 September 2006.
4. First Meeting of the Organizing Committee for the SAARC Car Rally, New Delhi, 18-19 September 2006.
5. First Annual Meeting of the Immigration Authority of the SAARC Members States, New Delhi, 20 September 2006.
6. 10th ASEAN-India Working Group Meeting, New Delhi, 16-17 October 2006.
7. 2nd Regional Economic Cooperation Conference, New Delhi, 18-19 November 2006.
8. 2nd Meeting of the Organizing Committee of the SAARC Car Rally, New Delhi, 30 November-1 December 2006.



The Consular, Passport & Visa (CPV) Division through its Passport Offices all over the country and Consular Wings in Indian Missions/Posts abroad constitutes the public face of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Passport Offices

There are presently 31 Passport Offices and 16 Passport Collection Centres in India. It is proposed to open new Passport Offices at Amritsar, Dehradun, Raipur, Shimla, Coimbatore and Madurai in 2007. All Passport Offices are computerized; and these Passport Offices issue machine-printed and machine readable passports as per the guidelines laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organisation. Grant orders for issue of passport are generated electronically. All routine passport related work such as generation of cash, index checking, printing of passports, addresses and dispatch is computerized and records are maintained electronically. Passport applications are being scanned and stored electronically.

Passport Services

There has been a significant increase in the number of passports issued over the years. Over 40 lakh passports were issued in 2006 compared to 35.7 lakh passports in 2005. The total revenue generated from all Passport Offices also increased from Rs 417 crores in 2005 to Rs. 427 crores in 2006. The Ministry has been continually taking a number of measures to make the passport issuance system simpler and speedier for the comfort and convenience of the passport seeking public. Some of these important steps are delineated as under:

a) Revised Passport Issuance Guidelines

External Affairs Minister announced a set of revised passport issuance guidelines at the All India Passport Officers' Conference in Chennai on 22 December 2006 for the convenience and benefit of passport applicants. These new procedures strike a balance between the needs of security and citizen comfort. The time period for issuance of passports under the Tatkal category has been

reduced from 20 and 10 days to 14 and 7 days respectively. The re-issuance of passports under the Tatkal scheme will be done in 3 working days as against 5 days at present without any extra charges to the applicants. Hitherto, the identity of applicants was established preponderantly through police verification prior to issuance of a passport. This procedure has been cumbersome and time consuming. The revised rules provide alternative and more efficient means for establishment of identity. Post-passport issuance police verification will, however, continue to be conducted.

b) Decentralization through District Passport Cells and Speed Post Centres

With a view to taking the passport issuance and related services nearer to the doorsteps of the applicants, District Passport Cells (DPCs) have been opened at the district level 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 463 DPCs in India covering more than 77 percent of the country. The passport applications are also received through the network of Speed Post Centres, which was widened from 220 to 1095 Centres in September, 2006.

c) Online Applications

Online submission of passport applications has been introduced in Mumbai, Chandigarh, Chennai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Malappuram, Lucknow, Pune, New Delhi, Kolkata, Goa, Bareilly and Patna. It is proposed to introduce the scheme in other Passport Offices as well in 2007.

Infrastructure

Efforts are being made continually to acquire suitable plots of land for housing Passport Offices. Suitable plots have been acquired for Passport Offices in Mumbai, Visakhapatnam and Guwahati and purchase of land at

Srinagar, Surat and Thane is under process. New buildings for Passport Offices at Bangalore, Lucknow and Jaipur are nearing completion. Construction of building at Bhubaneswar is likely to commence shortly.

Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism

Steps have been taken to strengthen the public grievance redressal mechanism in all Passport Offices. Facilitation Counters and Help Desks have also been set up to assist applicants and also to attend to grievances/complaints expeditiously. A public grievance redressal mechanism also exists in the CPV Division under the close supervision of the Joint Secretary (CPV) and Chief Passport Officer.

Passport Adalats

Passport Offices have been holding Passport Adalats periodically to redress the grievances of passport applicants. These Adalats have been very useful in disposing of old passport-related cases and also in the issuance of passports to applicants.

Right to Information Act (RTI)

A Central Public Information Officer and Assistant Public Information Officers have been appointed to provide information to applicants under the RTI.

Website

The website of CPV Division www.passport.nic.in, which was established in 1999 is being updated from time to time to make it more user-friendly. It has detailed information on passports, visas, consular matters and PIO cards. It also has downloadable forms. The main website provides status enquiry check of passport applications submitted at Delhi. It is also linked to the status check on the websites of all the Passport Offices.

Tatkal Scheme

The "Tatkal Scheme", which was implemented in 2000 in recognition of the genuine needs of some passport applicants for urgent issue of passports has been further liberalized recently. Passports are issued out-of-turn to eligible applicants on post police verification basis provided such cases are certified by an officer not below the rank of Under Secretary to the Government of India or his equivalent in the State Governments/Armed Forces.

Creation of Additional Posts

Approval from the Ministry of Finance for creation of 293 additional posts in various categories was received in September 2006. The process for filling up these posts in various Passport Offices has already been set in motion, which will be completed by March 2007. Another proposal for creation of 287 posts in Indian Missions/Posts abroad is presently under consideration of the Ministry of Finance.

Consular Attestation

During January-December, 2006 more than 470,000 documents were attested in the CPV Division, of which 220,000 were commercial documents. This service is rendered on the same day without any charges and is prompt and efficient.

Consular Services

There are 115 Indian Missions and 50 Posts abroad in 115 countries. Indian Mission/Posts abroad, which have been rendering an array of services apart from providing a constructive mechanism for interacting with members of Indian communities abroad. They issue passports and visas, arrange registration of births and deaths of Indians abroad, handle cases of compensation for death, render assistance to Indian workers in resolving labour related issues like payment of salaries, outstanding dues and disputes between employers and employees.

Our Missions/Posts also provide consular assistance to Indians in jails and approach local authorities for expediting judicial proceedings against the Indians and repatriating them to India on expiry of their jail terms. Though at present, there is no provision for rendering free legal assistance to Indian prisoners abroad, the consular staff members of our Missions/Posts periodically visit the Indian prisoners in foreign jails to render all possible consular assistance as and when required.

Indian Embassies in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE in the Gulf region have introduced, with effect from April 2006, provision of free legal aid for two hours twice a week to Indian workers for resolving their labor related problems. Indian Missions in Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia have also set up, as a welfare measure, Indian Citizen Welfare Funds to provide financial assistance to Indians in distress and medical assistance to

needy Indians, to arrange air tickets for repatriation of stranded Indians to India and temporary accommodation for stranded housemaids and medical assistance to destitute Indians.

Issuance of Visas

Over the years, the procedure for grant of visas by our 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. Our Missions/Posts issued over 57 lakhs visas during 2006, compared to 55.5 lakhs visas in 2005.

Visas Waiver Agreement for Diplomats and Officials

Visa waiver agreements with Mongolia and Mexico came into force in February 2006, thereby increasing the number of such countries to 35. Efforts are being made to sign such agreements with other countries.

Issuance of Diplomatic and Official Passports

The CPV Division issued 2444 diplomatic and 25, 265 official passports in 2006 compared to 1632 and 18, 560 passports issued in 2005.

Computerization of Missions/Posts abroad

This Ministry has classified Missions/Posts abroad into two groups, the first group consists of 26 Missions/Posts providing a large volume of passport and visa services and the second group comprises 120 Missions/Posts providing a smaller volume of passport and visa services. The process of computerization of Passport/Visa section has been successfully completed in London, New York, Islamabad, Kuwait, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Muscat, Dhaka, Riyadh, Madrid, Paris, Singapore and Colombo. The process of computerization in the remaining Missions/Posts would be completed by March 2007. In the second group, which consists of 120 Missions/Posts, visa services in 67 Mission/Posts have already been computerized. This Ministry expects to complete computerization of remaining Missions/Posts by March 2007.

New Projects

The Ministry has embarked on several projects with a view

to modernizing and upgrading the passport/visa issuance system. These are as follows:

(i) Centralized Printing of Passports

Currently all 31 Passport Offices in India and a few Missions/Posts abroad are issuing Machine Readable Passports (MRPs) as per the standards laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). It is proposed to issue passports centrally from the CPV Division in respect of other Missions/Posts as it would be cost effective. A pilot project is expected to be launched in this regard by February 2007.

(ii) Issuance of e-Passports

In accordance with ICAO guidelines it is proposed to issue e-passports or bio-metric passports in India. A Technical Committee has been constituted to finalise specifications of the e-passports and it is expected to submit its report shortly. It has been decided to launch a pilot project for issuing e-passports to all diplomats and officials by the end of 2007.

(iii) NISG Work Study

The National Institute of Smart Government (NISG) has been entrusted with task of undertaking a time-bound work to study on the passport issuance system, including its IT aspects and suggest ways and means towards setting up of a model passport office in the future. The study is to be completed by April 2007.

(iv) Outsourcing of Visa Work

Outsourcing of visa work was undertaken in Dhaka in 2005. A proposal to outsource visa work for Indian Mission/Posts in the UK is under consideration of the Ministry. Another 30 Mission/Posts in Europe, USA, Canada, etc., have been authorized to outsource visa services. This will help us to tide over the problems of space, security, manpower constraints, etc. in several Missions/Posts abroad.

Consular Agreements

During 2006, bilateral treaties on extradition and mutual legal assistance were negotiated with several countries to put in place a legal and institutional mechanism to combat organized crime, international terrorism and drug trafficking and to respond to the growing international dimensions of financial and other crimes.

An MoU to combat organized crime was signed in January 2006 with Saudi Arabia. A Mutual Legal Assistance (MLAT) Treaty in Criminal Matters was signed with Spain in June, 2006. MLATs in Criminal Matters also came into force with Belarus and Mauritius in 2006.

During the year an Indian delegation visited Mexico to negotiate Treaties on Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, and finalized and initialled the draft Extradition Treaty between the two countries. A delegation from Egypt visited India to negotiate the Extradition Treaty and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters.

Cases and Legal Assistance

The Ministry actively pursues requests for extradition and legal assistance from foreign Governments both for criminal and civil/commercial offences, which also include financial matters. The requests for extradition emanate

from our obligations under the Extradition Treaties or Extradition Arrangements entered into with various countries. During the year 2006, five extradition requests received from various investigating agencies were forwarded to the Foreign Governments. During the same period, 2 persons (Kosaraju Venketshwar Rao from Thailand and Govind Prasad Srivastava from Belgium) were extradited to India. During the year, 24 extradition requests were received from foreign countries. The Government of India received 93 requests for legal assistance in criminal/civil and commercial matters. The Government of India forwarded 39 requests for legal assistance in criminal matters to foreign countries. The Government of India also received approximately 2500 warrants/summons/ notices and other judicial documents from the judicial Authorities/State Governments/ Investigating agencies in India for services/execution on persons residing abroad.



Administration

Pranab Mukherjee assumed the charge of the Ministry of External Affairs on 25 October 2006 following the relinquishment of additional charge by the Prime Minister. The External Affairs Minister is assisted by two Ministers of State, E. Ahamed and Anand Sharma. Shivshankar Menon assumed charge as Foreign Secretary on 1 October 2006, following the retirement of Shyam Saran.

Effective pursuance of India's foreign policy objectives necessitates greater Indian diplomatic presence abroad. Towards this goal, it was decided to open new Missions / Posts in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo), Melbourne (Australia), Ljubljana (Slovenia), Juba (Sudan), Phuentsholing (Bhutan) and Songkhla (Thailand).

A critical component in the effective functioning of Indian Missions / Posts abroad is the locally recruited staff. To enhance the attractiveness of working in Indian Missions abroad, and to suitably adjust the pay scales on account of increase in the cost of living, the Ministry implemented a comprehensive review of pay scales for locally recruited staff, under the scheme known as the Global Cluster Scheme. Consequently, revision in pay scales was implemented in the first phase of this exercise in 31 Missions / Posts abroad.

As part of continuing efforts to streamline the administrative machinery of the Ministry, a comprehensive review of the rules and regulations was carried out, leading to greater decentralization of decision making. In particular, greater powers were devolved to Missions in a number of areas, including financial powers, rules on Home Leave Fares and Transfer Passages, authorizing language classes, and utilization of Children Education Allowance. Monetary limits on delegated powers and some entitlements, which were no longer commensurate with prevailing costs, were reviewed. An updated CD-ROM version of the Rules was brought out, with enhanced features, for easy access and reference.

Despite a severe shortage in human resources on account of reduction of posts, Ministry fully implemented the austerity measures of the Government with regard to abolition of posts and held the Screening Committee meeting for Optimization of Direct Recruitment. In addition, tenures at all family stations were increased to a uniform three years in order to reduce transfer related expenditure.

To ensure the motivation levels of personnel remain high, all Departmental Promotion Committee meetings were held on time. Regular meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee were also held. A major challenge was to make the optimum use of sanctioned strength. For this purpose, renewed efforts were made to fill up all backlog vacancies in the reserved categories as part of the Special Drive of the Government. Indents for fresh recruitment were placed on time and review of deployment of manpower at all levels was conducted periodically.

The current strength of the Ministry is 3514. Details are given in Appendix I. These personnel are deployed in India and in 166 Missions / Posts abroad. This includes officials from the Indian Foreign Service (IFS), Indian Foreign Service, Branch 'B' (IFS 'B'), Interpreters Cadre, Legal and Treaties Cadre and the Library Cadre, but excludes Group 'D' and ex-cadre posts.

Recruitment made to various groups in the Ministry from 1 April-12 January 2006 through Direct Recruitment (DR), Departmental Promotion (DP) and Limited Departmental 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.

Gender Issue

Gender equality has been a key element of the Ministry's overall policy. In keeping with this, equal opportunities are provided to women officers to take up important responsibilities.

Presently, there are 5 women officers at Secretary level, 6 women officers at Additional Secretary level and 32 women officers at Joint Secretary level. A total of 21 women officers are currently posted as Ambassador / High Commissioner / Permanent Representative / Consul General. The present distribution of women officers among the various cadres in the Ministry of External Affairs is at Appendix XVII.

Persons with Disability

Ensuring adequate opportunity to persons with disability and to have suitable representation of persons with disability among its personnel is an important objective of the Ministry. Towards this goal, the Ministry has identified posts suitable for appointment of persons with disability, including the Indian Foreign Service and the first officer with disability was recruited in the 2006 batch of the IFS. In all, the Ministry has 37 persons with disability in various grades and cadres.

Welfare

Welfare Division deals with all matters relating to general welfare of serving officers and members of staff of the Ministry and in Missions abroad. Specifically this includes giving of emergency first aid, transmission of telegraphic messages in cases of deceased personnel.

Educational Matters

Welfare Section facilitates admission of MEA children in Kendriya Vidyalayas against 60 seats allotted to this Ministry by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan. Welfare Section has also assisted children of the officials of the Ministry at Headquarters in securing admissions in colleges. Also Welfare Section has processed applications for admission in Medical/Engineering Courses. In 2005-2006, students were selected from about 40 applications for admission to Medical Degree courses and from 85 applications 40 children were accorded admission in engineering courses. This year Welfare Section succeeded in getting 62 seats in addition to normal quota of 17 seats. Four applicants were accorded admission to Diploma Courses against 10 Diploma seats.

Staff Benefit Fund

Welfare Division operates a Staff Benefit Fund formed over the years by contributions from officers and members of staff of the Ministry. This is mainly used to give financial

assistance of Rs. 6000/- per death case to meet the funeral expenses in the case of death of members of staff of MEA. On the recommendation of Welfare Section External Affairs Spouses Association (EASA) presented cheques amounting Rs.20, 000 to each dependents of deceased employees of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Compassionate Appointment

Whenever a member of the staff passes away, Welfare Division examines the financial status of the surviving family members and examines if spouse or any children of the deceased person is educationally qualified to be recruited in any Group'C' or Group'D' posts. A list of such persons is maintained in the Welfare Division strictly on the basis of financial position of the family. Eight dependents were employed as LDC's in the Ministry on compassionate grounds, during the year 2006.

Grant In-Aid

Welfare Section controls Grant in-Aid to all Indian Missions abroad and to all Regional Passport Offices in India for recreation facilities and sports activities. The Division also arranges and financially supports inter-Ministry sports activities.

Family Disputes

Though rare, Welfare Section extends its help in settlement of family disputes by listening to their grievances, differences, complaints and consoling them to continue a reasonably happy family life.

Flag Days

Welfare Section arranged for celebration of different Flag Days like Red Cross Day, Communal Harmony Day, Armed Forces Flag Day and collected funds for these organizations.

Canteens

Welfare Section administered Departmental Canteens located in Akbar Bhavan and Patiala House. As usual the canteens provided quality products and professional services to the officers and staff of the Ministry. In addition, the canteens were also able to provide excellent service to visiting Diplomatic Corps; international visitors and VIPs. To further augment and improve canteen services, a canteen under Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd, (IRCTC) has also been started in South Block from November, 2006.

General

As and when officers and members of the staff return from Missions to Headquarters, they face difficulties in getting admissions in various public/private schools, gas connection, ration card, and telephone connections. Welfare Section issued letters to schools, MTNL, etc. which helped them in getting these domestic facilities faster.

Establishment

The charge of the Establishment Division includes fixation of allowances abroad, purchase and maintenance of furniture and equipment, leasing and maintenances of property both in India and abroad, purchase and maintenance of official cars abroad, supply of Objects d'Art items, etc.

With regard to the fixation of allowances abroad, the 9th Annual Review of the Indexation scheme was carried out by a joint team from the Ministries of External Affairs and Finance from 9-13 September 2006. The team visited New York and carried out market survey and also held extensive discussions with senior officials dealing with allowances at the International Civil Services Commission (ICSC) of UN. The Ministry of External Affairs is also considering, in consultation with Ministry of Finance (MoF), a comprehensive proposal for the rationalization of the system of Representational Grant taking into account the growing global profile of India as well as the changing cost of living.

Special efforts were made for better maintenance of Ministry's premises in South Block and Akbar Bhawan. Besides upgrading common facilities, the Ministry is working on a programme to introduce modular sitting arrangement in various Division/Sections for more efficient space utilization. Steps have been taken for upgrading and improving the existing fire fighting infrastructure in South Block and Akbar Bhawan. A new Cafeteria in South Block was opened in November, 2006

External Affairs Hostels at K.G. Marg and Gole Market are being given a facelift. Steps are being taken to improve the occupancy by effectively addressing the problem of the security, communication and water supply in the Ministry of External Affairs' Housing complex in Dwarka.

The Committee for selection of art objects for Missions/ Posts abroad met on as many as three occasions during

2006, besides several visits to reputed art galleries/ emporia for identifying suitable art objects. The Committee also undertook visits to Ahmedabad and Baroda for establishing direct contacts with regional producers / suppliers of art work. The requirements of a majority of the Mission/Posts were met.

The work on the project for renovation of Jinnah House, Mumbai, the site for the SAARC Sub-Regional Cultural Centre has been initiated.

The Ministry's proposal for upgrading the Delegation of Financial Powers of Heads of Mission/Post abroad for bringing them in line with the present situation was approved by MoF. Separately, a number of proposals were initiated for streamlining the procedures, such as plinth area norms for leasing of property abroad, provision of furniture and equipment at the residences of Heads of Mission/Post, and simplification of procedure for acquisition of official cars.

Projects Division

Projects Division is responsible for purchase of built-up properties and construction of properties in India and abroad for the use of Ministry of External Affairs. Proposals relating to repairs/renovation of Government owned properties in stations abroad are also handled by the Projects Division. As of now, Government owns 78 Chancery Buildings, 84 residences for Heads of Missions/ Posts and 610 residences for officers/staff abroad. Currently 37 construction projects including major renovation/re-development projects are at different stages of implementation.

Amongst projects abroad, construction was started in the year 2006 for the Indian Embassy Complex in Muscat and the Luoyong Buddhist Temple in China. Renovation work is in progress at the residence of the Permanent Representative of India in Geneva and in three Government-owned properties in Karachi.

Construction projects in Abuja, Beijing, Kathmandu, Warsaw, Brasilia and Kabul are at tendering stage. The re-development projects in Singapore, London and Tokyo are also at tendering stage. For the Bangkok Embassy Residence and Indian Cultural Centre project, a Consultant has been selected.

Built-up properties have been purchased for Embassy

Residence in Caracas and for Chancery in Buenos Aires in the current financial year. A plot of vacant land adjacent to government owned Embassy Residence in Maputo has also been acquired. The Ministry is making vigorous efforts to acquire built-up properties in high-rental stations. Major proposals under process for purchase of built-up properties include a Cultural Centre in Washington and Embassy Residences in Buenos Aires and Minsk. In addition, a number of purchase proposals from different Indian missions/posts are also under consideration.

Amongst projects in India, the ground breaking ceremony for the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan project was performed by the Minister of External Affairs on 14 November 2006. The foundation stone for the Chanakyapuri Residential Complex for officers of the Ministry of External Affairs was laid by the Minister of State for External Affairs on 14 August 2006. The construction on both these projects has commenced.

Construction work on the Foreign Service Institute Complex in New Delhi is nearing completion and the Institute has already started functioning from the new premises. Other projects at various stages of implementation include the Africa House project for Indian Council of Cultural Relations in New Delhi, the AALCO Complex being built in New Delhi for the Asian

African Legal Consultative Organization, Videsh Bhawan, Kolkata, ICCR Cultural Centre, Kolkata, and a Hostel project at Canning Lane, New Delhi.

In the current financial year, proposals are being processed for purchase of land for offices of the Passport Offices at Srinagar, Jalandhar and Surat.

An allocation of Rs. 160 crores has been made under Capital Outlay during 2006-07. Budget estimates for 2007-08 have been kept at Rs. 621.06 crores, to provide for a number of projects expected to go into construction phase in the next financial year.

e-Governance and IT

Computerisation of passport and visa issuance system was completed in Missions at Riyadh, Kuwait, Oman, Singapore, Bangkok, Paris and Madrid. Outsourcing of visa application process at HCI Dhaka and AHCI Chittagong was also completed this year. Computerisation of passport and visa issuance system in Missions at Doha, Bahrain, Toronto, Kuala Lumpur, Birmingham, Jeddah and Colombo is underway.

Separately, visa issuance system in 67 Missions and Posts was computerized. Work on facilitating printing of Machine Readable Passports by Missions and Posts is underway.



The Coordination Division consists of three wings, viz., Parliament Section, Coordination Section and Education Section.

Parliament Section

The Coordination Division is designated as 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 Division also has the responsibility to organize the meetings of the Consultative Committee on External Affairs, and coordinate the work relating to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, and other Parliamentary Committees with regard to the matters relating to the Ministry of External Affairs.

Coordination Section

The Coordination Section processes all proposals for grant of no objection from the political angle for the foreign visits of Governors, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha, Union Ministers, Ministers in the State Governments, Members of Parliament, Members of State Legislative Assemblies, members of the judiciary, government officials, etc.

During the year, the Coordination Section also processed a large number of approvals for participation of various Indian sportsmen and sports teams in the international events abroad and foreign sports persons in India.

The Section coordinates the work relating to grant of Padma Awards to foreign nationals. The nominations are obtained by the Coordination Division from Indian Missions abroad and the recommendations of the Ministry conveyed to the competent authorities of the Government of India. Observance of the Anti-Terrorism Day (21 May), Sadbhavana Diwas (20 August) and Quami Ekta Week/ Diwas (19-25 November) in the Ministry and Missions/

Posts abroad was also undertaken by the Coordination Division; pledges were administered to the officials, both at Headquarters and in our Missions abroad.

The Section also examines the requests for grant of no objection for holding international conferences, seminars, workshop, 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. The Section also handles the work relating to grant of diplomatic clearances for non-scheduled flights, visits by foreign naval ships and vessels.

The Coordination Section issued revised guidelines for provision of courtesies by Indian Missions/Posts abroad to visiting Indian dignitaries, delegations and officials. The Section provided useful inputs to the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the Ministry of Youth and Sports to seek support of the Asian countries for India's bid to host the XVII Asian Games in Delhi in 2014. The Section also issued the guidelines for twinning of states in India with the provinces of foreign countries. The Coordination Section assisted the Inter-State Council Secretariat, Ministry of Home Affairs, in the preparatory work for the 4th International Conference on Federalism, which is scheduled to be held in New Delhi in November 2007.

The Coordination Section represented and gave the input of the Ministry at a number of inter-ministerial meetings on various issues. Similarly, the Coordination Section collated inputs from various Divisions of the Ministry in preparation of documents, notes and briefs on important subjects.

Education Section

The Education Section deals with the selection, nomination and admission of foreign self-financing students from 63 friendly, neighbouring, and developing countries against reserved seats in the MBBS/BDS/PG/

BE/B.Pharma and diploma courses in various institutions in India. It also processes the cases of political clearance of foreign students seeking admission to the Graduate and Post-Graduate courses in Engineering, Medicine, Management and other technical and professional courses including elective training/internship in various medical institutions and research courses. For the above work, the Section liaises with a number of institutions, agencies and Ministries/Departments of Government of India.

During the academic year 2006-07, Education Cell received and processed 122 and 77 applications for admission to the MBBS/BDS and B.E/B.Pharma courses respectively. In addition, during the period from January - November 2006, 900 applicants were granted no objection from the political angle to pursue various courses in India.



The Right to Information Act 2005 required the setting up of a practical regime of right to information for citizens to secure access to information under the control of public authorities, in order to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority in the country. Amongst other provisions of this Act, every public authority shall maintain all its records duly catalogued and indexed in a manner and form which facilitates the right to information under this Act and ensure that all records that are appropriate to be computerized are, within a reasonable time and subject to availability of resources, computerized and connected through a network of different systems all over the country so that access to such records is facilitated. In order to give effect to this Act in the Ministry of External Affairs, a new Division called Right to Information Division (RTI) was created with effect from October 2005.

The RTI Division is headed by a Joint Secretary level officer, who is also the Central Public Information Officer.

As per the mandate of the Act, a comprehensive list of information has been put online under the title “Basic Information Related to MEA”. The list covers all aspects of the Ministry, its structure, allocated business, functions, decision making process, cadre management, and details of subsidy programmes with list of beneficiaries. Particulars of facilities available to the citizens for information including names and address of public information officers (as per article 4(1)(b)(xvi) of RTI Act 2005) as well as that of the Chief Appellate Authority (under Sec 19(1) of RTI Act 2005) for the Ministry, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Indian Council of World Affairs and Central Passport Offices can be accessed on the website of the Ministry, viz. www.mea.gov.in. Some of the applications which do not pertain to this Ministry were transferred to the appropriate Public Authority.

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The External Publicity Division, as the interface of the Ministry with the media, continued to project India's foreign policy objectives through interaction with both Indian and international media. The concerns and viewpoint of the Government on various issues were actively articulated and widely disseminated through regular and special press briefings, statements, backgrounders and postings on MEA website.

The major activities of the Division focused on issues that included *inter alia* the Composite Dialogue Process between India and Pakistan, India's relations with its immediate and extended neighbourhood – Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Iran and with major countries like USA, Russia and China. India-US relations, particularly the consideration of the Bill on Indo-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation in the US Congress attracted considerable attention during the year. India's perspective on the issue was projected through several press briefings and statements. India's views on terrorism, international peace, security and disarmament and the progress achieved by India in the fields of economy, Science and Technology, IT, biotechnology, etc. were also highlighted. The reforms in the United Nations were another major area of foreign policy priority for India. The Ministry actively projected India's case for the permanent membership of UNSC, which was universally recognized.

The visits of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Germany, Uzbekistan, St. Petersburg (G-8 Summit), Brazil, Cuba, South Africa, UK, Finland, Japan and Phillipines (India-ASEAN, and East Asia Summits) provided excellent opportunities for articulating India's stand on various issues. India's intense engagement with the international community was also witnessed through a number of incoming visits, prominent among them being that of the Chinese President Hu Jintao, Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse, Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Russian President Putin among others. The

Division used the opportunities provided by these visits to state India's positions on all important global and regional issues. The Division arranged joint press interactions with the visiting dignitaries as also special briefings by Foreign Secretary and/or other senior officials both before and during such visits.

Official Spokesperson's Office

The Official Spokesperson's office adopted a proactive approach in expounding India's foreign policies through press releases and statements as well as regular media briefings by the Spokesperson. This was supplemented by special background briefings by the Foreign Secretary and other senior officers of the Ministry on significant issues. Planning and managing media campaigns and developing strategies to convey the Government of India's policies to the media continued to be a critical aspect of the functioning of the division. During April 2006-January 2007, more than 200 press releases/statements were issued on various issues of concern. These were circulated to the media through emails and simultaneously placed on the Ministry's website. The use of SMS's for informing the media about briefings and updates to the web site with the use of a web-based platform remains widely prevalent and has been appreciated by the media.

Interviews with the Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister, Ministers of State for External Affairs and other dignitaries were arranged with Indian and international newspapers and TV organizations.

Website

Ministry's website continued to serve as a useful publicity instrument. The press section of the website <http://meaindia.nic.in> was updated on a real-time basis by the Division with the speeches/interviews/statements on foreign policy by the Prime Minister, Minister(s), press releases, transcripts of briefings by the official Spokesperson and other senior officials. The relevant articles and op-ed pieces from the Indian and international

media were also uploaded on the official website. A new link was created to mark the Second Regional Economic Conference on Afghanistan. Separate sub-sections were created for Prime Minister's visits and important developments.

A Hindi version of the website was launched earlier this year. This initiative of the Ministry was greatly appreciated, particularly by the Hindi language media. The website is widely accessed both inside and outside India and is hyperlinked to the websites of India Missions/Posts abroad and various Ministries.

Press Facilitation

The Press facilitation work in terms of extending logistical and liaison support to foreign media delegations accompanying Heads of State/Government (HOS/G) visiting India and Indian media delegations accompanying the President, Vice President and the Prime Minister on their visits abroad forms an important part of the work of the Division. During the year, the Division assisted foreign media delegations and Indian media in connection with Head of State / Government and Vice President visits from Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Botswana, Burundi, China, Cyprus, Finland, France, Ireland, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritius, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Portugal, Spain, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan and United States of America through issue of media advisories, press conferences, facilitating access to ceremonial areas, meetings and providing assistance for transport and accommodation. Similar support was also extended for 35 Foreign Minister level visits apart from other high dignitaries.

All logistical arrangements, including setting up and operation of media centers fully equipped with facilities for filing of stories by journalists, media briefings and other arrangements, were made by the Division enabling Indian media delegations accompanying the President, Vice President and Prime Minister during their visits abroad, to provide timely coverage. These included President's visits to Philippines, Mauritius, Myanmar, Singapore, and South Korea; Vice-President's visit to Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago; and Prime Minister's visits to Brazil, Cuba, Finland, Germany, Japan, Phillipines, Russia, South Africa, United Kingdom and Uzbekistan.

Over 300 strong foreign media representatives based in India were provided necessary facilitation to enable them to function smoothly through provision of relevant information on various issues of interest as well as assistance in matters of credential documents, visas, and residence permits. Visa extensions and/or accreditation facilities were extended to about 340 foreign journalists.

Familiarization Visits

Familiarization visits by foreign journalists to India are a key element of the Division's 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 politics, foreign policy, economy, culture and Science and Technology. The Division, based on recommendations of Indian Missions abroad, continued to organize several such visits to important institutions and centres of excellence in India. Meetings for visiting journalists were also organized with Ministers, senior officials, intellectuals, academicians, and business representatives. One hundred and two journalists were hosted on such visits during 2006 with a special focus on India's neighbours and new EU countries. These included senior journalists and editors from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

Dissemination of Indian foreign policy and other areas of interest

This Division in collaboration with Foreign Service Institute organizes a "Diplomatic Correspondents Course" for foreign journalists based in India and Indian journalists covering world affairs. Two week long courses were held in March 2006 and August 2006. In the latter, for the first time, journalists from six SAARC nations were invited to participate.

Public Diplomacy

The Public Diplomacy Division of the Ministry of External Affairs was created in May 2006. Its mandate includes, inter-alia, outreach activities inside and outside India, and audio visual and print publicity. The ever-increasing engagement of India with the outside world makes it incumbent that issues related to India's foreign policy are effectively projected to enable a more informed

understanding. Such an understanding requires that issues of international politics, including those related to strategic issues, the reformation of global institutions so that they reflect contemporary realities, and the emerging global order are discussed and debated in our universities, think tanks and by the general public to evolve a national and consensual approach towards them. In this sense, the Division oversees the matter of public involvement/public interest in the shaping of the Indian foreign policy.

The objectives of outreach are to be achieved by reaching out to various actors in India by establishing contacts with think tanks, research institutions, opinion/decision makers and media both within and outside India. The Division draws upon the resources of the Ministry of External Affairs, as well as, independent experts and researchers through seminars, workshops and interactions on various foreign policy related issues.

Outreach Activities

It is with these objectives in mind that the Public Diplomacy Division has been engaging and supporting institutions, universities and think tanks, within India, to highlight the contour of India's foreign policy, the objective of which is not only to get inputs for our own functioning and analysis, but also to encourage wider discussion, interest and appreciation of foreign policy and strategic issues.

The External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee launched the Global India Foundation on 16 January 2006. The foundation is an independent think tank that aims to promote national resilience, economic prosperity, liberal values and the principle of social commitment in national life.

The Division participated in a "Round Table on India's Foreign Policy" organized by the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata in October 2006. The Division also participated in the seminar "Armed Conflict – Development and Governance in Eastern India" organized by Women's College, Shillong and Argue India at Guwahati on 1-2 December 2006. Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi was supported in organizing a seminar on "Rethinking the Third World: Idea, Concept, Category and Relevance" on 22-23 January 2007.

The Division has launched a Nobel Laureates forum in partnership with the CII in February 2007. The Laureates

will deliver lectures in India on contemporary themes like globalization, international order, economics and other issues topical to India's foreign policy. Prof. John Nash, the winner of Nobel Prize in Economics in 1994, delivered the first lecture on 14 February 2007.

Contacts have been initiated with reputed international think tanks such as the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London with whom under an institutionalized relationship an annual Ministry of External Affairs-IISS Foreign Policy Dialogue would be conducted. The first dialogue is scheduled on 5-6 February 2007. The Division will also be attending an International Conference on 'The Future of Public Diplomacy' in March 2007 at Wilton Park in London to project the efforts being made by the Division and to learn from the experiences of other countries.

A seminar "India and Latin America: Partners in progress" in cooperation with ICRIER is scheduled for February-March 2007 in New Delhi and will include a number of eminent researchers and scholars from Latin America and India.

The Division is supporting the organization of a seminar on "Super Power Rivalry in the Indian Ocean in the 21st Century" in March 2007. The event is being organized by the Book Review Trust and has the internationally renowned scholar, Eric Hobsbaum as a consultant.

The Division participated in the 35th annual conference on South Asia organized in University of Wisconsin (USA), and a conference on "Challenges for Foreign Ministries: Managing Diplomatic Networks & Optimizing Value" on 31 May-1 June 2006 in Geneva. Senior officials of the division had interactive sessions with students of Jadhavpur University and Tufts University (USA), on issues relevant to Indian foreign policy. The Division has also initiated an exercise of getting outside experts to provide inputs to senior officials of the Ministry on key issues through focused interactive sessions.

As part of its public outreach programme, the Division launched Ministry's Hindi website thereby providing an opportunity to Hindi speaking people in India, as well as, abroad to follow the developments in Indian foreign policy. Anand Sharma, Minister of State for External Affairs inaugurated the Hindi website on 18 August 2006.

Audio-Visual Publicity

The Division commissions/acquires documentaries aimed at positive projection of India's image abroad and sends these to Indian Missions abroad for presentation, screening and telecast on foreign TV channels. The procurement and supply of feature films for participation in film festivals and Indian film weeks abroad, organizing cultural publicity and exhibitions, are other audio-visual publicity activities undertaken by the Division.

Several documentaries were completed during the year. Some of these are, "*Spirit to Soul*" - a film on the life of Ustad Vilayat Khan; "*Free Media Free Country*" - a film on history of media in India; "*Road to Afghanistan*" - a film on India's assistance towards reconstruction in Afghanistan; "*Seeds of Knowledge*" - a film showcasing India as a knowledge destination; "*Partnership for Prosperity*" - a film showing economic cooperation between India and GCC countries and a film on India's maritime exchanges with South East Asian countries over 2000 years. A DVD set containing 2000 images of "*Monuments of India*" was also completed and dispatched to our Missions. The documentary film "*Road to Afghanistan*" was screened as curtain raiser to the 2nd Regional Economic Co-operation Conference on Afghanistan that took place in New Delhi on 18-19 November 2006. The film has been dubbed in Dari and Pashto languages for wider dissemination by our Mission in Kabul. Some of the documentaries acquired/commissioned by the Ministry were telecast on foreign TV channels.

The Division sent feature films and extended all support to the Indian Missions in Sao Paulo (Brazil), Mexico, Vienna (Austria), Harare (Zimbabwe), Istanbul (Turkey), Nicosia (Cyprus), Damascus (Syria), Tripoli & Malta (Libya), London (UK), Stockholm (Sweden), Minsk (Belarus), Caracas (Venezuela), Santiago (Chile), Rome (Italy), Johannesburg & Durban (South Africa), Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), Washington (USA), Prague (Czech Republic), Muscat (Oman), Moscow (Russia), Tel Aviv (Israel), Cairo (Egypt), Dakar (Senegal), Rabat (Morocco), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Almaty (Kazakhstan), Paris (France), Budapest (Hungary) and Windhoek (Namibia) for organizing the Indian film festivals/film weeks abroad.

The Division facilitated 8th Osian's Cinefan Film Festival held in New Delhi from 14-23 July 2006 and organised

the dispatch of Indian feature films for KARA film festival held in Karachi from 7-17 December 2006. The Division also supported First South Asian Film Festival in New Delhi (24-30 October 2006) and Second Indian International Women's Film Festival held in New Delhi from 11-18 December 2006. A documentary Film Festival on Art & Artists, organized by JD Centre for Arts from 15-17 December 2006 in Bhubaneswar, was supported by the Division by providing MEA documentaries.

The Missions/Posts were supplied audio-visual material in the form of Betacam cassettes, CD-ROMs, audio and video CDs, DVDs and Cassettes for library and presentation purposes. Missions/Posts' requests to sanction audio-visual equipment, dish antennas, etc. were also approved by the Division.

A photo exhibition titled "*India-Bhutan: Along the Friendship Trail*" was organized in Gangtok (13-17 November, 2006), Siliguri (21-25 November, 2006) and Guwahati (2-6 December, 2006).

During the year twelve documentary films, viz., *Ustad Bismillah Khan & Benares*, *Dismantling the Digital Divide*, *Manufacturing Sunshine*, *Tech Check*, *The Sky is not the Limit*, *Cosmopolitan Culture of India*, *India- Infrastructure-an opportunity*, *Song of the Sanctuary*, *A short history of Indian spices*, *Fifty years of Satyajit Ray's masterpiece Pather Panchali*, *India-Myanmar Relations*, *Back to Gondwana land* were approved for commissioning. One documentary on *Shri Mulk Raj Anand* was approved for acquisition. The film projects are under various stages of production.

Print Publicity

In line with Government's policy, books on a wide range of subjects ranging from India's art & culture to history, economic achievements, developments in the field of Science & Technology, foreign policy, etc. were supplied to Missions for presentation and use in their libraries. Books, audio CDs and DVDs were also provided for presentation to visiting dignitaries/delegations, journalists and participants of international seminars in India.

In addition, the Division brought out booklets on *Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2006*, *India's Assistance Programme in Afghanistan*, brochures on official visits of *Rastrapatiji and Prime Minister*. The Division also extended full financial support to our Embassy in Madrid to start the publication of '*Hola Namaste*' a bi-monthly Spanish magazine.

The process of translating and printing the German version of Ministry of External Affairs' publication '*India: A Dynamic Democracy*' has been initiated. Similarly in order to reach out to Spanish and French speaking territories, the Ministry of External Affairs' publication '*India: Timeless Splendour*' has been translated into Spanish and French languages and is currently under print. Journals, magazines and other publicity material on India continued to be regularly sent to Missions abroad to aid their own publicity efforts.

India Perspectives, the monthly magazine of the Ministry, is printed in 15 different languages with a combined print-run of about 65,000 copies. Besides highlighting India's rich cultural heritage it also seeks to showcase the impressive strides India is making in the fields of Science & Technology, industry, agriculture, space and energy. The orientation of the magazine is being revised to pay greater attention to economic and strategic issues.



Training for IFS Probationers

One of the primary activities of the Institute is the training of IFS Probationers. The objective of the training programme for IFS Probationers is to prepare the Probationers to handle the wide range of tasks that they would be required to perform during their professional careers, both in Missions and Posts abroad as well as in India. The IFS Probationers of the 2005 Batch were accordingly put through a comprehensive one-year training programme, which included modules on International Relations and Foreign Policy, Defence and Security, Economic Diplomacy, International Law, Parliamentary Affairs, Cultural Diplomacy, Protocol and Consular matters. The programme also included modules on practical skills such as administration and accounts, communication skills, representational skills and relations with the media. The training modules were implemented through lectures, interactive sessions, seminars as well as attachments to various leading institutions. In order to enable the participants to enhance their knowledge of India's immediate neighbourhood and to familiarize them with the work of Indian Missions abroad, the training programmes included a Mission Orientation Visit to Sri Lanka in May 2006. The 2005 batch Probationers were also deputed to various bilateral and multilateral Missions abroad on 4-week Mission Attachments to enable them to obtain a deeper understanding of the various aspects of the functioning of our Missions abroad. The 2005 batch of IFS Probationers completed their training with the Institute in January, 2007 and have been reverted to the Ministry for training in various Divisions before posting abroad.

After completion of the Foundation Course at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie, the 2006 Batch of the IFS Probationers have commenced their one-year comprehensive training programme with the Foreign Service Institute from January 2007.

Promotion of links with other training institutes

The Institute maintains regular contacts with other training institutions such as the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, the National Academy of Direct Taxes, the National Academy of Customs, Excise and Narcotics, the Institute of Secretarial Training and Management and the Bureau of Police Training and Research. The Institute is making efforts to develop ties with other training institutes with a view to further develop the relationship between the Indian Foreign Service and other Services, an area which has been assigned high priority by the Ministry of External Affairs. With this objective in mind, the Institute organised a special training programme for Senior IPS officers entitled "Main Currents in India's Foreign Policy" in December 2005 at the request of the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D). Following the success of this training programme, BPR&D has requested the Institute to organize a similar course for senior IPS officers in 2006-07. A special training programme was also organized for the first time for officers from the Cabinet Secretariat in May 2006. The Third Programme for Diplomatic Correspondents was organised from 28 August-1 September 2006, in association with the External Publicity Division of the Ministry. The Fourth Programme for Diplomatic Correspondents is likely to be held in March 2007. At the request of Air India, a senior officer of the Institute addressed Air India officers proceeding abroad on posting, at the Air India Staff College in Mumbai. The subjects covered the relationship between Air India offices abroad and Missions/Posts, cultural sensitivities, dos and don'ts while posted abroad, common areas of work, joint activities, etc.

Training of staff/officials of the Ministry

FSI regularly conducted the "Basic Professional Course" for the staff of Ministry of External Affairs. The training pertained to enhancing the skills of staff members in

computers and to update them on various aspects of administration, accounts, consular related work, drafting, office procedure and forms of communication. FSI, with the assistance of e-Governance and IT Division of the Ministry, commenced training of the staff of the Ministry on specially designed software packages, which are to be used in accounts work and in consular work. This training has now become an integral part of the Basic Professional Course. Since April, 2006, four Basic Professional Courses have been organized by the Foreign Service Institute. Bearing in mind the important supervisory nature of the work undertaken by Section Officers in Missions and Posts abroad, the first Refresher Course for Section Officers was organized by the Institute in September 2006 to enable them to effectively discharge their duties when posted abroad.

The First Orientation Course for IFS(B) Grade-I Officers was conducted by the Institute in July 2006. The Course focused on International Relations and Foreign Policy issues. Similarly, the first training programme on Representational and Related Skills was organized for the same group of IFS(B) Grade-I Officers from 6-9 November 2006.

Programmes for Foreign Diplomats

The Foreign Service Institute has been regularly organizing courses for foreign diplomats in its efforts at building

bridges of friendship and cooperation with countries around the world. The courses for foreign diplomats have been received extremely well and have been greatly appreciated. The 40th and the 41st Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) were organized from 1 February-10 March 2006 and 4 October-10 November 2006 respectively. Twenty eight diplomats from 26 countries attended the 40th PCFD and twenty five diplomats from 21 countries participated in the 41st PCFD.

A special four week course for 20 diplomats from Afghanistan was organized in April 2006. In coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat, a special course was also organized for diplomats from ASEAN countries in August-September, 2006.

In terms of institutional linkages, Agreements/MoUs, providing an institutional framework of cooperation between FSI and counterpart institutes in Ecuador and Romania were signed during the year. Discussions on possibilities of cooperation were also held with Mexico and Sudan. Senegal showed a keen interest in training their diplomats in the ongoing courses conducted by FSI and requested for ten slots in FSI Courses to be reserved for them. Already, three participations from Senegal had participated in the 41st PCFD. FSI hosted the Deans of counterpart institutes in Croatia, Bulgaria and Mexico and issues such as mutual cooperation and exchange programmes were discussed with them.

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Implementation of Official Language Policy and Propagation of Hindi Abroad

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The Ministry of External Affairs is making all possible efforts towards implementation of Official Language Policy of the Government of India. Documents like Bilateral Treaties, Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, Annual Report of the Ministry and Parliament Questions are prepared bilingually.

Training in Hindi forms a part of the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) training programmes conducted for IFS Probationers and officials of the Ministry before they take up their assignments in Missions abroad. Between April and November 2006, eight Hindi training programmes were organized for officers of the Ministry.

Hindi Advisory Committee has been reconstituted under chairmanship of EAM on 8 February 2005. A meeting of the Committee was held on 27 June 2006 under the chairmanship of MOS (AS).

The implementation of official language policy by all the Divisions and Sections of the Ministry is monitored by the Official Language Implementation Committee (OLIC) under the chairmanship of Joint Secretary (Administration). Meetings of the Committee are held every quarter. In the current financial year, two meetings of OLIC have been held on 22 June 2006 and 14 November 2006.

In compliance of the directives of the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs, Hindi Pakhwada was organized in the Ministry from 15-30 September 2006 during which a number of officers/officials took part in various Hindi competitions. Cash prizes were awarded to the winners.

The Parliamentary Committee on Official Language inspected Regional Passport Offices at Bhuwaneshwar (April 2006) and Bangalore (September 2006). Passport office, Kolkata was inspected by the officers of Hindi Section in October 2006. Hindi books have been sent to many Passport Offices for their libraries.

The Hindi website of the Ministry was formally launched by Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma on 18 August 2006. It is a mirror image of the Ministry's website in English. All information is now available both in English and Hindi simultaneously on the website.

The Ministry has well-formulated schemes for propagation of Hindi abroad. Hindi teaching material is supplied to the foreign educational institutions through Indian Missions abroad. These include textbooks, Hindi software, Hindi learning CD's, dictionaries, etc. Financial support has been extended to a number of Indian Missions/Posts for on-line Hindi teaching projects, development of Hindi text books as per local requirements, purchase of audio-visual equipments for donation to foreign universities teaching Hindi, organization of Hindi workshops, payment of honorarium to Hindi teachers abroad, etc.

Regional Hindi Conferences were organized in Australia (February 2006), Abu Dhabi (February 2006) and Tokyo (July 2006) with the aim of propagating and promoting Hindi in different regions of the world.

World Hindi Day was celebrated on 10 January 2007. A special function was organized in New Delhi to mark the occasion, in which Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma was the Chief Guest. Members of Parliament, diplomats, eminent Hindi scholars and writers, media personnel, NRIs including foreign Hindi writers and students participated in the event. An essay competition was organized for foreign students at the Agra and Delhi centre. More than 25 Indian Missions/Posts abroad also celebrated World Hindi Day with great fervor and enthusiasm.

Hindi Section coordinates work relating to grant of scholarships to foreign students to study Hindi at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. There are 100 slots every year. In 2006-07, 71 students availed of the scholarships. The Ministry also coordinates the work relating to the

correspondence course for foreign students conducted by Central Hindi Directorate.

The Ministry is currently engaged in coordinating work relating to the organisation of 8th World Hindi Conference to be held in New York in July 2007. A steering Committee under the chairmanship of Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma, has been constituted for the 8th World Hindi Conference. It consists of 14 official and 28 non-official members. The first meeting of the Committee was held on 28 November 2006.

The Ministry is also actively coordinating work relating

to the establishment of World Hindi Secretariat in Mauritius.

On National days, the President's address to the nation is read out in Hindi by most of the Heads of Mission/Post abroad. Many Missions organized Kavi Sammelans, essay competitions during the celebration of Hindi Diwas. Some Indian Missions also bring out Hindi Magazines.

Panels of Hindi interpreters have been drawn up in 29 countries to interpret from the local language into Hindi and vice-versa.



The Indian Council for Cultural Relations was formally set up in 1950, with the primary objective of establishing, reviving and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. Its aims, as enunciated in the Memorandum of Association, are:

To **participate** in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to India's external cultural relations

To **promote** cultural exchange with other countries and peoples

To **promote** and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries

To **establish** and develop relations with national and international organizations in the field of culture

The council has worked steadily to attain these objectives. The major activities of the Council are:

Administration of scholarship schemes for overseas students on behalf of the Government of India and other agencies, welfare of international students; grant of scholarships to foreign students to learn Indian dance and music; exchange of exhibitions; organization of and participation in international seminars and symposia; participation in major cultural festival abroad; organization of "festival of India" in countries abroad; exchange of groups of performing artistes; organization of lecture-demonstration by performing artistes abroad; distinguished visitors programme under which eminent personalities from abroad are invited to visit India and experts are sent abroad for delivering lectures on issues of interest; presentation of books, audio-visual material, art objects and musical instruments to institutions abroad; providing the secretariat for the Jawaharlal Nehru award for international understanding; organization of the annual Maulana Azad memorial lecture, conducting Maulana Azad essay competition; publication of books and journals for distribution in India and abroad;

maintaining Indian Cultural Centers abroad; maintaining a well stocked library and the manuscripts of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad; digitization of rare manuscripts.

Regional Offices, Centres/Chairs Abroad

The Council has 9 regional offices functioning at Bangalore, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kolkatta, Lucknow, Mumbai and Thiruvananthapuram.

In addition, with a view to promoting awareness and appreciation of India's composite cultural heritage abroad, the Council is also maintaining 18 Cultural Centres in Cairo (Egypt), Berlin (Germany), Port Louis (Mauritius), Paramaribo (Suriname), Georgetown (Guyana), Jakarta (Indonesia), Moscow (Russian Federation), London (U.K.), Almaty, (Kazakhstan), Tashkent, (Uzbekistan), Durban and Johannesburg (South Africa), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Suva (Fiji) and Tokyo (Japan) and 2 sub-Centres at Bali (Indonesia) and Lautoka (Fiji).

The Council is, separately, 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 chairs are maintained for teaching Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Modern Indian History, Indian Civilization in Paramaribo (Suriname) Budapest (Hungary), Moscow (Russia), Seoul (South Korea), Warsaw (Poland), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago), Ankara (Turkey), Sofia (Bulgaria), Bucharest (Romania), Beijing (China), Madrid (Spain), Bangkok (Thailand), Paris (France), Osh (Kyrgyzstan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Brussels (Belgium) and Moka (Mauritius). The Statutory Bodies of the Council have also approved five rotating Chairs (3 in Hindi and 2 in Modern Indian History) at Warsaw (Poland) and one full time regular Chair of Political Science at Osh, Kyrgyzstan. Council has also recently signed MoUs with Sciences Po, Paris

(France) and University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (USA) to depute Visiting Professor of Indian Economics and Indian Literature on short term basis.

Festivals

India-Japan Friendship Year–2007 (Festival of India)

A Joint Statement was signed between India and Japan by the Prime Ministers of both countries in April 2005 to develop closer relationship not only in political and economic arenas but also in the field of culture. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations is coordinating various events during the India-Japan Friendship Year, 2007 which will include business seminars, exhibitions, performing art events, fashion shows, a film festival, food festivals, seminars, talks/ lectures by eminent personalities and souvenir shops.

The Festival of India in Japan was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India on 14 December 2006 during his visit to Tokyo.

Public participation was invited for designing the Joint Logo for the Friendship Year in India and Japan in 2007. The Joint Logo designed by Indian students was selected and jointly unveiled by the Prime Ministers of India and Japan on 14 December 2006 in Tokyo.

Festival of India in Brussels

(7 October 2006 - 26 January 2007)

The Festival of India in Belgium was being held for a period of four months from October 2006 to January 2007 at the Palais des Beaux-Arts (BOZAR). The festival was inaugurated on 7 October 2006 by Dr. Karan Singh, President, ICCR and Queen Fabiola of Belgium.

The focus of the proposed Festival is to raise the cultural profile of India in Europe in general, and Brussels in particular—in view of the fact that, for all intent and purposes, the city has become the capital of the European Union (EU) and the seat of all the European institutions. The Festival events would provide an excellent opportunity to the EU audience to view India as an ancient and refined civilization and an energetic, growth-oriented and vibrant nation with an increasingly important presence on the international scene.

The Festival encompasses a variety of disciplines around

a central Exhibition ‘TEJAS’ which was conceptualized by Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan and curated by Ranesh Ray. It presents a clear picture of the cultural heritage and contemporary creativity of India, inter-linking the two and demonstrating the ability of the Indian civilization to survive and grow, not by cutting itself off from outside influences, but by absorbing them and thereby enriching itself. The Exhibition “TEJAS” was jointly inaugurated by Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson, UPA and Prime Minister of Belgium on 11 November 2006.

Scholarships and Welfare of International Students

One of the major activities of ICCR is the 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 students from developing nations with a special focus on the neighbourhood. The Council offered approximately 1300 new scholarships. The percentage of utilization of scholarship slots has been approximately 50 per cent so far.

In addition, the Prime Minister of India, during his visit to Afghanistan last year, had announced 500 scholarships for Afghan nationals for their higher studies in Indian universities. The Council was entrusted with the task of handling these scholarships. Over 400 students have joined different universities in India.

Apart from this, the Council looks after the general welfare of international students studying in India under self-finance and ICCR Scholarship Schemes. Under this programme, the Council arranged 5 summer camps for International students during May-June 2006. The Council also held 5-winter camps, in December 2006.

The Council had organized a meeting of International Students Advisors of various universities on 2 September 2006 at its office under the chairmanship of President, ICCR.

The Council has initiated the compilation and creation of Alumni data bank in respect of students who availed of scholarships offered by ICCR.

Presentation Section

During the period April-December 2006, the Council sent Books, Object d Arts, Audio-Visual materials, Musical instruments, Bronze/ wooden Statues, Kathak Costumes and other materials to 20 Countries i.e. Republic of Armenia, Uzbekistan, Georgetown, Jamaica, Greece, Surinam, Bangladesh, Poland, Denmark, Kuwait, Germany, Slovakia, Afghanistan, Finland, Kenya, Italy, Kazakhstan, Spain through Indian Missions abroad for presentation to different schools, universities, local dignitaries, institutions and for use by our Cultural Centres.

Incoming Cultural Delegations

ICCR organises the visits of foreign performing artistes to India 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 Indian Missions abroad and requests received from foreign diplomatic missions and Cultural Centres in India.

During the period April - December 2006, the Council hosted the visits of twenty-three foreign cultural groups from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Spain, Pakistan, Cote d'Ivoire, USA, Vietnam, China, South Africa, Armenia, Turkey, Italy, South Korea, Uzbekistan, Russia and Malaysia.

The Council organized a 5-day "Sufi festival" at Kashmir from 11-15 June 2006, "Malhar Festival" from 1-4 August 2006, "Festival of Music & Dance" by the foreign artistes resident in India from 12-14 September 2006, The "Spirit of Tanjore" (a festival of dance & music) from 10-12 October 2006 and the festival of Africa from 19-21 December 2006. The foreign groups also performed in various other cities including Kolkata, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Lucknow, Mumbai, Chennai, Kanpur, Trivandrum. The Council, under its "Retrospectives" series, organized performances by upcoming artistes.

Publication

The Council has an ambitious publication programme, which has grown over the years. The Council brings out six journals in five different languages namely, "Indian Horizons" and "Africa Quarterly" (both in English), "Gagananchal" (Hindi), "Papeles de la India" (Spanish), "Rencontre Avec L'Inde" (French) and "Thaqafat-ul-Hind" (Arabic). ICCR's quarterly publications - Indian

Horizons (English), Gagananchal (Hindi) and Africa Quarterly (English) have been brought out in a new format and style, which has been greatly appreciated. The Council also published a special issue of the Hindi quarterly "Gagananchal" entitled "150 years of 1857". The issue was released in November 2006.

The Council also published 12 books in different languages including English, Urdu, Hindi, Sanskrit, Arabic and Bengali, under its Library Fellowship course.

ICCR also participated in the 12th Delhi book Fair from 16-24 September 2006

Conferences and Seminars

The Council organises Conferences and Seminars with a view to facilitating interaction with intellectuals, opinion makers and academicians.

During the period April - December 2006, the Council organized two major international seminars viz an Indology Seminar at Vilnius University, Lithuania and a seminar at Bangkok on "Indo-Thai Historical and Cultural Linkages: the contemporary scenario". 21 scholars presented the papers during the seminars.

Library

The personal collection of books and manuscripts bequeathed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Founder President of the Council, forms the core of the ICCR Library. A catalogue of the manuscripts and personal books of Maulana Azad has been printed in a book form in three languages- Arabic, Urdu and Persian. The Library has also started work relating to restoration of original manuscripts available in the Library.

An Agreement was signed between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi and National Library, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on 9 June 2006 for digitization of Buddhist Manuscripts in the National Library of Mongolia.

During the year, six scholars were awarded ICCR's annual library fellowship.

Exhibitions

ICCR commissioned three busts of Mahatma Gandhi, two busts of Rabindranath Tagore, one bust of Kalidasa, one bust of Indira Gandhi, one statue of Mahatma Gandhi,

one bust of Indira Gandhi and one portrait of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad for permanent installation in Rome (Italy), Berlin (Germany), Frankfurt (Germany), Madrid (Spain), Shanghai (China), Hanoi (Vietnam) and London (UK).

ICCR sent two major exhibitions viz. an exhibition entitled “Celebrating Women-Amrita Shergil Revisited” to London and an exhibition called “Women by Women” to Port Louis (Mauritius), Addis Ababa, Warsaw and Poland.

ICCR also sponsored two exhibitions viz. (i) Exhibition of Photographs on Satyajit Ray to Bangladesh and a Dolls & Dresses exhibition gifted by Shankar’s Dolls Museum, New Delhi for participation in a festival in Tehran (Iran).

ICCR also organized several incoming exhibitions in New Delhi which included: (i) A Painting Exhibition “Different Strokes in Canvas” by foreign artists living in India ; (ii) an exhibition of the British artistes Anthony Christian and Marian Fanny Christian and (iii) a painting exhibition by Kahkashan Jafri, an artist from Pakistan.

Outgoing Cultural Delegations

During the period, the Council sponsored 67 cultural

delegations to 54 countries covering all continents of the world. Special emphasis was given to holding workshops-cum-lecture demonstrations with local artistes Some of these cultural groups participated in over 20 international events /festival such as;

- Houston International Festival in USA
- Hannover Industrial Fair in Germany
- Biennale Bonn Festival in Germany
- the 2nd Shanghai Co-operation Organisation Arts Festival” in Shanghai
- The International Youth Festival in Macau
- International Ramayana Festival in Thailand

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 eminent figures in public life as well as those of scholars, intellectuals, academicians and artistes under its Distinguished Visitors Programme. During the period, the Council hosted visits of 13 distinguished personalities from different countries.



During the period April-December, 2006, the Indian Council of World Affairs organized the following events:

- | | |
|--|----|
| (i) Lectures | 17 |
| (ii) Bilateral strategic dialogues | 16 |
| (iii) Seminars | 04 |
| (iv) Background briefings | 04 |
| (v) Other events (films, receptions, etc.) | 06 |

On an average, between 80-150 persons attended each of the lectures, with as many as 800 persons attending the lecture by the Chinese President Hu Jintao and over 400 persons attending the lecture by King Abdullah of Jordan. A complete list of seminars, conferences, lectures and meetings organized by ICWA during the year are given in Appendix XVIII.

ICWA organized launch for the following books:

- (i) "The Tajikon" by Tajik academician Bobojon Gafurov;
- (ii) "Selected Short Stories of Tagore" in Russian;
- (iii) "Shopping for Bombs" by Gordon Corera;
- (iv) "India and Turkey – Past and Emerging Relations" by Prof. Aftab Kamal Pasha;
- (v) "The Ultimate Book of Weapons" by Dr. N.C. Asthana and Dr. Anjali Nirmal.

ICWA seminars attracted between 50-100 persons each. The ICWA's master list of invitees has grown from a mere 350 or so to over 1000 during the year 2006 and includes 233 academicians, 203 intellectuals and members of think-tanks and research organizations, 135 diplomatic corps, 108 officials, 112 former diplomats and 125 senior journalists and media persons. This list is being revised regularly.

ICWA is actively pursuing research work. ICWA officials regularly participated in seminars and contributed papers/lectures in various reputed national and international journals. ICWA's magazine 'India Quarterly' was on track during 2006. Besides, the ICWA has signed MoUs with counterpart organizations in five countries: Malaysia, Tajikistan, Mexico, Portugal and Poland.

ICWA organized an international seminar "Revival of the Silk Route: New Initiatives and Engagements for the 21st Century", from 8-11 February 2007, in Goa in association with the Information Centre, Goa.

Thus, the activities of the Council have increased substantially and received widespread appreciation. The ICWA has emerged as an important platform for foreign affairs discussions in India in the year 2006.

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Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

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 is to function as an advisory body to the Government of India on matters pertaining to multilateral economic and social issues, including regional and sub-regional 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 2006-07 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:

■ East Asia Summit and India-ASEAN Summit

RIS has been assisting the government in preparation for the Second East Asia Summit (EAS). RIS has been conducting studies on the relevance of EAS as a forum for initiating approaches towards broader pan-Asian economic integration in Asia. A Policy Brief was prepared and provided to the government on the EAS. In addition, Notes on different issues on the agenda of the EAS such as Finance, Natural Disaster Management and Energy Security were also prepared and provided to the Ministry of External Affairs. RIS is also participating and representing India in the Meetings of the Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia hosted by the ASEAN Secretary-General as per a mandate by the Economic Ministers Meeting of EAS. RIS has also been

providing inputs for the ongoing ASEAN-India FTA negotiations on Rules of Origin. Another note on Safeguarding the Sensitivities of the Agriculture Sector in ASEAN-India FTA. Lessons from FTAs and EPAs of the ASEAN Countries and Some Developed Countries were prepared for the Ministry of External Affairs on 14 July 2006. RIS also provided a Note on India's trade and investment with East Asian countries to Ministry of External Affairs on 19 October 2006.

■ IBSA Summit

RIS has been conducting studies on the potential of economic cooperation within the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Trilateral Partnership. A policy Brief was prepared in preparation of the first IBSA Summit and was circulated at the Summit through Indian delegation. In addition, inputs for preparation for the Summit were provided to the Ministry of External Affairs and the Department of Commerce on 22 August 2006 and 24 August 2006 respectively.

■ NAM Summit and South-South Cooperation

RIS conducted a major study on Seizing New Opportunities for South-South Cooperation as a background document for the Havana Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held in September 2006. The study was issued as an RIS Policy Brief and was sent to the Summit for circulation among the delegations participating in the Summit through Indian delegation. DG-RIS was represented in the High-level Committee appointed by the Prime Minister for Economic and Social Issues on the agenda of the NAM chaired by the Chairman, RIS. RIS prepared and submitted following notes as inputs to the work of the Committee: South-South Cooperation on Trade Issues: Some Proposals for NAM Summit, and South-South Cooperation in Science and Technology, Energy and Exchange of Development Experiences

■ **Relevance of APEC**

A comprehensive note on the Relevance of APEC for India was prepared and made available at the request of the Ministry of External Affairs on 10 April 2006 for internal discussion.

■ **India-Japan Joint Study Group**

RIS assisted the work of Japan-India Joint Study Group by preparing a number of drafts including on other areas of economic cooperation, cooperation at WTO, and regional economic cooperation, Liberalised and Upgraded Framework for India-Japan Economic Partnership.

■ **SAARC Summit Preparations**

RIS prepared a concept note on Potentials for Trade in Services under SAFTA Agreement was sent to the SAARC Secretariat on 4 August 2006 also incorporating a proposal of a study on the subject to be undertaken as per the mandate of the Dhaka Summit at the request of the SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu. The proposal was subsequently revised in the light of the comments received from the member countries and finalized in consultation with the Secretariat and negotiated funding with the Asian Development Bank. RIS also provided comments on a draft Vision of the Third Decade of SAARC to the Ministry of External Affairs on 19 July 2006. A note on South Asian Performance and Challenges Ahead was made available to the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance on 1 July 2006.

■ **BIMSTEC Summit Preparations**

RIS prepared a draft note on the Vision for the BIMSTEC at the request of the Ministry of External Affairs to serve as an input for the preparations for the Second BIMSTEC Summit.

Major research studies conducted during the period include *World Trade and Development Report 2007*, customs valuation in the context of SAFTA, regional cooperation for infrastructure financing in Asia, studies in preparation for SAARC Summit, a draft vision of BIMSTEC, prospects for India-Pakistan trade, prospects for China-India trade and investments, India-South Korea negotiations for comprehensive economic cooperation, Mekong-India cooperation, feasibility study of SACU-India-Mercosur comprehensive economic partnership, a regime of prior informed consent and access and benefit sharing for

indigenous knowledge, South-South cooperation in information and communication technologies, implications of emergence of China and India for other developing countries and global governance, among other studies.

Policy Dialogue, Conferences and Symposia

During 2006-07 RIS organized a number of policy dialogues, conferences and symposia to fulfill its mandate of fostering intellectual dialogue among developing countries. The select major events organized in the period include the following:

Session on Pan-Asian Economic Integration: Its Relevance, Approaches and Challenges at the GDN Annual Conference 2007, Beijing on 14-16 January 2007

RIS organized a Session on Pan-Asian Economic Integration: Its Relevance, Approaches and Challenges at the GDN Annual Conference 2007 on 15 January 2007 held in Beijing to promote the Indian vision of the Pan-Asian Economic Community taking advantage of the global think-tank community at the GDN Conference. The session was chaired by Dr Hadi Soesastro, Executive Director, CSIS, Jakarta. It began with the presentation of a theme paper on the subject based on the work of RIS. It was followed up by presentations by three panelists viz. Professor Zhang Yunling, Director, Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing; Dr. Masanori Kondo, International Christian University, Japan; and Dr. Pradumna B. Rana, Senior Adviser, OREI, Asian Development Bank. It was followed up by an open discussion.

Conference on South Asia-East Asia Economic Cooperation and Pan-Asian Integration, Singapore on 29-30 November 2006

RIS organized this conference jointly with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Singapore Centre for Applied and Policy Economics (SCAPE-NUS), Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), and Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS). The first day of the conference was devoted to presentation of studies conducted by ADB on South Asia-East Asia cooperation and potential of cooperation in select sectors. The second day programme

organized by RIS was devoted to issues in broader economic integration and the agenda of the East Asia Summit. The first session on “Approaches for Pan-Asian Economic Integration” was chaired by Ambassador K. Kesavapany, ISEAS. It had following presentations: Relevance and Approaches for a Broader Asian Community by Dr. Nagesh Kumar, RIS; Towards a Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia: The Japanese Perspective by Dr. Tetsuya Watanabe, Director, Office of East Asian Economic Integration and Development, METI, Japan; and ASEAN’s Role in fostering Pan-Asian Economic Integration by Dr. Denis Hew, ISEAS. It was followed by a Panel Discussion on Regional Economic Cooperation in Asia: Agenda for the East Asia Summit moderated by Dr. Nagesh Kumar, DG-RIS and included Panelists: Dr. Mukul Asher, LKYSPP: Cooperation in Services in Asia; Ambassador Sudhir Devare, ISEAS: Regional Cooperation for Energy Security; and Dr. Tan See Seng, IDSS: A Strategic perspective. The Conference had participation of a large number of policy makers, business people and academics based in Singapore and other Asian countries.

Seminar on ASEAN and Pan-Asian Integration at the IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings, Singapore on 16-17 September 2006.

RIS jointly with the ASEAN Secretariat organized this Seminar on 16 September 2006 in Singapore, as part of the programme of seminars (PoS) coinciding with the 2006 annual meetings of the IMF-World Bank Group. The distinguished panelists at the Seminar were Haruhiko Kuroda, President of ADB; Ong Keng Yong, Secretary-General of ASEAN; Dr. Ashok Lahiri, Chief Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance; and Ambassador Chan Heng Chee, Singapore’s Ambassador to the US. Dr. Rodolfo Severino, former Secretary-General, ASEAN moderated the discussion. On this occasion RIS also issued and circulated a Policy Brief on the theme of the seminar to provide a background of the discussion.

Roundtable on the Agenda of NAM Summit, New Delhi on 5 September 2006

RIS organized a high-level roundtable in preparation of the 14th Non-Aligned Summit which was held in Havana, Cuba on 11-16 September 2006. The Seminar reflected on the relevance of the NAM movement in the

contemporary scenario and its agenda. Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma delivered the inaugural address. Dr Arjun Sengupta, MP (Rajya Sabha) and Chairman, RIS and Chairman of the Special Committee on the Agenda of NAM, chaired the Roundtable. The Roundtable was addressed by a large number of eminent experts on international affairs.

Seminar on Economic Cooperation in IBSA: Exploiting Synergies, New Delhi on 31 August 2006

RIS jointly with CII organized a Seminar as a preparation for the first IBSA Summit held in Brasilia in September 2006. Dr Arjun Sengupta, M.P., Chairman, RIS chaired the Seminar. It began with a presentation of RIS study on the potentials of economic cooperation in IBSA by Dr Nagesh Kumar, Director-General, RIS. It was followed by presentations by T.S. Vishwanath, Head-International Trade Policy, CII, Dr. Veena Jha, Programme Coordinator, UNCTAD India, New Delhi, R. Vishwanathan, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Jayant Dasgupta, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and Jose Vicente De Sa Pimentel, Ambassador of Brazil and an open discussion.

Seminar on World Trade and Development Report, WTO Public Forum, Geneva on 25-26 September 2006

The RIS draft World Trade and Development Report was presented and discussed at the WTO Public Forum 2006 in Geneva on 26 September 2006. The presentation of the WTDR by Dr Nagesh Kumar, DG, RIS, was followed by a panel discussion on its contents. Ambassador Faizel Ismail, Head of the South African Delegation to the WTO moderated the panel discussion. The distinguished Panelists were: Dr Yash Tandon, Executive Director, South Centre; Dr Sam Laird, Spl. Adviser, Office of Secretary-General, UNCTAD; and Dr Martin Khor, Director, Third World Network.

The Third Asian Conference on Biotechnology and Development, Manila on 9-10 November 2006

The Third Asian Conference 2006 on “Biotechnology Opportunities for Developing Countries” was held in Manila, Philippines on 9-10 November 2006. The Conference was organized jointly by RIS and the Biotechnology Coalition of the Philippines. In the

inaugural session Dr Rey de la Cruz was the Master of Ceremonies. Dr William Padolina, Deputy Director-General, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) made the welcome Remarks. Dr Estrella Alabastrom, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Philippines delivered the Keynote Speech. The participants addressed the different aspects of the following themes: World Perspective on Biocommercialization; Essential Issues; Advancement and Prospects in Agri-Biotechnology in Asia: Status and Priorities; Enabling Issues; Open Forum; Applications of Biotechnology (Biomedical) and Open Forum.

Seminar on India-Sri Lanka FTA: Trends and Prospects, New Delhi on 20 April 2006

In order to discuss the issues involved in the aforesaid process, RIS organized a Seminar on India-Sri Lanka FTA: Trends and Prospects in New Delhi on 20 April 2006. Dr. Arjun K. Sengupta, Chairman, RIS chaired the Seminar. The discussion was led by Dr. Saman Kelegama, Executive Director, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka, Colombo and Professor I. N. Mukherji of the School of International Studies, JNU, who presented the Sri Lankan and Indian perspectives respectively. Remarks were made by C.R. Jayasinghe, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka, Ambassador Shashank, former Foreign Secretary, Ambassador I.P. Khosla, President, Association of Indian Diplomats, Dr. Nagesh Kumar, DG-RIS, among other participants. A large number of participants from government, business and industry, and academic circles attended the seminar and participated in the discussion.

Seminar on Emergence of China and India-Implications for African Development, New Delhi on 5 October 2006

RIS jointly with Export-Import Bank of India organized a Seminar on 5 October 2006. The Seminar was chaired by Ambassador L.K. Ponappa, Vice-Chairperson, RIS. The discussion was initiated by Dr. Andrea-Enrico Goldstein, Senior Economist, OECD Development Centre, Paris, who has led an OECD Development Centre Study on the subject. The presentation was discussed and commented upon by S.R. Rao, Executive Director, Export-Import Bank of India, and Dr Sachin Chaturvedi, Fellow, RIS. It was followed by the open discussion in which a large number of participants took part.

Seminar on East Asia Summit: Strategic and Economic Issues, New Delhi on 26 April 2006

To take stock of the emerging strategic and economic configuration in the post-Kuala Lumpur phase, RIS organized this Seminar. Ambassador A. N. Ram, former Secretary (ER), Ministry of External Affairs chaired the event. Dr. Eric Teo Chu Cheow, Council Secretary, Singapore, Institute of International Affairs, Singapore and an eminent analyst and commentator on Asian affairs, made a presentation to initiate the discussion. The Seminar was also addressed by Professor Muchkund Dubey, President, Council for Social Development, and Rinzing Wangdi, Secretary (ER & Coordination), MEA. It had an extensive open discussion by a large number of participants.

Outreach, Global Presence and Networking

During the year under review, RIS strengthened its outreach activities by organizing seminars and symposia in Singapore, Beijing, Geneva, Manila besides in New Delhi, as summarized above. The institutional networking relations were strengthened with a number of institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, ASEAN Secretariat, the World Bank, Global Development Network, Export-Import Bank, CII, Biotechnology Association of the Philippines, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta, Institute of Developing Economies, Tokyo, the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, UNDP, New York; among a number of institutions through collaborations and joint activities. An MoU was signed with the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Colombo. RIS has collaborated with IPS for a number of years in publishing the *South Asia Economic Journal*, and conducting joint research studies on SAARC and IOR-ARC. The MoU seeks to further strengthen these links. An MoU has also been signed between RIS and Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP), Seoul, to promote academic and research cooperation.

Capacity Building and Training Programmes

Programme on International Economic Issues and Development Policy

RIS conducts a Programme on International Economic

Issues and Development Policy (IEIDP) in conjunction with the ITEC Programme, sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs. The programme structure was revised from 2005-06 in the light of the feed back obtained from previous batches in a more compact format with a larger participation. The 2005/06 batch conducted during 20 February 2006-17 March 2006, comprised participants from six countries viz. Oybek Makhmudov of Uzbekistan; Irina Arkadyeva, Russia; J.M.O. Ahanda of Cameroon; I.D. Antonius, Suriname; Y.G. Sardinas, Cuba and M.V. Razafindrakota, Madagascar. For the 2006-07 batch scheduled for 19 February-17 March 2007, RIS has received a long list of nominations and 16 participants from a diverse group of developing countries will take part in it.

Training Programme for IFS Probationers

On behalf of the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs RIS organized a Training Module on Global Economic Regime and India's Economic Engagements for IFS Probationers (2005 Batch) at RIS from 12-16 June 2006.

Training Workshop on International Economic Issues

RIS organized a special Training Workshop on International Economic Issues for officials of the Cabinet Secretariat on 22-23 June 2006 at RIS.

Special Orientation on WTO for Foreign Diplomats

At the request of the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi RIS organized a two lecture session on the International Trading System for the Afghan diplomats on 25 April 2006.

RIS Publications

During 2006-07 RIS published four books, issued eight Policy Briefs and eleven Discussion Papers. Two issues of the *South Asia Economic Journal* and three issues of the *Biotechnology and Development Review* and four issues of *New Asia Monitor* were brought out in addition to four issues of *RIS Diary*. (see Appendix XIX) RIS publications can be downloaded from its website <http://www.ris.org.in>.

Budget

RIS received a budgetary support of Rupees 150 lakhs during 2006-07 from the Ministry of External Affairs.



The Ministry's Library has over one hundred thousand books, rich resource material and a large collection of maps, microfilms and official documents. It is also equipped with modern facilities to support research. The Library subscribes/receives and maintains about 500 Periodicals, Journals and Newspaper titles. It has an in-house computer system consisting of a Server, and 12 PCs. The system supports data entry and retrieval in Hindi as well. The library has CD-ROM database on foreign affairs and current affairs. The Library PCs are also equipped with CD-writers and laser printers. It also has a colour scanner (with OCR capability as well as facility for storage and retrieval of Images), a microfilm/fiche reader printer, plain paper photocopiers and a HP Office-jet pro laser printer with Desk Top Publishing (DTP) software.

All Documentation/Bibliographic Services as well as other library operations and services have been computerized, using an integrated library software package LIBSYS covering all the features of Library. LIBSYS follows MARC as well as non-MARC format. LIBSYS supports word-based free text searching using Boolean operators. LIBSYS provides online validation of input data prior to updating the database. Information on all books, maps, documents and selected articles from periodicals received in the Library since 1986, publications received in the Library since 1986 [and also pre-1986 publications in active use] are available on-line through intranet in all PCs of Ministry of External Affairs Library. Library's information databases can also be accessed through Internet on Library's website: <http://mealib.nic.in>.

All new documents received in the Library - books, maps, microfilms, selected articles from periodicals - are being fed on a regular basis in the database on foreign affairs. Using this database and CD-ROM Databases, the Library provides Current Awareness Service and Bibliographical and Reference Services. In addition, the Library regularly

issues: Foreign Affairs Documentation Bulletin, a list of selected articles on International Relations and related subjects; Recent Additions, an annotated list of Books/Publications added to the Library.

Recently, Library has also initiated steps towards establishment of virtual library.

An Article Alert Service has been slated to provide abstracts of important articles from journals subscribed by MEA library available on net through e-Mail to Foreign Service officers and Heads of Division.

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. This CD-ROM version was prepared based on material available as on 1 January 2000. This CD can be consulted in the Library at Patiala House, New Delhi.

Library users including research scholars are welcome to access the Library and its database, including CD-ROM Database, and the Foreign Affairs Information Retrieval System (FAIRS). Photocopying and Computer Print-out facilities are also available to all Library users.

A committee has been set up for library reforms. The objective is to expand and establish a modern virtual/digital library of world-class standard, in a phased manner.

The Library is also participating in a project to publish volumes of India's Bilateral Treaties and Agreements (IBTA) for the period 1981-1990 and the periods thereafter.

For quick information retrieval, library has started sixty six (66) online periodicals/ journals subscription along with print version.

In MEA book collection, apart from Diplomacy and International relations, now the focus is also on building a strong section on International Economic issues.

Weeding out of old and obsolete books and journals has commenced. Substantial progress has been made in this regard.



Appendices

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Appendix I

Cadre strength at Headquarters and Missions/Posts abroad during 2006-07 (including posts budgeted by Ministry of Commerce and those held in abeyance/ex-cadred)

S. No	Cadre/Post	Posts at Headquarters	Posts at Mission	Total
1	Grade I	5	21	26
2	Grade II	8	26	34
3	Grade III	41	135	176
4	Grade IV	58	85	143
5	Junior Admn. Grade/Senior scale	48	136	184
6	(i) Junior Scale	1	29	30
	(ii) Probationers Reserve	35	...	35
	(iii) Leave Reserve	15	...	15
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	19	...	19
	(v) Training Reserve	7	...	7
	Sub Total	237	432	669
	IFS(B)			
7	(i) Grade I	84	122	206
	(ii) Deputation Reserve	6	...	6
8	(i) Integrated Grades II&III	147	229	376
	(ii) Leave Reserve	30	...	30
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	16	...	16
	(iv) Training Reserve	25	...	25
9	(i) Grade IV	204	409	613
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	...	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	55	...	55
10	(i) Grade V/VI	285	96	381
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	...	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	14	...	14
11	(i) Grade II of Cypher Cadre	41	148	189
	(ii) Leave Reserve	24	...	24
12	(i) Stenographer's cadre	186	474	660
	(ii) Leave Reserve	47	...	47
	(iii) Training Reserve(Hindi)	10	..	10
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	12	...	12
13	Interpreter's Cadre	7	26	33
14	L&T cadre	14	1	15
15	Library cadre	10	3	13
	Sub – Total	1337	1508	2845
	Grand Total	1574	1940	3514

Appendix II

Recruitment made in various groups in the Ministry of External Affairs and reserved vacancies filled by Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe/Other Backward Classes (OBC) categories from April to November 2006

Groups	Total No. of Posts	Number of Posts			Unreserved
		Reserved			
		SC	ST	OBC	
Group-A	41	8	-	5	28
Group-B	117	34	12	-	71
Group-C	27	6	3	-	18
Group-D	-	-	-	-	-
Ex-Cadre	-	-	-	-	-

Appendix III

Language-wise Statement of Officers (Grade I to Junior Scale of IFS) as on 30 November 2006

Language	Number of Officers	Language	Number of Officers
Arabic	92	Sinhalese	1
Bhasa Indonesia	12	Thai	2
Chinese	57	Tibetan	2
French	68	Turkish	6
German	30	Dutch	1
Italian	5	Gorkhali	1
Japanese	24	Swedish	1
Persian	21	Malay-Bhasa	1
Portuguese	18	Hungarian	1
Russian	80	Vietnamese	1
Spanish	58	Burmese	1
Hebrew	3	Mandarin	1
Kiswahili	6	Ukrainian	1
Nepalese	3	Kazakh	1
Serbo-Croatian	3	Korean	1

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 2006 to December 2006.

Name of RPO/PO	No. of Applications received	No. of Passports issued	No. of miscellaneous applications received	Miscellaneous services rendered	Passports issued under Tatkaal	Revenue under Tatkaal Scheme	Total Revenue	Total expenditure
Ahmedabad	237044	242363	22506	22444	4495	6541500	244047033	30528852*
Bangalore	241202	271941	46428	46067	13991	22552500	220581803	25086191
Bareilly	60404	57327	4163	4155	2257	3661550	65991987	9858227
Bhopal	78132	71097	7106	7064	7015	10614000	88977525	6634062
Bhubaneswar	38616	34813	2931	2631	1823	2511999	42249445	3591738
Chandigarh	250131	244664	37164	37167	9303	14329500	290202595	22906268
Chennai	291916	300503	38525	27998	37431	56961000	353321371	30560668
Cochin	203212	205028	54995	54319	21219	30453000	215966232	26372780
Delhi	242415	249174	38652	37458	28495	71323500	308697962	40006455
Ghaziabad	70059	65957	8925	8549	4944	7576010	76322825	6697074
Guwahati	27056	23711	3741	852	2833	4091000	37738100	3107042
Hyderabad	382121	403895	37046	36746	20638	45379100	446532867	34380111
Jaipur	154353	132406	18431	14487	11062	17071000	172830720	17515429
Jalandhar	201527	204765	29147	28374	819	1434100	231403779	22888523
Jammu	16795	13419	1023	789	177	257000	18515305	2871849
Kolkata	156539	152210	19584	19033	5008	7440000	165770806	19393297
Kozhikode	236375	250350	36510	35783	32475	50146000	351169790	30685992
Lucknow	228262	169023	15374	14959	2863	4480300	239152241	27914624
Mumbai	261004	263770	34752	34416	6799	7817000	272624819	51658931
Nagpur	41912	38401	3187	3122	3978	5137000	47566730	2751427
Panaji	25660	25630	6361	6666	1203	1661500	30422152	4295229
Patna	96990	75949	6516	6637	587	868500	99601940	8677703
Pune	97609	168243	14629	14285	6232	8474000	99772330	9380870
Ranchi	27359	24317	3080	2828	2300	3517000	28489200	3179871
Srinagar	13757	11906	1478	1290	345	503000	14707300	8928474
Surat	80000	78246	9782	9413	2406	3021000	85178900	**
Thane	114812	115819	10745	10429	6131	9053900	127153470	**
Trichy	279713	303684	24651	23387	15273	21983500	322993232	26844958
Trivandrum	137150	141280	32163	30997	15005	21751500	135203452	13555470
Vishakha'nam	88241	80821	10782	10181	2140	3217500	98859245	8034263
Malappuram	42348	21056	7684	6431	3051	4982500	53682100	***
Total	4422714	4441768	588061	558957	272298	448810959	4985727256	467777526

*Total Expenditure including Surat.

**The LOC is combined with Regional Passport Office, Ahmedabad.

*** Since no separate LOC has been allotted to this office, expenditure is being incurred from the Budget Grant of PO Kozhikode.

Appendix V

Finances of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2006-2007

The Budget Allocation of the Ministry of External Affairs in the Budget Estimates (BE) 2006-2007 is Rs. 3695.05 crores, which is Rs. 232.95 crores i.e. 5.93 % less than the BE 2005-2006 (oAppendix VIII

Outcome Budget in Respect of Major Heads of Expenditure (2006-07)n account of completion of Tala Hydro electric project in Bhutan). But there is an increase in the Revised Estimates for 2006-2007 by Rs. 337.70 crores i.e. by 10.9% over BE 2006-2007 allocation.

MEA Expenditure and Budget (2001-2002 to 2006-2007)

Years	Actuals (in Rs. Crores)	%age variation from previous year
2001-2002	2624.55	Nil
2002-2003	3253.79	23.98
2003-2004	3344.53	2.79
2004-2005	3756.15	12.31
2005-2006	4089.67	8.88
2006-2007 (BE)	3695.05	-9.65
2006-2007(RE)	4032.75	10.9

Appendix VI

The Major Sectoral Allocations in the 2006-2007 Budget (RE)

Sectors	Allocation (in Rs. Crores)
MEA Secretariat	154.23
Embassies & Missions	951.41
Passport & Emigration	154.98
Special Diplomatic Expenditure	873.01
Technical & Economic Cooperation	1439.23
Contributions to International Organizations	117.93
Grant to Indian Council for Cultural Relations	68.50
Loans and Advances to Foreign Governments	35.20
Others	238.09

Appendix VII

Principal Destinations of India's Aid Programmes

The principal beneficiaries of our Aid and Loan Programmes in the Current Financial Years are as under: (RE)

Aid & Loan to Countries	(In Rupees Crores)
Bhutan	541.80
Bangladesh	20.00
Nepal	210.00
Sri Lanka	28.02
Maldives	6.00
Myanmar	40.00
African Countries	20.00
Others	445.23

- 1 Aid to Bhutan accounts for 41.32 % of India's total aid and loan budget. Other destinations for Indian aid programs include African countries – 1.52 %, Nepal – 16 %, Bangladesh – 1.52 %, Maldives - 0.45%, Sri Lanka - 2.13 %, Myanmar – 3 % and Others including Afghanistan – 33.95 %.
- 2 The Government of India has extended loans to the Government of Bhutan to assist in the implementation of developmental projects. During 2006-2007, the loan extended to the Government of Bhutan amount to Rs. 35.20 crores.
- 3 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 scheduled to be commissioned shortly. The other projects in Bhutan being funded from the Plan head are the Punatsangchu Hydroelectric Project and the Dungsum Cement Plant Project. Kabul-Phu-e-Khumri double circuit transmission line is also funded from Plan Head since last year under Aid to Other Developing Countries.
- 4 The estimated expenditure on the Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs during the current financial year is Rs. 154.23 crores, which forms about 4 % of the total estimated revenue budget of the Ministry. Estimated expenditure on Indian Missions and Posts abroad is expected to be of the order of Rs. 951.41 crores which is about 24.79 % of the total revenue expenditure of the Ministry.
- 5 The Ministry of External Affairs' revenue from Passport and Visa fees and other receipts are likely to be of the order of Rs. 1428 crores. It is estimated that Passport fees would account for Rs. 650 crores, Visa fees for Rs. 750 crores and other receipts for Rs. 28 crores.

Appendix VIII

Outcome Budget in Respect of Major Heads of Expenditure (2006-07)

S.No.	Name of Scheme/ Programme	Objective	Projected Outcomes
1	2	3	4
1.	Advertising & Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Commissioning and purchase of feature films, dubbing/screening of documentaries, photographs/ exhibitions/ subscriptions, etc. ■ Printing of publications, purchase of books for libraries of Missions/Posts abroad and for presentation to foreign dignitaries, magazines and periodicals for Missions/Posts abroad ■ Publication of 'India Perspective' magazine ■ Advertisement in prominent international newspapers ■ Handling visits of foreign journalists. 	Effective and correct projection of India's image abroad.
2.	Passport & Emigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Networking of Passport Offices ■ Up-gradation of hardware and central data-base (PISON) ■ Scanning of passport files ■ Printing of travel documents ■ Provision of machine readable passports ■ Computerization of Passport, Visa and Consular services in select Missions abroad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enhanced connectivity between and with Passport Offices ■ Quicker disposal of applications ■ Efficient maintenance of records and retrieval of records ■ Improved efficiency of service
3.	Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conducting 7 programmes for participants from 97 countries and the League of Arab States ■ Conducting training programmes and refresher courses for officials of the Ministry of External Affairs and also other Government offices and media. 	Exposure of foreign/Indian participants to the various facets of international diplomacy and also exposure to the Indian polity, India's foreign and security policies, economy, etc.
4.	International Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participation in various International bodies including the United Nations 	Advancing of India's cause and profile, in line with the trend of India's role as an emerging global power
5.	Other Expenditure (i) Grant in Aid to Indian Council for Cultural Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cultural Diplomacy through exchange of cultural delegations, participation conferences & seminars, publications, offering scholarships, organisation of Festivals of India abroad, etc. 	Promotion of Indian culture abroad and also in international exhibitions, provide a platform to other countries for showcasing their culture

Appendix VIII

S.No.	Name of Scheme/ Programme	Objective	Projected Outcomes
1	2	3	4
	(ii) Other Miscellaneous items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide grants-in-aid to various institutions, fund various bilateral dialogues, holding of seminars and studies, propagation of Hindi, etc. 	Obtain inputs from research by various institutions, obtain inputs from bilateral dialogues for shaping policy, etc.
6.	Technical & Economic Cooperation with Other Countries) Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Providing of flood relief assistance, training of teachers in IT courses, welfare activities, repairs/renovation of institutions/historical buildings, etc. 	Creation of goodwill amongst the people of Bangladesh towards
7.	Technical & Economic Cooperation with Other Countries		
	ii) Bhutan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Construct mega hydro-electric projects – Tala & Punatsangchu I, assistance for other developmental and social projects, power purchase from Bhutan. 	Improved relations with Bhutan, socio-economic development of Bhutan, availability of power, promotion of trade.
	iii) Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Health projects, construction of hospitals, establishment of educational institutions and other development projects 	Socio-economic development, human resource development, infrastructure development in Nepal and creation of goodwill amongst people of Nepal towards India.
	iv) Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Small development projects ■ Execution of small community oriented development projects ■ Tsunami relief projects- reconstruction of KKS harbour ■ Defence cooperation. 	Goodwill for India
	v) Maldives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Defence cooperation. ■ Deputation of Indian medical and para-medical experts ■ Establishment of a Hydrographic Survey Unit ■ Establishment of a Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies 	General goodwill for India and to develop long term interests of India
8.	Technical & Economic Cooperation with Other Countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reconstruction/maintenance of infrastructure projects. ■ Cooperation in remote sensing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Infrastructure development in Myanmar, improved road connectivity, promotion of cross-border trade and tourism as well as to facilitate control of insurgency, arms smuggling, drugs trafficking and other allied problems.

Appendix VIII

S.No.	Name of Scheme/ Programme	Objective	Projected Outcomes
1	2	3	4
	vi) Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tamanthi hydroelectric project ■ Educational, cultural and other cooperation 	<p>Strengthening of cooperation with Myanmar and creation of goodwill and influence for India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enhancement of cross-border connectivity and trade. ■ Energy supply to India.
	vii) Other Developing Countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reconstruction of dams, infrastructure development projects, power transmission project, reconstruction of health facilities in Afghanistan ■ Bilateral assistance to countries in West Asia and North Africa ■ Rehabilitation and relief assistance to Iraq ■ Establishment of Information technology centers in select countries in South East Asia ■ Training of candidates from other countries in various civilian and military training programmes and SAARC Programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Development of infrastructure, improved health facilities and generation of goodwill in Afghanistan ■ Development of infrastructure in Palestine, development in Sudan and other countries in the West Asia/North Africa region ■ Enhancement and improvement of bilateral relations with 156 ITEC partner countries.
	viii) Aid to African Countries	<p>Setting up of projects in the agricultural processing sector, Information Technology centers, Development projects in countries in West Africa and East & Southern Africa</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Generate goodwill towards India amongst the people of the countries in West Africa and East & Southern Africa ■ Enhance connectivity through IT
	ix) Aid to Central Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Setting up of IT Centers ■ Defence cooperation ■ Providing agricultural implements to countries in Central Asia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Development of skills in the Information Technology sector. ■ General development of the region and generation of goodwill towards India amongst the people in the countries in Central Asia
9.	Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Construction of chanceries and residential buildings in 13 countries abroad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creation of assets and consequential reduction in the rental liabilities of Government of India over a period of time.

Appendix VIII

S.No.	Name of Scheme/ Programme	Objective	Projected Outcomes
1	2	3	4
10.	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Acquisition of land and built-up properties in 5 countries■ Construction of 10 projects of construction of office and institutional buildings in India including Jawahar Bhavan■ Construction of residences in 3 countries abroad and residential quarters/hostel suites in India■ Acquisition of properties for residential purposes in 3 countries■ Repairs and renovation works of properties abroad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Creation of assets and consequential reduction in the rental liabilities of Government of India over a period of time

Appendix IX

Extracts from C & AG Report on Ministry of External Affairs

1. Deficient internal control mechanism

Non-institution of effective internal control mechanism in the Ministry and the Indian Missions/ Posts abroad as well as deliberate disregard of the existing instructions and procedures resulted in irregular/unauthorized expenditure of Rs. 4.92 crores and non-recovery of Rs. 15.04 lakh from India-based officials.

(Report No. 2 of 2006)

2. Avoidable additional expenditure

Indian Missions at Port Moresby, Suva and Helsinki in violation of Ministry's instructions of providing only economy class excursion air tickets to ITEC trainees, purchased full fare economy class tickets for 212 trainees during the period April 1996 to

august 2004 resulting in an estimated additional expenditure of Rs. 1.44 crore.

(Report No. 2 of 2006)

3. Avoidable extra expenditure

The decision of the Ministry to increase the composition of the "Haj Goodwill Delegation 2005" from around 17 persons in the past years to 36 just ten days before the start of holy "Haj" pilgrimage resulted in extra expenditure of Rs. 24.50 lakh on booking of hotel rooms at higher rates.

(Report No. 2 of 2006)

Appendix X

Treaties/Conventions/Agreements Concluded or Renewed by India with other countries

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/Agreement	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
A. MULTILATERAL				
1	Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	14.05.2002	13.01.2006	
2	Global Development Network	28.10.2005	21.12.2005	
3	Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia	07.04.2006	16.05.2006	
4	Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts Which Can Be Fitted and/or Be Used on Wheeled Vehicles	25.06.1998	18.01.2006	
5	International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism	24.07.2006	01.12.2006	
6	Statute of the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia	17.06.2006	11.09.2006	
7	Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the East Asia Summit (ASEAN Countries)	14.12.2005		
8	Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA)	06.01.2004	16.03.2006	
9	SAARC Agreement on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters	13.11.2005	03.01.2006	
10	Framework for Co-operation on the Information Society between the Governments of the Republic of India, the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of South Africa	13.09.2006		
11	Memorandum of Understanding on Trilateral Cooperation in Agriculture and Allied Fields between the Governments of the Republic of India, the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of South Africa under the India-Brazil South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum initiative	13.09.2006		
12	Memorandum of Cooperation between the Members of the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on establishing a Trilateral Task Team on Biofuels	13.09.2006		
13	Trilateral Agreement among the Government of the Republic of India, the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of South Africa concerning Merchant Shipping and other Maritime Transport Related Matters	13.09.2006		

Appendix X

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
14	Action Plan on Trade Facilitation for Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment (among India, Brazil and South Africa)	13.09.2006		
15	Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the India Ocean and South East Asia	21.11.2006		
16	Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions		01.12.2006	
B. BILATERAL				
1	Afghanistan Memorandum of Understanding between BIS and ANSA, Afghanistan on the Cooperation in the filed of Standardization.	10.04.2006		10.04.2006
2	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Higher Education of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on cooperation in the field of Education	10.04.2006		10.04.2006
3	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on cooperation in the field of Rural Development	10.04.2006		10.04.2006
4	Armenia Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Armenia for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	23.05.2003	30.08.2004	30.05.2006
5	Australia Trade and Economic Framework between the Republic of India and Australia	06.03.2006		06.03.2006
6	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Australia relating to Air Services	06.03.2006		
7	MoU between the Central Board of Excise and Customs of the Republic of India and the Australian Customs Service on Customs Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters	06.03.2006		03.04.2006
8	Letter of Intent on India-Australia Strategic Research Fund	06.03.2006		06.03.2006
9	MoU between the Department of Biotechnology of the Government of India and the Australian Department of Education, Science and Training of the Government of Australia	06.03.2006		06.03.2006
10	MoU on Defence Cooperation between the Government of India and the Government of Australia	06.03.2006		06.03.2006

Appendix X

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
11	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Austria	01.06.2006		01.06.2006
	Azerbaijan			
12	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation	16.06.2006		
	Bahamas			
13	MoU on Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Public Service of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.	08.09.2005	08.09.2005	
	Belgium			
14	Social Security Agreement Between the Government of India and the Government of Belgium.	03.11.2006		
	Bahrain			
15	Agreement between 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.	13.01.2004	16.07.2005	16.07.2005
	Bangladesh			
16	Trade Agreement between India and Bangladesh	21.03.2006		01.04.2006
17	Agreement for Mutual Cooperation between the Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Government of the Republic of India for Preventing Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Related Matters	21.03.2006		21.03.2006
	Botswana			
18	Agreement on bilateral cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Botswana	08.12.2006		08.12.2006
	Belarus			
19	Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Belarus on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	05.10.2005	18.01.2006	30.06.2006
	Brazil			
20	Arrangement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Gainful Occupation for Family Members of a Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post.	02.02.2006		

Appendix X

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
21	Agreement between the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in Defence Related Matters	01.12.2003	19.05.2006	
22	Memorandum of Understanding between BIS and ABNT, Brazil in the filed of Standardization and Certification	12.09.2006		12.09.2006
Canada				
23	MoU between the Government of India and the Government of Canada on Climate Change Initiatives, including Clean Development Mechanism Projects.	08.01.2005		08.01.2005
China				
24	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China in the field of Agriculture	28.03.2006		28.03.2006
25	Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Establishment of Consulates General at Guangzhou and Kolkata	21.11.2006		21.11.2006
26	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the issue of Property of the Consulate of the Republic of India in Shanghai	21.11.2006		21.11.2006
27	Protocol on cooperation between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China	21.11.2006		21.12.2006
28	The Protocol between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China on Phytosanitary Requirements for Exporting Rice from India to China	21.11.2006		21.11.2006
29	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China for the Promotion and Protection of Investments	21.11.2006		
30	Agreement of cooperation on Inspection of Iron ore between Export Inspection Council of the Republic of India and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China	21.11.2006		21.11.2006
31	Exchange Programme between the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Education of the Government of the People's Republic of China	21.11.2006		21.11.2006

Appendix X

S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
32	Memorandum on Cooperation between the Indian Institute of Public Administration, India and the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the People's Republic of China	21.11.2006		21.11.2006
33	The Agreement on Forestry Cooperation between the Ministry of Environment and Forests of the Republic of India and State Forestry Administration of the People's Republic of China	21.11.2006		21.11.2006
34	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Preventing Theft, Clandestine Excavation and Illicit Import and Export of Cultural Property	21.11.2006		
35	Memorandum of Understanding between the Archaeological Survey of India of the Republic of India and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage of the People's Republic of China	21.11.2006		21.11.2006
36	Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Council of Agriculture Research and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences for cooperation in Agricultural Research	21.11.2006		21.11.2006
37	Memorandum of Understanding between Forward Markets Commission, India and China Security Supervision Committee regarding Commodity Futures Regulatory cooperation	21.11.2006		21.11.2006
Cuba				
38	Memorandum of Understanding in the filed of Consumer Protection between the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of the Republic of India and Ministry of Domestic Trade of the Republic of Cuba	06.09.2006		06.09.2006
Dominican Republic				
39	Bilateral Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Dominican Republic.	17.02.2006		
40	Joint Statement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Dominican Republic	17.02.2006		17.02.2006
Ecuador				
41	Cultural Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Ecuador	14.07.2006		
42	Arrangement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of			

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
	Ecuador on Gainful Occupation for Family Members of a Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post	18.07.2006		18.07.2006
	Fiji			
43	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Fiji Islands on Development of Cooperation.	26.10.2006		26.10.2006
	Germany			
44	Memorandum of Understanding between BIS and DIN Germany on the cooperation and mutual interest in the fields of Standardization and Certification.	24.04.2006		24.04.2006
45	Agreement between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of India and the Federal Ministry of Defence of the Federal Republic of Germany concerning Bilateral Defence co-operation	06.12.2006		
46	Memorandum of Understanding between Deutsche Bann AG (Germany) and Indian Railways for Cooperation in this field of Railways	24.04.2006		24.04.2006
	Hungary			
47	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Hungary for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	03.11.2003	04.10.2006	02.01.2006
	Iceland			
48	Cultural Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Iceland	19.10.2005	03.06.2006	
	Ireland			
49	Agreement on Cultural Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ireland.	19.01.2006	21.08.2006	
50	Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ireland	19.01.2006	15.11.2006	
	International Standards Organization (ISO)			
51	Memorandum of Understanding between BIS-NITS and ISO in the field of training on Standardization and related matters	13.09.2006		13.09.2006
	Israel			
52	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel on Cooperation in the fields of Health and Medicine	09.10.2003	11.05.2006	20.06.2006

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
Italy				
53	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and Ferrovie Dello Stato S.P.A, the Republic of Italy	21.06.2006		21.06.2006
54	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Italy	15.02.2006		15.02.2006
55	Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Italian Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income signed at New Delhi on 19 February, 1993	09.01.2006		
Japan				
56	Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Japan for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income	24.02.2006	29.05.2006	
Korea				
57	Memorandum of Understanding between Coast Guard and Korean Coast Guard	13.03.2006		13.03.2006
58	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Korea on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology	07.02.2006	28.07.2006	
59	Joint Ministerial Statement on the Launching of a Joint Task Force to Develop a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Korea.	07.02.2006		
60	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Korea concerning Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters.	07.02.2006		
Kenya				
61	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand	27.04.2006		27.04.2006
Kuwait				
62	Agreement between the Republic of India and the State of Kuwait on Juridical and Judicial Cooperation in Civil and Commercial Matters	16.08.2005	11.05.2006	
63	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Kuwait			

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
	for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	15.06.2006		
64	Executive Programme for the Cultural and Information Exchanges between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Kuwait for the years 2006-2008	15.06.2006		
65	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Kuwait on Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals and Related Matters.	15.06.2006		
66	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the State of Kuwait	11.07.2006		11.07.2006
Maldives				
67	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives for setting up of 'India-Maldives Friendship Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies' at Male, Maldives.	10.07.2006		10.07.2006
Mauritius				
68	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Mauritius on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	24.10.2005	09.12.2005	02.06.2006
69	Memorandum of Understanding in the filed of Consumer Protection and Legal Metrology between Government of the Republic of India, Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and the Government of the Republic of Mauritius, Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce & Cooperatives and the Ministry of Women's Rights, Family Welfare and Consumer Protection	24.10.2005		24.10.2005
Mongolia				
70	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia on Mutual Waiver of Visa Requirements for Holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports.	23.12.2005		23.01.2006
71	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia on the Establishment of			

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
	India-Mongolia Friendship Agropark for Research and Demonstration in Darkhan UUL AIMAG, Mongolia.	23.12.2005		23.12.2005
72	Programme of Cooperation in the field of Culture between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia for the years 2006-2008	23.12.2005		23.12.2005
73	Agreement on Lease of Land to the Embassy of the Republic of India between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mongolia	23.12.2005		23.12.2005
	Morocco			
74	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation of the Republic of India and the Ministry Delegated to the Prime Minister in charge of Housing and Urbanism of the Kingdom of Morocco.	13.01.2006		11.02.2006
	Myanmar			
75	Framework Agreement for Mutual Cooperation in the field of Remote Sensing between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar.	09.03.3006		
76	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Buddhist Studies between Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Government of the Republic of India and Ministry of Religious Affairs, Government of the Union of Myanmar.	09.03.3006		09.03.3006
77	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Petroleum Sector between Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas of the Government of the Republic of India and Ministry of Energy of the Government of the Union of Myanmar.	09.03.3006		09.03.3006
	New Zealand			
78	Air Service Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of New Zealand.	02.05.2006		
	Pakistan			
79	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Defence, Government of the Republic of India, and the Ministry of Defence, Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, for the Establishment of a Communication Link between the Indian Coast Guard and the Pakistan Maritime Agency.	03.10.2005	06.03.2006	
	Oman			
80	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Defence of the Sultanate of Oman on Military Cooperation.	06.12.2005		

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
Pakistan				
81	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan relating to Rail link between the two countries via Munabao (India) and Zero Point Railway Station (near Khokhopar, Pakistan)	31.01.2006		31.01.2006
82	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and the Government of Islamic Republic of Pakistan regarding utilization of funds for Earthquake Relief Assistance	11.06.2006		11.06.2006
Philippines				
83	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines concerning Defence Cooperation	04.02.2006	11.11.2006	
84	Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in Agriculture and Related fields between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines.	04.02.2006	02.11.2006	
Poland				
85	Agreement on Economic Cooperation between the Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Poland.	12.05.2006		
Qatar				
86	Air Service Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Sate of Qatar	14.04.2005		
Russian Federation				
87	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Russian Federation	21.02.2006		21.02.2006
88	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and the Russian State Company JSC-Russian Railways	25.03.2006		25.03.2006
Saudi Arabia				
89	Memorandum of Understanding on Combating Crime between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	25.01.2006	22.02.2006	
90	Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Tax Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	25.01.2006		
91	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi			

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
	Arabia concerning the Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	25.01.2006		01.11.2006
92	Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the field of Youth and Sports	25.01.2006		
93	Delhi Declaration between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	27.01.2006		
	Senegal			
94	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Senegal for the Promotion and Protection of Investments	2006		
	Serbia and Montenegro			
95	Convention between the Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro and the Government of the Republic of India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital	23.01.2006		
96	Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro	16.03.2006		
	Singapore			
97	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Singapore on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	29.06.2005	26.07.205	04.11.2005
98	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Singapore	11.07.2006		11.07.2006
	Slovak Republic			
99	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Slovak Republic for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	25.09.2006		
	South Africa			
100	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Republic of India concerning Merchant Shipping, and other Maritime Transport Related Matters.	03.03.2006	19.04.2006	
101	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on Cooperation in the field of Education	02.10.2006		02.10.2006
102	Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and Transnet Ltd. (SPOORNET) South Africa	02.10.2006		02.10.2006

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
Spain				
103	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Spain on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	03.07.2006	28.07.2006	
104	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on Cooperation in the field of Housing and Human Settlements.	27.04.2006		27.04.2006
Sri Lanka				
105	Bilateral cooperation Agreement between BIS and SLSI, Sri Lanka in the fields of Standardization and Conformity assessment	17.08.2006		17.08.2006
Sudan				
106	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Sudan for Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and Allied Sectors	13.05.2006		
Switzerland				
107	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand	02.06.2006		02.06.2006
Tanzania				
108	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Tanzania	25.04.2006		25.04.2006
Thailand				
109	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand	10.02.2006		10.02.2006
Turkmenistan				
110	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Turkmenistan for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	20.09.1995		30.05.2006
UAE				
111	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the UAE	04.04.2006		04.04.2006
United Kingdom				
112	Air Service Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	08.10.2005		

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S. No	Title of Convention/Treaty/ Agreement etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of Entry into force
United States of America				
113	Agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United States of America	17.10.2005	16.02.2006	02.06.2006
114	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United States of America on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	17.01.2001	01.07.2005	
115	Memorandum of Understanding concerning Consumer Product Safety between the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of the Republic of India and the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Government of the United States.	12.01.2006		12.01.2006
116	Memorandum of Understanding in the area of Forward Market Commission of India with the United States Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), USA	18.10.2006		18.10.2006
117	Memorandum of Understanding between BIS and ANSI, USA in the filed of Standardization, Conformity assessment and exchange of information and publications	13.09.2006		13.09.2006
118	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Coal, Government of India and the United States Environmental Protection Agency on Establishment of the Coalbed and Coalmine Methane Clearinghouse	16.11.2006		16.11.2006
119	Air Service Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the United States of America	14.04.2005		
Zimbabwe				
120	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives for setting up of 'India-Maldives Friendship Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies' at Male, Maldives.	14.06.2006		14.06.2006

Appendix XI

Instruments of Full Powers Issued during the period 1 January 2006 to December 2006

Sl. No.	Convention/Treaty	Date of Full Powers
1	In favour of Shri K. M. Chandrasekhar, Secretary, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance for signing the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Italian Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income signed at New Delhi on 19 th February, 1993	09.01.2006
2	In favour of Shri S. Jaipal Reddy, Minister of Urban Development and Culture for signing the Cultural Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Ireland	18.01.2006
3	In favour of Shri Balakrishna Shetty, Ambassador of India to Senegal for signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Senegal for the Promotion and Protection of Investments	18.01.2006
4	In favour of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Ocean Development for signing the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ireland	19.01.2006
5	In favour of Shri P. Chidambaram, Minister of Finance for signing the Convention between the Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro and the Government of the Republic of India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital	23.01.2006
6	In favour of Shri Alok Prasad, High Commissioner of India to Singapore for signing the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia	16.02.2006
7	In favour of Shri Kamal Nath, Minister for Commerce & Industry for signing the Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro	16.03.2006
8	In favour of Shri Sharad Pawar, Minister of Agriculture for signing the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China in the field of Agriculture	23.03.2006
9	In favour of Shri Kamal Nath, Minister for Commerce & Industry for signing the Agreement on Economic Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Poland	12.05.2006
10	In favour of Shri Sharad Pawar, Minister for Agriculture for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Sudan for Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and Allied Sectors	13.05.2006
11	In favour of Dr. M. K. Bhan, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology for signing the Agreement between the Government of India and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) concerning the Establishment of a Regional Centre for Biotechnology Training and Education in India	12.06.2006

Appendix XI

Sl. No.	Convention/Treaty	Date of Full Powers
12	In favour of Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State (Commerce) for signing the Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation	16.06.2006
13	In favour of Shri S. B. Ghosh Dastidar, Member Traffic, Railway Board, Ministry of Railways for signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and Ferrovie Dello Stato S.P.A, the Republic of Italy	21.06.2006
14	In favour of Shri Nirupam Sen, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations for signing the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism	06.07.2006
15	In favour of Shri Badal K. Das, Secretary, Ministry of Culture for signing the Cultural Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Ecuador	14.07.2006
16	In favour of Shri M.K. Lokesh, Ambassador of India to the Slovak Republic for signing the Agreement between the Republic of India and the Slovak Republic for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.	11.08.2006
17	In favour of Shri Ashok Jha, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs for signing the Agreement between the Republic of India and Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Promotion and Protection of Investments	11.09.2006
18	In favour of Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy for signing the Agreement on the Establishment of the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization for the Joint Implementation of the ITER Project; Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the ITER International Fusion Energy Organization for the Joint Implementation of the ITER Project; Joint Declaration by the Representatives of the Parties to the ITER Negotiations on the occasion of the Ministerial Meeting for ITER, Brussels, 24 May 2006; and Joint Declaration by the Representatives of the Parties to the ITER Negotiations on the occasion of the Ministerial Meeting for ITER, Brussels, 24 May 2006	09.11.2006
19	In favour of Shri Kapil Sibal for the signing the Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Norway on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology.	10.11.2006
20	In favour of Ms. Vijaya Latha Reddy for the signing of Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the India Ocean and South East Asia	21.11.2006
21	In favour of Shri Ashok Jha, Finance Secretary, for the signing of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the republic of Korea for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	07.12.2006

Appendix XII

Instruments of Ratification/Accession issued during the period 1 January 2006 to December 2006

Sl. No.	Instruments of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification
1	Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	10.01.2006
2	Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Belarus on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	18.01.2006
3	Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts Which Can Be Fitted and/or Be Used on Wheeled Vehicles	08.01.2006 (A)
4	Memorandum of Understanding on Combating Crime between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	02.02.2006
5	Agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United States of America	16.02.2006
6	Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA)	20.02.2006
7	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Defence, Government of the Republic of India, and the Ministry of Defence, Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, for the Establishment of a Communication Link between the Indian Coast Guard and the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency	16.03.2006
8	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Republic of India concerning Merchant Shipping, and other Maritime Transport Related Matters	21.04.2006
9	Memorandum of Understanding for the Establishment of a Collaborative Relationship to Combat Transnational Crime and Develop Regional Co-operation between Indian Coast Guard and Korea Coast Guard	21.04.2006
10	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel on Cooperation in the fields of Health and Medicine	11.05.2006
11	Agreement between the Republic of India and the State of Kuwait on Juridical and Judicial Cooperation in Civil and Commercial Matters	11.05.2006
12	Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia	16.05.2006
13	Agreement between the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in Defence Related Matters	19.05.2006
14	Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Japan for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income	29.05.2006
15	Cultural Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Iceland	23.06.2006
16	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Korea on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology	28.07.2006

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Sl. No.	Instruments of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification
17	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Spain on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	28.07.2006
18	Statute of the Secretariat of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia	14.08.2006
19	Cultural Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ireland	31.08.2006
20	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines concerning Defence Cooperation	11.09.2006
21	Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ireland	15.09.2006
22	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Agriculture and Related Fields between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines	02.11.2006
23	International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism	16.11.2006
24	Agreement between the Republic of India and Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Promotion and Protection of Investments	27.11.2006
25	Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions	01.12.2006
26	Cultural cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Ecuador	01.12.2006

Appendix XIII

Conference/ Seminars/ Study projects organized/ undertaken by Institutions/ NGOs, which were funded, partially or wholly, by Policy Planning & Research Division till January 2007.

Sl. No.	Event	Institution / Beneficiary
1.	Research project "Threat of Conservative Ascendancy in Bangladesh & Emerging Challenge to India's Foreign Policy".	Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change & Development (OKDISCD) Guwahati
2.	Publication of Verbatim Report and papers of the seminar on "Indian Foreign Policy: Continuity & Emerging Challenges" held on 21.2.06 in New Delhi.	Foundation for Peace and Sustainable Development, New Delhi.
3.	Organizing an Intl. Conf. on "India-Africa Relation: The Emerging Policy & Development Perspective" on 24-26/7/06 in Mumbai.	Centre for African Studies (CAS), University of Mumbai
5.	Research project "Identifying Cultural Similarities between Tajikistan and Kashmir". Completed in 6 months	Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Kashmir
6.	Undertake specific projects such as holding international conferences, publishing and printing original research work, organizing lecture tours in China for foreign scholars	Centre for Indian Studies, Beijing University, Beijing
7.	A national conference on "India's Perspective on West Asia" on 21-22/8/06 in Delhi	Centre for West Asian Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia University, N. Delhi
8.	Research project on "Reshaping the Discourse on Pakistan occupied Kashmir"	Centre for Strategic & Regional Studies (CSRS), University of Jammu
9.	Round trip airfare in r/o Prof. Sreemati Chakrabarti to visit Sun Yat-sen University, Gauangzhou, China	Deptt. Of East Asian Studies, University of Delhi
10.	Seminar on "Foreign Students in India" in Pune on 4 August 2006	University of Pune
11.	Research project entitled "India's External Relation: Role of Education Sector" by Dr. Kavita Sharma, Prof. JNU	Centre for Policy Research, N. Delhi
12.	Proposed return visit of a six member delegation of Indian to China to continue the Policy dialogue initiated in March 2004.	(RIS) Research and Information system for Developing Countries, New Delhi
13.	Study project on Lebanon with particular focus on the implication of the current development for Lebanon from region for the International order and for India.	Group for Economic & Social Studies (GESS), New Delhi
14.	6 th India-Korea bilateral dialogue in Delhi on 11-12 December 2006	ICRIER, New Delhi
15.	International Conf. on Private International Law to be held on 2-3 December 2006 in New Delhi	The Indian Society of International Law, (ISIL), New Delhi
16.	A seminar on "Multilateralism disarmament and arms control" on 26 - 27 October 2006 in New Delhi	JUN, New Delhi
17.	A seminar on "Strengthening Peace process in Sri-Lanka" on 8-9 September 2006	Institute for Defence Studies (IDS), N. Delhi
18.	A two day seminar on "Promoting Excellence in Sustainable Development" on 19-20 December 2006 in New Delhi	Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), New Delhi

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Sl. No.	Event	Institution / Beneficiary
19	A seminar on "India-China Border Trade-a Strategy for Frontier Development" to be held on 5-6 March 2007 at Gangtok.	Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) North Eastern Regional Centre, Shillong (Meghalaya)
20	Proposed expenditure to be incurred on the visit of two IDSA's officials to attend the first meeting of the forum for dicussing global issues to be held in Washington D.C. on 1 st to 2 nd Feb. 2007.	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi

Appendix XIV

List of ITEC Training Institutes in India

S. No	Name of Institute	City
1	Administrative Staff College of India	Hyderabad
2	Aptech Limited.	New Delhi
3	Bureau of Indian Standards	New Delhi
4	Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training	New Delhi
5	Central Fertilizer Quality Control & Training Institute	Faridabad, Haryana
6	Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages	Hyderabad
7	Central Institute of Tool Design	Hyderabad
8	Central Institute for Rural Electrification	Hyderabad
9	Central Scientific Instruments Organisation	New Delhi
10	Centre For Development of Advanced Computing	Mohali (Chandigarh)
11	CMC Ltd.	New Delhi
12	Comptroller and Auditor General of India	New Delhi
13	Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India	Bhat, Gujarat
14	Fluid Control Reseach Institute	Kerala
15	Human Settlement Management Institute	New Delhi
16	Indian Institute of Mass Communication	New Delhi
17	Indian Institute of Production Management	Orissa
18	Indian Institute of Remote Sensing	Dehradun
19	Indian Institute of Technology	Roorkee
20	Institute of Applied Manpower Research	New Delhi
21	Institute of Government Accounts Finance	New Delhi
22	International Management Institute	New Delhi
23	International Statistical Education Centre	Kolkata
24	National Crime Records Bureau	New Delhi
25	National Institute of Bank Management	Pune
26	National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration	New Delhi
27	National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development	Noida, UP
28	National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education & Research	Mohali,Punjab
29	National Institute of Rural Development	Hyderabad
30	National Institute of Small Industry Extension Training	Hyderabad
31	NIIT Limited	New Delhi
32	Research & Information System for the Non-aligned and Other Developing Countries	New Delhi
33	RITES	Gurgaon, Haryana
34	SIBIT	New Delhi
35	South India Textile Research Association	Coimbatore
36	TATA Infotech Ltd.	New Delhi
37	Technical Teachers' Training Institute	Chennai
38	Telecommunications Consultant Indian Ltd. (TCIL)	New Delhi
39	V.V. Giri National Labour Institute	Noida, UP

Appendix XV

List of ITEC/SCAAP partner countries

S. No	Countries	S. No	Countries
1	Afghanistan	39	Cuba
2	Albania	40	Czech Republic
3	Algeria	41	Djibouti
4	Angola	42	Dominican Republic
5	Anguilla	43	East Timor
6	Antigua and Barbuda	44	Ecuador
7	Argentina	45	Egypt
8	Armenia	46	El-Salvador
9	Azerbaijan	47	Equatorial Guinea
10	Bahamas	48	Eritrea
11	Bahrain	49	Estonia
12	Bangladesh	50	Ethopia
13	Barbados	51	Fiji
14	Belarus	52	Gabon
15	Belize	53	Gambia
16	Benin	54	Georgia
17	Bhutan	55	Ghana
18	Bolivia	56	Grenada
19	Bosnia - Herzegovina	57	Guatemala
20	Botswana	58	Guinea
21	Brazil	59	Guinea Bissau
22	Brunei Darussalam	60	Guyana
23	Bulgaria	61	Haiti
24	Burkina Fasso	62	Honduras
25	Burundi	63	Hungary
26	Cambodia	64	Indonesia
27	Cameroon	65	Iran
28	Cape Verde Island	66	Iraq
29	Cayman Island	67	Ivory Coast
30	Central African Republic	68	Jamaica
31	Chad	69	Jordan
32	Chile	70	Kazakhstan
33	Colombia	71	Kenya
34	Commonwealth of Dominica	72	Kiribati
35	Comoros	73	Korea(DPRK)
36	Congo	74	Kyrgyzstan
37	Costa Rica	75	Laos
38	Croatia	76	Latvia

Appendix XV

S. No	Countries	S. No	Countries
77	Lebanon	117	Russia
78	Lesotho	118	Rwanda
79	Liberia	119	Samoa
80	Libya	120	Senegal
81	Lithuania	121	Seychelles
82	Macedonia	122	Sierra Leone
83	Madagascar	123	Singapore
84	Malawi	124	Slovak Republic
85	Malaysia	125	Solomon Island
86	Maldives	126	South Africa
87	Mali	127	Sri Lanka
88	Marshall Islands	128	St. Christopher & Nevis
89	Mauritania	129	St. Lucia
90	Mauritius	130	St. Vincent & Grenadines
91	Mexico	131	Sudan
92	Micronesia	132	Suriname
93	Moldova	133	Swaziland
94	Mongolia	134	Syria
95	Montserrat	135	Tajikistan
96	Morocco	136	Tanzania
97	Mozambique	137	Thailand
98	Myanmar	138	Togo
99	Namibia	139	Tonga
100	Nauru	140	Trinidad & Tabago
101	Nepal	141	Tunisia
102	Nicaragua	142	Turkey
103	Niger	143	Turkmenistan
104	Nigeria	144	Turks & Caicos Island
105	Oman	145	Tuvalu
106	Palau	146	Uganda
107	Palestine	147	Ukraine
108	Panama	148	Uruguay
109	Papua New Guinea	149	Uzbekistan
110	Paraguay	150	Vanuatu
111	Peru	151	Venezuela
112	Philippines	152	Vietnam
113	Poland	153	Yemen
114	Qatar	154	Zaire
115	Republic Of Sao Tome	155	Zambia
116	Romania	156	Zimbabwe

Appendix XVI

Countries allotted Defence Training slots in 2006-07

S.No	Country	Army	Navy	Air Force	DSSC	NDC	Total
1	Afghanistan	67	-	-	2	1	70
2	Algeria	-	-	-	-	1	1
3	Bangladesh	11	14	2	-	1	28
4	Bhutan	-	-	-	1	-	1
5	Benin	-	1	-	-	-	1
6	Botswana	4	-	-	-	-	4
7	Burkina Faso	1	-	-	-	-	1
8	Cambodia	5	2	8	-	-	15
9	Congo	2	-	-	-	-	2
10	DPRK	2	-	-	-	-	2
11	Ethiopia	2	-	-	-	-	2
12,.	Ghana	4	9	5	1	-	18
13	Indonesia	3	3	1	1	1	9
14	Kazakhstan	3	1	-	1	-	5
15	Kenya	8	3	-	-	-	11
16	Kyrgyzstan	6	-	-	-	-	6
17	Lao PDR	2	-	1	-	-	3
18	Lebanon	5	-	-	1	-	6
19	Lesotho	5	-	-	-	-	5
20	Malaysia	7	6	1	1	-	14
21	Maldives	-	-	-	1	1	2
22	Mauritius	15	16	7	-	-	38
23	Mongolia	7	-	-	1	-	8
24	Myanmar	26	4	4	1	1	36
25	Namibia	-	-	8	-	-	8
26	Nepal	-	-	-	2	1	3
27	Nigeria	5	9	2	1	1	18
28	Seychelles	4	5	-	1	-	10
29	Sri Lanka	-	-	-	3	2	5
30	Syria	-	-	-	1	-	1
31	Tajikistan	10	-	-	-	-	10
32	Tanzania	3	1	-	-	-	4
33	Thailand	2	3	1	1	1	8
34	Uzbekistan	1	-	-	-	-	1
35	Vietnam	7	6	3	1	1	18
36	Zambia	9	-	2	1	-	12
	Zanzibar	-	2	-	-	-	2
	Total	226	85	45	21	12	389

Note: 11 slots under SAP (Bhutan – 1, Maldives-2, Nepal-3, Sri Lanka-5)

Appendix XVII

Gender-Related Statistics

Cadre	Total in position	No. of Lady officers	As % of the total strength
IFS	618	79	12.7%
IFS-B	2482	339	13.6%
L& T	11	2	18%
Interpreters	18	5	27.7%
Library	11	2	18%

Appendix XVIII

Seminars/Conferences/Lectures/Meetings organized by ICWA

S. No.	Date	Event
1.	13 April 2006	Lecture on “Cyprus as a Bridge Between India and the European Union” by Tassos Papadopoulos, President of the Republic of Cyprus
2.	1 May 2006	Reception to commemorate the 51 st Anniversary of the Inauguration of Sapru House
3.	9 May 2006	Dialogue between the Polish Foreign Office Delegation and ICWA
4.	17 May 2006	Talk on “Maldives: A Nation in Transition” by Mohamed Nasheed, Minister of Information of the Republic of Maldives
5.	20 May 2006	Foreign Affairs Discussion Topic: “Nepal: The Next Steps”; Lead Speaker: Maj. Gen. Ashok Mehta (Retd.)
6.	23 May 2006	Foreign Secretary’s Meeting with French Diplomats
7.	23 May 2006	Talk on “Recent Developments in Latin America and their Implications for Regional and Global Politics” by Alcides Rondon, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela
8.	24 May 2006	The Fourth “Africa Day” Lecture: “India and Africa – Yesterday and Tomorrow” (in association with the African Heads of Mission in India) by Mani Shankar Aiyar, Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports and Panchayati Raj
9.	3 June 2006	Foreign Affairs Discussion Topic: “Recent Developments in India-Pakistan Relations”; Lead Speaker: Siddharth Varadaraja, Deputy Editor, The Hindu
10.	3 June 2006	Screening of the documentary film “The Unfinished Revolution” by Suhas Borker [Beta: 54 min; 1998; English]
11.	12 June 2006	Foreign Affairs Discussion Topic: “Emerging Strategic Architecture in South-East Asia”; Lead Speaker: A.N. Ram, Former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs
12.	16 June 2006	‘Soweto Day’ Screening of ‘Sarafina’ ‘The Sound of Freedom’ to commemorate the 30 th Anniversary of the Students’ Uprising in South Africa (in collaboration with the High Commission of the Republic of South Africa)
13.	17 June 2006	Foreign Affairs Discussion Topic: “Recent Developments Pertaining to Iran: Regional and Global Implications”; Lead Speaker: Shri M. Hamid Ansari, former Ambassador to the UAE, Afghanistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia, and Permanent Representative to the United Nations
14.	23 June 2006	Valedictory Function for the Indian Foreign Service 2004 Batch and Award of the B.K. Sanyal Memorial Medals (in collaboration with the Foreign Service Institute and the Association of Indian Diplomats)
15.	27 June 2006	Foreign Affairs Discussion Topic: “Africa in the Post Cold War World: The Challenge of Nation Building, Peace & Development”; Lead Speaker: Dr. Gregg Mills, Director, The Brentthurst Foundation, Johannesburg
16.	1 July 2006	Foreign Affairs Discussion Topic: “Afghanistan: Foreign Policy, Regional Relations & Future Perspectives”; Lead Speaker: Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan
17.	27 July 2006	The 2nd Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru Memorial Lecture on “The Clash of Civilisations’ Revisited: Implications of the Global War on Terror and the Demonisation of the Other” by M.J. Akbar, Editor-in-Chief, The Asian Age

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S. No.	Date	Event
18.	8 August 2006	(i) Address by Emomali Sharifovich Rahmonov President of the Republic of Tajikistan (ii) Seminar on “India and Tajikistan in International Affairs” and release of following books “The Tajikon” by Academician Bobojon Gafurov and “Selected Short Stories” of Rabindranath Tagore Signing of MoU on Cooperation between the Indian Council of World Affairs and Academy of Sciences, Dushanbe (M. Ilolov, President, Academy of Sciences, Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan and Talmiz Ahmad, Director General, ICWA) [in collaboration with the India-Central Asia Foundation (ICAF)]
19.	19 August 2006	Foreign Affairs Discussion Topic: “The Soldier and the State: The Military and Politics in India and Pakistan”; Lead Speaker: Dr. Maroof Raza Regional Director [South Asia], Middlesex University
20.	22 August 2006	Lecture on “So Close Yet So Far: Lessons from the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process” by Shlomo Ben-Ami, former Foreign Minister of Israel
21.	23 August 2006	“An Evening of Music and Poetry” by Azad Iqbal (grandson of Allama Mohammed Iqbal)
22.	28 August – 1 September 2006	“3 rd Programme for Diplomatic Correspondents” Inauguration by: Shyam Saran, Foreign Secretary (in collaboration with the FSI)
23.	2 September 2006	Panel Discussion on “The War in Lebanon: Implications for Regional and Global Politics” (in collaboration with the Indian Association for Central & West Asian Studies) Chair: M. Hamid Ansari, Vice President, IACWAS Speakers: Prof. Toiraj Atabaki, Prof. Gulshan Dietl, Centre for West Asian and African Studies, JNU and Talmiz Ahmad, Director General, ICWA
24.	9 September 2006	Talk on “Does India Have A Neighbourhood Policy?” by Shyam Saran, Foreign Secretary
25.	11 September 2006	The 5 th Alfred Nzo Memorial Lecture (on the occasion of the 100 th Anniversary of the <i>Satyagraha</i> in South Africa) on “Satyagraha and its relevance in the ever changing world of the 21 st Century” by Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa
26.	19 September 2006	Lecture on “Disarmament and International Security in the 21 st Century” [in collaboration with the Foreign Service Institute (FSI)] by Ambassador Miguel Marin Bosch Director General, Matias Romero Institute of Diplomacy, Mexico
27.	20 September 2006	Seminar on “India-Sri Lanka Relations: the Path Ahead” <u>Participants:</u> Rajavaroatham Sampanthan, Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka; Gajendrakumar Gangaser Ponnambalam, Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka; Mavai Somasundaram Senathirajah, Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka; Kandiah (Suresh) Premachandran, Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka; Selvam Adaikalanathan, Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka; Talmiz Ahmad, Director General, ICWA
28.	26 September 2006	Launch of Gordon Corera’s book: <i>SHOPPING FOR BOMBS - Nuclear Proliferation, Global Insecurity and the Rise and Fall of the A.Q. Khan Network</i> , by I.K. Gujral Former Prime Minister of India (in collaboration with Foundation Books)

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S. No.	Date	Event
29.	6 October 2006	Lecture on “India-EU Relations: Vision for the Future” by Josep Borrell Fontlles, President of the European Parliament
30.	16-17 October 2006	Second India-Spain Dialogue Forum <u>Keynote Address</u> on “Dialogue of Civilisations” by Dr. Enrique Guerrero, Advisor, Office of the Prime Minister of Spain on 16 Oct. 2006
31.	27 October 2006	India-Lithuania Foreign Affairs Discussion
32.	1 November 2006	Lecture by Crown Prince Haakon of Norway on “Peace and Development: Why Should we Engage”
33.	2-4 November 2006	The Sixth China-India-Russia Academic Trilateral Conference <u>Keynote Address: China, India, Russia: Getting Out of Backwardness or, “Cunning Passages of History”</u> by Amiya Kumar Bagchi, Director, Institute of Economic Development, Kolkata [in association with the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS)]
34.	6 November 2006	Signing of MOU on Cooperation between The Indian Council Of World Affairs (ICWA) and the Consejo Mexicano De Asuntos Internacionales (COMEXI), Mexico
35.	7 November 2006	Ninth Dinesh Singh Memorial Lecture by K.P. Sharma Oli, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal on “Recent Developments in Nepal: Foreign Policy Implications” Chaired by: I.K. Gujral, Former Prime Minister of India [in collaboration with the Indian Council for South Asian Cooperation (ICSAC)]
36.	9 November 2006	Launch of Prof. Aftab Kamal Pasha’s book: India and Turkey – Past and Emerging Relations by M. Hamic Ansari, Chairman, National Commission for Minorities
37.	10 November 2006	Foreign Affairs Discussion on “Political Developments as Bangladesh prepares for Elections” Lead Speaker: Shri Mahendra Ved, Senior Journalist and Political Analyst
38.	17 November 2006	Lecture by H.E. Dr. Manouchehr Mottaki, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran on “Outlook for Convergence in Asia” [in association with the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran]
39.	22 November 2006	Keynote Address by H.E. Mr. Hu Jintao, President of the People’s Republic of China <i>Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Hon’ble Vice President of India and President, Indian Council of World Affairs Presided</i> Guests participated for Keynote Address included: 1. Hon’ble Shri I.K. Gujral, Former Prime Minister of India; 2. Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Hon’ble Minister for External Affairs; 3. Shri Sri Prakash Jaiswal, Hon’ble Minister of State for Home Affairs [in association with the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China]
40.	27 November 2006	Lecture by Ambassador Mark Hong Tat Soon, Former diplomat and Visiting Research Fellow, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore on “Quo Vadis, China?”
41.	30 November 2006	Address by His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn al Hussein on “Jordan and India: Prospects for Cooperation” [in association with the Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan]
42.	5-6 December 2006	Fifth India-Australia Security Roundtable Keynote Address: “Alliance Management in Contemporary Politics: Lessons from US-Australia Relations” by Dr. Rod Lyon, Strategy and International Programme Director, ASPI on 6 Dec. 2006

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S. No.	Date	Event
		[in association with Australia-India Council and Australian Strategic Policy Institute]
43.	7 December 2006	Keynote Address: "Rising Powers, India and China and their Impact on Prospects of Transatlantic relations" by Dr. Slawomir Debski, Director of Research and Analyses, Polish Institute of International Affairs and Signing of MoU
44.	8-10 December 2006	International Working Group Meeting of CSCAP on "Peace Keeping and Peace Building"
45.	13 December 2006	India-Spain Dialogue on "Parliamentary Democracy and its Contribution Towards Resolution of Global Conflicts"
46.	20 December 2006	Talk by His Excellency Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union on "Africa, India and China: From Yesterday to Tomorrow"
47.	21 December 2006	Launch of Dr. N.C. Asthana & Dr. Anjali Nirmal's book: The Ultimate Book of Weapons by Air Chief Marshal S.P. Tyagi, PVSM AVSM VM ADC, Chairman, Chief of Staff Committee and Chief of the Air Staff, Indian Air Force
48.	22 December 2006	Seminar "Towards Consensus in Indian Foreign Policy"
49.	17 January 2007	Release of Dr. K. Santhanam & Shri Ramakant Dwivedi's book: "INDIA TAJIKISTAN COOPERATION: Perspectives and Prospects" By Shri E. Ahamed, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs [in collaboration with ICAF]
50.	31 January 2007 at 6.00 p.m.	Lecture on "Kosovo: Challenges of International Law and Terrorism" by DR. SANDA RASCOVIC-IVIC, President of Coordination Centre of the Republic of Serbia for Kosovo and Metohija [in cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia].Forthcoming Events
		February, 2007
51.	2 February 2007	Lecture on "Russian Policy in Central Asia" by MR. DMITRI KOSYREV, Journalist & Political Commentator (in association with the Russian Information Agency
52.	7 February 2007 at 12.45 p.m.	Annual Lecture of the Association of Indian Diplomats by Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, President of India [in cooperation with the Association of Indian Diplomats]
53.	8-10 February 2007 at Goa	International Seminar on: "Reviving the Silk Route: New Initiatives and Engagements for the 21 st Century" (in association with International Centre, Goa)
54.	12 February 2007	Briefing by Indian experts for Bavarian delegation on 'Global Security from Indian Perspective'
55.	14 February 2007	Lecture on 'Middle East Peace Process: an Israeli Perspective' by Mr. Danny Rubinstein

Appendix XIX

Seminars Organized by RIS

- Talk on Japan's Foreign Policy in Retrospect, New Delhi, 24 May 2006.
- Screening of the film on NAM, 29 June 2006
- International Policy Dialogue on Economic Consideration of Biosafety and Biotechnology Regulations in India, New Delhi, 24-25 August 2006
- Seminar on International and Product Diversification, R&D and Innovative Capabilities in the World's largest Multinational Corporations, New Delhi, 12 January 2007

RIS Publications

Books and Reports

- World Trade and Development Report 2007: Building a Development Friendly World Trading System, Oxford University Press 2007
- Towards an Employment-Oriented Export Strategy: Some Explorations, Published by RIS 2006.
- Information Technology, Innovation System and Trade Regime: India and ASEAN by K.J. Joseph, London Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Environmental Requirements and Market Access: Reflections from South Asia, by Nagesh Kumar and Sachin Chaturvedi (eds). New Delhi: Academic foundation. 2007

Policy Briefs

- #22 Doha Round and Developing Countries: Will the Doha deal do more harm than good?
- #23 The Case for an Asian Currency Unit: Need for a Broad-based Approach
- #24 Towards Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between India and Central Asian Republics
- #25 Case for a Robust India-Taiwan Economic Partnership
- #26 India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Economic Cooperation: Towards a Comprehensive Economic Partnership

#27 Seizing New Opportunities for South-South Cooperation: Some Proposals for the 14th NAM Summit

#28 Regionalism with an 'Asian Face': An Agenda for the East Asia Summit

#29 Facilitating India's Overland Trade in the Eastern Neighbourhood

Discussion Papers

#107 Monetary and Financial Cooperation in Asia: Emerging Trends and Prospects by Ramkishan S. Rajan

#108 Towards Comprehensive Economic Co-operation between India and Central Asian Republics by Dr. Ramgopal Agarwala

#109 Trade Facilitation Priorities in India and Commitments at WTO: An Overview of Current Trends by Sachin Chaturvedi

#110 Reinventing UNCTAD: Some Proposals for the UNCTAD Mid-term Review by Muchkund Dubey

#111 Demographic Complementarities and Outsourcing: Implications and Challenges for India by Mukul G. Asher and Amarendu Nandy

#112 Regional Cooperation for Asian Energy Security by Vipul Tuli

#113 FDI and Spillover Effects in the Indian Pharmaceutical Industry by Annika Bergman

#114 India's Regional Trading Arrangements by Rajesh Mehta and S. Narayanan

#115 Trade Facilitation and Customs Valuations in India: Identifying the Gaps by Sachin Chaturvedi

#116 India's Rising Role in Asia by Mukul G. Asher

#117 Addressing Global Growth Asymmetries through Regional Trade Integration: Some Explorations by Ram Upendra Das and Ramaa Sambamurthy

Appendix XIX

Journals

1. South Asia Economic Journal (Vol. 7 No. 1) January-June 2006.
South Asia Economic Journal (Vol. 7 No. 2) July-December 2006.
2. Asian Biotechnology and Development Review, Vol. 8(2), March 2006.
Asian Biotechnology and Development Review, Vol. 8(3), July 2006.
Asian Biotechnology and Development Review, Vol. 9(1), November 2006.

3. New Asia Monitor, Vol. 3 No. 2, April 2006
New Asia Monitor, Vol. 3 No. 3, July 2006.
New Asia Monitor, Vol. 3 No. 4, October 2006.
New Asia Monitor, Vol 4, No.1, January 2007 (in press)

Newsletter

- RIS Diary, Vol. 4 No. 2, April 2006.
RIS Diary, Vol. 4 No. 3, July 2006.
RIS Diary, Vol. 4 No. 4, October 2006.
RIS Diary, Vol. 5 No.1, January 2007 (in press)

Abbreviations

ACAFD	Advanced Course on Asia for Foreign Diplomats	ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ACD	Asian Cooperation Dialogue	EU	European Union
AGPL	Actual Ground Position Line	FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum	FIEO	Federation of Indian Export Organisations
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations	FOC	Foreign Office Consultations
ASI	Archeological Survey of India	FSI	Foreign Service Institute
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical And Economic Cooperation.	FTA	Free Trade Agreement
BSF	Border Security Force	GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
CAN	Community of ANDEAN Nations	GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
CARICOM	Caribbean Community	GOI	Government of India
CBM	Confidence Building Measures	GSLV	Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle
CD	Conference on Disarmament	HAL	Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
CECA	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement	HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
CEL	Central Electronics Limited	HOM	Head of Mission
CEP	Cultural Exchange Programme	HOP	Head of Post
CFY	Current Financial Year	HTCG	High Technology Cooperation Group
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting	IBSA	India, Brazil and South Africa
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia	ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry	ICWA	Indian Council of World Affairs
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	IFS	Indian Foreign Service
CLMV	Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam	IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
COMESA	Community of Eastern and Southern Africa	ILO	International Labour Organisation
CPIF	Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs	IMO	International Maritime Organisation
CSCAP	Council for Security and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific	IRIGC	Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission
CUNPK	Center for UN Peacekeeping	ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention	ITPO	Indian Trade Promotion Organisation
DPC	District Passport Cell	JCE	Joint Committee of Experts
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	JEC	Joint Economic Commission
		JSG	Joint Study Group
		JTG	Joint Technical Group

Abbreviations

JWG	Joint Working Group	SADC	South African Development Community
LAC	Latin American Countries	SAFTA	South Asian Free Trade Area
LCDS	Least Developed Contracting States	SCAAP	Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Plan
LoC	Line of Credit	SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam	SCPD	Special Course for Palestinian Diplomats
MERC-OSUR	Market of Southern Cone Countries	SICA	System of Central American Integration
MNA	Myanmar News Agency	SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding	TCIL	Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd
NAM	Non Aligned Movement	TEAM-9	Techno-Economic Approach for Africa India Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	UGC	University Grants Commission
NDC	National Defence College	UMFCCI	Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry
NIDM	National Institute of Disaster Management	UNCO-	UN Committee on the
NRI	Non Resident Indian	PUOS	Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
NSCS	National Security Council Secretariat	UNDC	United Nations Disarmament Commission
NSSP	Next Steps in Strategic Partnership	UNGA	UN General Assembly
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugee
PCFD	Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats	UNMEE	UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
PIO	People of Indian Origin	UNSC	United Nations Security Council
PIS	Personnel Information System	UPA	United Progressive Alliance
PLA	People's Liberation Army	WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
PTA	Preferential Trade Agreement	WTO	World Trade Organisation
RITES	Rail India Technical Economic Services		
ROK	Republic of Korea		
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation		



Ministry of External Affairs
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