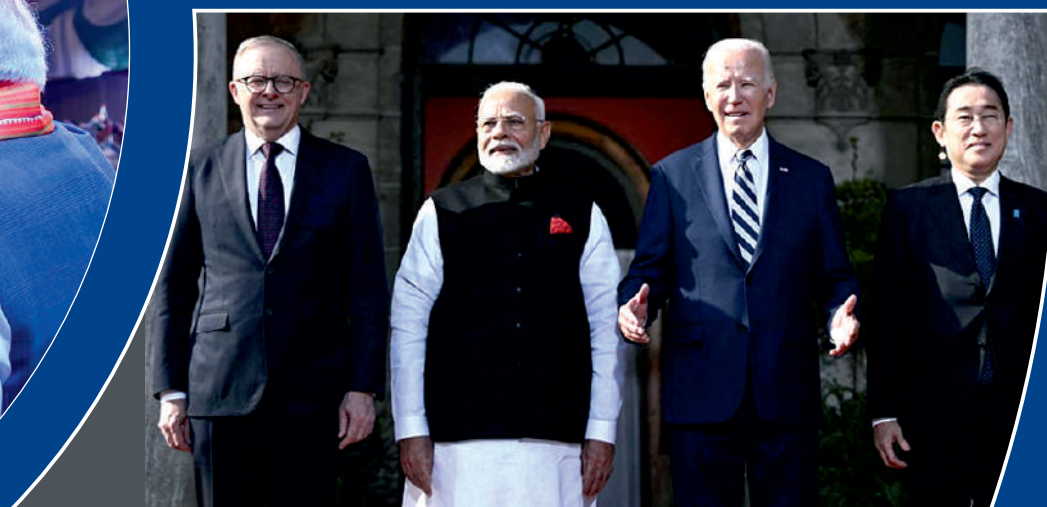




MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ANNUAL REPORT 2024





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ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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Introduction and Synopsis

India and the World in 2024

In the year 2024 India engaged actively with the world in advancing its national interests amid a rapidly evolving global landscape. Indian foreign policy demonstrated vibrancy and pragmatism, yielding significant achievements that also enhanced India's global stature and goodwill. Bilateral engagements with like-minded partners were complemented by India's proactive initiatives and leadership in plurilateral and multilateral platforms.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) played a pivotal role in steering India's foreign policy and global diplomacy towards pragmatic goals. India remained steadfast in expanding its strategic autonomy, championing meaningful reforms of multilateral institutions, addressing the priorities of the Global South, and safeguarding its security within the framework of the rules-based international order. These efforts underscored India's commitment to shaping a more equitable and inclusive global governance framework.

The year witnessed continuing economic fluctuations, climate change impacts, geopolitical tensions, and social disruptions with persistent challenges on global health and environmental fronts. India remained actively engaged on the global stage, addressing major global challenges through high-level discussions and collaborations. This included strengthening partnerships bilaterally and active

participation in notable regional and global groupings such as the UN, G20, G7, Quad, SCO, and BRICS.

By virtue of being the preceding G20 President, India continued to work with Brazil under the Troika grouping (India, Brazil, and South Africa). Building on the work done during India's G20 Presidency, Brazil identified three priorities for 2024, which broadly involved social inclusion, energy transition and the reform of multilateral governance institutions. Prime Minister participated in the 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro on 18-19 November. Prime Minister's interventions were widely appreciated across the spectrum of developed and developing countries for being human-centric, constructive and development-oriented. This was also the first G20 Summit in which the African Union participated as a permanent member, following its inclusion at the New Delhi G20 Summit in September 2023.

In August, India hosted the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit in virtual format under the overarching theme 'An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future'. Prime Minister inaugurated the Heads of State/Government session and in his address proposed a "Global Development Compact" to serve as a comprehensive framework to promote sustainable development in the Global South. The compact focuses on trade, capacity building, technology sharing, and financial support, and aims to empower the



Prime Minister with the then President of the United States of America Joseph Biden and President of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at the 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, November 2024

Global South and ensure that development is both balanced and sustainable. The Leaders' session was followed by ten Ministerial sessions: Health Ministers, Youth Ministers, Commerce/Trade Ministers, Information & Technology

Ministers, Finance Ministers, Energy Ministers, Education Ministers, Environment Ministers, and two sessions of Foreign Ministers chaired by the External Affairs Minister (EAM).



PM addressed the Leaders' Session of the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit, August 2024.

The Summit saw the participation of 173 dignitaries from 123 Global South countries, including 21 Heads of State/Government and 34 Foreign Ministers. This Summit was the first plurilateral Summit hosted by the Prime Minister after winning a historic third term and swearing-in of a new government. Having held within the first 100 days of the new Government, the Summit reflected India's sincerity and commitment in advancing the collective developmental journey of the Global South, and the priority accorded by the Prime Minister to engaging with the leaders and countries of the Global South.

Earlier in June, Prime Minister participated in the Outreach Session of the G7 Summit in Italy where he engaged with global leaders on key global challenges. At the summit, Prime Minister emphasised that technology must be guided by a human-centric approach, highlighting India's success in leveraging digital advancements for public service delivery. He underscored India's commitment to "AI for All" advocating for AI's role in fostering global progress and well-being. He also stressed the importance of prioritising the concerns of the Global South, particularly Africa, recalling India's role in securing the African Union's permanent membership in the G20. Prime minister also held discussions with Prime Minister of Italy Giorgia Meloni, on further strengthening the India-Italy Strategic Partnership.

Throughout the year, India collaborated actively with the global community to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and worked with partner countries towards capacity-building, best practices exchange, and information sharing in the counter-terrorism domain. During the year, India participated in various Counterterrorism Working Groups, in engaging with its partners on combating the menace of terrorism, including within the Quad grouping and with France, Kazakhstan, and Australia. The FATF (Financial Action Task Force) Mutual Evaluation of India

culminated with FATF Plenary at Singapore in June, wherein India's report was finalised and the FATF Plenary concluded that India had reached a high level of technical compliance with the FATF requirements. This indicated that India's anti-money laundering, counter terror financing and Counter Proliferation Financing (CPF) regime was achieving effective results.

India reinforced its credentials as a reliable 'first responder' in crises- both in its neighbourhood and beyond by undertaking three major Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations during the year. Operation Indravati was launched in March to evacuate Indian nationals from Haiti amidst civil unrest. In June, a special Humanitarian Airlift Operation was conducted in Kuwait to repatriate the mortal remains of 45 deceased Indian nationals. In September, Operation Sadbhav was launched for extending emergency humanitarian assistance in the wake of the floods caused by Typhoon Yagi in Myanmar. Apart from these operations, India provided HADR assistance to more than 20 countries during the year. In 2024, India also continued to provide its humanitarian assistance to conflict-zones in West Asia. India supplied anti-cancer medicines to Syria and coordinated with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to supply 30 tons of humanitarian aid and essential life-saving drugs for the people of Palestine. In July, India rescued nine crew, including eight Indians, in a joint search and rescue operation with the Omani authorities from MT Prestige Falcon, a Comoros-flagged vessel that capsized off the coast of Oman.

During the year, India also marked several significant diplomatic milestones, celebrating decades of ties with partner countries. These milestones reflected India's continued commitment to nurturing historic and evolving partnerships.



Prime Minister with other world leaders at the Outreach Session of the G7 Summit in Italy, June 2024



Prime Minister was conferred “the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle” by the President of Russia Vladimir Putin during the 22nd India–Russia Annual Summit in Moscow, July 2024

In 2024, several bilateral partnerships were enhanced to strategic as well as comprehensive strategic partnerships. India elevated ties with Singapore and Malaysia to the level of a ‘comprehensive strategic partnership’. Separately, diplomatic relations with Kuwait and Poland were upgraded to ‘strategic partnership’. These developments underscored India’s proactive approach to strengthening its strategic partnerships.

During the year, the Prime Minister received numerous civilian honours from nations across the globe, reflecting a recognition of his statesmanship and contributions to international relations. In March, during a State Visit to Bhutan, he received the “Order of the Druk Gyalpo”, the country’s highest civilian award, from King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. In July, during his official visit to Russia for the 22nd India–Russia Annual Summit, he was conferred the “Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle” by President Vladimir Putin. Recognising his leadership in strengthening bilateral ties and pandemic response efforts, the Prime Minister was honoured with the “Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados”; he was also decorated with the “Dominica Award of Honour”, the highest national award of Dominica by the President of the Commonwealth of Dominica Sylvanie Burton in Georgetown, Guyana. In November 2024, Nigeria conferred upon him the “Grand Commander of the Order of Niger”, while Guyana and Kuwait recognised him with their highest honours—the “Order of Excellence” and “The Order of Mubarak Al Kabeer”, respectively.

The International Solar Alliance (ISA) expanded its membership in 2024 with new signatories and ratifications. Malta (February), Paraguay (June), Lebanon (August), and Moldova (December) became signatories to the treaty, while Panama (March), New Zealand (August), and Armenia (November) ratified the treaty. These developments highlighted India’s initiatives in advancing global efforts to expand solar energy and tackle climate change.

Long-standing diplomatic relations were revitalised by several high-level bilateral visits. Hon’ble Rashtrapati ji paid State Visits to Algeria, Fiji, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, New Zealand, and Timor Leste. The visit to Algeria was the first-ever State Visit to that country and included holding the inaugural India-Algeria Economic Forum, signalling the beginning of a new chapter in bilateral relations. Hon’ble Rashtrapati ji also took groundbreaking visits to Fiji and Timor Leste, marking the first time an Indian Head of State had visited these nations.

During the visit to Timor Leste, President José Ramos-Horta conferred the country’s highest civilian award, the “Grand-Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste” upon Hon’ble Rashtrapati ji. Hon’ble Rashtrapati ji was bestowed the highest civilian award of Fiji, the Companion of the Order of Fiji at a ceremony in Suva in August. These visits provided impetus to the ongoing momentum in bilateral relations across regions.



Hon’ble Rashtrapati ji was conferred with Grand Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste, the highest civilian award of Timor-Leste, by President of Timor-Leste Jose Ramos-Horta in Dili, August 2024

Hon'ble Vice President visited Iran in May to participate in the official ceremony to pay condolences on the tragic demise of the then President of Iran, Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi and the then Foreign Minister of Iran Dr. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, in a helicopter crash.

Continuing India's high-level engagements with partner countries, Prime Minister visited Austria, Bhutan, Brazil, Brunei, Guyana, Italy, Kuwait, Laos, Nigeria, Poland, Qatar, Russia, Singapore, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and the United States of America to participate in various high-level bilateral, plurilateral, and multilateral engagements.

In July, the Prime Minister visited Austria, the first such visit by an Indian Prime Minister in four decades. August saw a historic visit to Ukraine, the first by an Indian Prime Minister since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1992. In November, the Prime Minister paid a State Visit to Nigeria, the first by an Indian Prime Minister in 17 years. Finally, in December, the Prime Minister paid a visit to Kuwait, marking his first visit to Kuwait and the first by an Indian Prime Minister in 43 years.

Prime Minister also participated in several virtual and in-person Summit-level meetings, including the Summit of the Future at the UN, the G20 summit, the Outreach session of the G7 Summit, Quad Leaders' Summit, the BRICS Summit, the SCO Summit, and the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit.

During the year, EAM visited Australia, Germany, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, and United States of America to participate in various diplomatic engagements.

In January, EAM visited Iran and met with the then Foreign Minister of Iran Dr. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian to discuss the development and operation of the Chabahar Port. He also travelled to Nepal, where he met with President Ram Chandra Paudel and the then Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and co-chaired the 7th India-Nepal Joint Commission meeting with the then Foreign Minister of Nepal Mr. N.P. Saud in Kathmandu. EAM visited Nigeria for the first time, co-chairing the 6th India-Nigeria Joint Commission Meeting with Foreign Minister Yusuf Tuggar. In the same month, he led the Indian delegation at the 19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in Kampala, Uganda. In March, EAM travelled to Japan, where he met with the then Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and co-chaired the 16th India-Japan Strategic Dialogue with the then Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa. He also visited Malaysia, meeting Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Bin Ibrahim and Foreign Minister Dato' Seri Utama Haji Mohamad Bin Haji Hasan to discuss various aspects of bilateral cooperation. Later that month, he visited the Philippines, meeting with President Ferdinand

R. Marcos Jr. and Foreign Minister Enrique A. Manalo to review engagements in political, economic, defence, and technology sectors. EAM also visited South Korea, where he co-chaired the 10th India-ROK Joint Commission Meeting with the then Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul. In Singapore, he met Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Deputy Prime Minister Lawrence Wong, apart from a bilateral meeting with his counterpart Vivian Balakrishnan to discuss strengthening bilateral cooperation in fintech, digitalisation, and green economy.

EAM visited Sri Lanka in June where he met the then President Ranil Wickremesinghe, the then Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena, and the then Foreign Minister M.U.M. Ali Sabry. To strengthen India's people-centric development cooperation, EAM and President Wickremesinghe jointly inaugurated 48 houses under the Model Village Housing Project in Colombo and Trincomalee districts, along with 106 houses under Phase III of the Indian Housing Project in Kandy, Matale, and Nuwara Eliya. Additionally, they virtually commissioned the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC), a key hub for search and rescue operations at sea, established with an Indian grant of USD 6 million. EAM also held discussions with officials from Sri Lanka's Ministries of Ports, Shipping and Aviation, Agriculture and Plantation Industries, and Power and Energy. Later that month, he visited the UAE and held talks with Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan to review the India-UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. In July, EAM led the Indian delegation to Astana for the 24th SCO Summit. During his visit to Mauritius, he called on the then Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth and explored ways to further enhance bilateral relations. In August, EAM visited Kuwait, where he met Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Prime Minister Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya to discuss strengthening our bilateral collaboration. He then travelled to the Maldives, where he met President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu and the then Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer, with whom EAM jointly inaugurated India's Line of Credit-assisted water and sewerage projects in 28 islands.

In September, EAM visited Germany and met the then Chancellor Olaf Scholz and the then Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock. He then travelled to Geneva, where he met Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis to discuss India's trade relations with European Free Trade Association (EFTA) nations and inaugurated India's new building of the Permanent Mission in Geneva. Later that month, he visited Washington D.C., meeting with the then Secretary of State Antony Blinken, the then Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, the then National Security Advisor (NSA) Jake Sullivan, and other senior US officials to discuss strengthening bilateral relations. In October, EAM visited Australia, meeting Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and



EAM co-chaired the inaugural session of the first-ever India-GCC Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue held in Riyadh, September 2024

other key political leaders. He also co-chaired the 15th Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue with Foreign Minister Penny Wong and inaugurated India's Consulate General in Brisbane. In November, he visited Italy to participate in the Outreach Session of the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting and in the 10th edition of the MED Mediterranean Dialogue in Rome. In Italy, EAM held bilateral discussion with his counterparts from Italy and other participating nations in the G7. In December, EAM travelled to Qatar and Bahrain. In Qatar, he attended the 22nd Doha Forum and met with Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. In Bahrain he co-chaired the 4th India-Bahrain High Joint Commission (HJC) meeting with Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani. In December, EAM and the Foreign Secretary visited the US, where they met with key senior officials, including the then NSA Sullivan, the then Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and Michael Waltz, President-elect Donald Trump's nominee for the post of NSA.

During the year, EAM also participated in several plurilateral and multilateral meetings including the 7th Indian Ocean Conference in Australia; 24th Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State in Kazakhstan; Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting in Japan; Foreign Ministers' Meetings under the

ASEAN framework, namely ASEAN-India, East Asia Summit, and ASEAN Regional Forum in Vientiane, Lao PDR; the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting and 79th UNGA High-Level Session in New York; India-GCC Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue in Saudi Arabia and the 23rd Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government in Pakistan.

In February, EAM addressed the 7th Indian Ocean Conference in Perth, emphasising regional cooperation. In July, EAM led India's delegation to the 24th SCO Summit in Astana, where leaders reviewed past activities and discussed multilateral cooperation. Later that month, he attended the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Tokyo, focusing on developments in the Indo-Pacific and Quad initiatives. In September, EAM participated in Brazil's 2nd G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New York, advocating for global governance reforms, including UN restructuring, financial architecture, and trade systems. He also delivered India's national statement at the 79th UN General Assembly and co-chaired the India-GCC Joint Ministerial Meeting in Riyadh, enhancing strategic dialogue with Gulf nations. In October, EAM delivered India's statement at the 23rd SCO Council of Heads of Government Meeting in Islamabad, stressing multifaceted cooperation, balanced growth, and regional stability.

During the year, EAM also received the Foreign Ministers of France, Greece, Bhutan, Ukraine, Maldives, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, UAE, Jamaica, Germany, and Thailand in New Delhi. EAM also hosted his BIMSTEC counterparts for the 2nd BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat in New Delhi in July and co-chaired the 3rd India-Japan 2+2 Ministerial meeting along with Raksha Mantri.

The Ministers of State (MoS) in the Ministry also engaged with various partner countries and advanced India's global outreach. MoS (Shri V. Muraleedharan) visited Uganda (January) and Brazil (February) to participate in the 3rd South Summit of the Group of 77 and G20 Foreign Ministers' meetings, respectively.

Following the assumption of office by the new government of India, MoS (Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh) visited Kuwait (June), Norway (August), Armenia (September), Malaysia (September), Qatar (October), Colombia (October-November), Zambia (November), and Azerbaijan (November).

MoS (Shri Prabitra Margherita) visited the Dominican Republic (August), Qatar (August); Guatemala (August), El Salvador (August), Panama (August), Trinidad & Tobago (August), Mexico, Grenada, Barbados, Antigua & Barbuda (September-October), and Indonesia (October).

These visits were aimed at enhancing bilateral cooperation across diverse areas, including political and economic collaboration, cultural exchange, cooperation in trade and health, and to connect with the Indian diaspora.

During the year India also hosted various high-level delegations, including the Heads of State/Government/Foreign Ministers and other high-level dignitaries. India welcomed diplomatic delegations from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Dominica, France, Germany, Greece, Jamaica, Kuwait, Maldives, Malaysia, Moldova, Spain, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

In 2024, India held Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) with 35 countries. FOC is an institutional mechanism for dialogue between Ministry of External Affairs with the Foreign Ministries of partner countries. During the year FOCs were held with Portugal (January); Japan (February); France (March); Cote d'Ivoire (March), Cabo Verde (March); Mauritania (March); Luxembourg (April); Belgium (April); Democratic Republic of Congo (April); Croatia (April); Netherlands (May); Sweden (May); Norway (May); Eritrea (May); UK (May); Benin (June); Togo (June); Germany (July); Kuwait (July); Zimbabwe (August); Zambia (August); Israel (August); Argentina (September); Uruguay (September); Indonesia (September); Moldova (October); Colombia (October); Guinea (October); Qatar (October); Montenegro (October); Cyprus (November); Bosnia and Herzegovina (November); Syria (November); Rwanda (December); and Liberia (December).

These engagements underscore India's continued diplomatic

efforts to advance its interests and to foster robust bilateral ties and cooperation with countries.

Under its Neighbourhood First policy, India strived to enhance connectivity and development partnerships with countries in its immediate neighbourhood. As a part of India's outreach to key partners in the neighbourhood, several leaders were invited for the swearing-in ceremony of the new Government in June. The then Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, Vice President of Seychelles Ahmed Afif, the then Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, President of Maldives Dr Mohamed Muizzu, the then President of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe, Prime Minister of Bhutan Dasho Tshering Tobgay, and the then Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' attended the ceremony.

India's approach to Afghanistan continues to be guided by its historical relations, friendship with its people and relevant UN resolutions. Since 2021, India has provided critical humanitarian aid including 50,000 MTs of wheat, 300 tons of medical supplies, 28 tonnes of relief aid and 40,000 litres of Malathion (pesticide). Collaborating with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), India distributed essential welfare items targeting vulnerable populations, particularly women. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) offered 2,000 online scholarships to Afghan students, with nearly 600 scholarships awarded to women. A technical team remains stationed in Kabul to facilitate the ongoing humanitarian assistance.

India and Bangladesh share bonds of history, language, culture, and a multitude of other commonalities. The relationship has evolved to include cooperation in diverse fields ranging from political and security cooperation, trade and economic ties, development partnership, cultural and people to people exchanges over the course of the last few years. Bangladesh is India's largest trade partner in South Asia and India has become the largest export destination of Bangladesh in Asia.

In June, the then Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina attended the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers in New Delhi. Following the developments in Bangladesh in July-August, India continued to engage with the Interim Government in Bangladesh led by Prof. Muhammad Yunus as the Chief Adviser. Prime Minister was the first world leader to congratulate Chief Adviser Yunus, whom he also invited to participate in the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August. EAM met Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain on the sidelines of the 79th United Nations General Assembly in New York in September. In December, Foreign Secretary visited Dhaka and called on the Chief Adviser of Bangladesh and the Foreign Affairs Adviser. India's support for a democratic, stable, peaceful, progressive, and inclusive Bangladesh was clearly articulated during these interactions.

Bangladesh is the largest development partner of India today. India has extended three Lines of Credits (LOCs) to Bangladesh in the last eight years amounting to around USD 8 billion for development of infrastructure in various sectors, including roads, railways, shipping and ports. In addition, High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) are an active pillar of India's development assistance in Bangladesh and include construction of student hostels, academic buildings, skill development and training institutes, cultural centres, orphanages, and restoration of common cultural heritage.

Several development projects were completed during the year. After the successful completion of Khulna-Mongla Port rail line in 2023, the Akhaura-Agartala cross border rail link project was completed in November 2024. This marked an important milestone as it connected the North-East of India with Bangladesh by rail thereby enhancing rail-connectivity in the region.

India and Bhutan enjoy exemplary bilateral relations, characterised by mutual trust, understanding and goodwill at all levels and people to people ties. Bilateral relations witnessed steady progress across all sectors with many high-

level exchanges in 2024, including the State Visit of Prime Minister to Bhutan, the official visit of His Majesty the King of Bhutan to India, official visits of Prime Minister of Bhutan to India and other Ministerial-level visits. Development cooperation with Bhutan expanded further with India doubling its assistance to Bhutan for its 13th Five Year Plan (2024-2029). The hydropower projects under construction in Bhutan with India's assistance witnessed progress, with the Punatsangchhu II hydropower project nearing completion. Trade and economic cooperation continued to expand, as several key decisions were taken during the Commerce Secretary level talks held in September. The opening of the immigration check post at Darranga in Assam and progress on establishing rail links provided positive momentum to cross border connectivity initiatives.

Among the major development projects funded by the Government of India, the Gyalsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck Mother and Child Hospital was completed in March. The hospital has a capacity of 150 beds and houses state-of-the-art facilities for paediatrics, gynaecology and obstetrics, anaesthesiology, an operation theatre, a facility for neonatal intensive care and a paediatric intensive care unit.



Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay inaugurated the Gyalsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck Mother and Child Hospital, a state-of-the-art hospital, built with the assistance of the Government of India in Thimphu, March 2024.

Maldives is a maritime neighbour with which India shares ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and commercial links steeped in antiquity. Both nations are key players in maintaining safety and security of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and Maldives occupies a special place in India's Neighbourhood First policy and the Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) doctrine.

Bilateral cooperation with Maldives has naturally focused on maritime security, connectivity, people to people exchanges, and development of community building infrastructure projects. In August, EAM visited Maldives where he met with the President, the then Foreign Minister and other senior officials. During this visit, EAM inaugurated the Addu Reclamation and Shore Protection Project and the Addu Detour Link Bridge Project, both part of India's assistance to the Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP). Additionally, EAM and the Maldivian Foreign Minister jointly inaugurated a water and sewerage network project, supported by India's Line of Credit (LOC), across 28 islands along with six HICDPs. MoUs were exchanged to enhance capacity building for 1,000 Maldivian civil servants through training in India, and the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) system was introduced in the Maldives.

In October, the President of the Maldives paid a State Visit to India and met with Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji and the Prime Minister. During this visit, Prime Minister and President Muizzu adopted the India-Maldives Vision for a 'Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership', a first for the relationship. Several MoUs and agreements were signed, covering various areas of mutual interest. Key highlights of the visit included the inauguration of a new runway at Hanimaadhoo International Airport, enhancing Maldivian aviation capacity. Additionally, 700 social housing units were officially handed over, constructed under EXIM Bank of India's Buyers' Credit facility, addressing housing needs in the Maldives. In addition, the RuPay card was also introduced in the Maldives during this visit.

Myanmar is an important neighbouring country that shares a long land border and maritime boundary with India. Being at the convergence of India's Neighbourhood First and Act East policies, Myanmar remains critical to India's connection with South-East Asian countries including ASEAN nations. India and Myanmar share strong civilisational, historical and people-to-people ties. Buddhism is an important cultural link and forms a part of India's shared heritage with Myanmar.

Since February 2021, the political and security situation in Myanmar has deteriorated. The current security and humanitarian situation in Myanmar remains a cause of concern as it has direct implications for India. India has called for complete cessation of violence, resolution of issues through dialogue, release of political detainees and Myanmar's return to the path of democratic transition at the earliest.

India and Nepal continue to build on their unique, multifaceted and strong ties that are underpinned by shared historic, cultural, geographic and civilisational linkages. The open border between India and Nepal and the free

movement of citizens reflects these robust and deep ties. In keeping with the Neighbourhood First approach, there has been a rapid expansion and strengthening of various connectivity initiatives spanning energy, trade, railways, digital infrastructure and culture.

The then Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' attended the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister in New Delhi in June. In July, the Prime Minister sent congratulatory message to the newly appointed Prime Minister of Nepal K.P. Sharma Oli. Subsequently, Prime Minister Oli participated virtually in the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit hosted by India in August. The two leaders also met on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly in New York in September.



Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Nepal K.P. Sharma Oli on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly held in New York, September 2024.

EAM visited Nepal in January and held meetings with the then Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal Narayan Prakash Saud and reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation. Later in August, the new Foreign Affairs Minister of Nepal Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba made an official visit to India during which she called on the Prime Minister.

India and Sri Lanka have a legacy of intellectual, cultural, religious and linguistic interaction and the relationship between two countries is more than 2500 years old. Sri Lanka is a crucial partner both from the perspective of Neighbourhood First policy as well as the SAGAR doctrine.

During the year, bilateral engagements continued through various leadership-level engagements and initiatives focused on deepening economic, developmental, cultural and people-to-people ties.

In February, Prime Minister along with the then President of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe jointly inaugurated UPI in Sri Lanka. Subsequently, President Wickremesinghe visited India on 9-10 June to attend the swearing in ceremony of Prime Minister and later participated in the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit in August.

EAM visited Sri Lanka in June and held detailed discussions with his then counterpart, Foreign Minister M.U.M. Ali Sabry. The inauguration of the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC), a nerve centre for Search and Rescue operations established with an Indian grant of USD 6 million, was also completed during EAM's visit to Colombo on 20 June.

Following the election of the new government and political leadership in Sri Lanka, EAM travelled to Sri Lanka in October, becoming the first foreign dignitary to meet the newly inaugurated President Anura Kumara Disanayaka. During the visit, EAM also held discussions with Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath. On 15-17 December, President Anura Kumara Disanayaka visited India on a State Visit. This was his maiden foreign visit since assuming the Presidency. A Joint Statement titled "Fostering Partnership for a Shared Future" was adopted by President Disanayake and the Prime Minister.



President of Sri Lanka Anura Kumara Disanayake met the Prime Minister during his first State Visit to India and both leaders adopted a Joint Statement titled "Fostering Partnership for a Shared Future" in New Delhi, December 2024.

While desiring normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan, India maintains that issues between the two countries should be resolved bilaterally and peacefully in an atmosphere free of terror, hostility and violence. The onus is on Pakistan to create such a conducive environment. It has been made clear that India will not compromise on issues relating to national security and will take firm and decisive steps to deal with all attempts to undermine India's security and territorial integrity.

India continues to pursue issues like the exchange of prisoners and fishermen, and the organisation of pilgrimages with Pakistan. India and Pakistan exchanged in January the list of nuclear installations and facilities covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities between India and Pakistan. EAM visited Pakistan to participate in the 23rd SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting in October.

With a view to enhancing regional connectivity and collaboration, India also contributed to various initiatives within the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). EAM hosted his BIMSTEC counterparts for the 2nd BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat in New Delhi in July. Subsequently in August, India hosted the 1st BIMSTEC Business Summit in New Delhi, drawing over 300 stakeholders from the Bay of Bengal region.

Prime Minister inaugurated the new campus of the Nalanda University near Rajgir, Bihar in June. This was the first milestone project inaugurated within 100 days of Prime Minister's third term in office. The University aims to revive the ancient glory of Nalanda as an international institution for pursuit of intellectual, philosophical, historical, and spiritual studies. Along with India, there are 17 Participating Countries in this endeavour including Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Mauritius, Myanmar, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. Ambassadors of these countries also travelled to Nalanda to participate in the University campus inaugural ceremony.

Throughout the year, India strengthened its ties with the Indian Ocean Region nations, including Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Seychelles, through high-level diplomatic, economic, and cultural engagements. India reinforced its SAGAR Vision by hosting leaders from the region including the President of Comoros, Azali Assoumani, and the Vice President of Seychelles, Ahmed Afif. These meetings focused on enhancing bilateral relations and advancing regional cooperation.

Prime Minister and the then Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth virtually inaugurated a new airstrip and jetty at Agalega Island along with six community development projects implemented with financial assistance from Government of India. Prime Minister met President of Madagascar Andry Rajoelina during the World Governments Summit. Defence cooperation saw joint exercise like 'Milan 2024' and Maritime Heads for Active Security and Growth for all in the Region (MAHASAGAR) meetings.

The third edition of the high-level virtual interaction MAHASAGAR was conducted by the Indian Navy in November, during which the Chief of the Naval Staff interacted with Heads of Navies/ Maritime Agencies and senior leadership from Indian Ocean Region littorals, viz., Bangladesh, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. The interaction's theme was 'Training Cooperation to Mitigate Common Maritime Security Challenges in IOR', which highlights the present and necessary imperatives for cooperation in capacity building towards mitigation of common maritime challenges in the Indian Ocean Region.

The 12th edition of the multi-nation Exercise MILAN was launched in February. This edition was the largest and saw the participation of Indian ships and 16 foreign warships and delegations from other partner countries. The exercise brought together like-minded nations to train and operate jointly towards establishing the regional synergy needed to achieve the shared objective of maritime security, peace and prosperity.

India's engagement with Southeast Asian countries and countries in the Indo-Pacific under the overall framework of the Act East Policy, continued to expand and deepen on various levels this year. Prime Minister of Malaysia Anwar Ibrahim paid a State Visit to India in August and held discussions with the Prime Minister. During the visit, the India-Malaysia bilateral relationship was elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership from the Enhanced Strategic Partnership established in 2015.

Prime Minister undertook a landmark visit to Brunei on 03-04 September, which was the first-ever bilateral official visit by



Prime Minister met with Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Anwar bin Ibrahim in New Delhi, August 2024

an Indian Prime Minister, coinciding with the 40th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties. Prime Minister visited Vientiane, Laos for the 21st ASEAN-India Summit and 19th East Asia Summit on 10-11 October. During the visit, Prime Minister also held a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of Lao PDR Sonexay Siphandone.



Prime Minister with ASEAN Leaders at the 21st ASEAN-India Summit in Vientiane, October 2024

Prime Minister visited Singapore on 04-05 September. This was the 5th visit of the Prime Minister to Singapore. India-Singapore relations were elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during the visit and four MoUs on cooperation in the areas of semiconductor ecosystem, digital technologies, healthcare and skill development were exchanged.

EAM participated in the ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Post Ministerial Conference in Vientiane in July. During the year, EAM met and held discussions with his counterparts from Brunei (July), Cambodia (July), Indonesia (October and November), Malaysia (March, July, and October), Philippines (March), Singapore (August) and Thailand (November). Raksha Mantri visited Vientiane on 20-22 November for the 11th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM Plus) to drive bilateral cooperation and exchange views on regional developments.



Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji was warmly received by Governor General Dame Cindy Kiro at Government House with a traditional Maori "Pōwhiri" ceremony.

India-Australia bilateral relations witnessed high level interactions and deepening cooperation across various domains. The 2nd India-Australia Annual Summit was held in November in Rio de Janeiro on the sidelines of the G20 Summit. At the bilateral summit, Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Australia Anthony Albanese welcomed

the launch of the India-Australia Renewable Energy Partnership. Under the 15th India-Australia Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue held in November in Canberra, EAM and Foreign Minister Penny Wong reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral cooperation. EAM also participated in the Indian Ocean Conference in Perth in February. The new Consulate General of India in Brisbane was inaugurated by the EAM with Jeannette Young, Governor of Queensland, during his visit in November. Defence collaboration saw robust advances with the fourth 2+2 Foreign and Defence Secretaries' Consultations in October.

India's bilateral relationship with New Zealand witnessed high-level exchanges. Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji undertook a State Visit to New Zealand in August. During her visit, a bilateral Customs Cooperation Arrangement was signed, and New Zealand joined the ISA after ratification by its parliament in July. In October, Prime Minister met the Prime Minister of New Zealand Christopher Luxon on the sidelines of the ASEAN-India Summit in Vientiane. Later in November, EAM held a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of New Zealand Winston Peters in Canberra on the sidelines of the 'Raisina Down Under'.

India has established strong and multifaceted partnerships with Pacific Island Countries (PICs) under its Act East Policy, focusing on development cooperation, climate action, health initiatives, and cultural ties. Through South-South Cooperation, India provides annual grant-in-aid to all 14 PICs, including Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Palau, Vanuatu, and Republic of the Marshall Islands, supporting diverse development projects such as solar electrification, water storage, disaster relief, and healthcare systems. Fiji joined the Global Biofuels Alliance as its 28th member in November. Deputy Prime Minister of Fiji Manoa Kamikamica took part in the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) General Assembly and Global Conference in November which was inaugurated by Prime Minister in Delhi. ICA Global Cooperative Conference and ICA General Assembly were organised in India for the first time in the 130-year long history of the ICA, which is the premier body for the global cooperative movement.

Separately, MoS (PM) undertook a visit to the Kingdom of Tonga in August to attend the 53rd Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders' Meeting and announced India's assistance for a Quick Impact Project (QIP) worth USD 50,000 in each of the 14 PICs, based on their respective needs. This was the first ever participation at ministerial level from India at a PIF meeting. India also provided significant humanitarian assistance, including USD 1 million to Papua New Guinea for landslide relief work and USD 500,000 to Vanuatu after an earthquake. With climate action as a priority, solarisation projects and broader initiatives under the ISA have been implemented in the Solomon Islands and Tonga. Health cooperation with PIF member countries includes



Prime Minister participated in the 6th Quad Leaders' Summit hosted by the then US President Biden with the then Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida and Prime Minister of Australia Anthony Albanese, Wilmington, September 2024.

the supply of medicines and equipment, the recognition of Indian Pharmacopoeia by Solomon Islands and Nauru, and the establishment of the first Jan Aushadi Centre in Nauru during the year.

India's approach to the Indo-Pacific region centres on advocating for a region that is free, open, inclusive, and governed by international law. The year marked a decade of India's Act East Policy and its approach for the Indo-Pacific region under the SAGAR doctrine. Prime Minister participated in the Quad Leaders' Summit in Wilmington, USA on 21 September 2024, along with his counterparts from Australia, Japan and the USA. The Quad Leaders highlighted the group's role as a global force for good, focusing on health, security, technology, climate and infrastructure. Key outcomes included the Quad Cancer Moonshot initiative to tackle cervical cancer and improved pandemic preparedness. Maritime security efforts under the Quad umbrella advanced through the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness and a new training initiative. Infrastructure projects such as the Quad Ports of the Future Partnership and undersea cable upgrades emphasised connectivity and resilience. In the domain of technology, the Quad leaders announced the launch of initiatives in AI, biotechnology, and semiconductors.

India and the United States of America (US) enjoy a Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership covering almost all areas of human endeavour driven by shared

democratic values, convergence of interests on a range of issues, and vibrant people-to-people contacts. Regular dialogue between the leaders is an important element of the expanding bilateral ties. India and the US continued to maintain robust cooperation through the 2+2 Ministerial bilateral dialogue, as well as under plurilateral frameworks including the G20, I2U2 and Quad, among others. The outcomes of these exchanges have been instrumental in strengthening multifaceted bilateral ties between the two countries.

During a bilateral meeting with the US President on the sidelines of the Quad Leaders' Summit in Wilmington in September, India and the US adopted four key documents. These included a Joint Fact Sheet on their partnership, a Roadmap for the US-India Initiative to Build Safe and Secure Global Clean Energy Supply Chains, and the deposit of Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) instruments of ratification for Pillars III and IV.

The then US National Security Adviser (NSA) Jake Sullivan called on the Prime Minister in June in New Delhi to discuss bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest. During the visit, EAM also held talks with NSA Sullivan. NSA Sullivan was accompanied by a delegation of senior US officials including the then US Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell, Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF), senior representatives from the US National Security Council, Department of Energy, National Aeronautics

and Space Administration (NASA), NSF, and US Agency for International Development (USAID). The two NSAs chaired the First India-US Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) annual review meeting. Both sides discussed the way forward for mutual collaboration and to address outstanding issues. A Strategic Framework for Human Spaceflight Cooperation to deepen interoperability in space was also concluded. A joint factsheet was issued after this meeting. India and the US also held a bilateral 2+2 Inter-session meeting in September.

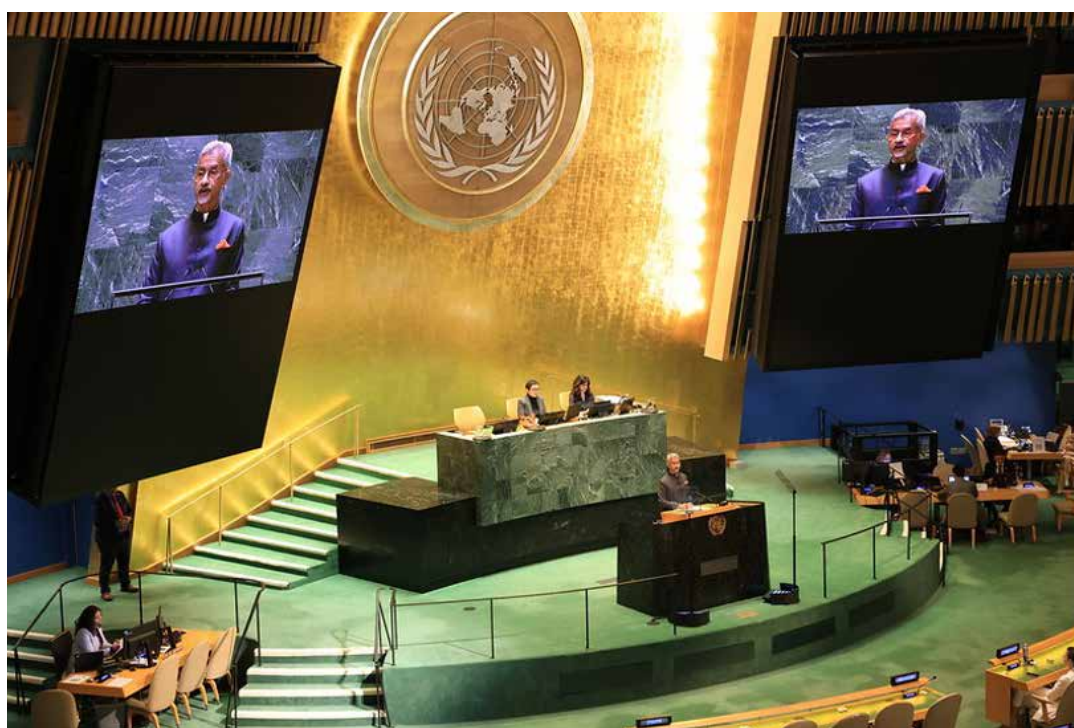
Separately, a bipartisan US Congressional delegation led by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Rep. Michael McCaul visited India in June and called on the Prime Minister. The delegation also had separate meetings with Foreign Secretary and the Deputy National Security Adviser. The delegation visited Dharamsala and met the 14th Dalai Lama.

India also participated in several key multilateral and plurilateral engagements. At the UNGA's 79th Session, EAM presented India's stance on contemporary global issues and participated in multiple foreign ministerial meetings, including the G4, G20, IBSA, BRICS, BIMSTEC, India-Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and India-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). EAM endorsed a Global Governance Reform "Call to Action" and signed the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement. Additionally, EAM joined discussions on drug threats, development paradigms, and India's role globally, including at foreign policy outreach seminars organised by

think tanks such as the Asia Society and Observer Research Foundation (ORF).

Defence cooperation between India and the US also grew stronger through the year. Prime Minister and the then US President Joseph R. Biden hailed the teaming agreement on the C-130J Super Hercules aircraft between Lockheed Martin and Tata Advanced Systems Limited during Prime Minister's visit to Wilmington in September. The leaders also welcomed enhanced collaboration between the Ministry of Defence's Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and US (Department of Defence) DoD's Defence Innovation Unit (DIU), facilitated through a MoU signed at the Silicon Valley Summit in September.

In January, the Indian Navy participated in the 4th edition of the Anti-Submarine Warfare training – "Exercise Sea Dragon 24" organised by the US Navy in Guam. During the year, India and the US engaged in several key bilateral defence exercises which included: the India-US Bilateral Tri-Service HADR Amphibious Exercise and Exercise Tiger Triumph 24 (Visakhapatnam, March), which brought together the Indian Navy, Army, and Air Force alongside the US Navy, Marine Corps, and Army. Separately, in April, senior military officials from both nations convened for the 7th edition of the India-US Army Executive Steering Group (ESG) meeting at the US Army Pacific Headquarters in Hawaii. Their discussions centered on emerging threats, conflict resolution strategies, and tackling modern defence challenges.



EAM delivered India's Statement at the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, in New York, September 2024

India-Canada relations are based on traditionally strong people-to-people ties and robust economic linkages. Prime Minister briefly met the then Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Apulia, Italy on 14 June. The prerequisites of our bilateral relations include mutual understanding, respect for each other's concerns, and unwavering respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of each other. In this regard, India has repeatedly urged the Canadian Government to take prompt and effective actions against all anti-India elements operating from its soil.

India-Russia relations continued to progress during the year. Prime Minister visited Moscow in July for the 22nd Annual Summit and Kazan in October to attend the 16th BRICS Summit. Bilateral trade with Russia touched an all-time high of USD 65.7 billion in 2023-24, making Russia the 4th largest trading partner of India. The 25th Session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade-Economic-Scientific-Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC) was held in New Delhi in November and was co-chaired by EAM and the First Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Denis Manturov. Separately, in December, Raksha Mantri visited Russia to co-chair the 21st Session of the India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission on Military & Military-Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-M&MTC). EAM and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov held several bilateral meetings during the year including

on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Astana in July, at the Foreign Ministers' Meeting under the ASEAN framework in Vientiane in July, at the Gulf Cooperation Council meeting in Riyadh in September and in New York on the margins of the 79th UNGA Session in September. Separately, NSA visited St. Petersburg in September for the BRICS NSAs' meeting. During the visit, NSA called on President Putin and had a bilateral meeting with his Russian counterpart Sergei Shoigu.

India's relations with European countries and the European Union (EU) witnessed a renewed momentum with several high-level engagements. India and the EU celebrated 20 years of their Strategic Partnership in 2024. The year witnessed high-level interactions and further deepening of co-operation in the areas of trade and investment, emerging technologies, innovation, green transition, security, as well as migration and mobility.

The then President of the European Council Charles Michel had a meeting with the Prime Minister on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in Vientiane in October. President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen met the Prime Minister on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro in November.

President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron paid a State Visit to India as the Chief Guest for the 75th Republic



Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Prime Minister and President of France Emmanuel Macron
at the 75th Republic Day Celebrations in New Delhi, January 2024

Day of India. During their delegation level talks, both sides decided to celebrate 2026 as the 'India-France Year of Innovation'. The two sides also signed several MoUs/Agreements in key areas including defence, space, civil aviation, S&T, health, public administration, and urban development.

Prime Minister visited Italy in June to participate in the G7 Summit as an outreach partner at the invitation of Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. On the sidelines of the G7 Summit, Prime Minister held separate meetings with the Prime Minister of Italy, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, President of France, and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

Prime Minister visited Austria in July, which was the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister in 41 years, coinciding with the celebration of the 75th year of the establishment of diplomatic relations. A Joint Statement on Enhanced India-Austria Partnership was issued during the visit. Prime Minister also called on President Alexander Van der Bellen and held bilateral talks with Chancellor Karl Nehammer.

At the invitation of Prime Minister of Poland Donald Tusk, Prime Minister paid a visit to Poland in August, which also coincided with the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. During the visit, Prime Minister held discussions with Prime Minister Donald Tusk and called on President Andrzej Duda. The

most significant outcome of the visit was the announcement of the elevation of India-Poland bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership.

The President of Spain Pedro Sánchez visited India in October. During the visit, Prime Minister and President Sanchez jointly inaugurated the Final Assembly Line Plant of C295 Aircraft in Vadodara that has been built by Tata Advanced Systems in collaboration with Airbus Spain.

On the sidelines of the 79th United Nations General Assembly in New York in September, EAM called on the Prime Minister of Belgium and held separate meetings with his counterparts from Belgium, France, Netherlands, the UK and Spain.

In a significant development, India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), comprising Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein signed a Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) in March. The agreement was signed by Commerce and Industry Minister (CIM) with Swiss Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iceland Bjarni Benediktsson, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Liechtenstein Dominique Hasler, and Minister of Trade and Industry of Norway Jan Christian Vestre. TEPA includes a commitment of USD 100 billion in investment and the creation of 1 million direct jobs in India over the next 15 years by 2039.



Prime Minister paid homage at the Kolhapur Memorial in Warsaw, August 2024.



EAM hosted the Foreign Ministers of Nordic-Baltic Eight (NB8) on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, February 2024.

In September, EAM visited Germany and called on Chancellor Olaf Scholz. He separately met with Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, Defence Minister Boris Pistorius, Foreign and Security Policy Advisor to the Chancellor Jens Ploetner, as well as Members of Parliament (Bundestag) and held a wide range of discussions on the full spectrum of bilateral relations. In the same month, EAM visited Switzerland and held a bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis and explored enhancing trade and investment through the India-EFTA Free Trade Agreement.

In November, EAM visited Italy to attend the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting. On the sidelines, EAM separately met the Foreign Minister of Italy as well as his counterparts from France and the UK.

Foreign Ministers from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Sweden participated in the 9th edition of the Raisina Dialogue in February in New Delhi. EAM hosted the Foreign Ministers of Nordic-Baltic Eight (NB8) for a meeting on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue. The meeting focused on advancing clean and green technologies, strengthening digital and cyber collaboration, and enhancing high-quality skills development and resilient global supply chains.

The year marked the 10th anniversary of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. India and Japan deepened their ties during the year through high-level visits, collaborative initiatives in various fields, including

technology, infrastructure and trade, as well as cooperation at the United Nations, G20, and the Quad. During the year, Prime Minister met the then Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida twice: at the G7 Summit in Italy (June) and again at the Quad Summit in Wilmington (September). Through these exchanges, the leaders reviewed the multi-faceted relationship and exchanged views to deepen cooperation further. In October, Prime Minister met the newly appointed Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba on the sidelines of the India-ASEAN Summit in Laos, with both leaders reaffirming commitments to deepen cooperation in trade, investment, defence, semiconductors and cultural exchanges.

In August, Japan's Foreign and Defence Ministers visited India for the third 2+2 Ministerial Meeting, co-chaired by Raksha Mantri and EAM. EAM also met Japan's Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya in November in Italy on the sidelines of the G7 Foreign Ministers' outreach session.

India and China have held 18 meetings of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) and 21 rounds of meetings at the Senior Military Commanders level since June 2020. In October, following negotiations and discussions at both diplomatic and military levels, an agreement was arrived at on patrolling arrangements in certain areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), leading to disengagement and a resolution of the issues that had arisen in these areas in 2020. Subsequently, Prime Minister met President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Summit in October in Kazan, Russia. This was their first

bilateral meeting at the delegation level in nearly five years. During the year, EAM met Foreign Minister Wang Yi on three occasions- in Astana in July during the SCO Council of Heads of State Meeting, in Vientiane in July during the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and in Rio de Janeiro in November on the sidelines of the G20 Summit. The Special Representatives of the two countries also met in Beijing in December.



Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister of Japan Shigeru Ishiba on the sidelines of the India-ASEAN Summit in Laos, October 2024.

The Special Strategic Partnership between India and the Republic of Korea (RoK) continued to deepen owing to several high-level exchanges and bilateral dialogue mechanisms. Prime Minister and the then President of RoK Yoon Suk Yeol met on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in October in Vientiane and the G-20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro in November. Separately, EAM visited Seoul in March and co-chaired the 10th India-RoK Joint Commission Meeting with Foreign Minister Cho Tae-Yul. The two Ministers also met on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum in July and again in New York in September on the margins of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly and at the G7 Summit in Italy in December.

Relations between India and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) remained on an even keel. India

has been consistently supportive of efforts to bring about peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula through dialogue and diplomacy.

India and Mongolia share civilisational, historical, cultural, and spiritual ties. Mongolia, being a landlocked country bordering China and Russia, considers India as an important 'third' and 'spiritual neighbour'. Development partnership remains an area of particular importance in the relationship.



Prime Minister met President of China Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, October 2024

India's relations with the Gulf countries continued to strengthen and deepen during the year with exchange of high-level visits, increase in trade and investment and broadening of relations in diverse areas, including energy, security, defence, nuclear, culture, education, technology, health and food security. The Gulf countries continued to be among the top trading partners of India. With bilateral trade exceeding USD 162 billion, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) emerged as India's leading regional trade partner in 2023-24. Investment flows into India also continued to be robust and India's energy imports from the region also remain substantial. The President of the UAE Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan visited India in January as the Chief Guest at the Vibrant Gujarat Summit in Ahmedabad. MoUs on investment cooperation in innovative healthcare projects, renewable energy and development of food parks were signed during the visit.



(Left-Right) Prime Minister addressed the Indian community at 'Ahlan Modi' in the UAE (February) and 'Hala Modi' in Kuwait (December).

Prime Minister paid a bilateral visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in February 2024 and held discussions with President of the UAE Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. Important MoUs/Agreements were signed during the visit, including a Bilateral Investment Treaty, Intergovernmental Framework Agreement (IGFA) on the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC), MoUs on Digital Infrastructure Projects, and National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC), among others. Prime Minister inaugurated the BAPS Mandir, the first Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi in February.

In November, EAM inaugurated the Symbiosis International University's Dubai campus. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of UAE Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan visited India for the fourth Strategic Dialogue and the 15th Joint Commission meeting in December.

EAM visited Riyadh in September to attend the first ever India-GCC Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue. This was the first meeting between India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states at the Foreign Ministers level. In June, EAM visited Doha to hold a bilateral meeting with Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdul Rahman bin Jassim Al Thani, who also serves as the Foreign Minister. In December, EAM took part in the 22nd edition of the Doha Forum and addressed a panel on 'Conflict Resolution in a New Era'.

EAM visited Kuwait in August and met with Crown Prince

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al Sabah, Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Al Abdullah Al Sabah and Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al Yayha. The Foreign Minister of Kuwait also visited India in December and held bilateral talks with EAM and called on the Prime Minister.

In 2024 India significantly strengthened its bilateral ties with West Asia and North African nations through a range of diplomatic, defence and humanitarian initiatives. Key highlights include the historic visit of Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji to Algeria, marking the first-ever visit by an Indian Head of State, and the inauguration of the India-Algeria Economic Forum. Defence cooperation was further strengthened with Algeria through high-level visits and a Military Cooperation Agreement. India also deepened its ties with Egypt, Israel and Morocco, with engagements ranging from defence cooperation to economic exchanges and strategic dialogues. India reopened its embassy in Tripoli in July.

India's humanitarian support extended to Palestine including significant contributions of medical aid. India fulfilled its annual contribution of USD 5 million for the year 2024-25 to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Over the years, India has contributed a total of USD 40 million to UNRWA's core programs, including education, healthcare, and relief services. In addition, medical and educational outreach continued in Sudan, Syria and South Sudan. Diplomatic visits and cooperation were enhanced throughout the year with Libya, Tunisia, and Djibouti, with India playing an active role in regional humanitarian efforts.

Additionally, India's engagement with Jordan and Somalia saw collaboration in the field of defence and business. The year also saw continued educational and cultural exchanges, reinforcing India's commitment to fostering deeper ties across the region.

Bilateral cooperation between India and Iran maintained its positive momentum during the year. In October, Prime Minister met the newly elected President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia. The two leaders reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and discussed regional developments, including the situation in West Asia. In January, EAM visited Iran and called on the then President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi. During the visit, he also met the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, Minister for Roads and Urban Development Mehrdad Bazrpash, and Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Akbar Ahmadian. In the same month, EAM met the then First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber on the sidelines of the NAM Summit in Kampala. In October, EAM met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran Abbas Araghchi on the sidelines of the BRICS Outreach Session in Kazan. Cooperation in connectivity projects was further strengthened during the year. The long-term main contract for equipping and operating the Shahid Beheshti Terminal of Chabahar Port was signed on 13 May between India Ports Global Limited and the Port and Maritime Organisation of Iran.

The 16th BRICS Summit under Russia's chairship was held in Kazan, Russia in October. The Summit was themed "Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security." In June, Russia hosted a BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Nizhny Novgorod, which featured a ministerial session on 'BRICS Dialogue with Developing Countries.' The meeting saw participation from Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan. Earlier in September, EAM represented the country at the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA in New York. During the Summit in October, Prime Minister led the Indian delegation, while EAM participated in the BRICS Plus/Outreach Session. The Summit concluded with the adoption of the 16th BRICS Kazan Declaration and the finalisation of the 'Modalities of the BRICS Partner Country Category' along with the 'List of Potential BRICS Partner Countries'.

India's priorities in SCO are shaped by the Prime Minister's vision of a 'SECURE' SCO, with SECURE standing for Security, Economic Development, Connectivity, Unity, Respect for Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity, and Environmental Protection. India remained actively engaged with various mechanisms/initiatives within the SCO framework, and reiterated mutual respect for sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, equality, mutual benefit, and non-interference in internal affairs. EAM represented India at the 24th SCO Summit held in Astana in July, delivering the remarks on behalf of the Prime Minister at the extended format Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of States.



Prime Minister participated in the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, October 2024



Prime Minister handed over 4 BHISHM Cubes to President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy during his official visit to Kyiv, August 2024

EAM also represented India at the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting in Islamabad in October. Besides the Astana Declaration a total of 23 documents were adopted at the SCO Summit. The Declaration, while welcoming transport and connectivity initiatives in the region, underlined the importance of cooperation on a fair and balanced basis and in accordance with international law, the goals and principles of the UN Charter and the SCO Charter. Further, the Declaration also condemned terrorism, specially emphasising the need to address the issues of terrorist financing and cross-border movement of terrorists as well as isolating and exposing countries that harbour and provide safe havens to terrorists.

India-Ukraine bilateral engagement continued to develop. In August, Prime Minister made a historic visit to Ukraine, the first ever by an Indian Prime Minister. Prime Minister also met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the margins of the G7 Summit in Italy in June and the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York in September. The Ukrainian Foreign Minister also paid an official visit to New Delhi in March at the invitation of EAM.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus Sergei Aleinik paid a visit to India in March at the invitation of EAM. The two Ministers reviewed the state of India-Belarus bilateral ties and discussed ways to enhance development

partnership and bilateral cooperation in sectors such as trade, economy, insurance, defence, education, IT and science and technology.

In September, MoS (KVS) paid a visit to Armenia and attended the inaugural Yerevan Dialogue, a Track 1.5 dialogue which saw the participation of ministers, diplomats, think-tanks and academicians. He called on the Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia Mher Herberti Grigoryan and held bilateral discussions with the Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan.

During the year, India's engagement with African countries was marked by high-level diplomatic visits, trade expansion, and promoting development partnerships. Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji undertook significant visits to Malawi and Mauritania in October. During the visit, Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji interacted with African leaders, strengthening bilateral and economic ties.

In August, several African leaders, including Vice-Presidents of Burundi, The Gambia, Liberia, Mauritius and Zimbabwe visited India to participate in the 19th CII India-Africa Conclave. In the same month, the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit witnessed participation from several African countries, including Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Equatorial

Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Prime Minister met President of Mozambique Filipe Nyusi in January in Gandhinagar and discussed bilateral ties and regional security. Prime Minister paid a State Visit to Nigeria in November, which was the first by an Indian Prime Minister in 17 years. The visit witnessed the signing of MoUs on customs cooperation, cultural exchange, and land survey cooperation. President of Nigeria Bola Ahmed Tinubu conferred the national award the "Grand Commander of the Order of Niger" on the Prime Minister.

EAM held separate meetings with the Foreign Minister of Ethiopia Taye Atske Selassie in September in New York on the sidelines of the 74th Session of the UNGA, Foreign Minister of Uganda Jeje Odongo in January on the margins of the NAM Summit in Kampala, and Foreign Minister of Ghana Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey in February on the margins of the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi.



Prime Minister was conferred with the 'Grand Commander of the Order of Niger' Award by President of Nigeria Bola Ahmed Tinubu in Abuja, November 2024.

India continued to expand its diplomatic footprint in Africa by opening new embassies in Gabon and Cabo Verde. Ethiopia joined BRICS in January with India's support and India became Tanzania's second-largest trade partner in Africa, with bilateral trade reaching USD 7.9 billion. Further, India provided USD 1 million in grant assistance to Rwanda for midwifery development, aided in the establishment of a permanent artificial limb fitment centre in Malawi, and donated two Fast Interceptor Crafts (FICs) to Mozambique.

Major defence related engagements included INS Talwar making port calls in Kenya (September), Tanzania (October), and South Africa (October), and holding of the first India-Mozambique-Tanzania Trilateral Naval Exercise in Nacala in northern Mozambique in March.

Major development initiatives in Africa included a USD 447 million funding towards Ghana's Tema-Mpakadan Railway Line, opening of the Exim Bank's (Export-Import Bank of India) new East Africa Representative Office in Kenya, and signing of agreements to enhance digital payment infrastructure in Namibia and Togo. On the humanitarian front, India provided aid to Namibia, Kenya, and Zambia for drought and flood relief, along with 3.5 tonnes of medical supplies to Zambia to combat a cholera outbreak. Capacity-building efforts continued throughout the year with over 1,800 ITEC training slots allocated to East and Southern Africa, 1,272 ITEC slots and 251 ICCR scholarships for Central and West Africa, and 7,600 African students enrolled in the e-VidyaBharati AarogyaBharati (e-VBAB) online education program. These initiatives highlight India's growing commitment to Africa through trade, defence, and development cooperation. During the year, political engagements between India and the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region have further provided a renewed momentum to our relationships with countries in the region.

Prime Minister visited Brazil for the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rio de Janeiro in November. On the sidelines of the G-20 Summit, he separately met the President of Brazil Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, President of Argentina Javier Milei, and President of Chile Gabriel Boric Font.

In November, Prime Minister also paid an official visit to Guyana, where he held delegation level talks with the President of Guyana Mohamed Irfaan Ali. At a ceremony held at the State House in Georgetown, Prime Minister was conferred Guyana's highest award, "Order of the Excellence", by the President of Guyana.

Prime Minister also co-chaired the 2nd India-Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Summit along with Prime Minister of Grenada Dickon Mitchell in Georgetown, Guyana. On the margins of the Summit, Prime Minister held bilateral meetings with the Prime Ministers of Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, St. Lucia, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Trinidad



(Clockwise from Top Left) Prime Minister met leaders of Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Saint Lucia and Trinidad & Tobago on the sidelines of the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit in Georgetown, November 2024.

and Tobago, and Suriname. At a ceremony in Georgetown, the President of the Commonwealth of Dominica Sylvanie Burton conferred the highest National Award of Dominica, the “Dominica Award of Honour”, on the Prime Minister.

The year also witnessed visits from leaders of the Caribbean nations. Prime Minister of Guyana Mohamed Irfaan Ali visited India in February. He called on Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji and Hon'ble Vice President and had separate meetings with EAM and the Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy. Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago visited Mumbai and Jamnagar in May. Prime Minister of Jamaica paid a visit to India in October and held separate meetings with Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Hon'ble Vice President and the Prime Minister. The Executive Vice President of Venezuela led a delegation to India in October and met the Hon'ble Vice President and the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

During the year, EAM received Foreign Ministers of Panama, Brazil, Chile, Argentina and St. Kitts & Nevis. He met his counterparts from Guyana, Bolivia, Mexico, Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Dominica, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and Venezuela as well as the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on the sidelines of UNGA in New York. On the sidelines of the NAM summit in Kampala, he met separately with the Foreign Ministers of Colombia, Bolivia, and Venezuela in Uganda.

EAM met Foreign Minister of Jamaica on the margins of the India-CARICOM Summit in Guyana in November and the

Foreign Minister of Honduras in December on the sidelines of Doha Forum in Qatar.



(Clockwise from Top Left) EAM met his counterparts from Cuba, El Salvador, Guyana and Venezuela on the sidelines of UNGA held in New York, September 2024.

MOS (VM) visited Brazil in February 2024 for the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting. In August, MOS (PM) paid official visits to Dominican Republic, Guatemala, El Salvador, Panama, and Trinidad and Tobago. Subsequently, he paid visits to Mexico (September), Grenada (October), Barbados (October) and Antigua and Barbuda (October). MOS (KVS) visited Cali, Colombia to participate in the COP16 meeting in October. India now has 17 resident Missions in the LAC region, with the opening of a new Mission in La Paz, Bolivia in September.

India continued to actively engage as a member of the United Nations playing a leading role in advocating for multilateralism and the reform of the global order. In January, the UN General Assembly President called on Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji and held a separate meeting with the EAM. In July, Prime Minister addressed the meeting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee for its 46th Session in New Delhi. This was the first such session of UNESCO to be hosted by India.

India participated in the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in November in Baku, Azerbaijan.

In September, Prime Minister addressed the 'Summit of the Future' at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The Summit adopted a "Pact for the Future" with 56 action points across five areas. Prime Minister also had separate bilateral meetings with several leaders, including the Prime Minister of Nepal, Crown Prince of Kuwait, President of the State of Palestine, President of Vietnam and President of Ukraine. Separately, EAM led the Indian delegation for the

high-level week at the 79th session of UNGA and addressed the General Debate of the High-level Segment of the 79th UNGA in New York on 28 September.

On the sidelines of the UNGA session, EAM participated in various plurilateral foreign minister-level meetings, including G20, G4, IBSA, BRICS, L-69 & C-10, India-CARICOM, India-CELAC, and BIMSTEC.

India has provided development assistance through projects, grants, and loans based on the needs of its partner countries. In the past few years, its scope has expanded to technical consultancy, disaster relief, humanitarian aid, heritage restoration, education scholarship, capacity building programmes, civilian and military courses in the areas of infrastructure, hydroelectricity, power transmission, agriculture, industry, education, health, archaeological conservation, and strengthening of cross border connectivity. Major development cooperation projects cover a wide range of sectors including education, health, agriculture, water, energy, and connectivity. India also offers LOC, which are concessional loans offered to partner countries. Major LOC projects which have been completed include a 20 MW hydro-electric project in Kabu in Burundi, upgradation of water supply systems in Zimbabwe and Tanzania, a railway track upgradation project in Sri Lanka, and supply of aircraft to Guyana. The year saw the first-ever Rupee denominated LOC extended for a water pipeline replacement project in Mauritius. India also facilitates capacity building for its partner countries by delivering a vast range of innovative training courses for foreign government professionals. More than 13,500 training slots were offered in civilian (10,200 slots) and defence courses (3,300+ slots) during the year, reaching out to more than 115 countries with civilian courses and close to 80 countries for defence-related courses.



Prime Minister delivered his remarks at the United Nations Summit of The Future in New York, September 2024



EAM participated in the Joint Ministerial Meeting of L-69 grouping in the margins of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, September 2024.



India handed over two Dornier HAL-228 aircrafts as part of a USD 23.37 million Defence Line of Credit (LoC) for the modernisation of Guyana's military infrastructure, November 2024

India made significant strides in emigration policy, welfare, and diaspora engagement. The government actively promoted safe and legal migration through multiple agreements, including Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreements (MMPA) and Labour Mobility Agreements (LMA) with Denmark, Israel, Malaysia, Taiwan, and the UK.

Joint Working Group meetings were held with the UK, and Italy to streamline labour mobility and employment pathways. Collaborations with international organisations like the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the Budapest Process, the Colombo Process, and the India-EU High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Mobility (HLDMM) strengthened India's role in global migration governance. India assumed the chairmanship of the Colombo Process for 2024-26 and joined the Advisory Committee of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. The government also expanded welfare schemes for assisting over 3.5 lakh Indian workers abroad under the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) and enhancing pre-departure orientation training aimed at enhancing soft skills of Indian migrant workers. The revamped eMigrate V2.0 portal and mobile app were launched, simplifying emigration processes with features like DigiLocker integration, grievance redressal, and e-verification. The government also focused on student issues, marital dispute resolution for NRI women, and engaging with the diaspora through initiatives such as the Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY), Know India Programme (KIP), and Videsh Sampark Programme.

During the year, the Ministry collaborated with think-tanks and academic institutes to facilitate several foreign policy outreach activities like Track 1.5 and 2.0 dialogues. The Ministry also undertook major foreign policy outreach dialogues, including the Raisina Dialogue, Asian Economic Dialogue, Indian Ocean Conference, the India-US Forum, India-Japan Forum, India-Nordic Dialogue, and India-EU Track 1.5 Dialogue, among others. The Ministry also held Policy Planning Dialogues with counterpart Policy Planning divisions/bureaus of the Foreign Ministries of Japan, France, Norway and jointly with Quad Member-States of Australia, Japan and the US. The first trilateral India-Japan-Korea Policy Planning Dialogue was also held during the year.

India's external publicity and public diplomacy significantly expanded in 2024 through digital diplomacy, regional media engagement, and influencer collaborations. Key initiatives included launching a MEA WhatsApp channel, expanding social media presence, facilitating visits of foreign journalists, organising film festivals, commissioning documentaries, and promoting Indian culture. Public engagement was enhanced through India Corners, SAMEEP lectures, and Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz.

During the year, India opened new diplomatic Missions in Latvia, Georgia, the Gabonese Republic, and Timor-Leste. New Consulates in Marseille (France), Barcelona (Spain), Brisbane (Australia), and Auckland (New Zealand) also commenced their operations.



EAM and Foreign Minister of Denmark Lars Løkke Rasmussen signed an Agreement on Mobility and Migration Partnership, February 2024



Clockwise from Left to Right: The Ministry collaborated with think-tanks and academic institutes to facilitate several foreign policy outreach activities including the India-US Forum (New Delhi), Global Technology Summit Innovation Dialogue (Bengaluru), Asia Economic Dialogue (Pune), India-Japan Forum (New Delhi), Indian Ocean Conference (Perth), and the Raisina Dialogue (New Delhi)



EAM and Jeannette Young, Governor of Queensland inaugurated the new Consulate General of India in Brisbane, November 2024

The Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service conducted several training programmes for officers and personnel of the Ministry, members of other civil services and foreign diplomats. The 2nd Edition of Global South Young Diplomats Forum (GSYDF) was conducted in

September with the participation of 32 diplomats from 29 countries of the Global South. The 71st Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) was conducted during April-May with the participation of 34 diplomats from 30 countries.



The 2nd Global South Young Diplomats Forum (GSYDF) was conducted in the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), September 2024.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) continued to promote cultural exchanges and global outreach of India's 'soft power'. In the academic year 2024-25, ICCR offered 3960 scholarship slots to foreign nationals under its 20 Scholarship Schemes, including 1000 scholarships for Afghan nationals to pursue online undergraduate and

postgraduate courses. ICCR also sponsored 62 cultural delegations from India to countries around the world, and organised donations of 9 busts and statues of iconic Indian leaders to various countries. ICCR continued to support 38 Indian Cultural Centres (ICCs) in different parts of the world.



EAM unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi at the Indian embassy in Tokyo, Japan, July 2024.

C H A P T E R

1

India's Neighbourhood

Afghanistan

India and Afghanistan have a strong relationship based on historical links, cultural relations and strong people-to-people ties. Post August 2021, India's approach towards Afghanistan continues to be guided by its historical friendship and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2593.

Since August 2021, India has sent several shipments of humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan consisting 50,000 MTs of wheat and 300 tonnes of medicines and medical/surgical items. In January, India granted 40,000 litres of Malathion, a pesticide to counter locust menace in Afghanistan. The supply of Malathion ensures crop protection and food security in the country and other central Asian nations. India has also partnered with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Afghanistan to provide assistance for the welfare of the Afghan drug-user population, especially women. Under this partnership, India supplied 11,000 units of female hygiene kits, baby food, general-use hygiene kits, blankets, clothing, footwear, medical aid and other miscellaneous items. These items are being distributed by the UNODC's drug treatment centres across Afghanistan. India also extended assistance comprising 500 units of winter clothing and 1.2 tonnes of stationery kits to Habibia High School, Kabul this year

Education and capacity building programmes are an important aspect of India's development partnership with Afghanistan. Since 2023, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarship scheme has provided online scholarships for 2000 Afghan students, including 580 girls through the e-VidyaBharti portal. India also continues to offer online scholarships for Afghan students in agriculture-related fields, in collaboration with the Afghanistan National Agriculture Sciences and Technology University (ANASTU). The first university of its kind in Kandahar offering post-graduate courses for Afghan students, ANASTU was established with the support of the Indian government.

The two countries continued to interact in the sporting realm this year. The Afghan Cricket Board (ACB) and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) signed an agreement in June, enabling the Afghan cricket team to use cricket stadiums in Greater Noida and Kanpur as home grounds.

In 2024, India actively engaged in regional and international efforts to maintain stability and peace in Afghanistan and participated in various meetings/formats including UN-led meetings in Doha, Moscow Format and the Oslo Forum, among others. Additionally, an Indian technical team is positioned in Kabul since 2022, actively supporting the people of Afghanistan with humanitarian assistance.



India granted 40,000 litres of Malathion pesticide to counter locust menace in Afghanistan, January 2024.

Bangladesh

India and Bangladesh share bonds of history, language, culture, and a multitude of other commonalities. Over the last few years, the relationship between India and Bangladesh has evolved to include cooperation in diverse fields ranging from political and security cooperation, trade and economic ties, development partnership, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, among others.

Bangladesh is India's largest trading partner in South Asia, while India has become Bangladesh's largest export destination in Asia in recent years. Additionally, Bangladesh is India's largest development partner, with the latter extending concessional credits amounting to almost USD 10 billion to Bangladesh, including three of its largest bilateral Lines of Credit (LOCs).

Beginning in late June 2024, the then Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina was confronted with a series of public protests, largely led by students, over the issue of quotas and reservations in jobs for families of freedom fighters. These protests turned violent, especially from mid-July 2024. The Awami League Government in Dhaka collapsed and was replaced by an Interim Government led by Prof. Muhammad Yunus as the Chief Adviser.

High Level Visits

The year was distinguished by continued high-level interactions between both sides. The then Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina attended the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister in Rashtrapati Bhavan on 09 June along with other Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

leaders. She also paid a State Visit to India on 21-22 June. This was the first incoming bilateral State Visit to India after formation of the Indian government in June. During this visit, ten MoUs ranging from maritime cooperation, oceanography, cooperation in the joint launch of a satellite, green partnership, digital partnership, health, fisheries, disaster management, and rail connectivity were signed between both countries.

Prime Minister was the first world leader to congratulate Chief Adviser Yunus after the formation of the Interim Government in Bangladesh. Both sides held a telephonic conversation on 16 August. At the invitation of Prime Minister, Chief Adviser Yunus participated in the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit (VoGSS), held in virtual-mode on 17 August. EAM met Foreign Affairs Adviser of Bangladesh Touhid Hossain on the sidelines of the 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) held in New York on 24 September.

The then Foreign Minister of Bangladesh Hasan Mahmud paid an official visit to India on 07-09 February. Foreign Secretary visited Dhaka on 08-09 May to sustain the ongoing momentum of visits and exchanges between both countries. Foreign Secretary visited Dhaka on 09 December and called on Chief Adviser Yunus and Foreign Affairs Adviser Hossain. During his visit, Foreign Secretary also held Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) with the Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh Jashim Uddin. Additionally, Foreign Secretary discussed recent developments and issues, and conveyed India's concerns, especially those related to the safety and welfare of minorities. He reiterated India's willingness to build a positive and constructive relationship with Bangladesh, based on mutual trust, respect and mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns and interests.



EAM met Foreign Affairs Adviser of Bangladesh Touhid Hossain on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA held in New York, September 2024.

Defence and Security Cooperation

Significant bilateral exchanges took place in 2023-2024 with incoming and outgoing visits of the Chiefs of the Indian and Bangladesh Armed Forces, as well as delegations comprising war veterans and serving officers from both countries.

As part of the annual visit of Muktiyoddhas (Liberation War veterans) on the occasion of Victory Day, a delegation of Muktiyoddhas and some serving officers of the Bangladesh Armed Forces (BDAF) participated in 'Vijay Diwas 2023' celebrations at Kolkata in December 2023. In reciprocity, a delegation comprising of 30 War Veterans and 6 serving officers of the Indian Armed Forces (IAF) participated in the Victory Day celebrations in Dhaka. Under the scholarship scheme for Muktiyoddhas, the Indian government annually provides 2000 scholarships to the wards of veterans for

undertaking higher secondary and undergraduate studies in Bangladesh. So far, 24,018 scholarships have been awarded. Since 2019, Muktiyoddhas are also facilitated to avail medical treatment in India under the Muktiyoddha Medical Scheme.

At the invitation of Bangladesh, IAF Chief visited Dhaka on 26 February-01 March. During his three-day visit to the country, IAF Chief visited Bangladesh Air Force Academy, Jessore and National Defence College, Mirpur. A three-member delegation of National Defence College (NDC), Bangladesh led by Commandant NDC visited National Defence College, New Delhi in May. Chief of Naval Staff of India visited Bangladesh in July and reviewed the Passing Out Parade at the Bangladesh Naval Academy. The Army Chiefs of India and Bangladesh held a virtual meeting on 05 November and identified areas of cooperation.



Chief of Naval Staff of India became the first Foreign Head of Service to review the Passing Out Parade at the Bangladesh Naval Academy in Chittagong, July 2024.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

Bangladesh is India's biggest trading partner in South Asia, while India is the second biggest trade partner of Bangladesh in Asia. Bangladesh exported USD 1.84 billion of goods to India in FY 2023-24, while its exports to India between April to September 2024 were valued at USD 0.97 billion. The total bilateral trade in FY 2023-24 was reported at USD 12.90 billion and the bilateral trade until September 2024 stood at USD 6.168 billion.

Development Cooperation

Bangladesh is the largest development partner of India, and the latter has extended 3 LOCs to Bangladesh in the last 8 years, amounting to around USD 8 billion for development of infrastructure in various sectors including roads, railways, shipping and ports. In addition to LOCs, the Government of India is providing grant assistance to Bangladesh for various infrastructure projects, including the construction of Akhaura-Agartala rail link and dredging of inland waterways in Bangladesh. The Akhaura-Agartala cross border rail link project was completed in November 2024, marking an important milestone as it connected the North-East of India with Bangladesh by rail for the first time and helped enhance rail-connectivity in the region. Additionally, the Khulna-Mongla Port rail line, a significant LOC project was completed in November 2023. This is the first rail project connecting Mongla port.

High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs)

also constitute an active pillar of India's development assistance in Bangladesh and include construction of student hostels, academic buildings, skill development and training institutes, cultural centers, orphanages, and restoration of common cultural heritage.

Connectivity

Connectivity has been a priority area of bilateral cooperation. Both sides are working to facilitate seamless movement of people and goods, both in bilateral and sub-regional contexts. Efforts are being made to revive the rail, road and waterways that traditionally linked the people and economies on both sides as well as establish new ones.

India and Bangladesh are jointly undertaking dredging of two critical stretches of the Brahmaputra and Kushiya river on the India-Bangladesh Protocol routes. This is an ongoing project under grant assistance, aimed at boosting connectivity of the North-Eastern states of India with Bangladesh as well as the rest of the country. India also supplied 420 railway freight wagons to Bangladesh Railway.

Both countries are finalising the implementation of the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement to boost sub-regional connectivity.

On 26 October, a new state-of-art Passenger Terminal Building and a second gate called "Maitri Dwar" at the Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Petrapole, West Bengal was inaugurated. These projects aim to significantly enhance trade facilitation between India and Bangladesh.



India inaugurated a Passenger Terminal Building and a second gate called "Maitri Dwar" at the Integrated Check Post (ICP) in West Bengal's Petrapole to significantly enhance trade facilitation between India and Bangladesh, October 2024.

Power and Energy Cooperation

Cooperation in power and energy sector has become one of the crucial pillars of India-Bangladesh relations. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) was registered as a G2G supplier in 2023 and is since supplying Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants (POL) products to Bangladesh. ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), in a consortium with Oil India Limited undertakes off-shore oil exploration.

The Joint Working Group (JWG)/Joint Steering Committee (JSC) on Power provides an institutional framework to promote bilateral cooperation in cross-border trade of electricity between the two countries. Bangladesh currently imports 1160 MW of power from India and the Maitree Super Thermal Power Plant (2 x 600 MW). The plant became operational in 2023 and has been supplying electricity to Bangladesh grid.

A tripartite Power Sale Agreement between Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Ltd. (NVVN) and Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) was signed on 03 October 2024 and operationalised in November. The agreement aims to facilitate the sale of 40 MW hydro power from Nepal to Bangladesh through the Indian Grid and marks the first step towards forging sub-regional cooperation in the energy and power sector.

Capacity Building and Human Resource Development

Human resource development and capacity building is a key component of India's development cooperation efforts in Bangladesh, undertaken through several ongoing training programs and scholarships. India has been providing training to Bangladeshi officials from the civil services, police, judiciary as well as other professionals at various premier training institutes in India. In the year 2023-24, 558 civil servants and 249 judicial officers received training at Indian institutions in fields including administration, police, customs, narcotics detection and nuclear science. Between August-November 2024, 40 Bangladeshi nationals were granted ITEC scholarships. The Indian government awarded 524 Bangladeshi students with ICCR scholarships and 700 Bangladeshi students were facilitated to enrol in self-financed colleges in India during 2024-25. The training programs extended by India to Bangladeshi police and judicial officers are also being resumed.

Cultural Cooperation

On the cultural front, a 100-member Bangladesh Youth Delegation visited India in February, during which they toured a number of prominent sites of academic and cultural interests. The delegation also called on the *Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji*. A nine-member Bangladeshi dance troupe from the famous Dhaka-based dance school 'Kolpotoru',

participated in the 'Bali Yatra Festival 2024' held in Cuttack on 15-22 November. The Bangladeshi artists performed dance pieces inspired by the works of Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam.

Bhutan

India and Bhutan enjoy exemplary bilateral relations, characterised by mutual trust, understanding and goodwill at all levels and excellent people-to-people contacts. The bilateral relations witnessed steady progress across all sectors of cooperation, including trade and economic connectivity, energy, skill development and capacity building, development cooperation, sports and youth exchanges, education, health, judiciary, environmental conservation, technology, and people-to-people contacts.

A large number of high-level exchanges took place throughout the year including the State Visit of Prime Minister to Bhutan, official visit of the King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck to India, official visits of Prime Minister of Bhutan to India and other Ministerial-level visits. The visits witnessed the publication of three joint statements, imparting political direction and momentum to the bilateral partnership.

Development cooperation with Bhutan expanded further as Bhutan entered into its 13th Five Year Plan (FYP) from 2024 to 2029, with the Indian government doubling its assistance to Bhutan for the plan. Hydropower projects under construction in Bhutan with India's assistance also witnessed progress, with the Puntasangchhu II hydropower project nearing completion. Both sides also agreed to take forward the mutually beneficial energy cooperation through a Joint Vision Statement on Energy Partnership.

Trade and economic cooperation continued to expand, as several key decisions were taken during Commerce Secretary-level talks held in September. The opening of the ICP at Darranga in Assam and progress on establishing rail links provided positive momentum to cross-border connectivity initiatives.

Cooperation in the judiciary sector intensified with the visit of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) to Bhutan. Sectors such as health, sports and youth initiatives, education and capacity building and training also witnessed progress during the year.

High level exchanges

Prime Minister paid a landmark State Visit to Bhutan on 22-23 March. He was conferred with the "Order of the Druk Gyalpo", Bhutan's highest civilian honour by the King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck. During the visit, seven MoUs were signed in areas including energy efficiency, supply of petroleum products, sports and youth, pharmacopoeia, space, digital network and food safety.



Prime Minister was conferred with Bhutan's highest civilian honour "Order of the Druk Gyalpo" by King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck in the presence of Prime Minister of Bhutan Dasho Tshering Tobgay, October 2024.

The King of Bhutan paid an official visit to India on 05-06 December and met Prime Minister, EAM and senior officials of the Indian government. Prime Minister of Bhutan Dasho Tshering Tobgay made four official visits to India this year, including his first visit overseas to India in March and as an Honoured Guest at the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister in June. In November, he attended the inauguration of the ICP at Darranga, Assam and participated in the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)'s Global Cooperatives Conference held in New Delhi.

The CJI paid a visit to Bhutan on 07-10 October. During his visit, the CJI graced the 3rd Graduation Ceremony of the Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law in Bhutan. Four MoUs, including the MoU between the two Supreme Courts on judiciary cooperation were signed in the area of legal cooperation.

Chief Minister of Assam visited Bhutan on 16-19 December to participate in Bhutan's National Day celebrations and for furthering Assam-Bhutan cooperation.

In 2024, India and Bhutan continued to strengthen bilateral cooperation in all sectors through regular Ministerial meetings. Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade of Bhutan Lyonpo D.N. Dhungyel visited India in February for the Raisina Dialogue, and participated in the 2nd Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Foreign Ministers' Retreat held in July. Minister Dhungyel met EAM during both his visits.



EAM called on King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck in New Delhi, December 2024.



EAM met Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade of Bhutan Lyonpo D.N. Dhungyel on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue held in New Delhi, February 2024.

Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Bhutan Lyonpo Gem Tshering visited India in July for the Project Authority Meeting of the Punatsangchhu-II Hydro Electric Project. During his second visit to the country on 14-18 October, he held a meeting with the Minister of Power and of New and Renewable Energy.

The year also witnessed several incoming visits by Ministers and senior government officials from Bhutan. Minister of Infrastructure and Transport Lyonpo Chandra Bahadur Gurung visited India in September for the 2nd Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation. Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Lyonpo Younten Phuntsho visited India in September for the 3rd World Food India event held in New Delhi. Minister of Finance Lyonpo Lekey Dorji visited India for the 3rd Kautilya Economic Conclave in October. Minister Dorji also attended the Global Economic Policy Forum at New Delhi in December. Minister of Health Lyonpo Tandin Wangchuk visited India for the 77th session of the WHO Regional Committee for South East Asia in October. Minister of Industry, Commerce and Employment Lyonpo Namgyal Dorji visited India in December for the CII Partnership Summit.

Chief Minister of Assam visited Bhutan on 16-19 December to participate in Bhutan's National Day and for furthering Assam-Bhutan cooperation.

Foreign Secretary of Bhutan Pema Choden visited India in March to co-chair the 2nd India-Bhutan Development Cooperation Talks (Plan Talks) of Bhutan's 13th Five Year Plan. In 2024, Foreign Secretary visited Bhutan twice, to co-chair the 3rd meeting of the Plan Talks in July and to participate in the bilateral discussions in November.

Development Cooperation

During the Prime Minister's visit to Bhutan in March, Government of India committed development support of USD 11.5 billion for Bhutan's 13th FYP. India's support will be earmarked for Project Tied Assistance (PTA), HICDPs, Bhutan's Economic Stimulus Programme (ESP) and Programme Grant. The first tranche of 61 projects under the Indian government's PTA, amounting nearly USD 576 million was agreed between the two sides during the Plan Talks held in July. The first batch of HICDP projects amounting nearly USD 480 million was agreed between the two sides during the 1st HICDP Committee meeting held in December.

Notable developmental projects completed in 2024 include *Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck* Mother and Child Hospital, Thimphu Aquatic Centre, Takti bridge in Chukha and Pangrizampa bridge in Thimphu, Lingzhi Dzong, and upgraded primary boarding schools. In addition, the groundbreaking ceremony of the Rama Centre of Excellence for Cricket and Shooting was held on 01 December.

Trade and Connectivity

India has remained Bhutan's top trading partner – both as an import source as well as an export destination, accounting for over 80 per cent of Bhutan's overall trade. India's total merchandise trade with Bhutan until September 2024 stood at USD 10.28 billion, wherein exports to Bhutan were pegged at USD 7.73 billion and imports stood at USD 2.54 billion.

During Prime Minister's State Visit to Bhutan on 21-22 March, the countries signed bilateral agreements including a MoU on general supply of POL and related products from India to Bhutan, the Agreement for recognition of official control exercised by Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), and the finalization of text of the MoU on Establishment of rail-links between India and Bhutan. Ministry of Railways is undertaking the Final Location Survey (FLS) for rail links agreed between both sides under the MoU, including the Kokrajhar-Gelephu rail link and Banarhat-Samtse rail link.



Prince of Bhutan Jigyel Ugyen Wangchuck and Ambassador of India to Bhutan participated in the groundbreaking ceremony of the Rama Center of Excellence for Cricket & Shooting featuring a state-of-the-art 20,000-seat cricket stadium and a modern shooting range. The centre is built as a part of the Bhutan-India Friendship project, December 2024.

A new Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement (FCSA) for the period 2024-27 for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries including Bhutan, came into effect in June. Bhutan availed the FCSA facility through the INR window introduced under the framework.

Secretary, Commerce visited Bhutan in September to co-chair the India-Bhutan Commerce Secretary Level Meeting (CSLM). Key decisions taken during the CSLM include notification of additional routes for import of Areca nut from Bhutan, notification of additional Point of Entry for import of food items from Bhutan, establishment of border haats along the India-Bhutan border, inclusion of additional species of timber for import from Bhutan and deployment of personnel for Phyto Quarantine Inspection Services (PQIS) at Land Customs Station (LCS) Darranga.

In November, an ICP at Darranga (Assam) was inaugurated to facilitate the entry as well as exit of third-country nationals by land route and enhance connectivity and tourism. The opening of the check post was agreed upon last year, during the visit of the King of Bhutan to India.

Bilateral cooperation on Gyalsung- Bhutan's National Service Program

The Indian government has supported Bhutan's National Service Programme 'Gyalsung' - a special initiative of the King of Bhutan, to equip the Bhutanese youth with critical skills and contribute in nation-building efforts. On 20 January, India signed a MoU with Bhutan, extending a concessionary loan of nearly USD 1.73 billion to build infrastructure for the Gyalsung academies. Earlier, India provided grant assistance of USD 230 million to Bhutan for the Gyalsung programme.

Power and Energy Cooperation

Cooperation in the hydropower sector is a central pillar of India-Bhutan ties. The Joint Vision Document on the India-Bhutan Energy Partnership was issued during the Prime Minister's visit to Bhutan in March. As per the Vision Document, both sides agreed to enhance the energy partnership and develop new energy projects in the fields of hydro-power, solar and green hydrogen, including through the participation of Indian entities as strategic partners. Nikachhu Hydro-Electric Project (HEP) commenced the export of surplus power through the Indian Energy Exchange in May. An India-Bhutan Renewable Energy Roundtable was held in Thimphu on 28 October, to identify opportunities for collaboration in the area of renewable energy.

At present, India is constructing two hydroelectric projects in Bhutan- Punatsangchhu-I with a capacity of 1200 MW and Punatsangchhu-II with a capacity of 1020 MW. The first two units of Punatsangchhu-II HEP were commissioned in December.

Environment and Climate Change

The 1st Joint Working Group on Environment was held in Bhutan on 21 October. The deliberations focused on creating institutional linkages and strengthening partnerships in the field of environment, waste management, and climate.

Space Cooperation

During Prime Minister's visit to Bhutan in March, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and GovTech Agency of Bhutan signed a Joint Plan of Action (JPoA) which provides

a concrete roadmap for bilateral cooperation in the space sector. The first meeting of the India–Bhutan JWG under the JPoA on Space Cooperation was held on 06 September in Thimphu. In consonance with the JPoA, ISRO allocated an additional 16 MHz bandwidth to Bhutan on the South Asia Satellite.

Education and Capacity Building

Bhutan is allotted 325 in-person training slots for upgrading administrative and technical skills of government officials and private sector employees under ITEC. Bhutanese civil service officers receive training at premier Indian administrative as well as other special training institutions and academies every year. Over 1,200 scholarships are being provided annually by the Indian government to Bhutanese students for studying in India. The Indian government also recruited 24 new Indian teachers in STEM subjects for teaching in Bhutanese schools this year. Under the Youth Exchange Programme, a Bhutanese Scouts delegation visited India for the Republic Day in January and a National Cadet Corps (NCC) delegation participated in Bhutan's National Day celebrations, held in December.

Sports Cooperation

Sports and youth connect have emerged as a key pillar of the India-Bhutan partnership. During the Prime Minister's visit to Bhutan, both sides concluded a MoU on Cooperation in Sports and Youth, aimed to further people-to-people ties between the two countries by advancing linkages between

sports agencies of both sides and conducting sports activities/programmes. Two delegations from Bhutan visited sporting facilities in India, including the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium in Dharamshala.

Maldives

India and the Maldives share ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and commercial links steeped in antiquity. The Maldives occupies a special place under India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and vision of 'Security And Growth for All in the Region' (SAGAR). This year witnessed a further intensification of bilateral interactions, including at the leadership and Ministerial level.

High Level Visits

President of the Maldives Dr. Mohamed Muizzu visited India twice this year. He attended the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister in June and undertook his first State Visit to the country on 06-10 October. During the State Visit, Prime Minister and President Muizzu adopted the India-Maldives vision for a 'Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership', a first for the relationship. The vision document outlines ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in an action-oriented manner. A Currency Swap Agreement was also signed between the two sides during the visit, enabling the Maldives to avail USD 400 million (in USD/Euro window) and INR 3,000 Crores (in INR window) from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).



President of the Republic of Maldives Dr. Mohamed Muizzu met Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji in New Delhi during his first State Visit to the country, October 2024.



EAM delivered his remarks at the handing over ceremony of the Addu Reclamation and Shore protection project completed with the assistance of the Government of India in Addu city, August 2024.

The then Foreign Minister of the Maldives Moosa Zameer visited India on 08-10 May, followed by the visit of Minister of Tourism Ibrahim Faisal in July. During his visit, Minister Faisal met Minister of Tourism and Minister of Civil Aviation. EAM undertook a visit to the Maldives on 09-11 August, marking one of his first foreign visits following the formation of the Union Government in June. EAM held interactions with the Maldivian leadership, wherein the Maldives appreciated India's continued developmental assistance and reaffirmed its commitment to deepen the bilateral relationship further. The then Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer and the then Minister of State for Youth Empowerment, Information and Art Ali Shamaan participated in the Foreign Ministers' and Youth Ministers' Session respectively, of the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit held on 17 August.

As guided by the leadership of both countries, India and the Maldives constituted the India-Maldives High Level Core Group (HLCG) to identify steps to enhance the partnership, including expediting the implementation of ongoing development cooperation projects and finding mutually workable solutions to continue operation of Indian aviation platforms that provide humanitarian and medical evacuation (medvac) services to the people of the Maldives. The HLCG

met four times in 2024. By May, Indian technical personnel were deputed to support these aviation platforms, as per the request of the Government of the Maldives.

Based on the Maldives' previous request, India facilitated the re-subscription of two interest-free Treasury-bills of USD 50 million each in May and September, for an additional one-year period. These assistances were extended as emergency financing assistance by the Indian government.

Development Cooperation

India is a traditional development partner of the Maldives and continues to extend financial and budgetary assistance to the Maldives, keeping in mind the requirements of the country. During EAM's visit to the Maldives in August, both sides jointly inaugurated infrastructure projects completed with India-assisted LOCs. These included water and sewerage network projects in 28 islands of the Maldives, the Addu reclamation and shore protection project and the Addu detour link bridge project. The countries also jointly inaugurated six HICDPs in the areas of mental health, special education, speech therapy and street lighting, all of which were completed under India's grant assistance.

Prime Minister and President Muizzu jointly inaugurated the new runway of Hanimaadhoo International airport and handed over 700 social housing units, developed with India's financial assistance during the latter's State Visit to India in October. The countries are also working together on the implementation of the India-Maldives flagship infrastructure project viz. the Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP), connecting the capital Malé with three islands of Maldives and the construction of the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) Coast Guard harbour 'Ekatha' at the Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTF) island. India is also supporting the construction of 4000 social housing units in Hulhumale Phase-II, under the Buyers' Credit facility, and implementing 65 HICDPs across islands, on grant basis.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

India and the Maldives signed a trade agreement in 1981, which provides for export of essential commodities as a special consideration for Maldives. In April, under the same agreement and upon the request of the Maldives government, India allowed for the export of 9 essential commodities for the year 2024-25 where the quotas of quantity for each of these commodities were revised upwards.

The India-Maldives bilateral trade stood at USD 434.6 million in 2024. In August, the countries signed a MoU

to introduce instant payment systems like the UPI in the Maldives, to enhance the bilateral trade further. The RuPay card became operational in the Maldives in October and both countries signed a MoU for establishing a framework to promote the use of local currencies (INR and Maldivian Rufiyaa – MVR) for cross-border transactions in November. These initiatives will inter alia enable increased tourism from India into the Maldives, contributing to the economy of the country.

Defence and Security Cooperation

India-Maldives defence and security partnership is one of the pillars of the bilateral relationship. In 2024, India commenced the refit of Maldives Coast Guard Ship 'Huravee' on gratis basis and the same is expected to be completed by March-April 2025. The countries also held defence interactions regularly this year. The India-Maldives-Sri Lanka trilateral exercise 'Dosti' was held in the Maldives in February and the 7th edition of the bilateral exercise 'Ekatha' was conducted in October-November. The 7th Joint Staff Talks were conducted in the Maldives in June and the 5th Defence Cooperation Dialogue was held in India in September. In August, India, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Mauritius signed the founding documents of the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) in Colombo.



EAM and the then Foreign Minister of Maldives Moosa Zameer witnessed the signing of a MoU between National Payments Corporation of India and Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Maldives on introduction of digital payment systems in the Maldives during the former's visit to Male, August 2024.



Coast Guards of India, Maldives and Sri Lanka jointly conducted the trilateral exercise 'Dosti' in Male, February 2024.

Education and Capacity Building

India has been a traditional partner for the Maldives in human resource development for decades, offering training slots annually under the ITEC and ICCR frameworks. The Indian government facilitates customized, tailor-made modules and programmes for Maldivian professionals, as per the requirements of the country in areas of public policy, governance and field administration, judiciary, local governance, among others.

In 2024, both sides also renewed the MoUs for training 1,000 Maldivian civil servants and 200 judicial officers in India, as also the MoU on cooperation in sports and youth affairs. In October, the countries also signed MoUs for bilateral cooperation on preventing and combating corruption and on establishing cooperation in academic and professional education, training and research.

Myanmar

Myanmar is an important neighbouring country that shares a 1643 km long land border and over 1100 km long international maritime boundary with India. At the convergence of India's 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' Policy, Myanmar remains critical to India's connect with South-East Asian countries including ASEAN. India and Myanmar share strong civilisational, historical and people-to-people ties. Buddhism is an important cultural link and forms a part of India's shared heritage with Myanmar.



EAM met U Than Swe of Myanmar on the sidelines of BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat in New Delhi, July 2024.

Since February 2021, the political and security situation in Myanmar has deteriorated. The current security and humanitarian situation in Myanmar remains a cause of concern, as it has direct implications for India. India has called for complete cessation of violence, resolution of issues through dialogue, release of political detainees and Myanmar's return to the path of democratic transition at the earliest.

High Level Visits and Meetings

In June, EAM met U Than Swe of Myanmar during his transit through New Delhi. Both sides also met during the 2nd BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat, held in July. NSA visited Myanmar in July to attend the BIMSTEC Security Chiefs meeting. Foreign Secretary held a bilateral meeting with Than Swe, on the sidelines of the Informal Consultations between Myanmar and its neighbouring countries in Bangkok, held on 19 December.

The JWG on Trade, Power, Pulses were held in September and the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) hosted the 2nd round of lecture series on 'Constitutionalism and Federalism' for stakeholders from Myanmar in November. The 12th India-Myanmar Heads of Survey Department Meeting was held on 03-04 December.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

India is the 7th largest trading partner of Myanmar. The bilateral trade in 2023-24 stood at USD 1.74 billion, with India's exports amounting USD 670 million. In 2024, pharmaceuticals, beans and pulses remained major items of India's export and import from Myanmar, respectively. Currently, India is the 11th largest investor in Myanmar, with an approved investment of USD 782.821 million by 39 Indian enterprises. Settlement of trade in national currencies has been operationalized since 26 January, enabling bilateral trade in Indian Rupee (INR).

Development Cooperation

India has a significant development cooperation portfolio worth approximately USD 2 billion in Myanmar, with most of the projects being undertaken under grant-in-aid. Despite the challenges posed by the ongoing security situation, this year witnessed progress on ongoing socio-economic development projects and major connectivity projects including the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMTP) and the India-Myanmar-Thailand (IMT) Trilateral Highway.

India has been implementing people-centric development projects throughout Myanmar under the Border Area Development Programme (BADP) framework, Rakhine State Development Programme (RSDP), HICDP and Quick Impact

Projects (QIP) for construction of civilian infrastructure including bridges, roads, schools and small health centres, among others.

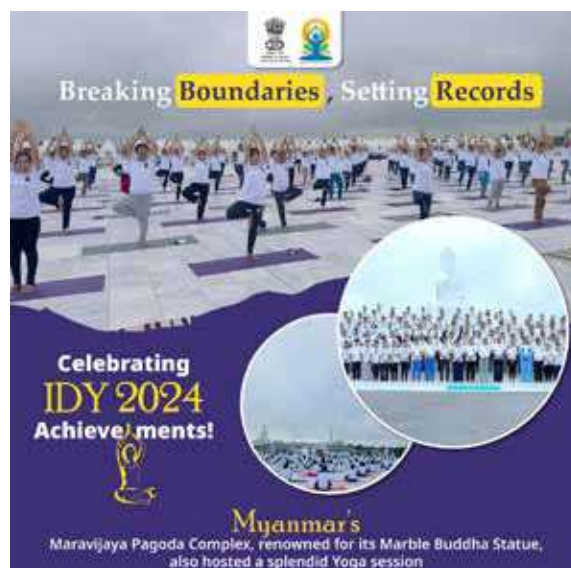
Education and Capacity Building

Capacity building initiatives continued throughout the year, with a focus on supporting human resource development in Myanmar under various schemes including ITEC, ICCR scholarships and other specialized training programs. 37 students from Myanmar utilised the ICCR scholarship slots in the current academic year and several students availed scholarships at Indian universities under various PhD fellowships offered to ASEAN students. Additionally, the Indian government trained nearly 175 Myanmar officials under various capacity building initiatives, across diverse areas including Competition Law, English, Information Technology, Banking, Audit and Accounts.

Cultural Cooperation

Director General of ICCR presented ICCR's International Award for Promotion of Buddhism 2023 to Sitagu Sayadaw Ashin Nyanissara, a renowned Buddhist scholar and founder of the Sitagu International Buddhist Academy on 31 May in Yangon.

Myanmar cultural artistes performed at the Kullu Dussehra Festival held on 13-19 October. Over 250 Ayurveda scholars and students attended the Ayurveda Day 2024 celebrations held at the University of Traditional Medicines in Mandalay on 24 October.



Myanmar's Maraviyaya Pagoda Complex-famous for its majestic Marble Buddha Statue hosted a Yoga session to commemorate the 10th anniversary of International Day of Yoga in Mandalay, June 2024.



India delivered 53 tonnes of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) aid under 'Operation Sadbhav' to help those affected by Typhoon Yagi in Myanmar, September 2024.

Swami Vivekanand Cultural Centre provided regular classes in Bharatnatyam, Yoga and Hindi for Myanmar nationals. An Art Exhibition on the 'Ramayana' was organised at the National Museum in Yangon on 08-15 November. Additionally, Bal Gangadhar Tilak's book titled 'Geeta Rahasya' was translated to Burmese language.

Humanitarian Assistance

In solidarity with the people of Myanmar and as the 'first responder' to natural disasters in the region, India launched 'Operation Sadbhav', to provide Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) to those affected by flash floods caused by Typhoon Yagi. The Indian government delivered 53 tonnes of HADR aid to Myanmar on 17 September, under this initiative. The aid material comprised pallets of essential items of use (edible and non-edible) as well as medical pallets, including medicines, food, kitchen kits, clothing, hygiene kits, tents, mosquito nets, solar lamps and water purification supplies.

India also donated 2200 MT of Indian white rice for the people of Myanmar. This contribution is expected to benefit approximately 140,000 needy individuals, including children, women, youth, elderly people and persons with disabilities.

Nepal

India and Nepal continue to build on their unique, multifaceted and strong ties underpinned by shared historic, cultural, geographic and civilisational linkages. The open

border between India and Nepal and the free movement of citizens is a reflection of these robust and deep relations. Over the last few years, the Government of India has undertaken several initiatives to strengthen cross-border linkages across areas of trade and economic relations as well as people-to-people movement.

In keeping with the 'Neighbourhood First' approach, the year witnessed a rapid expansion and strengthening of various connectivity initiatives spanning energy, trade, railways, digital infrastructure and culture. During the EAM's visit to Nepal in January, the countries finalised an agreement for Long Term Power Trade, which envisages an increase in the quantum of power exports from Nepal to India upto 10,000 MW within a time frame of 10 years. During this visit, EAM also took part in the handover of the Tribhuvan University Central Library building and virtually inaugurated a wide array of projects, including 25 schools and numerous health initiatives, demonstrating India's commitment to Nepal's development.

Marking a notable milestone on the trade infrastructure front, the ICP in Nepalgunj, inaugurated by the Prime Ministers of India and Nepal in June 2023 was successfully handed over and became fully operational on May 2024. In November, Nepal undertook its first ever power transaction to Bangladesh via the Indian grid, giving a fillip to bilateral energy cooperation.

High Level Visits

Prime Minister has visited Nepal five times since 2014, while his counterparts from Nepal have paid regular visits to India

during the same time period. On 09 June, the then Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' attended the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister in New Delhi and held a brief courtesy meeting, following the event. On 15 July, Prime Minister congratulated K.P. Sharma Oli on being appointed as the new Prime Minister of Nepal, after the then Prime Minister Prachanda lost the vote of confidence. Prime Minister and Prime Minister Oli met on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly in New York on 22 September. Prime Minister Oli also participated in the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit hosted by India in virtual-mode on 17 August.

EAM paid an official visit to Nepal on 04-05 January, at the invitation of the then Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal Narayan Prakash Saud. On 04 January, the two Ministers co-chaired the 7th meeting of the India-Nepal Joint Commission, which reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation. The then Foreign Minister Saud participated in the Raisina Dialogue 2024 held in New Delhi on 21-23 February. During the visit, he met EAM as well as high-level dignitaries of other participating countries. Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal Arzu Rana Deuba made an official visit to India on 18-22 August, during which she called on the Prime Minister and met the EAM.

Ministerial-level visits

As a part of the incoming visits to the country, the then Minister of Youth & Sports of Nepal Dig Bahadur Limbu attended the opening ceremony of the BIMSTEC Aquatics

Championship held in New Delhi on 06-09 February and met the then Minister for Information & Broadcasting and Youth Affairs & Sports. Minister for Industry, Commerce and Supplies of Nepal Damodar Bhandari visited India in August to attend the Plenary Session of the BIMSTEC Business Summit. Subsequently, he visited New Delhi in December to attend the 29th Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Partnership Summit. On the sidelines of the Summit, Minister Bhandari held meetings with EAM, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, and Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution. Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation of Nepal Badri Prasad Pandey visited New Delhi in September to attend the 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation. Minister for Health and Population of Nepal Pradip Paudel visited India in October for 77th Session of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Committee for South-East Asia. Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation of Nepal Dipak Bahadur Khadka attended the 7th General Assembly of International Solar Alliance (ISA) in New Delhi on 05 November. He met the Minister of Consumer Affairs & Food and Public Distribution and the Minister of New and Renewable Energy of India on the sidelines of the summit.

As a part of outgoing visits to Nepal, Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports visited Kathmandu on 24 August. During his visit, he and Home Minister of Nepal Ramesh Lekhak met 16 Indian nationals who were injured in a road accident and were undergoing treatment.



Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal Arzu Rana Deuba called on Prime Minister during her official visit to India, August 2024.

Other Important Visits

Foreign Secretary of Nepal Sewa Lamsal made two visits to India this year. Secretary Lamsal participated in the 8th Asia Economic Dialogue (AED), held in Pune on 29 February-02 March and attended the 2nd BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat held in New Delhi on 11 July.

The Chief Justice of India (CJI) visited Kathmandu on 03 May for a three-day visit at the invitation of the then Chief Justice of Nepal Bishwambhar Prasad Shrestha. During his visit, the CJI also delivered a keynote address at a National Symposium on Juvenile Justice.

Following the appointment of the new government in June, Foreign Secretary paid an official visit to Nepal on 11-12 August, upon the invitation of Secretary Lamsal. During the meeting, both sides reviewed the progress made in various bilateral initiatives as well as developmental projects and discussed opportunities for further collaboration.

The Speaker of Lok Sabha of India met Chairperson of National Assembly of Nepal Narayan Prasad Dahal, on the sidelines of 149th General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva, Switzerland on 16 October.

Delegation Level Visits

As a part of outgoing delegation level visits to Nepal, the 11th meeting of the Joint Working Group on Power Sector Cooperation (JWG) was held in Kathmandu on 03 January. The JWG was co-chaired by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Power and as well as Joint Secretary from Nepal's Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Nabin Raj Singh. A delegation from the 64th course of India's National Defence College (NDC), comprising 21 senior officers from civil services and Defence Forces of India as well as friendly foreign countries including Australia, Bhutan,

Japan, Kazakhstan, Oman and USA visited Nepal on 01-05 September.

As a part of incoming delegation-level visits, an 8-Member Parliamentary delegation from Nepal, led by Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on International Relations & Tourism (PCIRT) Raj Kishore Yadav, visited India on 30 January-07 February. MEA organised an exposure visit for a 10-member delegation from Humla, Nepal to India, covering cities of New Delhi, Hapur, Shimla, Ahmedabad and Ayodhya to observe urban development practices on 22-31 July. The visit was covered under a grant by the Indian government. 26 diplomats and officers from the Government of Nepal visited India to participate in the 1st Special Course for diplomats and officers from Nepal, organised by the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) on 20-29 November in New Delhi.

Bilateral Mechanism Meetings

In February, the 3rd Joint Project Monitoring Committee for the National Police Academy met in virtual-mode to review progress and address various project-related issues. The 8th India-Nepal Saschastra Seema Bal-Armed Police Force (SSB-APF) Coordination Meeting was held in Kathmandu on 18 November. Both sides agreed to enhance their coordination to ensure a smooth movement of citizens of both countries across the open borders.

Defence and Security Cooperation

India has played a vital role in modernisation and capability enhancement of the Nepali Army by provisioning various types of defence stores and imparting regular training to its personnel. The Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of the Indian Army visited Nepal on 20-24 November. During this visit he was conferred the Honourary Rank of General of the



An Indian Army contingent led by a battalion from the 11th Gorkha Rifles participated in the 18th edition of India-Nepal bilateral Exercise 'SURYA KIRAN' conducted at Nepali Army Battle School in Saljhandi, December 2024.

Nepali Army (NA) by the President of Nepal Ram Chandra Paudel. COAS called on the President of Nepal, the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister during the visit. He also visited Pokhara and addressed a rally of the Nepal-domiciled Gorkha ex-servicemen. Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of the Nepali Army General Ashok Raj Sigdel made a reciprocal visit to India on 11-14 December, for his investiture ceremony as the Honorary General of the Indian Army. During the visit, General Sigdel held important discussions with Raksha Mantri, NSA, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Defence Secretary and Foreign Secretary.

The 18th edition of Exercise 'SURYA KIRAN' was conducted at Nepali Army Battle School (NABS) in Saljhandi, Nepal on 29 December 2024 to 13 January 2025. The Indian Army contingent comprised of 300 regular troops and 34 troops of Special Forces. The annual exercise is conducted at the Battalion level, alternately in both the countries. 505 personnel from Nepali Army also attended various training courses in India this year.

The Nepali Army also issued supply orders worth USD 82 million to Indian companies for supply of defence stores this year. At present, nearly 32,000 Gorkha Soldiers from Nepal are serving in the Indian Army. In addition to these soldiers, there are about 1.20 lakh Indian Armed Forces pensioners residing in Nepal. The Indian Army laid out extensive welfare schemes to support its pensioners.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

India was Nepal's largest trading partner in FY 2023-2024, with bilateral trade pegged at USD 7.87 billion. Investments by Indian firms in Nepal account for nearly 33 per cent of its FDI stock, amounting to USD 7.44 billion. India's top exports to Nepal include - petroleum, iron and steel machinery, cereals and vehicles, whereas its top imports from Nepal include - edible oils, tea, spices, cement, plywood and synthetic yarn.

The interoperability between India's UPI and Nepal's FonePay payment service was operationalised in March. This will enable Indian visitors to conduct transactions at FonePay-enabled QR codes in Nepali merchant establishments, using Indian UPI apps.

Power and Energy Cooperation

Nepal commenced the export of over 900 MW of power to India, as established by the Long-Term Power Trade Agreement signed between the Governments of India

and Nepal on 04 January. During EAM's visit to Nepal in January, he inaugurated three crucial 132 kV cross-border transmission lines, further enhancing energy cooperation between the two nations. This development aims to increase power exports from Nepal to India upto 10,000 MW within ten years, promoting mutually beneficial investments in Nepal's hydropower sector and transmission infrastructure. Marking a significant milestone, the first trilateral power transaction from Nepal to Bangladesh via the Indian grid was inaugurated on 15 November.

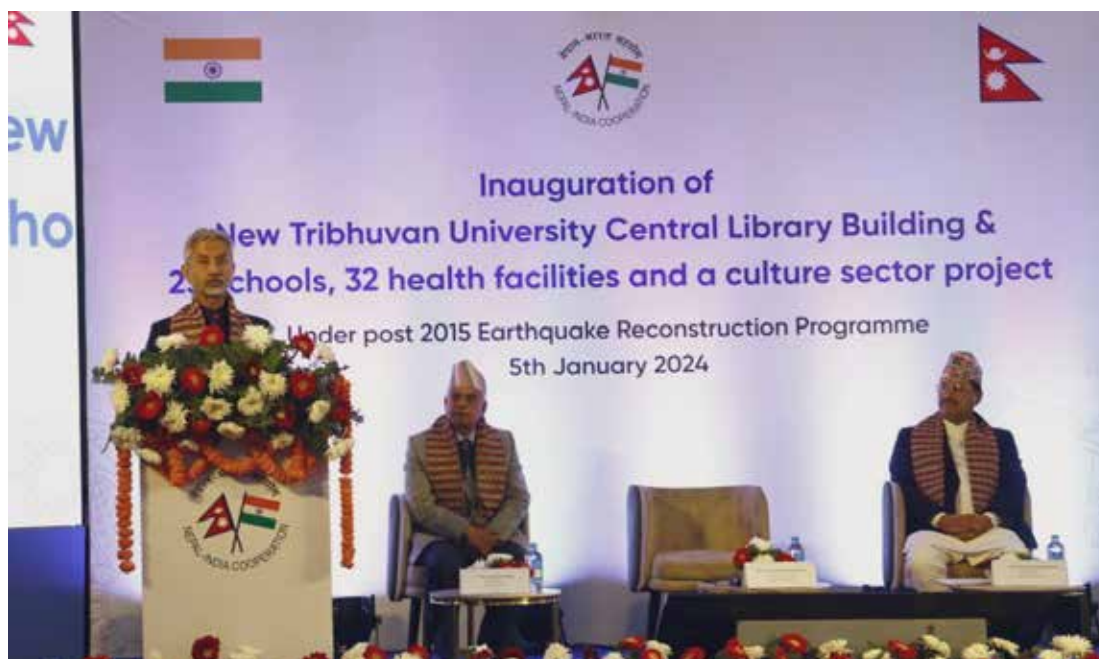
Development Cooperation

In the aftermath of the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake in Nepal, Government of India committed USD 1 billion to supplement the efforts of Government of Nepal in reconstruction. Additionally, both governments signed a USD 250 million in-grant commitment for the implementation of projects under post-earthquake reconstruction across four sectors namely housing, education, health and cultural heritage.

Over the last decade, there has been substantial progress in HICDPs across all four sectors including healthcare, education and cultural heritage sector. The Indian government handed over 32 projects in the health sector, 1 project in the education sector (Tribhuvan University Central Library) and 3 projects in the cultural heritage sector to the Nepali government. India also completed 43 projects in the health sector and 9 projects in the cultural heritage sector. Additionally, payments amounting to USD 14.9 million (USD 5.4 million in cultural heritage and USD 9.5 million in health sector) have been made to Nepal's government in this period.

On 04 January, EAM announced that the Government of India will provide a financial assistance package of approx. USD 720 million, with a major portion under grant assistance to support reconstruction efforts, following the Jajarkot earthquake. EAM's visit also witnessed the signing of a Revised Agreement for implementation of HICDPs, aimed at enhancing financial ceiling of each HICDP from USD 5,75,805 to USD 23.03 million.

On 14 April, the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu gifted ambulances and school buses to various organisations working in the health and education sector across different districts in the country, during a ceremony attended by government officials and community representatives. The initiative was aimed at solidifying the spirit of cooperation and goodwill between India and Nepal.



EAM and the then Foreign Minister of Nepal N.P. Saud jointly inaugurated Nepal's biggest Tribhuvan University Central Library as well as 32 schools and 25 hospitals under India's post-earthquake reconstruction program in the education and health sectors of Nepal, January 2024.

Education, Cultural Cooperation and People-to-People Exchanges

Cultural exchanges between India and Nepal flourished with the inauguration of the Jestha Varna Mahavihara in Lalitpur and the Nepal Bhasa Parishad in Kathmandu, showcasing a collaborative effort to preserve and promote heritage. The Nepal Bhasa Parishad was jointly inaugurated by Foreign Secretary and Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development of Nepal on 11 August. Additionally, the ground breaking for the Listikot Gumba in Sindhupalchowk was held on 21 March and the 2nd edition of the India-Nepal Cultural Festival organized by the Embassy of India and the Lumbini Development Trust was held in December; further emphasising bilateral initiatives to boost cultural cooperation.

1245 Nepalese students applied to appear in the Institute of National Importance Combined Entrance Test (INI-CET) for admission into PG medical courses (MD/MS/DM) to study across institutions including All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) campuses, Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research (JIPMER), National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS) as well as Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) in India. 05 Nepali students were allotted UG seats to pursue BE/B.Pharmacy/Architect/Diploma courses and 30 students were allotted

MBBS/BDS courses this year, under the Government of India's Self-Financing Scheme (SFS).

Nepalese students also receive approximately 1,400 scholarship slots annually for various academic programs in institutions across both India and Nepal. As of December, 1001 scholarships have been awarded to Nepalese students by the Government of India. Under the ITEC Programme, 265 participants from Nepal were trained during this period.

Support in Crisis Situations

In the aftermath of a road accident in the Anbukhaireni region of Tanahu District in August, where 27 Indian nationals lost their lives and 16 passengers sustained injuries; the Indian government coordinated the airlift of mortal remains of the deceased to Jalgaon (India) and evacuated the injured to Kathmandu for specialist medical treatment.

In October, India provided over 25 tonnes of humanitarian aid, including essential hygiene supplies, medicines, life jackets, sleeping mats, food items, inflatable rubber boats, motors, tarpaulins, sleeping bags, blankets, chlorine tablets, and bottled water to support families affected by the floods and landslides in Nepal. Further, a consignment of components for ten prefabricated steel bridges was handed over by the Indian government to Nepal. Requested by Government of Nepal, these bridges will contribute towards Nepal's reconstruction efforts to restore the road connectivity that was disrupted due to recent floods and landslides.



India handed over the 5th tranche of post-Jajarkot earthquake relief supply to Nepal, January 2024.

Pakistan

India desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan and has consistently maintained that issues between the two countries should be resolved bilaterally and peacefully. This requires the creation of a conducive environment, free of terror, violence and hostilities. India however continues to face cross-border terrorism as well hostile and fabricated propaganda generated by Pakistan. In August 2019, Pakistan downgraded the bilateral ties with India, including suspension of bilateral trade, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges.

Pakistan engages in disinformation campaigns and anti-India propaganda globally to vilify India. The Indian government has completely and unequivocally rejected in entirety, all such actions and statements by Pakistan on matters which are completely internal to India. The Government of India continues to engage the international community on its position as well as Pakistan's role in aiding and abetting terrorism in the region, particularly against India in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and beyond.

Pakistan sponsored cross-border terrorism remains a core concern. India has persistently asked Pakistan to respect the January 2004 commitment of not allowing its soil/ territory under its control to be used for terrorism against India. There has been no let-up in cross-border terrorism. The use of military-grade weapons, drones, communication equipment and under-ground tunnels for infiltration by terrorists, as well as smuggling of arms and narcotics into India across the Line of Control and the International Boundary clearly points

to the existence of a state-supported terrorist ecosystem directed against India.

India has consistently urged Pakistan to take concrete, verifiable and irreversible steps to curb terrorism emanating from Pakistan. Several UN designated terrorists and terrorist entities continue to thrive in Pakistan. Pakistan has not demonstrated any sincerity in delivering justice to the families of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks.

India continues to raise the issue of terrorism emanating from Pakistan directed at India, at various bilateral and multilateral fora including at the UN. Instances of cross-border infiltration, ceasefire violations, illegal construction along the border, smuggling of narcotics and weapons and violation of bilateral agreements have also been regularly raised through diplomatic channels with Pakistan. This has led to a greater awareness in the international community on Pakistan's use of terrorism as a tool of statecraft.

In February 2021, a ceasefire understanding was reached between Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMO) of India and Pakistan.

High Level Visits

On 05 March, Prime Minister congratulated Shehbaz Sharif on being sworn in as Prime Minister of Pakistan through a social media post. In an act of reciprocity, Prime Minister Sharif extended his wishes to the Prime Minister on his re-election on 10 June. Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif also conveyed greetings to the Prime Minister through social media platform 'X'.

EAM attended the 23rd Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government, held in Islamabad on 15-16 October. Secretary (Commerce) participated in the 23rd SCO Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Economic and Foreign Trade Activity in virtual-mode, on 12 September.

Religious Pilgrimages

Visits of pilgrims between India and Pakistan are facilitated under the 1974 Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines. In 2024, India facilitated the visits of 5609 Indian pilgrims across various shrines to Pakistan on the occasions of Baisakhi, Barsi of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Gurupurab, and twice to Katasraj Dham. During the same period, the government also facilitated the visit of 570 Pakistani pilgrims to religious shrines in India as part of five pilgrimages (Urs of Hazrat Amir Khusro, Urs of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, Urs of Hazrat Mujaddid Alf Sani, Urs of Hazrat Khwaja Allahudin Ali Ahmad Sabir and Urs of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya).

In October 2024, India and Pakistan extended the validity of the Agreement to facilitate the pilgrimage to the holy Gurdwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur (Kartarpur Agreement) for another five years. This development aims to facilitate smooth access and visa-free travel for Indian pilgrims as well as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders, from India to the holy Gurudwara Darbar Sahib located in Kartarpur, Pakistan on a daily basis, throughout the year. The agreement was signed in October 2019 and was valid for a period of 5 years. In 2024, the Indian government facilitated the visit of 1,14,702 pilgrims to the holy Gurdwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur in Narowal, Pakistan through the Kartarpur Corridor.

Humanitarian Issues - Prisoners and Fishermen

In line with the understanding reached under the 2008 Bilateral Agreement on Consular Access, India and Pakistan exchanged lists of prisoners and fishermen in each other's custody on 01 July. Pakistan acknowledged the custody of 43 civilian prisoners and 211 fishermen who are either Indians or are believed to be Indians. Similarly, there are 366 civilian prisoners and 86 fishermen from Pakistan in Indian custody. As a result of persistent efforts by the Government, 2639 Indian fishermen and 71 Indian civilian prisoners have been repatriated from Pakistan since 2014. India has sought early consular access, release and repatriation of the remaining Indian nationals in Pakistan's custody.

Treatment of Minorities in Pakistan

Given the persecution of minority communities in Pakistan, the Government of India has raised the issue of atrocities against the members of these groups in Pakistan on several

occasions. India has also conveyed its concerns regarding the incidents of vandalism/desecration of places of worship and cultural heritage of minority communities as well as discrimination, killing, abduction, forced conversion and marriages of the members of the minority communities in Pakistan.

Sri Lanka

India is Sri Lanka's closest neighbour and occupies a central place in India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and vision of 'Security and Growth for All in the Region' (SAGAR). Bilateral relations further intensified, building upon the unconditional financial assistance extended in 2022 and adoption of the Vision Document titled "Promoting Connectivity, Catalysing Prosperity: India -Sri Lanka Economic Partnership vision" in 2023. Bilateral engagements were continued through various leadership-level engagements and initiatives focused on deepening economic, developmental, cultural and people-to-people ties.

High Level Visits

The then President of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe visited India on 09-10 June to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister. The then President Wickremesinghe also attended the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit, held in virtual-mode on 17 August.

The incumbent President of Sri Lanka Anura Kumara Disسانayake made a State Visit to India on 15-17 December. This was his maiden foreign visit since assuming Presidency. He was accompanied by Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath. A Joint Statement titled "Fostering Partnership for a Shared Future" was adopted by the Prime Minister and President Disسانayake. As a part of the visit, the Prime Minister announced an annual financial assistance scheme for 100 new students each, from the University of Jaffna and the Eastern University. He also announced grant assistance of USD 14.9 million for a railway signaling project. In addition, India's National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) and the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA) signed a MoU on Training and Capacity Building Programme for 1500 Civil Servants of Sri Lanka over five years, along with a Protocol to amend the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. Beyond the official engagements of the State Visit, President Disسانayake also interacted with select CEOs from fields including IT, start-up ecosystem, agriculture, renewable energy, textile, and automobiles, as a part of a business event held in New Delhi. As the leader of National People's Power, Disسانayake had previously visited India under ICCR's 'Distinguished Visitors Programme' in February 2024. During the visit, he met EAM, NSA and the then Foreign Secretary and also visited Ahmedabad and Thiruvananthapuram.



President of Sri Lanka Anura Kumara Dissanayake received a ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhawan during his State Visit to New Delhi, December 2024.

EAM paid an official visit to Sri Lanka on 20 June. It was the first bilateral visit undertaken by EAM after his re-appointment in June. During the visit, EAM called on the then President Ranil Wickremesinghe, then Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena and held detailed discussions with the then Foreign Minister M.U.M. Ali Sabry. EAM also met the Leader of Opposition Sajith Premadasa and leaders representing Sri Lankan and Upcountry Tamils.

On 04 October, EAM became the first foreign dignitary to be received by the newly sworn-in President Dissanayake, during his second visit to the country this year. EAM called on President Dissanayake, Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya, and held discussions with his counterpart, Minister Herath. EAM conveyed India's strong commitment to advance bilateral cooperation based on its 'Neighbourhood First' policy and SAGAR outlook.

NSA visited Colombo on 29-30 August to sign the Founding Documents of the CSC. During the visit, NSA called on the then President Wickremesinghe, the then Prime Minister Gunawardena and held bilateral discussions with the then National Security Advisor of Sri Lanka Sagala Ratnayaka.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

India and Sri Lanka continued discussions on the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement (ETCA), with the 13th round of talks held on 08-10 January in New Delhi and the 14th round of negotiations held on 24-26 July in Colombo.

On 12 February, Unified Payment Interface (UPI) QR-based

payment was jointly launched in Sri Lanka by Prime Minister along with the then President Ranil Wickremesinghe in presence of the then Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth and the Governor of Reserve Bank of India, in virtual-mode. The 5th meeting of the India – Sri Lanka Joint Working Group (JWG) for Cooperation in the Power Sector and the inaugural meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Renewable Energy were held in Colombo on 28 February and 11 March respectively. Adding further momentum to the UPI services in Sri Lanka, PhonePe in partnership with LankaPay, launched the PhonePe UPI payments in Sri Lanka on 15 May.

The passenger ferry service between Nagapattinam in India and Kankesanthurai (KKS) near Jaffna in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka was resumed on 16 August. The ferry service was previously launched in October 2023, but suspended shortly after. Petronet LNG Limited (PLL), India, and LTL Holdings Limited, Sri Lanka signed a MoU on 20 August for LNG Infrastructure Development and LNG Supply to Sri Lanka.

As co-chair of the Official Creditor Committee, India continued its support for Sri Lanka for the early finalisation of the debt restructuring programme with bilateral creditors. The dues of Asian Clearing Union and Swap framework were rolled over by India in October, for a period of six months as a goodwill gesture. Additionally, India has been supporting Sri Lanka in its engagements with International Monetary Fund (IMF).



Prime Minister and the then President of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe jointly launched Unified Payment Interface (UPI) QR-based payment in Sri Lanka in presence of the then Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth and the then Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in virtual-mode, February 2024.

Development Cooperation

In June, the then President of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe and EAM jointly handed over 48 houses under Model Village Housing Project in Colombo and Trincomalee districts and 106 houses under Phase III of the Indian Housing Project in Kandy, Matale and Nuwara Eliya districts in a testament to the comprehensive and people-centric nature of India-Sri Lanka development cooperation. During EAM's visit to Colombo on 04 October, he announced the extension of grant assistance to cover payments related to completed LOC projects to the tune of USD 20.66 million and grant assistance to modernise Kankesanthurai port to the tune of USD 61.5 million. He also announced gifting of 22 diesel locomotives to the Sri Lankan Railways.

A two-story state-of-the-art new surgical unit at Teaching Hospital Batticaloa built with Indian grant assistance of USD 1.01 million was inaugurated in November. The Indian government also installed Solar PV Rooftop Systems at 5000 religious sites across Sri Lanka, as a part of its USD 17 million assistance.

In 2024, India undertook three programmes for the plantation community as a part of the multi-sectoral grant assistance of nearly USD 8.64 million announced by the Prime Minister in July 2023 to mark the 200th anniversary of the arrival of the Indian-origin Tamil community in Sri Lanka. These programmes include a 3-month teacher training program in STEM subjects for over 2000 teachers in plantation schools, distribution of 10,000 school bags and 30,000 note books among students, and donation of 4000 solar lanterns to beneficiaries of the Indian Housing Project.

Education and Capacity Building

A delegation led by Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances visited Sri Lanka in July and held discussions on capacity building of Sri Lanka civil service officers in India. Four training programs at the NCGG were successfully completed in 2024 under the ITEC framework, benefitting 160 Sri Lanka civil service officers.

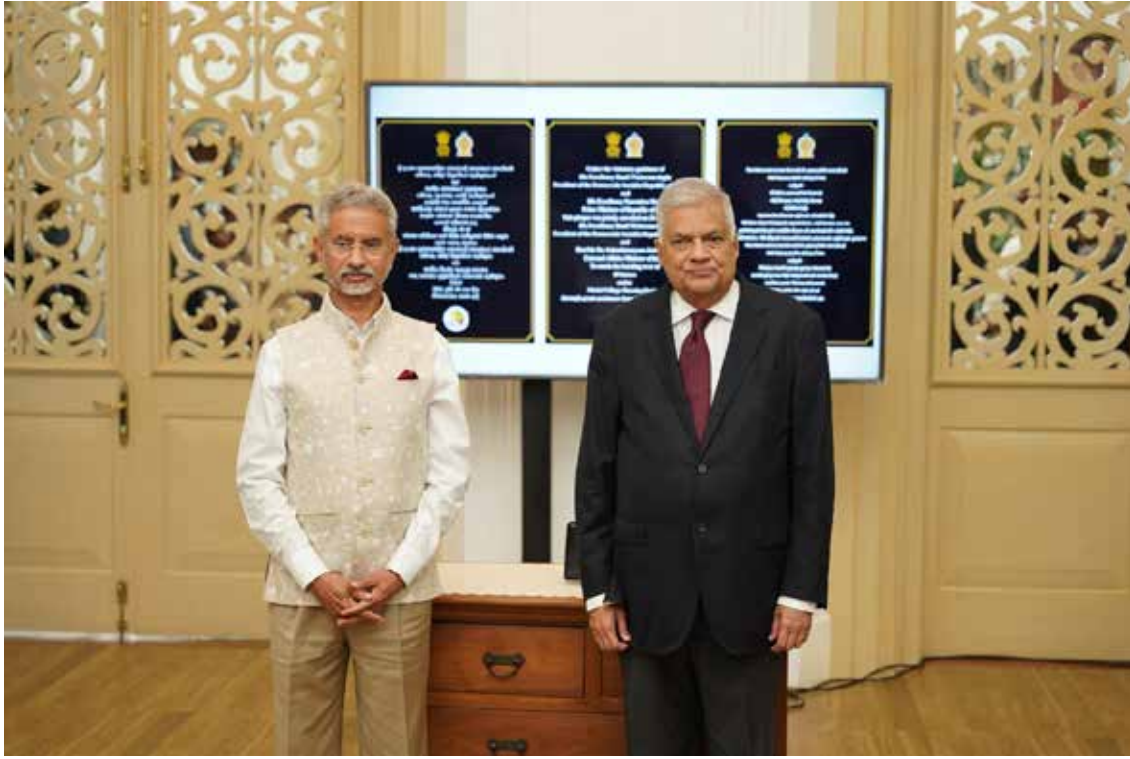
A seven-day special course for Sri Lankan diplomats and officers was organized on 05-13 August at the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), New Delhi, at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka.

Defence Cooperation

Vice Admiral Priyantha Perera, Commander of Sri Lanka Navy visited India on 14-19 April to participate in the INDO-US Joint Naval War College conference at Goa.

The installation of Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC), a nerve centre for Search and Rescue operations established with an Indian grant of USD 6 million was commissioned during EAM's visit to Colombo on 20 June. The 10th India-Sri Lanka Army-to-Army Staff Talk was conducted on 09 July at Colombo, while the 7th Indian Coast Guard-Sri Lankan Coast Guard High Level Meeting was held on 10-13 November in Colombo.

Several Indian Naval Ships / Coast Guard Ships and Submarines visited Sri Lanka in 2024, bringing the total number of port calls to 12. The Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Sachet' handed over essential spare parts worth USD 1.2 million on gratis for Sri Lanka Coast Guard Ship 'Suraksha'.



EAM and the then President of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe virtually commissioned the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Colombo, June 2024.

while visiting Colombo on 19-21 June. Artificial limb camps were organized on 03 May-24 June in Colombo and Jaffna by Jaipur-based Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti, benefitting several Sri Lankan Ministry of Defence and civilian personnel.

Fisheries

The 6th round of Joint Working Group (JWG) on Fisheries was held in Colombo on 29 October. The JWG undertook a comprehensive review of all relevant issues pertaining to fishermen and the fisheries sector.

CHAPTER

2

Indian Ocean Region

Comoros

India and Comoros enjoy a warm relationship that is characterized by historical and cultural linkages. India sees Comoros as a close neighbour in the Indian Ocean region in line with India's Vision 'Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)'. Key areas of cooperation between the two countries include development partnership, capacity building and diaspora engagement.

Bilateral Cooperation

Ambassador of India to Comoros represented India at the Investiture Ceremony of the President of Comoros Azali Assoumani on 26 May in Moroni.

Minister of Interior and the then Acting Foreign Minister of Comoros Fakridine Mahamoud participated virtually in the 2nd Foreign Minister's session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

Economic, Trade and Digital Cooperation

In 2023-24, bilateral trade between two countries stood at USD 46.6 million, with Indian exports amounting to USD 27.95 million and imports amounting to USD 18.65 million. Top import commodities included iron and steel, copper, aluminum and cloves, while top export commodities included rice, meat, cotton, sugar, textiles, and so on.

Defence and Security

Commander of the Moroni Naval Base Lt Siradji Chamsidine represented Comoros as an Observer at "Milan 2024" Naval Exercise held from 19-27 February in Visakhapatnam.

Head of Operations of the Comorian Coast Guard Capt. Elmir Mohamed Ahmed participated in the 2nd edition of MAHASAGAR (Maritime Heads for Active Security and Growth for all in the Region) meeting hosted by the then Chief of Naval Staff on 02 April, virtually.

Commander of the Comorian Coast Guard Lt. Col. Azad Ahamada participated in the 3rd edition of MAHASAGAR hosted by the Chief of Naval Staff on 05 November in virtual format.

Cultural and People to People Cooperation

A 12-member cultural group from Comoros participated in the 37th Surajkund International Handicrafts Mela held from 02-18 February, in Surajkund, Haryana.

Multilateral Cooperation

The then Foreign Minister of Comoros Dhohir Dhoulkamal participated in the 7th Indian Ocean Conference held from 09-10 February in Perth, Australia.



Prime Minister met President of Madagascar Andry Rajoelina on the sidelines of the World Governments Summit in February 2024 in Dubai

Madagascar

2024 witnessed further consolidation of India-Madagascar bilateral relations, given that the latter holds a special place in India's Vision SAGAR.

Bilateral interactions

On 14 February, Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with President of Madagascar Andry Rajoelina on the sidelines of the World Governments Summit in Dubai, and discussed ways to further strengthen India-Madagascar relations.

Interactions at the Ministerial level continued in 2024. EAM held talks with Foreign Minister of Madagascar Rasata Rafaravavitaika on the sidelines of the 7th Indian Ocean Conference on 10 February, in Perth, Australia. In August, Madagascar was represented by the Minister of Economy and Finance and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Youth and Sports at the 3rd edition of VoGSS.

The President of Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) of Madagascar visited India from 29-31 January and met the Chief Election Commissioner. Two representatives of CENI also took part in the International Election Visitors' Programme organized by the Election Commission of India, in New Delhi, from 04-09 May for the 2024 General Elections.

Development cooperation, economy and culture

A 15-member cultural troupe from Madagascar took part in the 37th Surajkund International Handicrafts Mela, held from 02-18 February, in Surajkund, Haryana.

Development cooperation between the two countries has deepened over the years. On 27 June, both sides signed a MoU on Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters, strengthening mutual capacity building in customs matters. In June, 14 Malagasy diplomats participated in the 1st Special Course organized at the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, New Delhi.

On 04 September, the Solar Power System installed at the National Assembly of Madagascar under India's grant assistance, was jointly inaugurated by the President of National Assembly of Madagascar, Acting Foreign Minister and India's Ambassador to Madagascar.

The first ever 'Jaipur Foot Camp' was organized from 12 November, in Antananarivo, which provided free-of-cost artificial limbs for more than 500 specially challenged people in Madagascar. First Lady of Madagascar, Malagasy's Minister of Public Health, and other senior government officials graced the inauguration ceremony of the camp.

An India Corner was launched by the Minister of Communication and Culture of Madagascar and India's

Ambassador to Madagascar, at the National Library of Madagascar in Antananarivo, on 06 December.

On 10 December, India gifted three trucks to CENI, prior to the conduct of municipal elections in Madagascar. The handing-over ceremony was attended by the President of CENI and the Minister of Transport and Meteorology of Madagascar.

Defence cooperation

India and Madagascar have enhanced communication between their navies through regular naval exercises. Chief of Naval Staff of Madagascar represented the country as an Observer at 'Milan 2024' Exercise in February, in Visakhapatnam. Madagascar also participated in MAHASAGAR meetings hosted by India in virtual format in April and November.

Mauritius

India and Mauritius share close relations, with strong people-to-people ties at its core. The relationship lies at the intersection of our Vision SAGAR and our commitment to

the Global South. It continues to expand to cooperation in maritime security, ICT, health care, development partnership, and disaster management.

Bilateral cooperation

2024 witnessed several high-level visits. Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji undertook a State Visit to Mauritius from 11-13 March. She graced the Mauritius National Day celebrations on 12 March as the Chief Guest, on invitation of the Government of Mauritius. She also announced extension of OCI card to seventh generation Mauritians of Indian-origin and India's assistance to redevelop the Ganga Talao complex. Among other things, Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji also witnessed the exchange of four MoUs in the fields of finance, civil services, taxation and anti-corruption.

The then Vice-President of Mauritius Marie Cyril Eddy Boissézon participated in the 19th CII India Africa Business Conclave from 20-22 August.

Prime Minister and the then Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth jointly launched UPI and Rupay card services on 12 February. They also inaugurated the airstrip and jetty at Agalega, on 29 February.



Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji held talks with President of Mauritius Prithvirajsing Roopun in Port Louis, March 2024



Prime Minister and the then Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth virtually inaugurated an airstrip and jetty in Agalega, February 2024

The then Prime Minister Jugnauth visited India from 09-11 June, to participate in the swearing-in of the Prime Minister. He also participated in the Inaugural Leaders' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

Following Mauritius' general elections held on 10 November, Prime Minister congratulated the newly elected Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam and invited him to visit India.

EAM paid an official visit to Mauritius from 16-17 July. During the visit, India-assisted projects were inaugurated and MoUs in the field of space, education and culture were exchanged. Attorney General and the then Foreign Affairs Minister of Mauritius Maneesh Gobin visited India and participated in the 9th Raisina Dialogue, from 21-23 February. The then Minister of Financial Services Soomil Duth Bholah visited India from 14-24 March, and 04-11 August, to participate in financial services promotion campaigns.

On 24 January, Chief Justice of Mauritius Bibi Rehana Mungly-Gulbul visited India and participated in the commemoration of the 75th year of founding of the Supreme Court of India. The then Mauritius National Assembly Speaker Adrien Duval visited India from 16-18 August and discussed ways to strengthen relations between the Parliaments of both countries.

The Governor of Bank of Mauritius visited India from 02-05 October to hold discussions with the Ministry of Finance. Election Commissioner of Mauritius, Mohammed Irfan Abdool Rahman visited India for the International Election Visitors' programme from 29 May-09 June.

Multilateral cooperation

Mauritius signed the Charter and MoU for the establishment of the Colombo Security Conclave Secretariat in Sri Lanka on 30 August. A 25-kilowatt solar rooftop demonstration project, developed as part of International Solar Alliance, was inaugurated at Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital in Mauritius on 03 June.

Development cooperation

Development cooperation was enhanced by completing projects such as the airstrip and jetty at Agalega, Civil Service College, Mediclinic and Area Health Centres at New Grove and Cap Malheureux. EAM inaugurated an India-assisted Mediclinic in Grand Bois, along with the first overseas Jan Aushadhi Kendra on 17 July.

Ongoing projects include supply of e-buses, the National Archives and Library Building, and the Forensic Science Lab among others.

On 17 October, India extended first-ever rupee denominated LoC for INR 487.60 crores to Mauritius for financing of a water pipeline replacement project under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS). The project envisages replacement of approximately 100 km of water pipeline in Mauritius. Further, 50 High Impact Community Development Projects funded by India have been completed.

Defence and Security Cooperation

India completed the refit of CGS Victory in April on gratis basis, while refit of CGS Valiant is underway in Visakhapatnam. India has also committed to undertake the refit of CGS Barracuda in coming months. NSG provided training to four batches of Mauritius Police Force in anti-hijacking, hostage rescue, and counter-terrorism operations, in India. SPG conducted training for the VIP Security Unit of Mauritius from 01-05 July. Indian Navy and Coast Guard ships including INS Tir, INS Sujata, ICGS Sarathi among others, made port calls at Mauritius during the year.

Economy, Trade and Digital cooperation

During the visit of Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji from 11-13 March, a protocol to amend India-Mauritius Double Tax Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) to make it compliant with Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Minimum Standards, and a MoU between International Financial Services Centres Authority (GIFT City) and Financial Services Commission of Mauritius were signed. On 25 April, a MoU was signed between the African Peer Review Mechanism and the India based Care Ratings (Africa) for technical and financial collaboration in setting up an African Credit Rating Agency.

On 06 May, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade at the Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry, approved a special exemption for the export of 14,000 metric tons of white non-basmati rice to Mauritius.

Cultural and People to people cooperation

A delegation of ten Mauritian youth delegates participated in the Republic Day Camp from 14-29 January in Delhi, and visited Agra and Jaipur as part of National Cadet Corps Youth Exchange Programme. Mauritius hosted Vishwarang 2024, an International Hindi Conference, from 07-09 August. This event was organized in collaboration with several institutions including the World Hindi Secretariat and the Rabindranath Tagore University in Bhopal. During Vishwarang 2024 at the Rabindranath Tagore Institute, the then President of Mauritius, Prithvirajsing Roopun, unveiled a statue of Rabindranath Tagore. The event was attended by approximately 150 delegates from 20 countries.

Seychelles

India and Seychelles enjoy friendly bilateral relations. India views Seychelles as a crucial partner in the Indian Ocean region, aligning with its Vision SAGAR. Seychelles considers India a reliable partner for development assistance and capacity building, while also supporting it in multilateral forums. Key areas of cooperation between the two countries

encompass development partnership, defence collaboration, capacity building initiatives, and diaspora engagement.

Bilateral Engagements

Vice President of Seychelles Ahmed Afif visited New Delhi from 08-10 June. During the visit he called on Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, attended the Prime Minister's swearing-in ceremony, and held talks with EAM.



EAM met Vice-President of Seychelles Ahmed Afif in New Delhi, June 2024

Minister for Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment of Seychelles Flavien Joubert participated in the India Energy Week from 06-09 February in Goa, discussing energy and climate cooperation. He also represented Seychelles at the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

Institutional cooperation included CAG India signing a MoU on Public Sector Audit during a visit to Seychelles from 21-22 October. Seychelles Electoral Commission officials including Chairperson Danny Lucas visited India from 05-07 May, to observe the conduct and process of the general elections.

Development Cooperation

India continued its socio-economic partnership with Seychelles in 2024, by completing a USD 10 million LoC



The 10th India-Seychelles Exercise LAMITIYE was held in Victoria, March 2024

programme, supplying 60 Ashok Leyland buses. Under the High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs), renovation of three schools were completed, and road projects under the USD 2.9 million HICDP Phase-II began. This is expected to be completed by mid-2025. India trained 75 Seychelles citizens under ITEC civil and defence programmes. In July, 200 tonnes of non-basmati rice were delivered under a special export waiver. A 5 MT solar cold storage facility funded by the International Solar Alliance was commissioned on Praslin Island in October.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

India-Seychelles bilateral trade witnessed 14.6 percent growth in 2023-24. The value of trade stood at USD 40.7 million in the period between April and September, with Indian exports amounting to USD 38.5 million and imports amounting to USD 2.2 million.

Defence Cooperation

Seychelles Defence Forces vessel PS Zoroaster participated in 'Milan 2024' Exercise in February, in Visakhapatnam. It underwent a refit at Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd (GRSE) in Kolkata, before returning to Seychelles in June. The 10th India-Seychelles Exercise LAMITIYE was held in Victoria in March.

In the US-led 'Cutlass Express' Exercise in Seychelles, INS Tir participated, demonstrating India's commitment to

enhance security of IOR. INS Sunayna visited Seychelles for the 48th National Day celebrations in June, with its Advanced Light Helicopter performing a fly-past and demonstration.

In February, two Dornier aircraft gifted by India were repaired at HAL Kanpur, with spares delivered by INS Tir. Seychelles participated in multiple Indian multilateral defence events, including MAHASAGAR, Goa Maritime Symposium, and CSC seminars. A delegation from India's Hydrographic Office visited Seychelles in November to enhance hydrography cooperation with the newly constituted Seychelles Standing Committee on Hydrography in the presence of Minister of Transport Antony Derjacques and Chief of Seychelles Defence Forces Brigadier Michael Rosette.

Cultural Cooperation

Multiple cultural events were organized in 2024, furthering people-to-people engagement. The Seychelles-India Day was reinstated after six years in partnership with Indian diaspora organizations. Organized from 03-15 August, the event consisted of National Chess Tournament, Men's and Women's Cricket Matches, performances by the visiting ICCR dance troupe, cultural extravaganza and India-Seychelles Cuisine Food Festival.

An ICCR dance troupe visited Seychelles from 12-15 August and performed at the National History Museum, ICCS National Auditorium and the National Sports Council Hall. The troupe also organized a Kathak workshop.

CHAPTER

3

South East Asia & Oceania

India's engagement with the South East Asia and Oceania regions continued to expand and deepen on various levels this year.

Australia

The India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) witnessed transformational growth in and was further strengthened across diverse sectors, including defence and security, trade and investment, education and research, cyber and space, sports, mining and critical minerals, renewable energy, and mobility of people.

The second India-Australia Annual Summit was held on 19 November in Rio de Janeiro. A Joint Statement was issued on the occasion. The India-Australia Renewable Energy Partnership was launched prior to the Annual Summit fulfilling a commitment agreed at the first Annual Summit which was held in March 2023. Earlier Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Australia Anthony Albanese on the sidelines of the ASEAN-India Summit held on 11 October and the sixth Quad Leaders' Summit held in Wilmington, USA on 21 September. EAM and Foreign Minister of Australia Penny Wong held the 15th Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue on 05 November and reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral cooperation. The year witnessed two official visits of EAM to Australia, including for the Indian Ocean

Conference, hosted by Australia for the first time in Perth in February, and for the Raisina Down Under Dialogue held in Canberra in November.



EAM visited Australia's Humanitarian Logistics Capability (HLC) warehouse for HADR supplies to the Pacific in Brisbane, November 2024

The Commerce and Industries Minister and the Minister for Trade and Tourism of Australia Don Farrell co-chaired the 19th India-Australia Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) in September in Adelaide and discussed ways to enhance bilateral trade. Both sides are engaged in negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) as economic and trade relations have progressed significantly. India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) resulted in gains in bilateral trade and enabled market access for new Indian products in the Australian markets, including Indian pomegranates.

Cooperation in critical minerals, mining, renewable energy and education continued to expand. The India-Australia Renewable Energy Partnership was launched prior to the second Annual Summit on 19 November, fulfilling a commitment agreed upon in the first Annual Summit, which was held in March 2023. Earlier, the Joint Working Group on Critical Minerals met on the sidelines of the International Mining and Resources Conference (IMAC) held in October. The second Australia India Education and Skill Council (AIESC) meeting was held in Sydney on 24 October which was co-chaired by the Minister for Education and Skill Development and the Australian Minister for Education and Youth Jason Clare, along with the Minister of Skills and Training for Australia Andrew Giles. Australian Universities namely, Deakin and Wollongong, became the first foreign universities to set up campuses in India.

To build on the ongoing cooperation in the space sector, an Implementation Arrangement between Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and Australian Space Agency (ASA) relating to crew and crew module recovery for Gaganyaan missions was signed on 20 November. In addition, Australia also announced USD 11.62 million to fund collaborative space projects as part of the Space Grants in the International Space Investment India (ISI) Projects program. Australia was the Innovation Country partner of the Bengaluru Space Expo.

Defence and security cooperation is a key pillar of our bilateral ties. India and Australia reinstated the mechanism of 2+2 Secretary-level talks and the fourth edition of the 2+2 Foreign and Defence Secretaries Consultations was held on 14 October in New Delhi. India and Australia held regular defence exercises, including Exercise Southern Discovery (February), Exercise Southern Jackaroo (June), Exercise Pitch Black (July-August), Exercise Kakadu (September), Exercise Tarang Shakti (September), Exercise Malabar (October) and AUSTRAHIND (November). The Chief of the Australian Navy visited India in April. Staff talks between the defence forces were also held. An arrangement for Air-to-Air Refueling of Military Aircraft was signed between India and Australia in November. In a first, a composite delegation of Indian Defence Shipyards led by Chairman and MD of Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE), Kolkata visited Australia on 08-



Foreign Secretary and Secretary (Defence) participated in the fourth (4th) India-Australia 2+2 Secretary-level Consultations with Secretary, Department of Defence Greg Moriarty and Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Jan Adams, New Delhi, October 2024



The 3rd edition of the joint military exercise AUSTRAHIND at the Foreign Training Node, Pune, November 2024

12 April to explore potential opportunities for industrial cooperation for Indian shipyards in Australia. Indian defence PSUs also hosted a Pavilion at the Indian Ocean Defence & Security Conference in Perth on 24-26 July. MoS (Defence) participated for the first time at the Land Forces International Land Defence Exposition in Melbourne on 11-13 September.

People-to-people linkages are the bedrock of India-Australia ties. As of December 2024, Indian students numbering 1,35,301 form the second highest number of foreign-born students in Australia. To address the needs of the community and expand diplomatic footprint in Australia, a new Consulate General of India in Brisbane was inaugurated by EAM on 04 November. The operationalisation of the Work and Holiday Visa Program in October and operationalisation of Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) on 09 December helped enhance mobility of young professionals to Australia. India has become the fourth largest tourism market for Australia.

Australia was the 'Country of Focus' at the 55th International Film Festival of India held in Goa on 20-28 November.

Brunei

Prime Minister undertook a landmark visit to Brunei on 03-04 September, the first-ever bilateral official visit by an Indian Prime Minister, coinciding with the 40th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties. A MoU on Cooperation in the Operation of Telemetry Tracking and Telecommand Station for Satellite and Launch Vehicles and for Cooperation in the field of Space Research, Science and Applications was exchanged on 04 September. A Joint Statement on India-Brunei Enhanced Partnership was issued.

EAM met Brunei's Second Foreign Minister Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof in Vientiane on the sidelines of the ASEAN-India

Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) on 26 July. The two ministers unveiled a logo commemorating 40 years of diplomatic relations between India and Brunei. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Dato Haji Erywan also participated in two sessions of the third edition of VoGSS on 17 August, held in virtual mode.

ICGS Samudra Paheredar and INS Kiltan visited Brunei on 09-12 April and 25-28 May respectively, strengthening defence ties between the two countries. Four Indian educators received awards from Brunei's Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah on Brunei's Teacher's Day marked on 03 October. India continues to assist Brunei's long-term development through capacity building initiatives.



Prime Minister was received by Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah as he arrived in Brunei for an Official Visit, September 2024



Prime Minister inaugurated the Chancery building of Indian High Commission in Bandar Seri Begawan by unveiling a commemorative plaque, September 2024

Royal Brunei Airlines launched direct flights from India to Brunei (Chennai-Bandar Seri Begawan) flights on 05 November, enhancing connectivity between the countries.

talks taking place on 23-25 July in Secunderabad, India. A delegation from National Defence College (NDC), New

Cambodia

EAM met Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia Sok Chenda Sophea on the sidelines of the ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Post Ministerial Conference in Vientiane, Lao PDR in July. Minister of Culture and Fine Arts of Cambodia Phoeurng Sackona visited India in July to attend the 46th Session of the World Heritage Committee in New Delhi. Minister-in-Charge of the State Secretariat of Civil Aviation of Cambodia Mao Havannal attended Wings India 2024 in January in Hyderabad and the second Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation in New Delhi in September. Secretary of State, Ministry of Post and Telecommunications of Cambodia Sok Puthyvuth visited India in October to attend the ITU World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-24) in New Delhi.

On 17 August, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Yentieng Puthirasmey, and Secretary of State, Ministry of Health of Cambodia Lo Veasnakiry, represented their country in the Foreign Ministers' Session and the Health Ministers' Session, respectively, of the third edition of VoGSS.

Defence Cooperation between India and Cambodia progressed with the second round of army-to-army staff



EAM met Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Cambodia Sok Chenda Sophea on the sidelines of ASEAN meetings in Vientiane, July 2024

Delhi comprising 14 officers from India and 7 officers from Friendly Foreign Countries, visited Cambodia for Strategic Neighborhood Study Tour on 01-05 September. Additionally, 32 defence personnel from Cambodia availed training in India including under Defence ITEC programme and one tailor-made course.

Trade and investment relations between India and Cambodia were further strengthened with the second meeting of the India-Cambodia Joint Working Group on Trade and Investment on 19 June in New Delhi. The fourth meeting of the India-Cambodia Joint Working Group on Tourism Cooperation was held virtually in February and the first India-Cambodia Year of Tourism was launched in New Delhi in June.

A total of 258 Cambodian nationals availed of training under ITEC Programme, including 8 customised training courses. 65 Cambodian students availed scholarships under the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), including 10 scholarships of Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC). Additionally, 27 Cambodian nationals attended various trainings in India under the MGC Plan of Action. A customized training course for Cambodian diplomats at the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) was organised on

27 March- 5 April with 15 Cambodian diplomats joining the course. India and Cambodia signed an MoU on Cooperation in the field of Human Resource Development in the Civil Service on 22 April.

On the development cooperation front, work commenced under the Indian grant assistance for making three districts and one commune in Koh Kong Province, Cambodia, landmine-free. Additionally, three Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) were completed under the Under Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC).

Heritage conservation work by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) at Ta Prohm and Preah Vihear Temples in Cambodia continued to progress. Authority for the Protection of the Site and Management of the Region of Angkor (APSARA) National Authority of Cambodia also progressed ahead with the work of restoration and preservation of Wat Raja Bo Pagoda paintings in Siem Reap, Cambodia, under grant assistance.

Cambodia joined the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA) as an Observer in November. It also conveyed its concurrence to join the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) as a member country. Direct flights between Phnom Penh and New Delhi commenced on 16 June.



Minister of Women's Affairs of Cambodia Ing Kantha Phavi and India's Ambassador to Cambodia inaugurated a 3-classroom building under the Quick Impact Project scheme as part of the Mekong Ganga Cooperation, Cambodia, July 2024

Indonesia

India and Indonesia commemorated 75 years of establishment of diplomatic relations this year. President Prabowo Subianto was elected as President of Indonesia in March. MoS (PM) represented India during the inauguration ceremony of President Prabowo Subianto and Vice President Gibran Rakabuming on 20 October in Jakarta. Prime Minister met President Prabowo Subianto on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 18 November. This was the first meeting between the two leaders. EAM and Foreign Minister of Indonesia Sugiono met in Kazan, Russia on the sidelines of the BRICS Plus Summit on 23 October and again on the sidelines of G-7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Fiumicino, Italy in November. The Commerce/Trade Ministers' Session of third edition of VoGSS was attended by Vice Minister of Trade Jerry Sambuaga on 17 August.



MoS (PM) meeting President of Indonesia Prabowo Subianto at the Inauguration Ceremony of President & Vice-President of Indonesia, October 2024

The eighth India-Indonesia Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) was held on 26 September in New Delhi. On 23 August, the sixth meeting of the India-Indonesia Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter-Terrorism was held in Jakarta. Direct flights between Bengaluru and Bali also commenced in March enhancing connectivity further.

Three Agreements/MoUs between India and Indonesia were signed in March: (i) MoU on Local Currency Settlement System (LCSS) on 07 March, (ii) implementation agreement on transfer of title of integrated Biak Telemetry, Tracking and Command (TTC) Facilities on 19 March, and (iii) implementing

arrangement on operation, maintenance and utilisation of integrated Biak Telemetry, Tracking and Command (TTC) facilities for satellites and launch vehicles between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) on 19 March.

The 10th Army-to-Army staff talks took place in March while the fifth edition of Air Staff Talks took place on 02-04 July in India. The 12th Navy-to-Navy Staff Talks were held on 11 September. Indonesia also participated in India's MILAN- Multilateral Naval Exercise which took place at Visakhapatnam on 19-27 February. The 42nd edition of India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT) between Indian and Indonesian Navies was conducted on 16-25 May and the seventh India-Indonesia Joint Defence Cooperation Committee meeting was held in New Delhi on 03 May.

Lao PDR

Prime Minister visited Vientiane, Laos for the 21st ASEAN-India Summit and 19th East Asia Summit on 10-11 October. Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister of Lao PDR Sonexay Siphandone, and also met President Thongloun Sisoulith. Both Prime Ministers witnessed exchange of MoUs/ Agreements in the fields of defence, broadcasting, customs cooperation and three QIPs under the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation. Grant assistance of about USD 1 million to improve nutrition security in Laos was also announced.

Raksha Mantri visited Vientiane on 20-22 November for the 11th ADMM Plus. During the visit, Raksha Mantri also held a bilateral meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence of Laos General Chansamone Chanyalath. EAM visited Vientiane on 25-27 July to participate in ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers Meeting and Post Ministerial Conference. EAM paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone and held a bilateral meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Saleumxay Kommasith. Both Ministers witnessed exchange of MoUs on 10 Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) for Laos under MGC, and for cooperation in the field of sharing successful digital solutions implemented at population scale for digital transformation. Both Ministers also launched a special stamp set celebrating India-Lao PDR shared cultural treasures of Ramayana and Buddhism.

Minister of Commerce and Industry participated in the 21st ASEAN-India Economic Ministers (AEM-India) meeting and the 12th East Asia Summit Economic Ministers Meeting (EAS EMM) on 20-21 September in Laos. In the third edition of VoGSS, Laos Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone participated in the Inaugural Leaders' Session, Deputy Foreign Minister Thongphane Savanphet participated in



EAM participated in ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Vientiane, Laos, July 2024

first Foreign Ministers' Session and Deputy Health Minister Snong Thongsna participated in Health Ministers' Session. A two-member delegation led Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) visited Laos to represent Parliament of India as an Observer to ASEAN-Inter Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) and related meetings on 19-22 October. Secretary (East) visited Laos on 06-09 June and 21-23 August for ASEAN Related Senior Official Meetings (SOMs).

This year marks 15 years of work undertaken by ASI at Vat Phou UNESCO World Heritage site. A special publication on restoration and conservation work of Vat Phou, brought out by ASI was launched by Minister of Home Affairs Vilayvong Bouddakham and Minister of Education and Sports Association Phout Simmalavong of Laos on 04 November.

15 Lao diplomats attended a special training course at SSIFS on 27 March-5 April. 25 Lao officials were trained under ITEC scheme in 2024 and 12 Lao students are pursuing studies in India under ICCR scholarship scheme. Additionally, a media delegation visited Laos on 01-03 July. A journalist from Laos visited India to attend a media familiarisation programme on 18-27 August.

In the wake of Typhoon Yagi, India extended emergency humanitarian assistance to Laos and Vietnam under Operation Sadbhav. A consignment of 10 tonnes was provided.

Malaysia

Prime Minister of Malaysia Anwar Ibrahim paid a State Visit to India on 19-21 August and held discussions with Prime Minister. During the visit, India-Malaysia elevated the bilateral relationship to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) from the Enhanced Strategic Partnership established in 2015. 08 MoUs/ Agreements were exchanged between the countries. These include MoUs on cooperation in the fields of recruitment, employment and repatriation of workers, ayurveda and other traditional systems of medicines, digital technologies, culture, arts and heritage, tourism, public administration and governance reforms, youth and sports, and financial services.

Some of the important announcements made during the State Visit of Prime Minister of Malaysia to India include, special allocation of 200,000 MT of White Rice to Malaysia; allocation of 100 additional ITEC slots for Malaysian nationals, Malaysia joining the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) as founding member, establishment of Ayurveda Chair at University Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Malaysia, establishment of Thiruvalluvar Chair of Indian Studies at the prestigious Universiti Malaya, Malaysia, cooperation between Start-up Ecosystems in both countries under an India-Malaysia Startup Alliance, and establishment of Malaysia India Digital Council. The ninth India-Malaysia CEO

Forum took place on the sidelines of the visit on 19 August in New Delhi. Ayurveda Chair at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) was operationalised in September.

During his visit to Malaysia on 27-28 March, EAM held bilateral discussions with the Foreign Minister of Malaysia Gobind Singh Deo, who also serves as the Minister of Digital of Malaysia. EAM also called on the Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Anwar bin Ibrahim. EAM also held bilateral meetings with the Foreign Minister of Malaysia Mohamad Hasan on the sidelines of ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Post Ministerial Conference in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 26 July and with the Minister of Economy of Malaysia Rafizi Ramli on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia on 23 October. MoS (KVS) visited Malaysia from 13-15 September to inaugurate the second edition of Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) day 'Pravasi Diwas' Celebrations and attended the 15th Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) international convention.



Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Anwar bin Ibrahim at Hyderabad House, New Delhi, August 2024

Malaysian Navy Corvette KD Lekir participated in the Multilateral Naval Exercise MILAN on 19-24 February at Vishakhapatnam. Following the exercise, INS Kiltan and Royal Malaysian Ship KD Lekir participated in the bilateral maritime exercise Samudra Laksamana on 28 February-02 March. INS Delhi and INS Shakti visited Kota Kinabalu Port, East Malaysia from 12-15 May. The ninth Navy-to-Navy staff talks between the Indian Navy and the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) was conducted on 22-25 July in New Delhi. The bilateral air exercise 'Udara Shakti', between IAF and Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) was conducted on 04-10 August at the Kuantan Air Base, Malaysia. The air staff talks between the IAF and RMAF was conducted on 05-07 November in New Delhi. The bilateral army exercise Harimau Shakti between Indian Army and Malaysian Army was conducted in Bentong, Malaysia on 02-15 December.



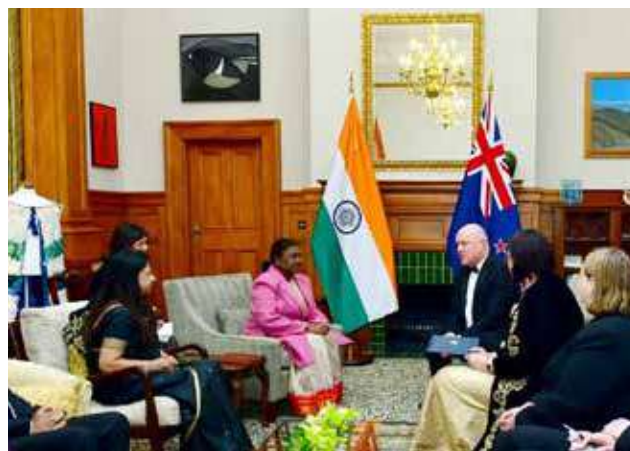
MOUs exchanged between India and Malaysia at Hyderabad House during Prime Minister of Malaysia, Anwar Ibrahim state visit to India, August 2024

As a reciprocal visa liberalisation measure, India implemented a gratis visa regime to grant 30 days e-tourist visa with single/double entry to Malaysian nationals from 01 July till 30 June 2025 or till further orders.

New Zealand

The India-New Zealand relationship is characterised by close bilateral cooperation, cultural exchanges and people-to-people ties. This year, the bilateral relations experienced an upward trajectory, marked by several important developments which added momentum to the relations.

Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji undertook a State Visit to New Zealand on 07-09 August. A Customs Cooperation Arrangement



Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji held discussions with Prime Minister of New Zealand Christopher Luxon in Wellington, August 2024

was signed, and New Zealand joined the International Solar Alliance upon its ratification. Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji delivered a speech at the New Zealand International Education Conference where India was the "Country of Honour" and met the Indian diaspora in Auckland at a community event.



Prime Minister met Prime Minister of New Zealand Christopher Luxon on the sidelines of the 21st ASEAN-India Summit in Vientiane, October 2024

In October, Prime Minister met the Prime Minister of New Zealand Christopher Luxon on the sidelines of the ASEAN-India Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR. EAM held a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand Winston Peters, who also serves as the and Foreign Minister, in Canberra in November on the sidelines of the 'Raisina Down Under' dialogue. The New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Winston Peters had also earlier visited India on 10-13 March.

On the trade and economic front, earlier in April, the Joint Trade Committee meeting at the level of Senior Officials was held in Wellington between the two sides. Commerce and Industries Minister met the Minister for Trade and Agriculture of New Zealand Todd McClay in New Delhi in July and both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral trade and economic ties.

The Chief of the Royal New Zealand Navy Rear Admiral David Proctor visited India in February and engaged in discussions with the Chief of the Naval Staff of India.

Pacific Island Countries (PICs)

India has strong historical engagement with the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) under the Act East Policy and priority given to engagements in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Government of India stepped up its efforts to engage with countries in this region through a number of high-level visits and under the landmark initiative- the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC). Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji paid an official visit to Fiji in August at the invitation of the then President of Fiji Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere. This was the first-ever visit by a Head of State from India to Fiji. Fiji's Deputy Prime Minister Manoa Kamikamica took part at the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) General Assembly and Global Conference on 25-27 November which was inaugurated by Prime Minister in Delhi. He also met EAM and visited GIFT City and Amul in Gujarat. Fiji joined the Global Biofuels Alliance as its 28th member in November.

Since 2002, India has been a Dialogue Partner of Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the apex regional mechanism in the Pacific. India participated in the PIF at Ministerial level for the first time when MoS (PM) attended the 53rd PIF Leaders Meeting in August in Tonga. During this visit, India announced one Quick Impact Project (QIP) worth USD 50,000 in each of the 14 Pacific Island Countries based on their respective needs.

Development Cooperation

A major part of India's continued engagement with the PICs is in the form of development assistance under South-South Cooperation primarily delivered through capacity building with civil and defence training under ITEC, ICCR scholarships and grant-in-aid projects. India supports the PICs in their socio-economic development through community-oriented projects by providing annual grant-in-aid of USD 2.8 million with USD 200,000 to each of the PICs with roll-over facility. These projects are in diverse areas like community development, solar electrification, purchase and supply of agricultural equipment, computers, LED bulbs for schools, sewing machines, dialysis machines, portable saw mills, boats and pick-up trucks, construction of sea wall, and coral farms. The Government of India supported the Republic of the Marshall Islands as a development partner in hosting of the 10th Micronesian Games in June and the 15th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women in July and provided USD 200,000 as grant-in-aid for the purpose. India is also in



Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji with President of Fiji Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere at State House in Suva, August 2024

the process of supply, installation and commissioning of 12 Water Storage Tanks to Palau under a Grant-in-Aid project.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and combating Climate Change

India has been providing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) to the PICs as an early responder. In the wake of the massive landslide in Enga Province of Papua New Guinea in May, India extended an immediate relief assistance of USD 1 million to support relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts as a gesture of solidarity with the people of Papua New Guinea. An earthquake of magnitude 7.4 struck near Vanuatu's coast in the South Pacific Ocean on 17 December causing major destruction and loss of life. As a gesture of solidarity with the people of Vanuatu, India extended a relief assistance of USD 500,000 to support relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

All the PICs are vulnerable to climate change and subsequent effects of rising sea levels. They also face challenges related to environment, sustainable development, mitigation and adaptation related issues. Initiatives like the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) complement our development partnership with the PICs.

Cooperation in Health: Medicines and medical supplies are regularly donated to the PICs through bilateral grants. A consignment of medical supplies containing medicine

and injections for children under essential Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) programme was handed over to Fiji in April. Anti retro-viral drugs and special medicines are supplied on a regular basis to Fiji and other PICs.

A MoU was signed with Solomon Islands and Nauru on the recognition of Indian Pharmacopoeia in August and September respectively. The first Jan Aushadi Centre in the PICs is being set up in Nauru.



MoS (PM) jointly commissioned the India-funded Solarization of Heads of State project at Tongan National Council for Women with Minister of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications Fekitamoeloa Utoikamanu, Tonga, August 2024

India-UN Development Partnership Fund: In addition to the bilateral engagements, the India-UN Development Partnership Fund (UNDP) was created in 2017. It aims to support demand-driven sustainable development projects in developing countries, focusing mainly on LDCs and SIDS. The PICs have been beneficiaries of this Fund. Assistance to Solomon Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu and Palau for procurement of medical equipment and supplies, as well as for strengthening healthcare systems in response to COVID-19 have been provided by India through this Fund. Under the India-UNDP Fund, the Government of India undertook a solarisation project for the Government House in Honiara, Solomon Islands which was completed at a cost of USD 1 million in August. Additionally, during the visit of the MoS (PM) to the Kingdom of Tonga a solarisation project was commissioned at the premises of National Council For Women in Nuku'alofa. MoS (PM) visited Tonga for the 53rd Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Leaders Meeting in August. The project was commissioned under India-UNDP fund.

People-to-People ties and Cultural links: India has close cultural and historical ties with Pacific Island Countries characterized by cultural exchanges, and cooperation in the



HADR relief assistance reached Port Moresby airport after India announced immediate relief assistance in the wake of a landslide in Enga Province, June 2024

field of education. Fiji, with strong cultural linkages with India, is a major diaspora country with almost 33 percent of the total population being of Indian origin. Four Pacific Island countries, namely Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, and Solomon Islands have their Resident Missions in New Delhi. India has its Resident Missions in Fiji and Papua New Guinea while the rest of the PICs are covered by India's Missions in Canberra, Wellington, Tokyo and Manila through concurrent accreditations respectively.

The Government of India funded Tamil language teaching program was officially launched on 27 November at Penang Sangam School in Rakiraki, Fiji. Two Tamil teachers from India will be deployed in the Penang Sangam school in Rakiraki and the Sangam Primary school in Labasa to conduct Tamil classes for the school students and interested community members.

The third edition of the Voice of Global South Summit witnessed participation at high levels from the PICs. The President of the Republic of Marshall Islands Hilda C. Heine and Foreign Minister of Papua New Guinea Justin Tkatchenko, Foreign Minister Nauru Lionel Rouwen Aingimea and Foreign Minister of Solomon Islands Peter Shanel Agovaka attended the Summit.

Philippines

Prime Minister and President of Philippines Ferdinand Marcos Jr. had a brief interaction on the sidelines of 21st ASEAN-India Summit held in Vientiane, Laos on 10 October. The two countries completed 75 years of diplomatic relations in November. The joint official logo for the 75th anniversary celebrations was launched by EAM on 13 November in New Delhi.

Raksha Mantri met Secretary of National Defence, Gilbert Teodoro on the sidelines of 18th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and 11th ADMM Plus in Vientiane, Laos on 22 November. EAM visited the Philippines on 25-27 March. During the visit, EAM called on President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and met Secretary of Foreign Affairs Enrique A. Manalo and Secretary of National Defence Gilbert Teodoro. EAM also met Secretary Manalo on the sidelines of NAM Summit in Kampala on 20 January, and again on 25 July on the sidelines of ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Vientiane.

Secretary of Department of Health Teodoro Herbosa addressed the Health Minister's Session of third edition of VoGSS on 17 August, through a video message. Secretary, Department of Transportation of the Philippines Jaime J. Bautista visited India to attend the second Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference (APAC-MC) on Civil Aviation held on 11-12 September in New Delhi. An Indian delegation led by MoS (Home Affairs) visited the Philippines to attend the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) held on 14-17 October.

The 14th India-Philippines Policy Consultations and fifth Strategic Dialogue were held on 09 September in New Delhi. The fifth Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) and third Service to Service interactions were held in Manila on 11-13 September. The first JWG meeting on FinTech was held on 12 September in New Delhi. The second JWG meeting on Tourism was held on 21 May in Manila. The fourth Joint Consular Consultation Meeting (JCCM) was held on 13 April in Manila. The SOP on White Shipping Information Exchange, signed between the Indian Navy and the Philippines Coast Guard on 23 August 2023, came into effect on 09 August.

INS Delhi, INS Shakti and INS Kiltan made port calls at Manila on 19-22 May for Operational Turn around (OTR). A 4-member delegation from the Philippines Navy attended the exercise MILAN-24 as observer on 19-23 February at Visakhapatnam.

The two countries signed 06 individual Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) on Quick Impact Projects were signed on 15 July in the sectors of Agriculture, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, Healthcare and Livelihood Support.

A total of 08 Government officials from the civilian side and 23 from the Philippines Armed Forces attended the ITEC courses in India in 2024. The Government of the Philippines started an e-Visa facility for travellers from India to the Philippines on 28 October. Beta version of the e-Visa was launched by the Philippines Embassy in New Delhi on 5 April.

Lastly, the Philippines became the country coordinator for India-ASEAN Relations for the period 2025–2028.

Singapore

Prime Minister visited Singapore on 04-05 September. This was the fifth visit of Prime Minister to Singapore. India-Singapore relations were elevated to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during the visit and 04 MoUs on



Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Singapore Lawrence Wong visited AEM Holdings Ltd., a leading Singaporean company in semiconductors and electronics sector in Singapore, September 2024

cooperation in the areas of semiconductor ecosystem, digital technologies, healthcare and skill development were exchanged. On 22 September, Commerce and Industry Minister inaugurated the Invest India Office in



EAM, Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of Railways, Information and Broadcasting, and Electronics and Information Technology participating in the 2nd India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable in Singapore, August 2024

Singapore, which was announced by Prime Minister to facilitate investments. Prime Minister also announced that the Thiruvalluvar Cultural Center will be set up in Singapore. Both sides also agreed to start a bilateral Cyber Policy Dialogue, inaugural round of which was held in Singapore on 17 October. Under the aegis of the MoU on semiconductor ecosystem partnership, the first India-Singapore Semiconductor Ecosystem Policy Dialogue was held on 05 November in New Delhi.

Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Singapore Wong had a brief interaction on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in November.

Raksha Mantri and Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen co-chaired the 6th India-Singapore Defence Ministerial Dialogue in New Delhi on 22 October. Both sides agreed to extend bilateral agreement on joint military training for the next five years.

The 2nd round of India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR), was held in Singapore on 26 August. EAM, Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of Railways, Information and Broadcasting, and Electronics and Information Technology visited Singapore for the roundtable. From the Singapore side, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Foreign Affairs Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law Shanmugam, Minister for Digital Development and

Information and Second Minister for Home Affairs Josephine Teo, Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry Tan See Leng, and Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Finance Chee Hong Tat participated in the meeting. EAM visited Singapore on 23-25 March and 08-09 November.

Other high-level visits from India include Minister of Education (20-21 October) and MoS (Electronics & IT) (15-17 October). Chief Minister of Odisha visited Singapore from 17-20 November.

Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Finance Chee Hong Tat, (12-13 September), Home Minister K. Shanmugam and Minister for Manpower & Second Minister for Trade & Industry Tan See Leng (07-09 November), Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Digital Development and Information & Ministry of Health, Janil Puthucheary and Senior Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office Desmond Tan (17-21 November) visited India this year.

Additionally, India hosted multiple bilateral military exercises with Singapore, such as Agni Warrior (25 October – 11 December), SIMBEX (24-29 October) and Joint Military Training (04 October- 16 December). The fourth Singapore-India-Thailand Maritime Exercise (SITMEX) was also held in India on 08-11 November. The Singapore Air Force participated in the inaugural edition of Exercise Tarang Shakti.



The navies of India and Singapore participated in the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) held in Visakhapatnam, October 2024

Thailand

Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Thailand Paetongtarn Shinawatra on the sidelines of ASEAN Related Summits in Vientiane on 11 October. Earlier, Prime Minister had a telephone conversation with then Prime Minister of Thailand Srettha Thavisin on 06 June.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand Maris Sangiampongsa met EAM on 02 November in New Delhi. Earlier, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand Maris Sangiampongsa visited New Delhi to attend the 2nd BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat hosted by EAM and for an official bilateral visit on 11-13 July. The then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand Parnpree Bahiddha-Nukara visited India on 26-28 February to co-chair the 10th India-Thailand Joint Commission Meeting with EAM in New Delhi.

Upon request from the Government of Thailand, India sent the Holy Relics of Lord Buddha, along with two of his main disciples for public exposition on 22 February-19 March. The Holy Relics were enshrined in four cities of Thailand and more than 4.1 million devotees from different parts of Thailand and beyond paid tributes to the Sacred Relics.



Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Thailand Paetongtarn Shinawatra on the sidelines of East Asia Summit in Vientiane, October 2024

India participated as a partner country in the 43rd edition of Cobra Gold maritime exercise held in Thailand on 06 February- 06 March . The 13th edition of Ex-Maitree was held on 01-15 July in Tak province of Thailand between

the armies of both countries. Commander-in-Chief of Royal Thai Navy Admiral Adoong Pan-lam paid an official visit to India on 01-03 April and Chief of the Air Staff of India visited Thailand on 18-23 August.

Lastly, as a reciprocal visa liberalisation measure, India implemented a gratis visa regime to grant 30 days e-tourist visa with single/double entry to Thai nationals from 01 July till 31 December or till further orders. India and Thailand signed an MoU on Air Services in Bangkok on 15 March .

Timor Leste

President of Timor-Leste José Ramos-Horta met Prime Minister on his visit to India to attend the 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit in January. Prime Minister of Timor-Leste Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, virtually participated in the Inaugural Leader's Session of third edition of VoGSS, held in virtual mode.



Prime Minister met the President of Timor-Leste José Ramos-Horta in Gandhinagar, January 2024

Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji visited Timor-Leste on 10 August which was the first-ever visit by an Indian Head of State. During her visit, Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji met President José Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão. President Horta conferred the highest civilian award of Timor-Leste 'Grand-Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste' upon Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji. During the visit, India and Timor-Leste exchanged 03 MoUs focused on, cultural exchange Program, collaboration between Prasar Bharati and Timor-Leste Radio & Television and exemption from visa requirement for holders of diplomatic, official and service passports.

On 05 September, an Indian Embassy was operationalized in Dili, Timor-Leste. Subsequently, Timor-Leste also established their Resident Mission in New Delhi in October.

Vietnam



Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Vietnam Pham Minh Chinh in New Delhi, August 2024

Prime Minister of Vietnam Pham Minh Chinh paid a State Visit to India on 30 July- 01 August. He held talks with Prime Minister where the two leaders agreed to a Plan of Action for the Implementation of India-Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for the period 2024-2028. The countries exchanged 08 bilateral documents were exchanged including MoUs for cooperation in the fields of customs capacity, agricultural research and education, legal field, radio and television, medicinal plants, development of national maritime heritage complex at Lothal, Gujarat, conservation and restoration of F block in My Son, Vietnam, agreement authorizing the dependents of members of a

diplomatic mission or consular post to engage in gainful employment and two Dollar Credit Line Agreements for defence procurement for USD 300 million. Additionally, both Prime Ministers inaugurated Army Software Park at Telecommunications University, Nha Trang in virtual mode. The facility was established with a grant of USD 5 million by India. Vietnam conveyed its decision to join the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) on 01 August.

Prime Minister and General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Tô Lam held a bilateral meeting in New York in September on the sidelines of the Summit of the Future. Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Vietnam interacted informally in Vientiane in October on the sidelines of ASEAN Related Summits. Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh virtually attended and addressed the Inaugural Leaders' Session of the third edition of VoGSS while Vietnam's Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Phan Thi Thang addressed the Commerce Ministers' Session of third edition of VoGSS.

EAM delivered remarks virtually at the ASEAN Future Forum (AFF) session titled "Ensuring comprehensive security for a people-centered ASEAN Community" in Hanoi on 23 April.



Prime Minister met General Secretary of the Communist Party and State President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam To Lam on the sidelines of the Summit of the Future at UNGA held in New York, September 2024

Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam Tran Luu Quang participated in the 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit held on 10-12 January in Gandhinagar.

National Security Advisor visited Vietnam on 24-25 July to attend the state funeral of the former General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Nguyen Phu Trong in Hanoi.

In the field of defence, the 14th Annual Defence Policy Dialogue co-chaired by the Secretary (Defence) and Deputy Minister of Defence of Vietnam was held in New Delhi on 01 August. In addition, the sixth Navy-to-Navy talks were held in New Delhi from 19-21 November, the fifth high-level meeting between Indian and Vietnam Coast Guards in New Delhi on 22 February and the first Joint Working Group Meeting on Hydrographic Cooperation in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam on 07-09 May. The fifth Vietnam-India Bilateral Army Exercise- was held in India on 04-23 November and Vietnam People's Navy Frigate participated in the 12th

Multilateral Naval Exercise MILAN in Visakhapatnam in February. INS KILTAN made a port call on Cam Ranh Bay, along with PASSEX exercise on 12-15 May and Coast Guard Ship Samudra Paharedar visited Ho Chi Minh City port on 02-05 April. The fourth India-Vietnam Maritime Security Dialogue was held in Hanoi on 16 August.

In 2024, 61 Vietnamese students joined undergraduate, postgraduate and doctorate programmes in India under the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarship scheme. Over 100 Vietnamese officials and specialists attended short-term training courses in India under ITEC and other programmes. 09 Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) were executed under MGC in areas such as construction of community houses, classrooms and water supply.

A consignment of 35 tonnes of humanitarian assistance for Vietnam was provided. Air India commenced daily flights between New Delhi and Ho Chi Minh City 01 June, increasing direct flights between the two countries.

CHAPTER

4

East Asia

China

India and China have held 18 meetings of Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) and 21 rounds of meetings at the Senior Military Commanders level since June 2020. Throughout the year, four rounds of WMCC meetings were held in Beijing in March & August and, in New Delhi in July & December. The 21st round of India-China Corps Commander Level Meeting was held in February. Following the negotiations and discussions at both diplomatic and military levels, both countries arrived at an agreement on patrolling arrangements along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in October, leading to disengagement and a resolution of the issues that had arisen in these areas in 2020.

Subsequently, Prime Minister met President of China Xi Jinping held a meeting on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Summit, on 23 October. This was their first bilateral meeting at the delegation level in nearly five years. In the meeting, Prime Minister underscored the importance of not allowing differences on boundary-related matters to disturb peace and tranquillity on the borders. In this context, the two leaders noted the critical role of the Special Representatives mechanism on the India-China Boundary Question, in the resolution of the Boundary Question and maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas. The two leaders also affirmed that the relevant dialogue mechanisms at the level

of Foreign Ministers and other officials will also be utilised to stabilise and rebuild bilateral relations.



Prime Minister met President of China Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, October 2024

EAM met Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi on three occasions- in Astana on 4 July on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of State Meeting, in Vientiane on 25 July during the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and in Rio de Janeiro on 18 November on the sidelines of the G20 Summit. In the meeting held on 18 November, both sides discussed the next steps in India-China relations, which included the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra pilgrimage, data sharing on trans-border rivers, direct flights between India and China and media exchanges. Raksha Mantri also held a bilateral meeting with Defence Minister of China Dong Jun in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 20 November, on the sidelines of ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-plus).

The 23rd meeting between the Special Representatives of India & China was held on 18 December in Beijing. India continues to engage with China on multilateral platforms including BRICS, SCO, G-20, and the UN.

DPRK

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

Japan

The year 2024 marked the 10th anniversary of India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. India and Japan deepened their ties during the year through high-level visits, collaborative initiatives in various fields including technology, infrastructure, and trade, as well as cooperation in multilateral forums like the United Nations, G20, and the Quad. The year witnessed three meetings between the Prime Ministers, Ministerial visits, high-level defence exchanges, and regular meetings of various bilateral mechanisms and working groups.

Prime Ministerial Engagements

Meetings between the Prime Ministers included a bilateral meeting in June with the then Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on the sidelines of the G-7 Summit in Italy, during which both leaders expressed satisfaction at the progress made in the relationship and discussed ways to deepen cooperation further in holistic manner, adding new and emerging areas.

Prime Minister met outgoing Prime Minister Kishida again on the sidelines of the Quad Summit in Wilmington, Delaware

in September. The two Prime Ministers reviewed the multi-faceted relationship and exchanged views to deepen cooperation further.

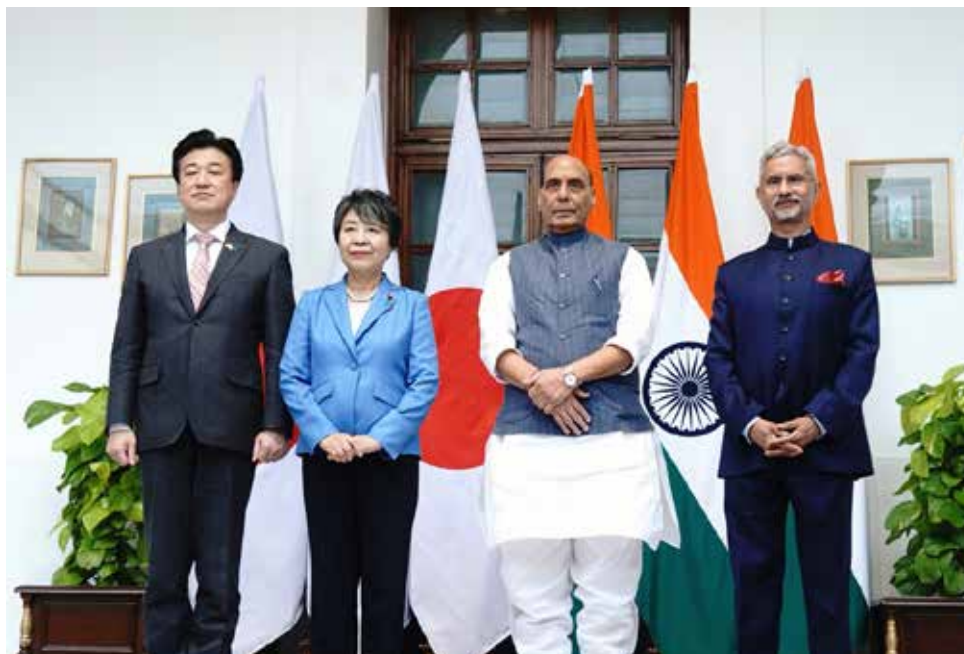


Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with the then Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida on the sidelines of the G-7 Summit in Italy, June 2024

Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with the newly appointed Prime Minister of Japan Shigeru Ishiba on the sidelines of the India-ASEAN Summit in Laos in October, within a few days of the latter's assumption of office. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership, through enhanced cooperation in a wide range of areas including trade and investment, infrastructure development, defence and security, semiconductors, skilling, culture and people-to-people exchanges.

Foreign Ministerial Engagements

During 2024, EAM also held several engagements with the Foreign Minister of Japan. EAM visited Japan twice to co-chairing the 16th India-Japan Strategic Dialogue with the then Foreign Minister of Japan Yoko Kamikawa and to attend the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in March and July, respectively. During his visit to Tokyo in March, EAM also attended the inaugural Raisina Roundtable and delivered remarks on India-Japan bilateral relations in the broader context of the evolving global trends. EAM also addressed the Nikkei Forum on India-Japan partnership, outlining the historical and current trajectories in the relationship and reflecting on the new possibilities. which Raksha Mantri and



Raksha Mantri and the EAM participated in the third round of India-Japan 2+2 Ministerial meeting with the then Foreign Minister of Japan Yoko Kamikawa and the then Defence Minister of Japan Minoru Kihara in New Delhi, August 2024.

EAM and the Foreign Minister and Defence Minister of Japan held the third 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting in New Delhi. EAM also co-chaired the 17th India-Japan Strategic Dialogue on the sidelines of 2+2 Ministerial meeting. These discussions underscored the strategic priorities of both nations, particularly cooperation in defence equipment and technology. EAM held a meeting with the incumbent Foreign Minister of Japan Takeshi Iwaya in Italy in November, on the sidelines of outreach session for G7 Foreign Ministers meeting. EAM also delivered remarks at the seventh India-Japan Indo-Pacific Forum and 10th India-Japan Track 1.5 Dialogue as well as the third India-Japan Forum.

Defence Cooperation

India and Japan maintained good momentum in their defence and security engagements this year through regular high-level interactions and exercises between all three defence services. The third India-Japan 2+2 meeting emphasised collaboration on defence technology, joint military exercises, and maritime security. In November, Raksha Mantri met with the incumbent Defence Minister of Japan, Gen Nakatani, during his three-day visit to Laos. Other high-level engagements included the visit of Japan Air Self Defence Force Chief of Staff General Hiroaki Uchikura to Jodhpur, India to attend the Distinguished Visitors (DV) Day and inspect exercise Tarang Shakti-24 on 10-13 September 2024; visit of General Yoshihide Yoshida, Chief of Staff,

Joint Staff of Japan Self Defence Force to India in October to participate in DV Day of exercise MALABAR-24 and visit of Chief of the Army Staff to Japan in October.

Regular exercises provided impetus to bilateral defence and security cooperation. Japan participated in the 12th edition of Multilateral Naval Exercise MILAN-2024 was held in February, which saw Japan's participation. In February-March, the fifth edition of bilateral exercise DHARMA GUARDIAN-23 was conducted between Indian Army and Japan Ground Self Defence Force in Bikaner. In June, the eighth edition of bilateral maritime exercise JIMEX-24 between the two navies was conducted at Yokosuka. The Indian Naval Ship Shivalik also made a port call at Yokosuka. The 28th edition of MALABAR-24 exercise saw the participation from Japan and was conducted in October at/off Visakhapatnam. A Memorandum of Implementation was signed at the Embassy of India, Tokyo on 15 November for co-development of UNICORN mast for fitment onboard the ships of Indian Navy.

Parliamentary exchanges

Parliamentary exchanges during the year included incoming visits of Members of Parliament of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan led by Taro Honda to India in January and Speaker of House of Representatives of Japan Fukushima Nukaga to India in August. Speaker Nukaga led a Japanese Parliamentary and Business delegation, during which called on the Prime Minister.

Economic Cooperation

Minister of State for Commerce and Industry inaugurated the India Pavilion at the Japan International Seafood and Tech Expo in Tokyo in August. His interactions with Japanese business leaders highlighted India's potential as a strategic investment destination. In September, Railway Minister visited Tokyo to engage with Japanese officials on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) project and digital infrastructure development. Foreign Secretary co-chaired the first round of India-Japan Dialogue on Economic Security, including Strategic Trade and Technology, in Tokyo on 27 November along with Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan Masataka Okano. The Dialogue, attended by stakeholder Ministries, departments, and agencies from both governments, was announced during the India-Japan 2+2 Ministerial meeting held in New Delhi on 20 August.

Other JWG's & Bilateral dialogues

Other important bilateral dialogues held this year include Policy Planning Dialogue held in February in New Delhi, Consultations on Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Export Control held in April in Tokyo, JWG on Counter Terrorism held in May in New Delhi, second India-Japan Finance Dialogue attended by the Secretary Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, held in September in Tokyo, India-Japan Industrial Competitiveness Partnership held in June in New Delhi and Deputy NSA-level Dialogue held in November in New Delhi, among others.

State Delegations

Chief Minister of Rajasthan visited Japan for a roadshow focusing on "Rising Rajasthan" in September. Speaker-led delegations of various states including Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Odisha, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh, visited Japan in October and November for a study tour. Other state government delegations included those led by Minister of Industries of Karnataka and Deputy Chief Minister of Telangana.

Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges

The India-Japan Year of Tourism Exchanges, first celebrated in 2023, was extended to 2024, with the theme 'Connecting Himalayas with Mount Fuji'. In September 2024, 'India Month' was organised in Japan and a 'Japan Month' was organised in India. Embassy in Tokyo organised various events as part of this celebration, including, the inauguration of India Month by Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, "One District, One Product" (ODOP) exhibition at Embassy, performances by two distinguished Kathakali and Purulia

Chhau dance troupes from India across Japan supported by ICCR, launch of the "India Ecotourism" campaign at the Tourism Expo in Japan, among others.

Mongolia

India and Mongolia share civilisational, historical, cultural and spiritual ties. Being a landlocked country bordering China and Russia, Mongolia considers India an important 'third' and 'spiritual neighbour'. Both countries established Strategic Partnership during the visit of Prime Minister to Mongolia in 2015. Since then, the trajectory of India-Mongolia relations and cooperation has witnessed continuous growth. The momentum of high-level exchanges continued this year as well. Some of the key development projects in Mongolia, being built with India's assistance, witnessed significant progress this year.

Major Developments in India-Mongolia bilateral relations

Prime Minister of Mongolia Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai sent a special video message for the Inaugural Session of the third Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August. EAM met with the Prime Minister of Mongolia Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai on the sidelines of 22nd meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of Government (CHG) in Islamabad in October. In addition, the year also witnessed incoming visits from senior officials and Parliamentary delegations.

The 12th Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting on Defence was successfully held between India and Mongolia from 15-18 May in Ulaanbaatar to further boosting the cooperation in the field of Defence. Additionally, a contingent of 150th Regiment of Mongolian Armed Forces participated in the bilateral military training exercises – NOMADIC ELEPHANT from 03-16 July, held in Shillong, Meghalaya. Chief of General Staff of MAF attended the closing ceremony on 16 July, along with General Officer Commanding (GoC), 33 Corps of the Indian Army.

The Chief Election Commissioner of India led a high-level 4-member delegation to participate in the International Election Visitors Program during the general elections in Mongolia from 25-29 June. India provided indelible ink to Mongolia which was used during the conduct of Parliamentary elections.

Development Projects

2024 served as a landmark year for India-Mongolia cooperation in development projects. India's largest overseas Line of Credit (LoC) project, the Oil Refinery Project (ORP), is

being implemented in Mongolia. The project is considered of national strategic importance by Mongolia. The first phase of the construction of ORP was successfully handed over to Mongol Refinery on 22 November. The work on the second and third phase of the ORP is progressing well.

Republic of Korea

The Special Strategic Partnership between India and the Republic of Korea (RoK) continued to deepen owing to several high-level exchanges and bilateral dialogue mechanisms. Prime Minister and the then President of RoK Yoon Suk Yeol met on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in October and the G-20 Summit in Rio in November. EAM visited RoK in March and co-chaired the 10th India-RoK Joint Commission Meeting with Foreign Minister of the of RoK Cho Tae-Yul. The two Ministers also met on the sidelines of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meetings in July, UNGA in New York in September and at the Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Italy in December.

Raksha Mantri met the Defence Minister of RoK Kim Yong-Hyun in Laos in November. Commerce and Industry Minister met Trade Minister of RoK Inkyo Cheong during the 12th East Asia Summit Economic Ministers Meeting Lao PDR in September. The then MoS (RRS) participated in the third Summit for Democracy-Ministerial Conference in Seoul in March. Raksha Mantri met the then Defence Minister of RoK Kim Yong- Hyun in Laos on 21 November on the sidelines of the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting.

The inaugural India-RoK-US Trilateral Dialogue on Critical & Emerging Technologies and India-RoK-Japan Trilateral Policy Planning Dialogue were held in March and October respectively in Seoul.

India and Korea launched the Fast Track Mechanism for Korean Companies in August. The Fast Track Mechanism held its first meeting to enhance Ease of Doing Business in India for Korean Companies in December.



Prime Minister met the then President of South Korea Yoon Suk Yeol on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit, Vientiane, October 2024

CHAPTER

5

Eurasia & the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

Armenia

The India-Armenia bilateral relationship witnessed continued high-level bilateral engagements during the year. Prime Minister met the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, briefly on the sidelines of UNGA-79 in New York in September. EAM met his Armenian counterpart, Ararat Mirzoyan, in February on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference. MoS (KVS) visited Armenia on 09-11 September to attend the inaugural edition of the Yerevan Dialogue. During the visit, he also called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Armenia.

Speaker of Lok Sabha met the Armenian President of the National Assembly Alen Simonyan, on the sidelines of the 149th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva in October and invited him to pay an official visit to India. The visit took place on 16-20 December. The visiting Armenian delegation led by Alen Simonyan called on Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji and Hon'ble Vice President and had a delegation level meeting with the Speaker of Lok Sabha. Both sides expressed mutual interest in further deepening bilateral parliamentary exchanges.



EAM met the Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan on the sidelines of Munich Security Conference in Germany, February 2024.

Armenian Finance Minister Vahe Hovhannisyan participated in the Finance Ministers Session of the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit. Armenia also participated in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit. Armenia ratified the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework Agreement on 10 September and became the 104th member of the ISA. The 2nd India-Iran-Armenia trilateral consultations were held in New Delhi on 12 December at the level of Director General/Joint Secretary.

Azerbaijan

EAM met Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov on 19 January on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in Kampala. MoS (KVS) led the Indian delegation to COP29 in Baku on 11-22 November.



EAM met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov on the sidelines of the 19th NAM Summit in Kampala, January 2024.

Azerbaijan participated in Environment Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit. Azerbaijani delegation led by the Deputy Foreign Minister Yalchin Rafiyev, visited New Delhi for consultations on the agenda of the COP29 Summit. Azerbaijan's Minister of Youth and Sports, Farid Gayibov, visited India for meetings related to International Convention against Doping in Sport.

Belarus

The then Belarusian Foreign Minister Sergei Aleinik visited New Delhi on 12-13 March. He met EAM, Commerce and Industry Minister, Minister for Chemicals, Fertilizers, Health

and Family Welfare, and Secretary, Department of Financial Services. The visit was a follow up to their earlier meeting on 18 January, on the sidelines of the NAM Summit in Uganda. EAM also met his Belarusian counterpart Maksim Ryzhenkov in Astana in July on the margins of the SCO Summit and later in September during the 79th UNGA Session in New York. The First India-Belarus Consular Dialogue was held in Minsk on 28 June. President Aleksandr Lukashenko sent his video message for the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit.



EAM met the Foreign Minister of Belarus Maksim Ryzhenkov on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Astana, July 2024.

Georgia

The Resident Indian Mission was opened in Georgia on 22 July. Georgian Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Youth, Taniel Gugava, participated in the Education Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit. A delegation headed by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India visited Tbilisi on 17-20 November to participate in the Global Summit on Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI) Audits Contributing to Digitalization and Sustainability.

Kazakhstan

EAM visited Astana to participate in the SCO Heads of State Summit on 03-04 July. He met the Kazakh Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Murat Nurtleu and called on the Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev for an exchange of views on bilateral cooperation as well as cooperation in multilateral fora such as SCO, CICA, etc. Kazakh Vice Minister for Energy Akkenzhenov Erlan participated in the Energy Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit. Visits by India's Chief Election Commissioner on 22-24 June and Chief

Justice of India on 19-20 May further bolstered cooperation in electoral and judicial fields.



EAM met Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Murat Nurtleu in Astana, July 2024.

Defence cooperation progressed through the KAZIND-2024 joint exercise, conducted from 30 September to 13 October, along with specialized training programs for Kazakh officers and collaborations between naval and air forces.

Kyrgyzstan

The then Deputy National Security Adviser led the Indian delegation to the 6th Regional Dialogue of Secretaries of Security Councils/National Security Advisers on Afghanistan which was held in Bishkek on 16 February.

Kyrgyz Republic participated in the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit. The Health Ministers' Session was attended by Meder Ismailov, First Deputy Minister of Health and the Youth Ministers' Session by Askar Shaikidinov, Head of the Youth Policy Department of the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy.

The annual Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR-XI was held from 22 January to 03 February at Special Forces Training School, Bakloh/Himachal Pradesh. Defence

Secretary met Lt. Gen. Bekbolotov Baktybek, Defence Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic on 25 April in Astana on the sidelines of the SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting. The 2nd meeting of Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation was held at New Delhi on 08-09 July. A 20-member Kyrgyz youth delegation visited India on 06-12 March as a part of the visit of a 100-member youth delegation from Central Asia.

Russia

India-Russia Special and Strategic Partnership continued to strengthen through regular high-level interactions and progress in bilateral cooperation in a range of fields, including political, economic, defence, energy, and people-to-people ties. Bilateral trade during 2023-24 reached an all-time high of USD 65.70 billion with Russia becoming India's fourth largest trading partner.

Prime Minister paid an official visit to Russia on 08-09 July for the 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit. During the visit, he was conferred the highest Russian state honour, the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle. The leaders set the revised target of bilateral trade to USD 100 billion by 2030. A separate Leaders' Joint Statement on the development of strategic areas of India-Russia economic cooperation for the period up to 2030 was released during the Summit.

Prime Minister again visited Russia on 22-23 October to attend the 16th BRICS Summit in the city of Kazan. Prime Minister and Russian President Vladimir Putin also had four telephone conversations in 2024 (15 January, 20 March, 05 June and 27 August).



Prime Minister met the President of Russia Vladimir Putin for the 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit in Moscow, July 2024.



(Clockwise from bottom left) Prime Minister met the leaders of Egypt, China, Iran, UAE, Uzbekistan and Russia on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan, October 2024.

Speaker of Lok Sabha visited St. Petersburg for the 10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum on 11-12 July and also met his counterpart Chairman of State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin and Speaker of Federation Council Valentina Matvienko.

Raksha Mantri visited Russia on 08-10 December for the 21st Session of the India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission on Military and Military-Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-M&MTC), co-chaired by the Defence Ministers of the two countries.

EAM and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov, had bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Astana on 03 July, Foreign Ministers' Meeting under the ASEAN framework in Vientiane, Laos on 26 July, the Gulf Cooperation Council meeting in Riyadh on 09 September and the 79th UNGA Session in New York on 25 September.

National Security Adviser (NSA) visited St. Petersburg on 11-12 September for the BRICS NSAs' meeting. During the visit, NSA also called on President Putin and had a bilateral meeting with his Russian counterpart Sergei Shoigu. Prior to this, NSA had visited St. Petersburg on 24 April to attend the 12th International Conference of High Officials Responsible for Security Matters, where he met his then counterpart Nikolai Patrushev. MoS (Home Affairs) visited Moscow on 28-29 July to hold the Second Meeting of the India-

Russia Joint Commission on the Cooperation in the Field of Emergency Management with Minister of the Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM of Russia) Alexander Kurenkov. During the visit, the working plan of cooperation in the field of emergency management for 2025-2026 was signed.

Secretary (West) visited Moscow on 19-20 December for the 13th round of the India-Russia Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and bilateral consultations on UN and multilateral issues.

Russia's First Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov visited India on 10-12 November and co-chaired the 25th Session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC) with EAM on 12 November in New Delhi. A Protocol for the 25th Session of IRIGC-TEC was signed. The IRIGC-TEC Sessions were preceded by the India-Russia Business Forum, which was convened in Mumbai on 11 November and witnessed participation by a wide range of stakeholders including officials as well as representatives from businesses and industries of both India and Russia.

Indian Naval Ship, Tabar, called at St. Petersburg on 25-30 July to participate in the Main Naval Parade on the



Raksha Mantri and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh Tripathi at the Commissioning Ceremony of INS Tushil at the Yantar Shipyard in Kaliningrad, December 2024.

occasion of 328th anniversary of Russian Federation Navy on 28 July.

Indian delegations also participated in various events held in Russia like the World Youth Festival in Sochi from 29 February to 07 March, BRICS Sports and Games in Kazan on 12-23 June, BRICS Academic Forum in Moscow on 22-24 May and other cultural events.



EAM co-chaired the 25th meeting of the India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission with the First Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Denis Manturov in New Delhi, November 2024.

Tajikistan

The year saw continuing political engagement between India and Tajikistan. On 17 August, Tajik President Emomali Rahmon participated in the Inaugural Leaders' Session and the Tajik Foreign Minister Sirojiddin Muhriddin participated in the Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit.



EAM met the Foreign Minister of Tajikistan Sirojiddin Muhriddin on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Astana, July 2024.

On 03 July, EAM met the Tajik Foreign Minister Sirojiddin Muhriddin on the sidelines of the SCO Summit in Astana. Speaker of the Majlisi Oli (Lower House) of the Republic of Tajikistan Mahmadoir Zokirzoda, met the Speaker of Lok Sabha on the sidelines of the 10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum in St. Petersburg on 12 July.

Deputy Minister of Energy and Water Resources, Manuchehr Safarzoda, participated in the strategic conference “Powering Tomorrow - The Future Outlook for Energy Markets” at India Energy Week 2024 in February in Goa. First Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for Land Management and Geodesy Pirzoda Diloar Atakhon, attended the First India-Central Asia Rare Earths Forum held in New Delhi in September.

Eleven young diplomats from the Tajik Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended the 3rd Special Course for Diplomats from Central Asia at Sushma Swaraj Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi in October. A 20-member youth delegation from Tajikistan visited India in March, as part of the 2nd India-Central Asia Youth Forum, which involved a total of 100 youth delegates from the five Central Asian countries.

Turkmenistan

EAM met the Turkmen Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov on 27 September on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York. Turkmenistan participated in two sessions of the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit. Turkmen Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmed Gurbanov participated in the Foreign Ministers' Session, while Chairman of the State

Concern “Turkmengaz” M. Babayev, took part in the Energy Ministers' Session. For the first time a 20-member youth delegation visited India on 06-12 March as part of the 2nd India-Central Asia Youth Forum. Turkmenistan celebrated the 300th birth anniversary of its national poet Magtymguly Fragi on 17-18 May. During the ceremony, statues of 24 famous poets from all across the world including Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore were unveiled in the cultural park complex of Turkmenistan.

Ukraine

The highlight of the India-Ukraine ties during 2024 was Prime Minister's historic visit to Kyiv in August. It was the first visit to Ukraine by an Indian Prime Minister since diplomatic relations were established between the two countries in the year 1992. During the visit, Prime Minister held restricted as well as delegation level talks with the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. During the visit, four agreements on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and Food Industry, Cooperation in the field of Medical Products Regulation, Indian Humanitarian Grant Assistance to Ukraine and Programme for Cultural Cooperation for 2024-2028 were signed. India also provided humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Prime Minister gifted four Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita & Maitri (BHISHM) Cubes and 10 Gensets to the Government of Ukraine. The two leaders also met in Italy in June and in New York in September on the sidelines of G7 Summit and UNGA respectively, and held several telephone conversations.



Prime Minister and the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy witnessed signing of bilateral agreements between India and Ukraine at Maryinskyi Palace in Kyiv, August 2024.



EAM met the then Foreign Minister of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba and co-chaired the Ukrainian-Indian Intergovernmental Commission Review Meeting in New Delhi, March 2024.

This year also marked other high-level engagements. The then Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba visited India in March and held talks with EAM and the then Deputy National Security Adviser. EAM also met the new Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha in November in Italy on the sidelines of G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Apart from this, there have been several telephone conversations between EAM and Ukrainian Foreign Minister as well as NSA and the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine Andriy Yermak.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Iryna Borovets paid a working visit to India on 20-24 February to participate in the Raisina Dialogue. During the visit, she met the then Foreign Secretary and the then Deputy National Security Adviser and discussed issues related to further development of bilateral relations.

Uzbekistan

On 23 October, Prime Minister met the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan. EAM met the Uzbek Foreign Minister Bakhtiyor Saidov in Astana on 03 July and in New York on 28 September on the sidelines of the SCO Summit and the UNGA respectively.



Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, October 2024.

On 24-28 September, Finance Minister visited Uzbekistan to attend the 9th Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank's Annual Meeting in Samarkand. She called on the President of Uzbekistan and met the Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade Laziz Kudratov, Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan Khodjayev Jamshid Abdukhakimovich and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance Kuchkarov Djamshid Anvarovich. A Bilateral Investment Treaty was signed and the India-Uzbekistan Business Forum was held during the visit.

At the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit, Uzbekistan participated in two Ministerial sessions on Trade (Gulamov Shokhrukh Khasanovich, Acting Deputy Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade) and Environment (Mr. Jusipbek Sdikbekovich Kazbekov, Deputy Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection).

On 13 August, the Comptroller and Auditor General signed a MoU on mutual cooperation with his Uzbeki counterpart Adiz Boboyev, Chairman of the Chamber of Accounts during his official visit to Uzbekistan.

At the invitation of Central Election Commission of Uzbekistan, Chief Election Commissioner visited Uzbekistan on 24-27 October as an observer to the parliamentary elections. He also held a meeting with Zayniddin Nizamkhodjayev, Chairman, Central Election Commission of Uzbekistan during which a MoU for cooperation in the field of election management and administration was signed.

On the sidelines of 10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum in St. Petersburg on 12 July, Speaker of Lok Sabha met Senate Chairperson Tanzila Narbaeva.

The Chief of Army Staff paid a four-day visit to Uzbekistan on 15-18 April. An Information Technology lab at the Academy of Armed Forces in Tashkent funded by the Ministry was inaugurated during the visit. The 5th edition of the annual military exercise “Dustlik” took place in Termez in Uzbekistan. For the first time, the scope of the exercise was enhanced to a ‘Bi-Service’ status with the inclusion of 15 personnel from the IAF Garuds. The Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation was held in April in Tashkent.

A 20-member delegation from Uzbekistan visited India to join the 100-member youth delegation from five Central Asian countries for the India-Central Asia Youth Forum on 05-13 March.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

India's priorities in SCO are shaped by Prime Minister's vision of a 'SECURE' SCO. SECURE stands for Security, Economic Development, Connectivity, Unity, Respect for Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity, and Environmental Protection. India remained actively engaged in the SCO format, including various mechanisms/initiatives within the SCO framework, and reiterated mutual respect for sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, equality, mutual benefit, and non-interference in internal affairs. India also consistently advocated for greater emphasis on combating

terrorism, enhancing economic ties, promoting Digital Public Infrastructure, digital inclusion, lifestyle for sustainable development and WTO reforms. India's advancement in economy, trade, energy, technology, startups and innovation, traditional medicine etc. was also highlighted at various meetings in SCO.

Summit of SCO Council of Heads of State

EAM represented India at the 24th SCO Summit held in Astana on 03-04 July. Besides the Astana Declaration, which is the main Summit outcome document, a total of 23 documents were adopted at the SCO Summit. Notably, for the first time, the Summit Declaration echoed the theme of “One Earth, One Family, One Future.” It strongly condemned terrorism, specially emphasizing the need to address the issues of terrorism financing, cross-border movement of terrorists, isolating and exposing countries that harbour and provide safe havens to terrorists. The Declaration, while welcoming transport and connectivity initiatives in the region, underlined the importance of cooperation on a fair and balanced basis and in accordance with international law, the goals and principles of the UN Charter and SCO Charter.

EAM delivered Prime Minister's remarks at the extended format Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of States in Astana on 04 July, a day after the 24th Summit of SCO



EAM represented India at the 24th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of States in Astana, July 2024.



EAM represented India at the SCO Council of Heads of Government Meeting in Islamabad, October 2024.

Council of Heads of States. Terrorism was highlighted as the foremost challenge before the group. Emphasis was laid on the need for resilient and reliable supply chains and the potential of India's Make in India drive to help democratise the global economy. Prime Minister's remarks underlined the need for creating new connectivity linkages for a rebalanced world that should respect sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and non-discriminatory trade and transit rights to neighbours. The statement also flagged the progress made on Chabahar port and the value it holds to landlocked Central Asian states. Additionally, it conveyed that India remains sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the Afghan people. The remarks expressed hope that SCO's commitment to reforms in international order will also extend to the UN Security Council. The statement urged that English should be granted the status of third official language of SCO in order to achieve better communication and build consensus.

Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG)

EAM represented India at the CHG meeting in Islamabad on 15-16 October. EAM underlined the importance of commitment to the SCO Charter, and conveyed that

cooperation in areas like trade, energy and connectivity is unlikely to flourish if activities across borders are characterized by terrorism, extremism and separatism (three evils). He appealed member states to remain firm and uncompromising in countering the 'three evils.' The Joint Communiqué adopted at the meeting strongly reflected India's priorities, with key outcomes including the reaffirmation of principles like non-interference in internal affairs, respect for territorial integrity, and peaceful dispute resolution; developing a dialogue on the idea of One Earth, One Family, One Future; support for India's initiatives on decarbonization, digital transformation, and sustainable development; endorsement of rules-based multilateral trading system with WTO at its core; and commitment to enhancing global food security through research on climate-resilient crops like millets.

Meeting of SCO Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM)

Secretary (Economic Relations) attended the CFM meeting in Astana on 20-21 May. The meeting reviewed ongoing cooperation in SCO, discussed preparations for the Summit of the SCO Council of Heads of State and exchanged ideas on regional and global developments of common concern.

Other high-level SCO Meetings

Secretary (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) represented India in the Session of Heads of Ministries and Agencies responsible for Information and Communication Technologies on 01 February (virtual). Additional Secretary (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare) led the Indian delegation at the 7th SCO Health Ministers' meeting in Astana on 14 March. NSA led an Indian delegation at the 19th Meeting of Secretaries of the Security Council of SCO in Astana on 02-03 April. Joint Secretary (Ministry of Education) represented India in the Session of Education Ministers of SCO on 18 April (virtual). Secretary (Ministry of Defence) participated in the SCO Defence Ministers' meeting in Astana on 26 April.

Minister of Culture attended (virtual) the 21st meeting of Culture Ministers of SCO on 15 May. Inspector General of Forests led the Indian delegation at the 5th meeting of Heads of Ministries and Departments Responsible for Environmental Protection Issues in Astana on 22 May. Chief Justice of India attended the 19th Meeting of the Chief Justices of the Supreme Courts of SCO held in Tashkent on 23 May. Secretary (Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports) attended the Meeting of Heads of Ministries and Agencies Responsible for the Development of Physical Culture and Sport in Almaty on 24 May. Additional Secretary (Ministry of Tourism) attended the Session of Heads of Tourism Administrations of SCO in Almaty on 24 May. Additional Secretary (Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare), attended the 9th Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of SCO on 29 May (virtual).

Additional Secretary (Ministry of Law and Justice) attended the meeting of SCO Justice Ministers held on 06 June (virtual). Joint Secretary (Ministry of Road Transport and Highways) represented India in the SCO Transport Ministers Meeting held on 20 June (virtual). Secretary (Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas) represented India in the 4th meeting of SCO Energy Ministers on 20-21 June (virtual). Secretary (Ministry of Commerce) represented India at the meeting of SCO Trade Ministers on 12 September (virtual). Minister of Women and Child Development addressed the SCO Forum on Women in Qingdao on 09 September (virtual). Executive Director (Infra-II) (Ministry of Railways) represented India in the Meeting of the Heads of Railway Administrations in Moscow on 29 November.

Other Events Hosted by India

India hosted the 4th edition of the SCO Startup Forum on 19 March in New Delhi, on the sidelines of Startup Mahakumbh. The forum brought together stakeholders in the SCO startup community to foster collaboration, exchange ideas and share best practices. A showcase opportunity at the SCO Pavilion was provided where over 15 SCO startups participated. The second session of the Special Working Group on Startup and Innovation was hosted by India on 21 November in virtual format on the theme 'The Role of Startups and Innovation in Sustainable Development'.

C H A P T E R

6

GCC, West Asia & North Africa

Gulf Countries

India's relations with the Gulf countries continued to strengthen during 2024 with the exchange of high-level visits, increase in trade and investment, and broadening of relations in areas including energy, security, defence, nuclear, culture, education, technology, health, and food security.

The member countries remained among the top trading partners of India. With a bilateral trade of more than USD 162 billion, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was the top regional grouping trade partner of India in 2023-24. Investment flows continued to be robust, with cumulative FDI from GCC countries standing at approximately USD 20 billion. India's energy imports from the region also remained substantial.

The 9.3 million-strong Indian community continues to serve as a vital bridge between India and the Gulf countries.

Bahrain

Bilateral relations between India and Bahrain continued in an upward trajectory, with significant progress in political relations, institutional cooperation, economic ties, and engagement with the Indian diaspora.



EAM was received by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani on his arrival in Manama in December 2024

High Level Exchanges

The Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Bahrain Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa sent a congratulatory message to the Prime Minister on his re-election in June. Marking 25 years of the ascension of King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of Bahrain, 126 Indian prisoners were granted Royal Pardon in 2024. Bahrain is home to 340,000 Indians.

EAM made an official visit to Bahrain on 08-09 December and co-chaired the 4th India-Bahrain High Joint Commission meeting with his Bahraini counterpart Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani. During the visit EAM also met Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa. Additionally, he addressed the Concluding Plenary Session titled “*Whither Regional Strategic Cooperation*” at the 20th edition of the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) Manama Dialogue.



EAM addressed the 20th International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) Manama Dialogue, in Manama, Bahrain in December 2024

EAM met Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in Kampala, on 19-20 January. In September, EAM met his Bahraini counterpart on the sidelines of the GCC-India Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue in Riyadh.

On 17 January, on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland, EAM

met Bahraini Minister of Sustainable Development Noor Ali Alkhulaif.

On 17 August, Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani participated virtually in the 3rd edition of VoGGS, chaired by EAM, focusing on “Global South and Global Governance.” The Comptroller and Auditor General of India, visited Bahrain on 25-28 August to strengthen institutional ties.

Discussions were also held between Bahraini Minister of Sustainable Development Noor Ali Alkhulaif, and the then Minister of Women and Child Development in January on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland. Additionally, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas met Senior Adviser to the Managing Board of Bahrain Economic Development Board Iain Lindsay, and CEO of Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO) Mark Thomas, at the same event.

On 23 July, Minister of Culture met the President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA) Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa during the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO in New Delhi. A Delegation led by Bahraini Minister of Sustainable Development & Chief Executive of Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB) Noor bint Ali Alkhulaif visited India on 09 -14 September and met with potential investors to promote inward investment from India to Bahrain. On 25 September, a virtual meeting took place between the Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports and Minister of Youth Affairs of Bahrain Rawan Bint Najeeb Tawfeeqi focusing on enhancing youth exchanges.

A delegation led by Bahraini Minister of Industry and Commerce Abdullah bin Adel Fakhro participated in the 29th Partnership Summit 2024 on 02-03 December, and met the Minister of Commerce and Industry and discussed cooperation in industry, trade, and investment.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

The trade and economic relations between India and Bahrain remained robust in FY 2023-24. Bilateral trade reached USD 1.73 billion, with imports from Bahrain standing at USD 0.82 billion and exports from India to Bahrain at USD 0.91 billion. India continued to be among the top five trading partners of Bahrain and the 6th largest investor. Cumulative FDI equity inflows from Bahrain amounted to approximately USD 1.43 million in FY 2023-24.

During the year, several Indian delegations visited Bahrain, including those from the Indian Economic Trade Organization (IETO), Customs AEO Zone Trichy, CBIC, Ministry of Finance, and the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI). The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) signed a deal with Kingdom Projects to establish two Taj hotels in Bahrain—a



Indian Navy's 1st Training Squadron Ships, INS Tir and ICGS Veera, visited Mina Salman Port, Bahrain, October 2024

Taj Resort in Hamala and a 200-room Taj Hotel in Seef. From the Bahraini side, the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB) delegation visited Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Chennai in September to promote inward investment from India to Bahrain.

The first round of Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) negotiations between India and Bahrain was held virtually on 03-04 September. As a special gesture, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry issued a notification permitting the export of 3000 MT of onions to Bahrain, granting an exception to the ban on onion exports from India.

Defence and Security Cooperation

India's first year as a full member of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), headquartered in Bahrain, saw significant engagements in both multilateral and bilateral spheres. In April, the Indian Navy Ship INS Talwar, operating as part of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 of the CMF, seized 940 kg of drugs. Indian Navy's 1st Training Squadron Ships, INS Tir and ICGS Veera, visited Mina Salman Port, Bahrain in October. The Sarang Helicopter display team of the Indian Air Force participated in the 7th edition of the Bahrain International Air Show, held at Sakhir Airbase in November.

A three member delegation from India, attended the Maritime Security Conference 2024, organized by the Combined Maritime Forces in Manama, on 16-17 April. The Director-General of Medical Services, Indian Navy, visited Bahrain on 01-03 July for the Multinational Combat Casualty Care Exchange Seminar, conducted by US NAVCENT.

Iran

India and Iran share millennia-long historical and civilizational ties, which provide a strong foundation to the bilateral relationship and foster robust strong people-to-people ties. Bilateral cooperation between India and Iran maintained its positive momentum throughout the year.

High Level Exchanges

On 22 October, Prime Minister met the newly elected President of Islamic Republic of Iran Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia. The two leaders reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and discussed regional developments, including the situation in West Asia.



Prime Minister met President of Iran Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, October 2024

On 14-15 January, EAM visited Iran and called on the then President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi. During the visit, he also met the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Minister for Roads and Urban Development Mehrdad Bazrpash, and Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Akbar Ahmadian. On 20 January, EAM met the then First Vice-President Mohammad Mokhber on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Kampala. On 24 October, EAM met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran Abbas Araghchi, on the sidelines of the BRICS Outreach Session in Kazan, Russia.



EAM called on the then President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, in Tehran, January 2024

Following the passing of President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Hossein Amir Abdollahian, and several other Iranian officials in a helicopter crash, India declared a one-day official state mourning on 21 May. Hon'ble Vice-President attended the official ceremony to pay condolences on 22 May in Tehran. In July, both the Houses of Parliament paid tribute to the late President Raisi and other senior officials who passed away in the tragic crash.

In July, the Minister of Road Transport and Highways visited Iran to represent India at the swearing-in ceremony of President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Cooperation in connectivity projects was further strengthened during the year. The long-term main contract for equipping and operating the Shahid Beheshti Terminal of Chabahar Port was signed on 13 May between India Ports Global Limited and the Port and Maritime Organization of Iran. The Minister for Ports, Shipping, and Waterways visited Iran to witness the signing of the contract. The Third Working Group meeting on Chabahar Port between India, Iran, and Uzbekistan was held on 22 November in Mumbai.

Iraq

India has long been a traditional partner of Iraq, with deep historical and civilizational ties. Throughout the year, several bilateral interactions occurred at various levels.

High Level Exchanges

On 25 September, EAM met with the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Iraq Fuad Hussein on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly in New York. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister also participated virtually in the Foreign Ministers' session of the 3rd edition of VoGGS held on 17 August. Iraqs' Deputy Minister for Upstream Affairs, Ministry of Oil Bashim Mohammed Khudhair also participated virtually in the Energy Ministers' session of the 3rd edition of VoGGS. On 17 January, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas met with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohamed Shia Al Sudani on the sidelines of the 54th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos.

A 3-member Iraqi naval delegation, led by the Iraqi Commander of the Naval Force, Staff Vice Admiral Mazin Abdulwahid Gubaian Al-Aameri, visited Visakhapatnam on 17 February at the invitation of the Indian Navy Chief to participate in MILAN-2024, a multinational naval exercise in India on 19-27 February.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

Iraq is the 7th largest trade partner of India in FY 2023-24, with bilateral trade reaching USD 6.35 billion. This included

imports of USD 3 billion and exports of USD 3.3 billion. Cumulative FDI equity inflow on Iraq stood at approximately USD 0.01 million for FY 2023-24.

India's crude oil imports for the year stood at 49.90 MMT, accounting for 21.46 percent of India's total crude oil imports. From 01 January-30 November, these imports amounted to 47.03 MMT, making up 21.1 percent of India's total crude oil imports. An Indian delegation, including representatives from IOCL, HPCL, BPCL, and GAIL, visited Iraq on 21-23 May and held discussions with State Organization for Marketing of Oil (SOMO) and the Ministry of Oil of Iraq.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) led business delegations to Iraq in January. Iraqi companies also actively participated in the Indus Food trade show held on 08-10 January. More than 20 multisectoral Indian Companies visited Erbil and Sulaymaniyah under the sponsorship of FIEO in June. About 20 Indian Construction Companies participated in the Erbil Construction Trade Fair held in May. Many ceramics and marble supplying companies are actively doing business in Kurdistan and Iraq. About half a dozen Iraqi businessmen participated in the India Soft Exhibition held in New Delhi on 17-19 January. An India pavilion was set up at the 47th Baghdad International Fair held on 10-19 January in Baghdad under the sponsorship of FIEO with participation of 47 companies and about 100 Indian businessmen.

India continued to support capacity building in Iraq by offering 200 ITEC slots annually and with 75 scholarships granted by ICCR to Iraqi students for the academic year 2024-25. Iraq remains a significant source of medical tourism to India, with over 30,000 medical visas issued annually. The Indian community in Iraq is estimated at around 35,000, primarily in Baghdad, the Kurdistan region, Basra, Najaf, and Karbala. Additionally, approximately 100,000 Indians visit Iraq annually for religious pilgrimages to cities like Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf, and Samarra.

In August, Indian musical instruments were presented to the Ministry of Culture and Youth of Kurdistan as a gift from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). The Global South Centre of Excellence at RIS signed a Letter of Association with the Iraqi think-tank, Al-Rafidain Centre for Dialogue (RCD) in June, and with the Kurdish think-tank, Middle East Research Institute (MERI) in April.

Kuwait

India and Kuwait have long enjoyed close and friendly relations, rooted in strong people-to-people ties and trade. During the year, these relations were further strengthened by high-level visits and interactions.

High Level Exchanges

Prime Minister paid an official visit to Kuwait on 21-22 December. This was Prime Minister's first visit to Kuwait and the first by an Indian Prime Minister in the last 43 years. During the visit, he held talks with Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah AL-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. Prime Minister was conferred with 'The Order of Mubarak Al Kabeer' the highest award of the State of Kuwait by the Amir of Kuwait.



Prime Minister was conferred with 'The Order of Mubarak Al Kabeer' by the Amir of the State of Kuwait Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, December 2024

Prime Minister also visited a labour camp in Kuwait with a workforce of around 1500 Indian nationals and interacted with a cross-section of Indian workers and later, addressed a large gathering of the Indian community in a special event 'Hala Modi'.



Prime Minister visited a labour camp and interacted with Indian workers in Mina Abdullah area of Kuwait, December 2024



Prime Minister addressed a large gathering of the Indian community in a special event 'Hala Modi' in Kuwait, December 2024

Both sides agreed to elevate the relationship to a Strategic Partnership. Key bilateral documents signed during the visit included a MoU on cooperation in the field of defence and Kuwait's membership of International Solar Alliance (ISA), among others.

On 22 September, Prime Minister met with Crown Prince of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Khaled AL-Hamad AL-Mubarak AL-Sabah on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UNGA in New York. This marked the first meeting between the Prime Minister and the Crown Prince of Kuwait, and was the first high-level interaction between the leadership of both countries in the last decade.

EAM visited Kuwait on 18 August for official talks with the Foreign Minister of Kuwait Abdullah Ali AL-Yahya. During the visit, EAM also called on the Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah AL-Khaled AL Sabah and Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed AL Abdullah AL Sabah. EAM subsequently met with the Foreign Minister on the sidelines of the first India-GCC Foreign Ministers Meeting in Riyadh on 9 September. The Foreign Minister of Kuwait visited India on 03-04 December, where he held bilateral talks with EAM. On 4 December the Ministers signed a MoU to establish a Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC) at the level of Foreign Ministers.



EAM and Foreign Minister of Kuwait Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, jointly signed an MoU to establish a Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC) at the level of Foreign Ministers, in New Delhi, December 2024



MoS(KVS) at the repatriation of the mortal remains of the deceased in tragic fire incident in Kuwait by a special IAF aircraft, June 2024

MoS (KVS), visited Kuwait on 13 June in the wake of a tragic fire incident in which 46 Indians lost their lives. He called on the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and Interior, the Foreign Minister, and the Minister of Health of Kuwait, and met with the injured Indian nationals in various hospitals. The mortal remains of the deceased were airlifted by a special IAF aircraft on 14 June with MoS (KVS) aboard.

The 6th round of India-Kuwait Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) took place on 24 July in Kuwait. Joint Secretary (CT), MEA also participated in the United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT) Conference organized by Kuwait on 04-05 November. The 7th meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Hydrocarbons was held in New Delhi on 10-11 December.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

Bilateral trade between India and Kuwait continued to grow steadily. In FY 2023-24, total trade reached USD 10.47 billion. India's exports to Kuwait stood at USD 2.1 billion, while imports from Kuwait totalled USD 8.4 billion, with crude oil and related products accounting for nearly 75 percent of imports. Aircraft & parts, cereals, and organic chemicals were the top three items exported by India to Kuwait.

Cumulative FDI equity inflows from Kuwait amounted to approximately USD 1.45 million for FY 2023-24, reflecting growing interest in sectors such as Oil & Gas, Pharmaceuticals, Food Processing, Auto/EV, Chemicals, and Tourism.

Trade and investment promotion events organised during the year include the 'India-Kuwait Investment Conference 2.0' in April, two B2B networking events in the food and beverage sectors in September, and an online meeting with the Public Authority for Housing Welfare and real estate companies in India with support from CII. Senior officials from the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition and the President of the Kuwait Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies participated in World Food India 2024.

Oman

India and Oman share a centuries-old historic relationship, deeply rooted in strong people-to-people connections, with approximately 700,000 Indian nationals residing in Oman. Both countries continued to strengthen their close and multi-dimensional partnership in political, defence, economic, and cultural domains.

High Level Exchanges

The Sultanate of Oman held a teleconference with the Prime Minister in June. Notably, the Sultanate was among



EAM met the Foreign Minister of Oman Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al-Busaidi, during the India-GCC Foreign Ministers Meeting in Riyadh, September 2024

the first GCC leaders to congratulate the Prime Minister on his re-election. EAM held three teleconferences with Oman's Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al-Busaidi, discussing bilateral and regional issues. The two Ministers also met in Riyadh during the India-GCC Foreign Ministers Meeting in September.

On 3 December, the 13th India-Oman Strategic Consultative Group meeting was co-chaired by the Secretary (CPV & OIA), MEA of India and his Omani counterpart, the Under Secretary for Diplomatic Affairs Sheikh Khalifa Alharthy in New Delhi. Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs Sayyid Asaad bin Tarik participated in the Leaders' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGGGS, hosted by Prime Minister. He also took part in the Trade and Investment Vice Ministers' session during the summit.

In February, the 9th strategic dialogue between India and Oman was held. India's Deputy National Security Advisor visited Oman and co-chaired the dialogue with Major General Idris al-Kindi, Secretary General of the National Security Council of Oman. The dialogue reviewed the full range of strategic areas of cooperation.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

Oman's Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion, Qais Al Yousef visited India in August to explore trade and investment opportunities. India remained Oman's fourth-largest crude oil export market and the third-largest

for non-oil exports. During 2023-24, the total bilateral trade amounted to approximately USD 8.9 billion. The cumulative FDI equity inflow from Oman for FY 2023-24 stood at about USD 5 million.

The last round of Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) negotiations occurred virtually from 30 September to 1 October.

The updated Protocol to amend the India-Oman Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) was agreed upon and approved by the Union Cabinet of India. The two countries are also negotiating the India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership, with notable business-to-business interactions spanning agriculture, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors.

Defence and Security Cooperation

The defence partnership remained strong with key visits, meetings, and exercises. In January, India's Defence Secretary co-chaired the Joint Military Cooperation Committee (JMCC) with the Secretary-General of Oman's Ministry of Defence. During the JMCC meeting, both countries signed a MoU on the procurement of defence material. In October the Indian Navy's Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command visited Oman. The Indian Navy also hosted the 'Naseem Al-Bahr' exercise with Oman in Goa on 13-18 October, and Oman hosted the 'Al Najah' exercise with the Indian Army on 12-26 September, and 'Eastern Bridge' exercise with the Indian Air Force on 12-22 September.



INS Trikand and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft, participated in the Indo-Oman bilateral naval exercise 'Naseem-Al-Bahr' with the Royal Navy of Oman Vessel Al Seeb off Goa, October 2024



Indian Army and the Royal Army of Oman conducted the 5th edition of the joint military exercise 'Al Najah V' at the Rabkoot, Oman, September 2024

The training partnership saw record participation, with over 70 Omani personnel receiving specialized training in India, and Indian Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) conducted tailored courses in Oman. A joint Search and Rescue (SAR) operation involving the Indian Navy, Oman Maritime Security Centre, Royal Navy of Oman, and Royal Air Force of Oman led to the rescue of nine crew members, including eight Indians, from the MT Falcon Prestige.

Indian Embassy in collaboration with the Oman Historical Association and the National Museum of Oman, hosted a

lecture series titled 'Mandvi to Muscat: Indian Community and the Shared History of India and Oman'. The series, inaugurated by the then MoS (VM), highlighted the centuries-old historical ties between the two countries. The Embassy also digitized over 7,000 historical documents from Indian merchant families in Oman, preserving the legacy of the Indian diaspora. In April, the National Museum of Oman, in collaboration with the Indian Embassy, unveiled the Anis al-Hujaj manuscript, a historical document on loan from the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya in Mumbai.

Qatar

India shares a historic and multifaceted relationship with Qatar. Both countries continued to strengthen ties across various domains, including high-level exchanges, trade, energy cooperation, and people-to-people linkages. The Indian diaspora, numbering approximately 830,000, remains the largest expatriate community in Qatar, serving as a vital bridge between the two nations.

High Level Exchanges

The Prime Minister paid an official visit to Qatar on 14-15 February. In Doha, he met with the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and discussed avenues to deepen bilateral relations. Prime Minister also met The Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani congratulated the Prime Minister on his re-election during a telephonic conversation on 10 June.

EAM visited Qatar on 30 June and held discussions with the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh

Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. They held discussions on deepening India-Qatar relations. They met again during the India-GCC Ministerial Meeting in Riyadh on 09 September. EAM visited Qatar on 06-07 December where he took part in the 22nd edition of Doha Forum and spoke at a panel on 'Conflict Resolution in a New Era'. EAM also met the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations with Qatar. He also met the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al Thani and Minister of State Ahmed Al Sayed during the visit.

EAM visited Qatar for the third time on 30 December and met his Qatari Counterpart Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani to review the bilateral relations and the forthcoming VVIP visit of Amir of Qatar to India in early 2025

On 01-04 October, MoS (KVS) addressed the 2nd Business Forum held at the sidelines of the 3rd Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit in Doha. During his visit, he held a bilateral meeting with Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad Al Muraikhi on 03 October.



Prime Minister held discussions with the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani in Doha, February 2024



MoS(KVS) addressed the 2nd Business Forum held at the sidelines of the 3rd Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit in Doha, Qatar, October 2024

On 26-27 February, the Minister for Railways, Communications, and Electronics & IT visited Doha and held meetings with his Qatari counterparts. Minister of Industries & Commerce of Rajasthan visited Qatar on 19-20 September and interacted with investors and the business community and invited them to participate in the 'Rising Rajasthan' Investment Summit in December.

In February, Qatar's Minister of State for Energy, and QatarEnergy CEO, Eng. Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi, participated in the India Energy Week in Goa and met the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. During this visit, QatarEnergy and Petronet LNG signed an agreement for supply of 7.5 MMTA LNG from Qatar to India for 20 years starting from the year 2028.

Secretary (CPV & OIA), MEA visited Qatar on 27 October and co-Chaired the 5th round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Qatar with Secretary General of Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The first meeting of the India-Qatar Joint Task Force on Investment was held in New Delhi on 06 June. The meeting was co-Chaired by the Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs on the Indian side and by the Under Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Qatar Mohammed bin Hassan Al Malki. The inaugural meeting of the Joint Working Group on Trade and Commerce was held in Doha on 10 July.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

India-Qatar trade remained robust, with total bilateral trade during FY 2023-24 amounting to approximately USD 14 billion. India's imports from Qatar reached USD 12.38 billion,

while exports to Qatar were valued at USD 1.7 billion. Energy continues to dominate the trade relationship, with Qatar being a significant supplier of LNG and LPG to India. The two sides have also been in negotiations for concluding a Bilateral Investment Treaty and a revised Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement to give further boost to bilateral trade and investment. Cumulative FDI equity inflow totalled approximately USD 998.66 million for FY 2023-24.

Several Indian business delegations and companies participated in events and exhibitions held in Qatar to explore trade and commerce opportunities. These included visits by a Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) delegation on 02-03 June, a Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) delegation on 11-12 September, and a buyer-seller meet on marine products on 11 July. Indian companies also participated in exhibitions such as the Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition (05-11 February), the Qatar International Agricultural Exhibition (21-27 February), and Project Qatar (27-30 May). Similarly, several Qatari businessmen and delegations visited India for business events.



MoS(KVS) met Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad Al Muraikhi on the sidelines of 3rd Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Summit in Doha, Qatar, October 2024

The Indian diaspora continued to play a pivotal role in fostering bilateral ties. Cultural events such as 'Passage to India', Labour Day celebrations, and 'Bharat Utsav' were organized in collaboration with Indian community organizations. An Indian mango festival 'Al-Hamba Exhibition' was held in collaboration with Souq Waqif on 30 May-08 June, showcasing diverse Indian mango varieties.

Saudi Arabia

India and Saudi Arabia continued the momentum of wide-ranging cooperation under the framework of the Strategic Partnership Council (SPC), underpinned by regular high-level political & commercial exchanges, setting up of High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Investment, deepening of defence partnership, and enhanced cultural and people-to-people ties.

High Level Exchanges

EAM visited Riyadh on 08-09 September and co-chaired the inaugural session of the first-ever India-GCC Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue. This marked the inaugural Foreign Ministers-level meeting between India and the GCC that was attended by the Foreign Ministers of all the GCC countries and Secretary General of GCC. On the sidelines, EAM also held bilateral talks with his counterparts. A Joint Action Plan 2024-2028 was adopted at the meeting for cooperation in various sectors including security, trade, transportation, energy, agriculture, health, and culture.

Under the SPC framework, Ministerial, Senior Officials and Joint Working Group meetings of the Political, Security, Social and Cultural Committee (PSSC) and Economy and Investment Committee (E&I) were held. EAM and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud co-chaired the PSSC meeting on 13 November in New Delhi. Minister

of Commerce & Industry co-chaired the E&I meeting with the Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman Al Saud on 30 October in Riyadh. Minister of Commerce & Industry also attended the Future Investment Initiative Summit during the visit. Foreign Secretary and Deputy Minister for Political Affairs, Saud Al Sati held delegation level talks under the PSSC Committee on 18 October in New Delhi.

The then Minister of Minority Affairs along with the then MoS (VM) visited Jeddah on 06-08 January and participated in the 3rd edition of Haj and Umrah Conference. Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, visited Riyadh and attended the COP16 of UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), on 01-03 December. Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, attended the 4th Global High-Level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance on 15-16 November in Jeddah. An Indian delegation, led by Minister of State for Finance, along with Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), and a Member of Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) represented India at the Zakat, Tax, and Customs Authority (ZATCA) Conference 2024 at Riyadh on 04-05 December. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India visited Riyadh on 28-31 August and held bilateral meetings with his counterpart. During the visit, a MoU on public sector auditing was signed. The Secretary of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas visited Saudi Arabia on 29-30 September. The Secretary (CPV&OIA), MEA visited Saudi Arabia on 04-07 May for bilateral meetings.



EAM co-chaired the inaugural session of the first-ever India-GCC Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue held in Riyadh, September 2024



The inaugural edition of India-Saudi Arabia Joint land Military Exercise 'SADA TANSEEQ' conducted at Mahajan, Rajasthan, January 2024

Trade and Economic Cooperation

Bilateral trade and investment ties between India and Saudi Arabia continued to make significant progress. India is the 2nd largest trade partner for Saudi Arabia, whereas Saudi Arabia is the 5th largest trading partner of India. During the Financial Year 2023-24, bilateral trade was valued at USD 43.37 billion. During this period, India's imports from Saudi Arabia amounted to USD 31.81 billion, while exports to Saudi Arabia were valued at USD 11.56 billion. Total trade with Saudi Arabia accounted for 4.53 percent of India's total trade in the Financial Year 2023-24. Major commodities of export from India and Saudi Arabia include engineering goods, rice, petroleum products, chemicals, textiles, food products, ceramic tiles. Whereas, major commodities of import for India from Saudi Arabia are crude oil, LPG, fertilizers, chemicals, plastic and products thereof. Saudi Arabia remained the 3rd largest crude sourcing destination for FY 2023-24. Cumulative FDI equity inflow totalled approximately USD 20.04 Million for FY 2023-24. Rajasthan's Minister of State for Industry and Commerce also visited Riyadh for business promotion.

Defence and Security Cooperation

With the first ever official visit to India by the Royal Saudi Naval Forces Chief of Staff, Admiral Fahd AL-Ghufaili in January, defence cooperation achieved new heights. The then MoS (Defence) attended the 2nd World Defence Show in Riyadh on 04-08 February. Munitions India Ltd. signed a contract worth USD 225 million for supply of artillery ammunition to Saudi Arabia, through its partnership with Nadrah Trading Company on the sidelines. The first ever India-Saudi Joint Land Force Exercise "SADA TANSEEQ" was conducted in Rajasthan on 29 January-10 February.

A delegation from Royal Saudi Air Force participated as observers in 'Exercise Tarang Shakti' held at Jodhpur on 29 August-14 September. The 6th meeting of the Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation was held in Riyadh on 3 September. The Vice Admiral of the Indian Navy attended the 3rd Saudi International Maritime Forum on 19-21 November in Dammam. The second edition of India-Saudi Arabia Defence Seminar was held on 28 November in Riyadh. Regular exchange of officials and cadets for training courses were conducted throughout the year.

On 06-10 October, a five-member delegation from National Archives of India attended a training programme on archives preservation and restoration at the King Abdulaziz Foundation, Riyadh.

Indian art and cultural groups participated in the annual Riyadh Season 2024 organized by the Saudi government. The number of Indians living in Saudi Arabia increased to nearly 2.65 million.

UAE

The India-UAE relationship is rooted in centuries of collaboration, cultivating a deep bond of friendship and mutual respect. This cooperation has continued with significant bilateral engagements, marked by three high-level visits between the leaders of both countries. Throughout the year, both countries have advanced transformative initiatives, launched historic projects, and further strengthened their long-standing trade, investment, and energy ties.

High Level Exchanges

The Prime Minister visited the UAE on 13-14 February and met the President of the UAE, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed

Al Nahyan, and the Ruler of Dubai, Prime Minister, Vice-President, and the then Minister of Defence of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. On 14 February, he inaugurated the Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS) Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi, which has since become a cultural symbol, attracting over a million visitors. The visit also saw the signing of significant agreements, including the Bilateral Investment Treaty, the Intergovernmental Framework Agreement (IGFA) on the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC), and MoUs on Digital Infrastructure Projects and the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC).

President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, visited India as the Chief Guest at the Vibrant Gujarat Summit held in Ahmedabad on 09-10 January. During the visit, MoUs on Investment Cooperation in Innovative Healthcare Projects, Renewable Energy, and Food Parks Development were signed. On September 09-10, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan paid an official visit to India. During these high-level visits, several MoUs and agreements across multiple sectors, including in investments, IMEEC, renewable energy, food parks development, digital infrastructure, nuclear, critical minerals, energy were signed enhancing the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the two countries.



Prime Minister met President of the UAE Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi, February 2024



Prime Minister inaugurated BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi, February 2024



Prime Minister along with President of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, oversee the exchange of MoUs by EAM and Minister of Investment Mohamed Hassan Al Suwaidi in Gandhinagar, January 2024



Prime Minister held discussions with President of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Gandhinagar, January 2024



Prime Minister received Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in New Delhi, September 2024

During the year, EAM visited UAE thrice. He accompanied the Prime Minister in February and later visited on 23 June and 14 November. On 23 June, EAM met with his counterpart, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the UAE. They reviewed the multifaceted India-UAE Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, expressing satisfaction with progress in areas such as commerce, economic collaboration, fintech, education, culture, and people-to-people connections. Additionally, they explored new avenues for further cooperation and exchanged views on regional and global issues. During his November visit, EAM again met with his counterpart and inaugurated Symbiosis International University's Dubai campus.

EAM and the UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan co-chaired the 4th Strategic Dialogue on 12 December, and the 15th Joint Commission Meeting on 13 December, at New Delhi.

The Commerce and Industry Minister visited the UAE from 27 February to 01 March, focusing on enhancing trade and investment ties under the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). Chairman and Managing Director of the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan visited on 7 October to discuss deepening collaboration in sovereign investments.

On 22 October, UAE Minister of Investments Mohamed Hassan Alsuwaidi, visited Rajasthan and signed an investment memorandum with the state to explore the development of a 60 GW renewable energy project.

India – UAE have strong institutional mechanisms to advance cooperation in several fields. During the year, most of these institutional mechanisms met to review and further enhance the comprehensive strategic partnership. Key meetings held during the year include the 4th meeting of the Joint Security Committee in New Delhi on 7 May, the 5th meeting of the Joint Committee on Consular Affairs in New Delhi on 14 May, the 3rd Army-to-Army Staff Talks and 8th Navy-to-Navy Staff Talks in Abu Dhabi on 08 July, the 12th Joint Defence Cooperation Committee Meeting on 08–09 July, the 12th meeting of the UAE-India High-Level Joint Task Force on Investments in Mumbai on 07 October, and the 2nd meeting of the Joint Committee on India-UAE CEPA in Dubai on 10 October.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

India-UAE trade and investment relations continued to experience robust growth in 2023-24. Bilateral trade reached USD 83.64 billion, with India's imports from the UAE totalling USD 48 billion and exports to the UAE valued at USD 35.62 billion. Indian exports to the UAE saw a notable increase of 12.71 percent, solidifying the UAE's position as India's second-largest export destination and third-largest trading partner. The UAE remained a significant source of foreign direct investment (FDI) in India, with cumulative FDI equity inflow totalling approximately USD 2.92 billion for FY 2023-24. From April to September, the UAE ranked as the fourth-largest contributor to India's overall FDI

equity inflow. Both countries signed multiple agreements for enhancing investment cooperation in conventional and renewable energy, nuclear energy, food parks, healthcare, digital infrastructure.

The Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) between India and the UAE, signed on 13 February took effect on 31 August, ensuring continued investment protection following the expiry of the 2013 Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) in September 2024

Energy Cooperation

India-UAE energy cooperation has also reached new heights. In September, an MoU was signed between Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd and UAE's Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) for the latter's participation in additional opportunities for crude storage in India in the phase 2 of the program. A long term 0.5 MMTPA LNG contract was signed between ADNOC and GAIL in January. Another long-term LNG contract was signed between IOCL and ADNOC in September for supply of 1 MMTPA from 2028 onwards.

During the visit of the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on 09-10 September, which marked his first official visit to India in this capacity, a MoU on Nuclear Cooperation was signed, marking the first agreement between the two countries in the field of nuclear energy. Additionally, a MoU was signed between International Resources Holding RSC Ltd. (IRH) and a consortium consisting of Oil India Ltd., Khanij Bidesh India Ltd., and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Videsh Ltd, for global collaboration in the critical mineral supply chain. The agreement focuses on exploration efforts in third countries, thereby opening avenues for cooperation in the important sector of critical minerals.

Defence and Security Cooperation

India and the UAE strengthened their defence cooperation throughout the year, as evidenced by delegation exchanges, training programs, and joint military exercises.

The Chief of Naval Staff of the Indian Navy visited the UAE on 20 - 25 October as part of ongoing efforts to enhance maritime cooperation between the two countries. He participated in the third edition of the India-UAE Bilateral Naval Exercise (BILAT).

The 12th Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) meeting was held on 08-09 July at Abu Dhabi. Staff talks between the Navy and Army of the two countries were also conducted on the sidelines of the JDCC.

The first joint military exercise 'Desert Cyclone' was conducted on 02-15 January in India. 3rd edition of India - UAE bilateral naval exercise was conducted in October. In UAE, UAE Air force also participated in Exercise 'Tarang

Shakti' in India in September. The first India-UAE Defence Partnership Forum was held in Abu Dhabi in September which brought together companies and officials from both sides.



The troops of Indian Army and UAE Land Forces undergoing training & tactical exercises during the first Joint Military Exercise 'Desert Cyclone' in Rajasthan, India, January 2024

People-to-people ties remained strong with the number of Indians residing and visiting UAE increasing every year. UAE has the largest population of Indian nationals in the world and the Indian community in UAE has grown from 3.5 million (2021) to 3.89 million (2024).

There are 108 Indian curriculum schools in the UAE. In July, a CBSE Regional Office and Centre of Excellence was set-up in Dubai to support the CBSE schools in the UAE and those outside India.

Trilateral Cooperation

The India-France-UAE Trilateral Focal Points meeting was convened through virtual conference on 09 July. India was represented by Joint Secretary (Europe West), MEA and Joint Secretary (Gulf), MEA. The French delegation was led by Timothée Truelle, Head of South Asia Division, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the UAE side was headed by Saeed Mubarak Al-Hajeri, Assistant Minister for Economic and Trade Affairs at the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The participants reviewed the progress in the trilateral cooperation across all areas under the Joint Roadmap agreed upon by the three Foreign Ministers in February 2023.

Yemen

India's relationship with Yemen is centuries old and its cornerstone is our people to people ties. Despite the difficult security situation in Yemen, both countries continue to foster close relations. India remains committed to a peaceful, Yemeni-led and Yemeni-owned political resolution of the conflict through negotiations.

High Level Exchanges

On 24 September EAM met Vice-President of the Republic of Yemen Major General Aidarus Qassem Abdulaziz Al-Zubaidi on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York. EAM reaffirmed India's support for a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Yemen. Yemeni Education Minister Tareq Al-Akbari participated in the 3rd edition of VoGGS held on 17 August.

The total bilateral trade between India and Yemen for FY 2023-24 was USD 1.067 billion and the total exports to Yemen during this period was USD 875 million while total import was USD 191 million.

Two officials from the Yemeni Foreign Ministry successfully completed the ITEC Executive Course on Data for Development Capacity Building Initiative (D4D-CBI) in New Delhi. The course was conducted on October 23-29.

In 2024, 48 Yemeni students availed ICCR scholarship to study in India.

India and Yemen share strong defence ties. Training and capacity building is a key component of this cooperation. More than six Yemeni Cadets are undergoing training in various institutes in India. The Coast Guards of the two countries also have strong collaboration mechanisms. One Yemeni Coast Guard underwent a Long Navigation Course in India this year.

West Asia and North Africa Region

During the year, India significantly strengthened its bilateral ties with West Asian and North African nations through a variety of diplomatic, defence and humanitarian initiatives. Key highlights include the historic visit of Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji to Algeria, marking the first-ever visit by an Indian Head of State since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1962. Defence cooperation was further strengthened with Algeria through high-level visits and a Military Cooperation Agreement. India also deepened its ties with Egypt, Israel and Morocco, with engagements ranging from defence cooperation to

economic exchanges and strategic dialogues. India reopened its embassy in Tripoli in July.

India's humanitarian support was extended to Palestine with significant contributions of medical aid and financial assistance to UNRWA, while medical and educational outreach continued in Sudan, Syria and South Sudan. Diplomatic visits and agreements were also prominent in Libya, Tunisia, and Djibouti, with India playing an active role in regional humanitarian efforts.

Additionally, India's engagement with Jordan and Somalia saw collaborative defence meetings and business dialogues. The year also saw continued educational and cultural exchanges, reinforcing India's commitment to fostering deeper ties across the region.

India engaged in various multilateral and regional forums, reflecting our commitment to peace and stability in the WANA region. Secretary (CPV & OIA), MEA led the Indian delegation at the BRICS Deputy Foreign Minister meeting on the Middle East and North Africa in Moscow on 25 April. India held the 19th India-Japan consultation on the Middle East on 25 July, followed by the first India-Germany consultation on 27 November, both led by JS (WANA), MEA.

Algeria

The year was significant for reinforcement of the bilateral relations between India and Algeria in all domains.

High Level Exchanges

Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji paid a State visit to Algeria on 13-16 October, the first-ever visit by an Indian President to Algeria. This visit was even more special as it was the first incoming visit of a Head of State to Algeria after President Tebboune began his second term of five years on 17 September. During the visit, the first-ever India-Algeria Economic Forum was organized. The visit marked the commencement of a new era between the two countries.

Lok Sabha Speaker met President of the People's National Assembly of Algeria on the sidelines of 149th Assembly of Inter-Parliamentary Union held in Geneva on 14 October. EAM met Algerian Foreign Minister in New York on 28 September on the sidelines of 79th session of the UNGA. EAM also had a telephonic conversation with him on 30 November in which he congratulated him on his reappointment. On 17 August, the Algerian Minister of Finance Laaziz Faïd attended the Finance Ministers' session of the 3rd edition of VoGGS. At the invitation of the Minister of Commerce & Industry, Algerian Minister of Domestic Trade and National Market Regulation visited India to participate in and address CII's 29th edition of the Partnership Summit held in New Delhi on 02-03 December.



Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji was received by the President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Abdelmadjid Tebboune, and was accorded a Guard of Honour and a ceremonial welcome at the airport, October 2024

Trade and Economic Cooperation

India-Algeria trade reached USD 1.73 billion in 2023-24, reflecting a significant 38 percent increase in India's exports to Algeria compared to the previous year. A notable presence of Indian companies was seen at key events, with 48 Indian companies participating in the International Pharma Exhibition, 'Maghreb Pharma' held on 05-07 February in Algiers. Additionally, the Federation of Indian Export Organizations took part in the 21st edition of the International Trade Show for Food Production, Djazagro, on 22-25 April in Algiers, showcasing 32 Indian companies. Apollo Hospitals Group organized an interactive cardiology session for the Algerian Cardiology Society in Algiers on 03 May.

The Embassy, in collaboration with the Tea Board of India and the United Planters' Association of Southern India, hosted a "Tea Tasting Exhibition: Chai of India-Elixir of Life" featuring Nilgiri black tea on 01-03 February in Algiers.

Defence and Security Cooperation

The Defence Wing was re-opened in the Embassy of India, Algiers in June after 30 years. Algeria also positioned its Defence Attache in its Embassy at New Delhi. On the

invitation of the Chief of Staff of the People's National Army, India's Chief of Defence Staff visited Algeria from 31 October to 03 November and participated in the 70th Anniversary of Algeria's War of Independence. An agreement on Military Cooperation between India and Algeria was signed during the visit.

Djibouti

High Level Exchanges

The Minister for Agriculture of Djibouti Mohamed Ahmed Awaleh participated in the World Food India on 19-22 September organised by Ministry of Food Processing and Industries (MoFPI). The Minister of Energy of Djibouti Yonis Ali Guedi visited New Delhi and participated in the 7th session of International Solar Alliance (ISA) Assembly held on 03-06 November.

Defence and Security Cooperation

33 Operational Turn Around (OTR) visits of Indian Naval Ships to Djibouti took place during the period. The Djiboutian Government continued to accord clearances for the India

Ships and facilitated their OTR visits at short notice. This was important as Indian Navy enhanced its presence in the region as part of “Operation Sankalp” to safeguard Indian maritime interest.

The 2nd edition of India- Djibouti Business Forum was organised on 28 November, with the aim to increase the bilateral trade and investment. Bilateral trade in 2023-24 stood at USD 1.2 Billion.

Egypt

India-Egypt Strategic Partnership continue to strengthen. High-level exchanges between our two countries continued.



Prime Minister met President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, October 2024

High Level Exchanges

Prime Minister met President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Russia in October and the G20 Summit in Brazil in November. EAM had telephonic conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs Badr Ahmed Mohamed Abdelatty on 03 August. EAM met Minister Abdelatty again on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in September. Minister of State for Tourism met the Tourism Minister of Egypt Sherif Fathy, in Italy, on the sidelines of

the G7 meetings in November. Egyptian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs participated in the the Foreign Ministers' Session of 3rd edition of VoGGS. Lok Sabha Speaker met the Egyptian Speaker on the sidelines of the 10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum in St. Petersburg in Russia. Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas met his Egyptian counterpart on the sidelines of GASTECH-2024 held in Houston in September.

The 13th round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and Egypt was held in Delhi on 05 December. The FOC was co-chaired by Secretary (CPV&OIA), MEA and the Egyptian Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ahmed Shaheen. The FOC reviewed various facets of India-Egypt Strategic Partnership and discussed ways to further strengthen it.

Indian delegation led by Secretary (Housing and Urban Affairs) participated in the 12th World Urban Forum in Cairo in November.

A 3-member Niti Ayog delegation visited Egypt on 02-10 March, to study the Haya Karim project of Egypt. The delegation also visited Suez Canal Economic Zone, Aswan, Luxor and Alexandria during the visit.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

Egypt has traditionally been one of India's most important trading partners in the African continent. During FY 2023-24, the bilateral trade stood at USD 4.8 billion. A high-level delegation, led by Chairman of General Authority for Investment and free Zones (GAFI), Hossam Heiba participated in CII- India-Mediterranean Business Conclave in August, in New Delhi. The delegation interacted with many Indian companies, trade promotion bodies, including CII, Startup India, Invest India and Ministry of Commerce. The 6th round of Joint Trade Committee meeting between India and Egypt was held in New Delhi in September. The JTC discussed various bilateral trade issues and was followed by a Joint Business Commission meeting. The Special Rupee VOSTRO account between India and Egypt is now functional, with Egypt opening the bank account in SBI. Our countries could trade in local currencies, opening new avenues of investment and cooperation.

India's commitment to capacity-building of Egyptian professionals is steadfast. This year, besides the regular ITEC courses, two customized courses were offered to the Egyptian Ministry of Investments & Foreign Trade and Ministry of Finance at Marri Channa Reddy Human Resource Development Institute (MCHRD) Hyderabad and National Academy of Direct Taxes (NADT) Nagpur respectively.

A four-member delegation from the National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT), IIT Gandhinagar and IIITM Gwalior visited Egypt in March and signed a MoU to implement the Memorandum of Cooperation

in field of IT. The MoU was in between National Institute of Electronics & IT of MeITY and IT Institute of Egypt in March.

A delegation from National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) Ltd. led by CMD, NSIC participated in the *Turathna* (Our Heritage) Exhibition held in Cairo on 11-14 December. A MoU on cooperation in the MSME sector was signed between National Small Scale Industries Corporation (NSIC) and Micro Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Egypt (MSMEDA) on 12 December on the margins of the trade fair.

Defence and Security Cooperation

The defence collaboration between India and Egypt is robust with regular high-level exchanges, joint exercises, participation in exhibitions, and training courses. The 10th Joint Defence Committee (JDC) meeting was held in July in New Delhi. The JDC further helped strengthen defence cooperation. A bilateral Air Force Exercise took place on 21-26 June. The Sarang Helicopter Display team participated in the first Egypt International Airshow in September. India also participated in the Tactical Leadership Programme, hosted by Egypt in November-December. The engagement provided operational exposure to both sides.

Egypt supported India's candidature for Director General, International Solar Alliance.

State of Eritrea

The 2nd India-Eritrea Foreign Office Consultations was held on 15 May in New Delhi. Discussions covered entire range of bilateral relations including development cooperation and capacity building as well as regional and international issue of mutual interest.

Capacity building and human resource development remains a focus area of the partnership. 60 slots under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) were allotted to Eritrea, an increase of 20 slots from the previous year. 12 scholarships for undergraduate/postgraduate courses have been provided by ICCR under India-Africa Maitri Scholarship Scheme in 2024-25. 10 ICCR scholars from Eritrea are studying in India.

Israel

India and Israel maintained robust political interactions throughout the year. Prime Minister received a congratulatory call from his Israeli counterpart on his re-election on 6 June. Regular communication between the two countries was also evident as EAM held telephonic discussions with the Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar on 14 April, 13 June, and 18 December. Both sides exchanged greetings on significant

occasions. Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Prime Minister, EAM and Lok Sabha Speaker extended Independence Day greetings to their Israeli counterparts on 14 May, and Rosh Hashanah wishes on 02 October.

High Level Exchanges

The year witnessed key visits on both sides. Miri Regev, Minister of Transport, National Infrastructure & Road Safety visited India on 01-06 September and held meetings with Minister of Road Transport & Highways, Minister of Power, Housing & Urban Affairs, Minister of Civil Aviation, Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways. Israel's Minister of Economy and Industry Nir Barkat attended the CII Partnership Summit on 02-03 December and met EAM, Minister of State for Science & Technology and Commerce & Industry Minister. The former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert participated in Firstpost's Defence Summit in India on 22- 27 February. On 28 – 29 August, 17th India-Israel Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) was held during which Foreign Secretary and Director General (DG), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Yaakov Blitshtein reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations. DG Blitshtein also called on EAM and held meetings with Foreign Secretary, MEA Secretary (ER), MEA and Deputy NSA. Deputy DG (DDG) for Middle East Affairs visited India on 03-04 June and held meetings with Secretary (ER), Joint Secretary (WANA), Joint Secretary (PAI), Joint Secretary (Gulf) and, Joint Secretary (ED) of MEA. 3rd Consular dialogue led by Joint Secretary (CPV), MEA was held in Israel on 12 November.

The 16th Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation, co-chaired by Defence Secretary and Israel's Director-General of the Ministry of Defence Eyal Zamir, was held in New Delhi on 23 July. The meeting reviewed existing Defence Cooperation between the two countries.

As of October, there were around 32,000 Indian workers in Israel. This includes 6583 Indian workers who went to Israel under the Agreement on Facilitation of the Temporary Employment of Indian workers in specific labour market sectors in the State of Israel and their implementation protocols.

India commemorated International Holocaust Remembrance Day with the participation of the then MoS (RRS) at a ceremony hosted by Alliance Française on 30 January.

The multifaceted engagements throughout the year showcased the strong India-Israel strategic partnership across political, economic, defence dimensions.

Jordan

The warm friendly relations shared between India and Jordan has continued to remain strong. The multi-faceted relations

between India and Jordan have strengthened over the period. EAM met Foreign Minister of Jordan Ayman Safadi on the sidelines of 79th UNGA Summit in New York on 27 September and discussed the situation in West Asia. Jordan along with Egypt and the UN co-hosted the 'Call for Action: Urgent Humanitarian Response for Gaza' Conference, which was attended by Secretary (CPV & OIA), MEA on 11 June.

Defence and Security Cooperation

In April-May, a three member Jordanian delegation from Jordanian Royal Navy paid a visit to Southern Naval Command Kochi within the framework of 2nd Joint Defence Consultative Meeting. Another four-member defence delegation from the Royal Medical Services of the Jordan Armed Forces visited India in April, as part of a military training exchange programme within the ambit of the 2nd India – Jordan Consultative meeting on Defence.

The then Minister of Tourism of Jordan Makram Mustafa Queishi visited India in July to participate in the 46th session of World Heritage Committee of UNESCO. He met with the Minister of Tourism.

Lebanon

This year marked the 70th year of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Lebanon. On 25 November, EAM interacted with the Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib on the sidelines of the Rome Mediterranean Dialogues. Finance Minister of Lebanon Youssef El Khalil virtually attended the Finance Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGGS on 17 August.



EAM met Foreign Minister of Lebanon Abdallah Bou Habibon on the sidelines of Rome Mediterranean Dialogue, Rome, Italy, November 2024

While evacuating 77 Indian nationals from Syria in the aftermath of the departure of President Bashar Al Assad from Syria and the takeover of Damascus by the rebel group Hayat Tahrir Al Sham (HTS), the Embassy facilitated the cross over of Indian nationals from Damascus to Beirut and also arranged for their stay in Lebanon.

Multilateral cooperation

Lebanon became a member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) with the Lebanese Minister of Energy and Water Walid Fayad signing the ISA Framework Agreement on 21 August.

Humanitarian Assistance

In October, India gifted 33 tons of medicines including cardiovascular medications, NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), anti-inflammatory agents, antibiotics, and anaesthetics. The Health Minister of Lebanon Firas Abiad received the consignment.

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

The Indian battalion at UNIFIL comprising of around 900 personnel to perform peacekeeping duties in South Lebanon completed 26 years in November.

Libya

India and Libya have traditionally enjoyed warm and friendly relations, which continued to grow during the year. On 27-28 May Libyan Deputy Minister for Political Affairs Mohamed Khalil Issa visited India and called on the then MoS (VM) and had successful meetings with the Secretary (CPV&OIA), MEA; Secretary (ER), MEA and Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. The delegation also met Business Chambers including CII, FICCI and the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

India's Mission in Libya was re-opened on 22 July and the ban on Indian nationals traveling to Libya was relaxed on 6 August. It demonstrates India's commitment to strengthen the bilateral relation between India and Libya.

India organised a Special Course for 10 Libyan diplomats at Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service on 11-20 December.

Morocco

India and Morocco enjoy warm and friendly relations. EAM met Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita in New



INS Tabar, the frontline Frigate of the Indian Navy's Western Fleet arriving at Casablanca, Morocco for a three day visit, July 2024

York on 25 September on the sidelines of the 79th session of the UNGA. Moroccan Minister for Industry and Trade Ryad Mezzour visited India and participated in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024 on 10-12 January. He also met Commerce and Industry Minister on the sidelines. Moroccan Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development Leila Benali participated in the Energy Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGGS on 17 August. 4th Meeting of India-Morocco Joint Working Group on Water Resources was held on 20 August at New Delhi wherein various aspects of cooperation in the field of water management and conservation were discussed.

Indian Naval Ship Tabar visited Casablanca for a port call on 08-11 July and conducted Passex with the Royal Moroccan Navy. Morocco's National Defence Administration and Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) signed an agreement on 27 September aimed at local production of the ground combat vehicle (WhAP 8x8) at the Tata Advanced Systems - Morocco (TASM) plant. India-Morocco Defence Industrial Seminar was held on 09-10 December in Rabat during which around 13 Indian companies showcased their products, technology, and expertise to various stakeholders of Moroccan defence authorities.

150 Moroccan officials participated in various ITEC/e-ITEC courses between 1 January – 15 December. A special ITEC course on Cross-Border Energy Trading was conducted for officials from the Moroccan Agency for Sustainable Development (MASSEN), the National Office of Electricity and Drinking Water (ONEE), the National Electricity Regulatory Authority (ANRE), and the Ministry of Energy Transition and

Sustainable Development. This course was held from 29 April-3 May at the NTPC School of Business.

Palestine

India has continued its persistent support to the Palestinian people amidst the continuing Israel- Hamas conflict. In September, Prime Minister met the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in New York on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA. EAM met the then Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad al-Maliki on the sidelines of NAM Summit in Kampala, Uganda on 20 January. Minister of Agriculture of Palestine Rezaq Basheer-Salimia visited India to participate in the 3rd edition of World Food India, held on 18-23 September. During his visit, he also had a meeting with the Minister of Food Processing Industries of India.

Development Assistance

India has continued to be a keen development assistance partner of Palestine. Currently, developmental projects worth USD 40 million are in progress in Palestine to improve the lives of the Palestinian people. These projects include the Super-Speciality Hospital in Jenin governorate, the India Palestine Centre for Empowering Women Turathi (My Heritage) Project and the Commissioning of the National Printing Press in Palestine. We have also signed a MoU for the implementation of three Quick Impact Projects in Palestine, in Qalqilia, Nablus and Bethlehem. India also

facilitated capacity building in Palestine through the ICCR scholarships.

Humanitarian Assistance

India has continued its humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people in 2024. In October and November, India sent 65 tons of life-saving medicines to both UNRWA and the Palestinian Ministry of Health. Additionally, India maintained its annual support to UNRWA, contributing a total of USD 5 million in two tranches, one in June and the other in November.

Sudan

Bilateral cooperation with Sudan has been generally warm and friendly. A team of Indian doctors from Kauvery Hospital, Chennai visited Port Sudan on 25 May and conducted a 4-day free medical camp in collaboration with Sea Port Corporation in Port Sudan.

As per India's commitment to Capacity Building Development Cooperation program with Sudan, every year ICCR offers 60 scholarships for higher education in India, which have been fully utilised in 2024-25. As the ICCR scholarships were oversubscribed, 12 additional scholarships were offered to Sudanese students under the India-Africa Maitri Scholarship scheme in 2024-25, which have been fully utilized as well.

South Sudan

Bilateral relations with South Sudan have been generally warm and friendly.

During the year, three Quick Impact Projects supported by the Government of India were launched in South Sudan. The first involved organizing eight veterinary aid camps by Indian Battalions (INDBATT) deployed under the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), with INDBATT procuring medicines from India to address critical livestock health needs. The second project focuses on constructing an Observatory Seismic Station, which includes a control room, office, meeting hall, and observatory. A seismograph, donated by North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) Shillong, will be installed once the observatory is ready. The third initiative is the renovation of the South Sudan Learning Centre (SSLC) in Juba, which had served as a hub for technical training and online courses under the Pan African e-Network project from 2012 to 2015 but was abandoned during the civil war in 2016. The renovated centre will provide upgraded facilities, equipment, and tools to facilitate the resumption of online training courses.

A Special Course for diplomats from South Sudan was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs at the Sushma

Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), New Delhi on 11-20 December. Fifteen diplomats from South Sudan attended the Course.

The Deputy Minister of Information, Communication Technology and Postal Services Jacob Maiju Korok took part in the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), held in New Delhi on 14-24 October. South Sudan also participated as an observer at the 46th World Heritage Conference in New Delhi on 21-31 July.

India continued its focus on capacity-building through the ITEC programme, with over 100 training slots utilized by South Sudanese nationals. In addition, 30 South Sudanese students received ICCR scholarships for higher education in India during the year.

Somalia

India and Somalia share a longstanding partnership rooted in historical trade ties across the Indian Ocean. This relationship continued to grow, driven by strengthened diplomatic and economic collaboration.

EAM met Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia Ahmed Moalim Fiqi on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York in September.



EAM met Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia Ahmed Moalim Fiqi on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York, September 2024

People-to-people relations continue to be the primary force in this partnership. To strengthen this, and to ease issuance of Indian visa to Somali nationals, High Commission of India, Nairobi has also been added as a visa issuing destination for Somali nationals, in addition to the Embassy in Addis Ababa.

A Government of India delegation led by JS (WANA), MEA visited Somalia during 04-05 March and undertook a comprehensive assessment of the situation in Mogadishu and engaged with the Government of Somalia. The delegation met senior dignitaries in Government of Somalia including Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs Hassan Moallin Muhamoud Sheikhali, Deputy Foreign Minister Isaak Mohamud Mursal, Minister of State in Prime Minister's office Hirsi Jama Ganni, and Permanent Secretary in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Somalia Hamza Adan Haadoow.

Somali Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Abdisalam Sharif Hussein visited India on 19-30 August and took part in the 19th CII India Africa Business Conclave. During his visit, he also held a meeting with the Minister of State for Commerce and Industry on 28 August, alongside several discussions with business organizations in New Delhi.

Syria

The warm and historic relations with Syria witnessed new developments in the year. On 26 September, EAM met the then Syrian Foreign Minister Bassam Sabbagh on the sidelines of 79th UNGA summit in New York. The then Foreign Minister of Syria, Fayssal Mekdad participated in the 3rd edition of VoGGS held virtually in August. The then Deputy Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Rania Ahmed participated in the 1st CII India Mediterranean Business Conclave on 6 September in New Delhi.

India and Syria reconvened the FOC after a span of nine years. On 29 November, the 6th round of FOC was held in New Delhi. The Syrian delegation was led by the then Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Syria Ayman Raad.



EAM met the then Syrian Foreign Minister Bassam Sabbagh on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York, September 2024



India sent approximately 1400 kgs of anti-cancer drugs to Syria, August 2024

India continued to extend humanitarian assistance to Syria and sent approximately 1400 kgs of anti-cancer drugs to Syria in August.

Evacuation of Indian nationals

December saw major changes in Syria, with the departure of President Bashar Al Assad from Syria and the takeover of Damascus by the rebel group Hayat Tahrir Al Sham (HTS). The Indian Embassy in Damascus, along with the Indian Embassy in Beirut successfully coordinated the evacuation of 77 Indian nationals from Damascus to Beirut.

Tunisia

India has shared friendly relations with Tunisia based on common values and mutual respect of shared principles. The 2nd Joint Working Group on Space Cooperation was held between ISRO and Tunisia's Centre National de Cartographie et de Télédétection (CNCT) on 15th February. India offered to provide its expertise in Remote Sensing, Terrain Mapping & Capacity Building. Officials of the L'Instance Supérieure Indépendante pour les Élections (ISIE), Tunisia visited India to observe the election process of the Parliamentary elections held in April-May.

Under the Cultural Exchange programme 2024-27, in February, 2 delegations comprising a total of 23 Tunisian artists participated in the Surajkund Crafts Mela festival, fully funded by India. An 8-member troupe of theatre artists also participated in the International Theatre Festival of Kerala hosted by the Government of Kerala in February.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

Indian export to Tunisia for the period January – October stood at USD 491.72 million with a total bilateral trade of USD 608.6 million. Tunisia Secretary of State for Energy Transition Ouail Chouchen participated in the Energy Session and President and Director General of Technopark, El Ghazela Sofienne Hemissi participated in the IT Session of the virtual 3rd edition of VoGGS on 17 August. President of the Indian Economic Trade Organisation (IETO) and India-Africa Trade Council, participated in the session on 'Financing Investment Trade in Africa' as moderator in the India-Tunisia Conference held in Tunis in September.

60 ITEC slots were utilised by Tunisia in this year. The Tunisia-India Friendship Association (TIFA) was established and registered officially in Tunis in October.

C H A P T E R

7

Africa

Central & West Africa

India shares cordial and friendly ties with the 24 countries in Central & West Africa (C&WA) region. India respects the sovereignty of its allied nations in the region, which is based on its commitment to a multi-polar world and advocacy for non-alignment. India has enhanced its footprints in the region by opening diplomatic missions in 13 countries in recent years, the latest one in Gabon in 2024. The C&WA countries have been supportive of India's candidature in various elections in the UN and at multilateral fora. Ministers and senior officials of 23 C&WA countries participated in 12 sessions of 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August. 22 of them participated in the 7th Assembly of International Solar Alliance (ISA) held on 03-06 November in New Delhi. Along with other member countries, 20 C&WA countries have signed the ISA Framework Agreement, of which 16 countries have ratified it.

In 2023-24, apart from diplomatic engagements and high-level visits, trade between India and C&WA was significant, amounting to USD 29.25 billion. Countries in the region are amongst the most important mineral-rich countries in the world. It has been India's endeavour to engage local governments to invite Indian companies and investors to increase and diversify the volume of trade in this sector as well as other high potential but less explored sectors.

Capacity building and development partnership have been important pillars of India's engagement with C&WA. Over the years, many candidates and students from these countries have been benefiting through our flagship ITEC training programmes and ICCR scholarships. In 2024, 1272 ITEC training slots and 251 ICCR scholarships were allotted to the candidates of C&WA countries. Around 7600 students from C&WA countries have been enrolled for UG/PG courses under India's initiative of e-VidyaBharati-ArogyaBharati (e-VBAB) Project, which offers fully funded online courses. Additionally, defence training under ITEC has been extended to the defence personnel of these countries. 16 candidates from 12 C&WA countries attended the 1st ITEC Executive Course on Data for Development for senior officials from the Global South held from 23-29 October in New Delhi. Media Journalists from 9 C&WA countries visited India for 'familiarization program' conducted by the XP Division from 23-30 October.

Angola

India enjoys close and cordial relations with Angola, an important partner in meeting India's energy security needs.

Minister of Industry and Commerce of Angola, Rui Miguens de Oliveira participated in the 19th CII India-Africa Business Conclave held in August. He was accompanied by a high

level delegation comprising officials from the National Oil, Gas and Biofuels Agency (ANPG) which held discussions with Indian oil and gas companies with the objective of attracting investment in the Angolan petrochemical sector. From India, a delegation from the Department of Commerce and Gems & Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India visited Luanda on 17-18 October, to participate in the meeting of the Adhoc Committee on the Review and Reform of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

Secretary of State for Oil and Gas of Angola Jose Alexandre Barroso and National Director of Telecommunications and IT Matias Borges participated in the Energy Ministers' Session and Information & Technology Ministers' Session of 3rd edition of VoGSS respectively.

In 2023-24, bilateral trade between the two countries amounted to USD 4.19 billion. Exports from India were valued at USD 698 million, registering a growth of 12 percent over the previous year, and Angola imports amounted to USD 3.495 billion, with oil being the major component.

General Director of Angolan National Institute for Information Society Promotion (INFOSI) Andre Mpumba Pedro attended the 1st ITEC Executive Course on Data for Development conducted for senior officials from the Global South, from 23-29 October in New Delhi.

Three Angolan journalists from print and visual media attended the familiarization programme for C&WA countries, organized by the Ministry from 23-30 October.

Benin

The 3rd FOC led by Additional Secretary (C&WA) was held on 24 June, at Cotonou in Benin. A multi-sector business delegation from India was part of the visit.

Technical Advisor to the Minister of Health, Government of Benin Dr Rodrigue Kohoun, participated in the Health Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

The bilateral trade between India and Benin stood at USD 752 million in 2023-24. Around 90 Indian or Indian-owned companies are operating in Benin, including in the Glo-Djigbe Industrial Zone in the fields of automobile, textiles and food processing. A Salt Farming Project under the IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa) framework has been successfully implemented in Benin. India, Germany and Benin have jointly undertaken a tripartite agriculture mechanization project worth USD 140758.43 in Benin.

Beninese officials continued to benefit from the ITEC program, ICCR scholarships, and scholarships under the e-VidyaBharati and e-ArogyaBharati (e-VBAB) project.

In 2024, the Beninese defence forces were provided with 40 vacancies in various training programs in India under the ITEC program. In March, the High Commission in Benin

organized a seminar to promote Indian defence exports. This was attended by the CDS and other senior officers from the Benin Ministry of Defence. Further, a case for re-purposing of an existing LoC for defence purposes is also under consideration with the Benin Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Defence.

Benin participated in the 7th Assembly of the ISA held in November in New Delhi.

Burkina Faso

Minister of Communication, Culture, Arts and Tourism Rimalba Jean Emmanuel Ouedraogo participated in the World Heritage Committee Conference hosted by India on 21-30 July. Minister of Industrial Development, Commerce, Handicrafts and Small and Medium Enterprises Gnaniodem Serge Poda; Minister of Economy, Finance and Forwarding Planning Aboubakar Nacanabo; Minister of Digital Transitions and Electronic Communications Dr. Aminata Zerbo Sabane; and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Cooperation and Burkinabe Abroad Kabre Kabore Bebgnasgnan Stella, attended the 19th CII India Africa Business Conclave in August. Secretary General of the Ministry of Digital Transitions and Electronic Communications Kisito Traore participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August. Minister of Digital Transitions and Electronic Communications Dr. Aminata Zerbo Sabane attended the World Telecommunications Standardization Assembly held on 15-24 October in New Delhi.

The bilateral trade between India and Burkina Faso increased to USD 323.89 million during 2023-24 from USD 293.11 million in the previous year.

Cameroon

The cordial bilateral relations between India and Cameroon further strengthened, as Cameroon opened its Resident Mission in New Delhi in January.

The bilateral trade between India and Cameroon stood at USD 1.242 billion in 2023-24, with an increase of 12.60 percent from the previous year.

Minister Delegate Dr. Félix Mbayu attended 19th CII India Africa Business Conclave, held from 20-22 August in New Delhi. Minister of Post and Telecommunications Minette Libom Li Likeng visited India to attend the ITU-WTSA Assembly, held from 15-24 October. Head of the New Technology Unit in the Ministry of External Relations of Cameroon Assene Assene Joseph attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development- Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog, from 23-29 October in New Delhi.

The machinery and equipment were sent from India for the Cassava plantation project in November. The project is being carried out under LoC of USD 42 million.

Cabo Verde

India and Cabo Verde share warm and cordial relations. Cabo Verde has been supportive of Indian candidatures to various posts in the UN and at multilateral fora.

Minister of Education Dr. Amadeu Cruz participated in the Education Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August.

Within the first year of opening of a resident Mission in Cabo Verde, the 1st FOC between India and Cabo Verde was held on 18 March. The Indian side was led by Additional Secretary (C&WA). Both sides discussed a range of subjects and outlined the roadmap for cooperation.

A 13-member cultural troupe from Cabo Verde visited India to participate in the 37th edition of Surajkund International Crafts Mela 2024.

Central African Republic (CAR)

India and CAR share cordial and friendly relations. Dr. Samuel Gondje, In-Charge of Defence Mission in the Ministry of Health and Population attended the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

Chad

Bilateral relations between India and Chad remained cordial. Commerce and Industry Minister Guibolo Fanga Mathieu led a five-member official delegation to attend the 19th CII India Africa Business Conclave held on 20-22 August in New Delhi. On the sidelines, he met MoS (Commerce & Industry, Electronics and IT) and discussed matters of mutual interest.

Minister of Environment, Fisheries and Sustainable Development Dr. Idriss Saleh Bachar participated in the Environment Ministers' Session of 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August.

An eight-member CII business delegation visited N'Djamena from 24-27 September to explore bilateral business opportunities. During the visit, a B2B meet was organised, which was attended by over 50 Chadian business leaders and industrialists. During 2023-24, bilateral trade increased by about 40 percent in comparison with the last financial year and reached USD 83.48 million.

Chad is an ITEC partner country. Director in the Ministry of Communications, Digital Economy and Digitalisation of

Administration Zara Ahmed Sedick, and Director (Americas and Caribbean Division) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Moussa Mahamat, attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development- Capacity Building Initiative' at NITI Aayog, on 23-29 October in New Delhi.

Chad participated in the 7th Assembly of ISA held in November in New Delhi.

India extended medical aid to the Government of Chad, containing 2300 kgs of essential life-saving drugs for the victims of deadly fire incident occurred in N'Djamena in June.

Cote d'Ivoire

Bilateral relations between India and Cote d'Ivoire reflect the shared values and interests of both nations, fostering cooperation across various sectors. From trade and technology to cultural and educational exchanges, the relationship between the two countries has grown steadily, with both sides committed to deepening ties and exploring new areas of mutual benefit.

Minister of Technical Education, Vocational Training, and Apprenticeship N'Guessan Koffi participated in 3rd edition of VoGSS held virtually on 17 August. Minister of Digital Transition and Digitization Ibrahim Kalil Konate visited India to participate in the 19th CII India-Africa Business Conclave held from 20-22 August in New Delhi. A three-member delegation of the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development led by a representative of the Director of Cabinet of the Minister for the Economy, Planning and Development Hien Toto Jean-Paul, visited India on 20-25 September. One of the key objectives of the visit was to explore India's UPI system as a model for seamless and secure financial transactions besides gaining insights into other fields of economics. An 11-member CII delegation visited Cote d'Ivoire in September to accelerate bilateral trade activities.

India's training programs under the ITEC and ICCR programs play a crucial role in enhancing capacity building of Ivorians in key sectors. During the year, around 100 Ivorians participated in various training programs in India. This included training of 29 Ivorian teachers to enhance their skills in English language, which is a testament to our shared commitment to educational exchanges and development. Director General of Digital Transformation and Digitalization of the Ministry of Digital Transition and Digitization Olivier Avoa attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog, from 23-29 October in New Delhi.

To promote Indian culture in Cote d'Ivoire, an ICCR-sponsored cultural troupe visited Cote d'Ivoire and showcased their dance performances. Four Journalists from Cote d'Ivoire visited India and participated in the familiarization

programme organized by the Ministry for C&WA countries from 23-30 October.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

India and DRC share cordial and friendly bilateral relations. India continues to be among the largest contributors of peacekeepers to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

To enhance bilateral cooperation in defence, Congolese Permanent Secretary of Defence Marcel Lukwikila led a delegation to India twice on 01-15 July and 29 July-08 August. The Permanent Secretary also visited defence manufacturing facilities in Kanpur, Pune, Bengaluru, and Mumbai.

The Secretary-General of the Ministry of Posts, Telecom, and New Technologies Aurelien Kamba Nsunda participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August. The Congolese Minister of Industry, Louis Watum and Minister of Hydraulic Resources and Electricity Teddy Lwamba Muba, visited New Delhi from 20-22 August to participate in the 19th CII India-Africa Business Conclave.

A 15-member business delegation led by CII visited Kinshasa and Lubumbashi on 04-08 March. An Indian delegation led by Director (Mines) participated at the DRC Mining Week and Expo in Lubumbashi on 12-14 June.

Equatorial Guinea

Equatorial Guinea continued to support Indian candidatures to various posts in the UN and at multilateral fora.

A delegation led by Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energies of Equatorial Guinea Gervasio Engonga Mba participated in the 7th Assembly of ISA, held in November in New Delhi.

Secretary of State in Charge of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Diaspora Mari-Cruz Evuna Andeme participated in the Second Session of Foreign Ministers of the 3rd edition of VoGSS held virtually on 17 August.

Two senior Officers from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Equatorial Guinea participated in the Policy Makers Forum for Recognition of Indian Pharmacopoeia held in India in August.

Diplomatic Officer and Assistant to the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Diaspora Mariano Ela Ebang, attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development- Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog, on 23-29 October in New Delhi.

One officer from the Government of Equatorial Guinea also participated in the 2nd Global South Young Diplomats Forum conducted by Sushma Swaraj Foreign Service Institute, in September in New Delhi. Three Journalists from Equatorial Guinea visited India for a familiarization program for C&WA countries, organized by the Ministry from 23-30 October.

India's trade relationship with Equatorial Guinea is characterized by strong partnership in the oil and gas sector. During 2023-24, the bilateral trade was USD 374.10 million and import of crude oil from Equatorial Guinea was 293.63 million.

Gabon

India and Gabon have traditionally enjoyed warm and friendly relations even prior to the latter's independence. To further strengthen it, India opened its diplomatic mission in Libreville in September.

On the business front, a delegation from MOIL Ltd. visited Gabon in March to explore possibilities of investment in the mining sector. A 25-member Indian business delegation visited Gabon in April. In August, two Secretary General-level officers of the Gabonese Government visited India to participate in the 19th CII India-Africa Business Conclave held in New Delhi.

Secretary-General of the Ministry of Petroleum Herve Buba Nzengue, participated in the Energy Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

Ghana

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey met EAM, and participated in the 9th Raisina Dialogue held on 21-24 February in New Delhi.

On 22 November, the then President of Ghana Akufo-Addo inaugurated the Tema-Mpakadan Standard Gauge Railway Line (SGRL) and Diesel Multiple Unit trains (DMU) in Accra. The USD 447 million 97.7-kilometre railway line project including a 300-metre bridge over the Volta River, is funded under Buyers' Credit of Exim Bank of India. The project is the first section of Ghana-Burkina Faso inter-connectivity project connecting Tema- Ghana's key port city- to Mpakadan, aimed at strengthening links with neighbouring countries.

The 4th Session of the India-Ghana Joint Trade Committee meeting was held in Accra on 02-03 May. The meeting was co-chaired by Additional Secretary (Department of Commerce), and Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry Michael Okyere-Baafi. The Indian delegation was accompanied by a CII-led business delegation. Deputy Minister Michael Okyere also participated in the Commerce Ministers' Session of 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.



EAM met Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey on the sidelines of 9th Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, February 2024.

A delegation comprising four Ministers - Deputy Minister of Finance Dr. Stephen Amoah, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration Kwaku Ampratwum-Sarpong, Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry Michael Okyere Baafi, and Deputy Minister for Food and Agriculture Mohammed Hardi Tufeiru - attended the 19th CII-India Africa Business Conclave held on 20-22 August in New Delhi.

Deputy Minister of Education John Ntim Fordjour participated in the Education Knowledge Exchange Summit held on 14-21 February in New Delhi. Minister of Communications and Digitalization Ursula Owusu-Ekuful participated in the Global Standards Symposium (GSS) and World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly (WTSA 2024) on 14 October in New Delhi. Deputy CEO of Ghanaian Food & Drug Authority (FDA) Seth Seaneke, visited India from 19-22 August, as Drug Regulatory Expert from Ghana for discussion on issues pertaining to recognition of Indian Pharmacopoeia and adoption of Janaushadhi Scheme in Ghana.

An Indian delegation from the Survey of India led by the Surveyor General of India participated in the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) Working Week 2024 on 19-23 May in Accra. An Indian delegation led by the Senior Director of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) Secretariat in New Delhi, visited Ghana in September.

In 2024 about 128 civilians and 109 Defence personnel were trained in India under ITEC program and 35 scholarships

under ICCR and three scholarships under Ayush have been awarded to Ghanaian citizens. At present, under the e-VBAB initiative, more than 1600 Ghanaians are studying.

Director, Middle East Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Regional Integration Louisa Hanson attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development- Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog, on 23-29 October in New Delhi.

India is among the top investors in Ghana, sharing second place with USA and UK for investments by number of projects (with China as the top investor), and 6th by value of FDI (top 3 being Spain, China, and USA). As per Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), India invested USD 7.83 million in five projects between January-June, which constitutes 4.20 percent of Ghana's total FDI. These projects were in manufacturing, services, general trading, export trade, building and construction, tourism, liaison and agriculture sectors. A delegation consisting of 56 Indian companies participated in the 3rd Agri-tech West Africa exhibition, and the Food & Beverage Ghana and FoodPack Tech Ghana exhibition from 19-21 March in Accra. A 13-member delegation from Indian Economic Trade Organization (IETO) visited Ghana on 18-24 February to strengthen business ties.

Ghana participated in the 7th Assembly of ISA held in November in New Delhi.

A five-member media delegation visited India on 24-30 October for a Media Familiarization Visit organised by the Ministry. A 20-member cultural troupe from Ghana participated at the 37th Surajkund International Crafts Mela in February. On 26 October, HCI Accra in collaboration with various Indian Associations organised the India Fest at the Accra Sports Stadium.

Guinea-Bissau

Director General of Culture, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports Cynthia Djenaba Evora Cassama participated in Youth Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

Liberia

Vice-President of Liberia Jeremiah Kpan Koung participated in the 19th CII-India Africa Business Conclave held on 20-23 August in New Delhi. Deputy Minister for Administration Martha C Morris, and Deputy Minister for Planning and Policy from Ministry of Health Malayah Tamba Chieyoe also participated in the Conclave.

Deputy Minister for Health Services and Chief Medical Officer of Ministry of Health and Social Welfare Dr. Catherine T Copper, and Deputy Minister for Budget and Development

Planning Dr. Tanneh G. Brunson participated in the Health Ministers' Session and Finance Ministers' Session, respectively of the 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August.

Deputy Minister for Extension of the Ministry of Agriculture Moses Gbanyan attended World Food India 2024 held from 19-22 September in New Delhi. A six-member delegation led by Sekou M. Kromah, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications visited India to attend Global Standards Symposium (GSS) / World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) 2024 on 14-15 October in New Delhi. A three-member delegation led by the Minister of Mines and Energy Wilmot JM Paye participated in the 7th Session of the Assembly of ISA from 03-06 November in New Delhi.

Mali

India and Mali share friendly and cordial relations. Advisor to the Minister of Youth Baba Mahmoud Arby participated in the Youth Ministers' Session of 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

India continued to offer numerous educational, training and capacity building opportunities to Malian citizens through its ITEC program and ICCR scholarships. For the year 2023-24 Mali was offered 70 slots under ITEC Program and 15 ICCR

scholarships were offered to Malian students for higher studies in India.

A cultural troupe of 20 Malians visited India to participate in the 37th Surajkund International Crafts Mela 2024.

Mauritania

India-Mauritania relationship continued to strengthen during the year. Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji paid the first-ever state visit to Nouakchott, Mauritania on 16 October. She met President of Mauritania Mohamed Ould Ghazouani, Foreign Minister Mohamed Salem Ould Merzoug, and held delegation-level talks. During the visit four bilateral agreements/MoUs were signed, namely, Bilateral visa waiver agreement for holders of diplomatic and official passports, Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations, and a MoU between SSIFS and Diplomatic Academy of Mauritania, and Cultural Exchange Program.

Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Yacoub Moine participated in the Education Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

The 1st FOC was held on 21 March in Nouakchott, and was co-chaired by AS (C&WA) from Indian side and Director General of Bilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mauritania Mohammed El Hanchi Kettab.



Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji met President of Mauritania Mohamed Ould Ghazouani in Nouakchott, October 2024



Prime Minister held talks with President of Nigeria Bola Ahmed Tinubu in Abuja, November 2024

Niger

Bilateral relations between India and Niger remained warm and friendly. Niger continued to support India's candidatures in UN and at multilateral fora.

Seidou Asman, Minister for Commerce and Industries of Niger visited India to participate in 19th CII-Africa Business Conclave in August.

Amadou Haoua, Minister of Energy, participated in the 7th Assembly of International Solar Alliance held in November in New Delhi.

Minister of Youth Sports and Culture Senior Colonel Abdourahamane Amadou participated in the Youth Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

India continued to support Niger through various capacity building programmes. India offered 156 ITEC training slots, five defence training slots and five ICCR Scholarships to Niger for the academic year 2024-25.

Nigeria

India and Nigeria enjoy warm, friendly and deep-rooted bilateral relations. The partnership is comprehensive and has expanded to sectors including space, renewable energy, defence, research and development, counterterrorism, maritime security and intelligence sharing, cyber security, health, agriculture and food security, fin tech, training, and capacity building.

High-level engagements

The bilateral ties received fresh impetus with the Prime Minister's state visit to Nigeria on 16-17 November. This visit came after a gap of 17 years and was his first to the West African region. During the visit, MoUs were signed on customs cooperation, culture exchange program and between the Surveyors General of India and Nigeria.

EAM visited Nigeria on 21-23 January. He co-chaired the 6th Joint Commission Meeting and oversaw the signing of a MoU on cooperation in the field of renewable energy. Both leaders addressed the Indian community in Nigeria.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Yusuf Maitama Tuggar participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

Indian investments in Nigeria is estimated at over USD 27 billion, with more than 200 Indian companies operating in Nigeria in diverse fields such as petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, telecom, electrical machinery, and LNG. The bilateral trade amounted to USD 7,893.30 million in the FY 2023-24 wherein, India imported USD 3,989.66 million worth of crude oil from Nigeria, while it exported USD 1,035.69 million worth of refined fuel and other petrochemical products. It also exported USD 440.14 million worth of pharmaceutical products to Nigeria in FY 2023-24.

The second Joint Trade Commission meeting was held on 29 April in Abuja.

Defence Cooperation

India's defence cooperation with Nigeria continued to grow during the year. During his visit, EAM highlighted the growth of the Indian defence manufacturing industry and the benefits Nigeria could accrue from the same. Defence Exports to Nigeria from India have been growing, and have gone up from USD 2 million in 2021-22 to USD 283 million in 2023-24. The Nigerian National Security Advisor Nuhu Ribadu visited India for the 2nd India-Nigeria Counter Terrorism Dialogue from 04-06 November. He met the National Security Advisor and held discussions on issues related to terrorism and internal security. The two countries agreed to continue regular naval exercises and joint anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Guinea to safeguard critical maritime routes.

The Nigerian Armed Forces were allocated 126 seats for various defence courses under ITEC Programme during 2024-25.

Other exchanges

The first virtual meeting of the Joint Working Group on Renewable Energy was held on 19 July. The third Consular Dialogue took place on 22 August in New Delhi. The second Counter Terrorism Dialogue was held on 04-06 November in New Delhi. Nigeria participated in the 7th ISA Assembly held on 03-06 November in New Delhi.

India continued to offer many slots to Nigerian officials under ITEC programme, as well as various scholarships programs to Nigerian students including ICCR, iLearn, Hindi Scholarship, Study in India (SII) scholarships, and CV Raman Fellowship, to pursue various courses in India.

Director of Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy Andrew Adeniyi Dada, attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development- Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog, on 23-29 October in New Delhi.

The Indian Council of Cultural relations (ICCR) offered 38 scholarships under the 'ICCR Africa Scholarship Scheme' for Nigerian students to pursue under-graduate, post-graduate, and PhD courses in India. In 2024 total 250 civilian training slots were allotted to Nigeria under ITEC/e-ITEC. For 2024, hundreds of Nigerian students were admitted in various Indian universities under Study in India (SII) programme.

On 10 October, 10 sewing machines were donated to the Ubuntu Centre, Karu for skill development of the local community.

In February, a 20-member cultural troupe from Nigeria participated in the 37th Surajkund International Crafts Mela at Faridabad.

Six Nigerian journalists attended the familiarization programme organized by the Ministry for C&WA countries on 23-30 October.

Republic of Congo (ROC)

India and ROC continued to enjoy cordial relations. OSD (ER & DPA), represented Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji at the First International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation (CIAR1) organized by ROC in Brazzaville on 02-05 July.

To encourage bilateral trade and to explore business opportunities, a 14-member delegation from the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) visited ROC on 03-04 March. The bilateral trade between the two countries was valued at USD 298.42 million in FY 2023-24.

Head of Department of Ministry of Civil Service, Labor and Social Security Koussou Athanase, attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development- Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog on 23-29 October, New Delhi.

In October, 2 Congolese media persons visited India for a familiarization visit organized by the Ministry for C&WA countries.

Republic of Guinea

A ministerial delegation including Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Ismael Nabe, Minister of Transport Mahamadou Abdoulaye Diallo, Minister of Health and Public Hygiene Oumar Diouhe Bah, and Minister of Infrastructure and Public Works Ousmane Gaoual Diallo, participated in the 19th CII-Africa Business Conclave from 20-22 August in New Delhi. During the visit, Guinean Ministers also held meetings with the Minister of Road Transport and Highways, the Minister of Health and Family Welfare and other senior government officers.

Secretary General of Ministry of Youth and Sports Mohamed Billy Kaba, participated in the Youth Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS held virtually on 17 August.

The 1st India-Guinea FOC between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Guineans Abroad of the Republic of Guinea and the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India was held at Conakry from 18-19 October. The Indian delegation was led by AS (C&WA) and the Guinean Delegation was led by Ambassador Abdoulaye Youla, Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Guineans Abroad. The visit was the first high level exchange to review of relations since opening of the Mission in 2019. During the discussions, both the sides addressed several issues of mutual interest at both bilateral and multilateral levels. India has offered assistance in digital

public infrastructure, railways, mining, agriculture, health and in other areas, which opens up further opportunities for Indian companies to invest in Guinea.

Abdoulaye Toure, National Director of Posts, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Digital Economy has attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development- Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog, New Delhi on 23-29 October.

2 Guinean journalists attended the familiarization programme organized by MEA for Central & West African countries on 23-30 October.

Senegal

India and Senegal enjoy excellent bilateral relations. Secretary General of the Ministry of Communication, Telecommunications and Digital Economy, Government of Senegal participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August.

Bilateral trade between India and Senegal amounted to USD 1.572 billion during FY 2023-24.

Senegal participated in the 7th Assembly of the ISA held in November in New Delhi.

Dakshin, the Global South Centre of Excellence at RIS and Senegal's Afrikajom Center signed a Letter of Association in April to enable sharing of development solutions amongst the Global South countries. Dakshin also signed a Letter of Association with the Consortium pour la Recherche Economique et Sociale (CRES), Senegal in May, to enable sharing of development solutions amongst the Global South countries.

Sierra Leone

India continued to be a major trade partner of Sierra Leone and ranked 4th in terms of imports by Sierra Leone. India's exports to Sierra Leone in FY 2023-24 reached USD 298.53 million.

Minister of Technical and Higher Education of Sierra Leone Dr. Haja Ramatulai Wurie, and Deputy Minister of Technical and Higher Education Emily Kadiatu Gogra attended the India Summit on Education Knowledge Exchange organized by the World Bank, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship on 14-21 February in New Delhi.

Deputy Minister of Energy Dr. Eldred Tunde Taylor and Deputy Minister, Communications, Technology and Innovation of Sierra Leone Ibrahim Sannoh, participated in the Energy Minister's Session, and Information and Technology Ministers' Session respectively of the 3rd edition of VoGSS held virtually on 17 August.

Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food Security Dr. Theresa Tenneh Dick, along with one delegate, attended the 3rd edition of World Food India held on 19-22 September at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

For furthering capacity building, Director of Technology, Ministry of Communication, Technology and Innovation Dr. Abdulai Sankoh; Deputy Director of Industrial Development and Head of Trade Data and Statistics, Ministry of Trade and Industry Victor Abdulai; and Director Transport, Ministry of Information and Civic Education Sheku Kamara, attended the 1st ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development: Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog, on 23-29 October in New Delhi.

India provided Sierra Leone a grant of USD 990,000 from the India-UN Development Fund for the project 'enabling economic independence for specially abled persons in Sierra Leone'.

Sao Tome & Principe

India and Sao Tome & Principe continued to enjoy friendly and cordial relationships. Sao Tome & Principe has been supportive of India's nominations to various posts in the UN and at other multilateral fora.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Communities of Sao Tome & Principe Dr. Gareth Haddad do Espirito Santo Guadalupe participated in the Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August.

A three-member delegation from Sao Tome & Principe attended the 7th session of the ISA Assembly held on 3-6 November in New Delhi. Sao Tome & Principe also supported India's candidature for the post of Director General of ISA for the period 2025-2029.

India continued to provide capacity building support to STP. During the year, 13 officials of Sao Tome & Principe attended the capacity building courses in India and two officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sao Tome & Principe attended the 71st Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats held at SSIFS on 22 April-03 May in New Delhi. Diplomatic Adviser of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bilma Edney Bandeira Mandinga, attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development- Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog, from 23-29 October in New Delhi.

In August, a MoU was signed between India and Sao Tome & Principe for the supply of six school buses as a gift from India.

A 14-member cultural troupe from Sao Tome & Principe participated in the 37th Surajkund International Crafts Mela 2024.

The Gambia

India and The Gambia share warm and friendly relations. Vice-President of The Gambia Muhammad B.S. Jallow led a high-level delegation of Ministers of Trade and Industry, Tourism and Culture, and Transport works and Infrastructure, to participate in the 19th CII India Africa Business Conclave, held on 20-22 August in New Delhi.

Hassan Jallow, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy attended the 3rd edition of VoGSS held virtually on 17 August.

The Gambia participated in the 7th ISA Assembly held in November in New Delhi.

Under capacity building, the 4th batch of 25 senior civil servants of The Gambia attended a training course on advanced leadership on public policy and governance at National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG), on 22 Jan-02 February in New Delhi. A batch of 30 mid-level civil servants participated in a course on public policy from 27 May-07 June. A special training program was organized at the SSIFS for the third batch of 19 diplomats on 12-21 June.

Global South Centre of Excellence at RIS and The Gambia's Center for Policy, Research and Strategic Studies (CepRass) signed a Letter of Association in May, to enable sharing of development solutions amongst the Global South countries. A MoU on 'Cooperation in the field of sharing successful Digital Solutions implemented at population scale for digital transformation', was signed between the MeitY and The Gambia, on 3 October in New Delhi.

India gifted 40 dialysis machines worth USD 385329.91 to Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital of The Gambia located in Banjul, on 16 March.

Togo

India and Togo share friendly and cordial relations. The 1st round of FOC between India and Togo was held from 27-28 June in Lome. From Indian side, it was chaired by AS (C&WA). MoU on formalising the mechanism of FOC and Agreement on Reciprocal Visa Exemption for holders of Diplomatic, Official and Service Passports were signed during the FOC.

Head of Togo Digital Agency, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Youth; Vice-President of ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID); and Vice-President of West African Development Bank (BOAD) participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS held virtually on 17 August.

Togo also participated in the 7th ISA Assembly held in November in New Delhi.

The economic linkages between the two countries continued to witness an upward trajectory, with India becoming Togo's largest export destination.

Capacity building, development partnership, economic and commercial engagement, and educational linkages remained the mainstay of the relationship. A total of 50 scholarships were utilized by Togo under ITEC civilian and defence slots for officials and ICCR's Africa Scholarship scheme for students. Ten officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including Director of International Relations underwent a two week customised training in the area of Conflict Management at Rashtriya Raksha University, Gandhinagar in February. The second batch of 25 Presidential Guards was trained at the Rajasthan Police Training Academy (RPTC) Jodhpur from January-March. Subsequently a Senior Officer from RTPC visited Lome in May, to discuss the next steps of collaboration. David Rehoboth Fiogbe, Data Scientist, Togo Digital Agency and Kadoukpe Constante Affo, a government official attended the ITEC Executive Programme on 'Data for Development- Capacity Building Initiative' at NILERD, NITI Aayog, on 23-29 October in New Delhi.

In October, two journalists visited India, as part of a familiarization visit for journalists, organised by the Ministry, for C&WA countries.

East and Southern Africa

In 2024, India continued to maintain friendly relations with countries in East and Southern Africa. High level engagements with these countries have continued to enhance and strengthen bilateral cooperation in sectors including development partnership, defence, trade and economy, agriculture, commerce, art and culture, education, digital technology, renewable energy, health and medical tourism, and people to people exchanges.

The 19th edition of CII India-Africa Conclave inaugurated by the Hon'ble Vice-President, was held from 20-22 August in New Delhi. It witnessed high-level participation from East and Southern African countries. Vice-President of Burundi Prosper Bazombanza, Vice-President of The Gambia Muhammad B.S. Jallow, Vice-President of Liberia Jeremiah Kpan Koung, Vice-President of Mauritius Marie Cyril Eddy Boisse 'zon, and Vice-President of Zimbabwe Dr. C.G.D.N. Chiwenga, participated in the Conclave.

On the multilateral front, several heads of states and ministers participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS, in August.

Africa continued to be the 2nd largest beneficiary of India's development partnership initiatives through capacity-building and training programmes, scholarships, lines of credit, grants, humanitarian aid and disaster relief operations among others.



Hon'ble Vice-President inaugurated the 19th edition of CII India-Africa Conclave in New Delhi, August 2024

India's development partnership continued to be a strong pillar in its relations with the region, notably through 1,815 beneficiaries (1,521 civilians and 294 defence personnel) under the ITEC program in 2023-24.

Botswana

On the sidelines of the 3rd South Summit of the Group of 77 and China, held in Kampala from 21-22 January, the then MoS (VM) met the then Foreign Minister of Botswana Dr. Lemogang Kwape and discussed issues of mutual interest.

A MoU on Economic Cooperation was signed between India and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Gaborone on 2 July. It was signed by the High Commissioner of India to Botswana and Special Representative to SADC on behalf of India, and the Executive Secretary, SADC on behalf of the SADC.

Under the capacity building program, 77 civilian and defence ITEC training slots were availed. 54 ICCR scholarships were granted to Botswana nationals for pursuing higher education in India.

A 14-member delegation from Botswana Scouts Association visited India to participate in the Youth Exchange Programme held during the Republic Day Camp from 16-29 January.

An 18-member delegation from Botswana comprising

a cultural troupe, artisans and buyers participated in the Surajkund International Crafts Mela 2024, held on 2-18 February in Haryana.

Burundi

President of Burundi Évariste Ndayishimiye inaugurated the India-aided KABU-16 hydroelectric plant on 25 October, during which he acknowledged the support provided by India, which facilitated a loan critical for the dam's construction. He recognized India's commitment to supporting Burundi, particularly during challenging times when the country faced sanctions from other countries. The project marks a significant milestone in Burundi's energy sector. The EXIM Bank of India had extended a LoC of USD 80 million for construction of the 20 MW hydro-electric project in Burundi.

Vice-President of Burundi Prosper Bazombanza participated in the 19th edition of CII India-Africa Conclave held on 20-22 August, in New Delhi.

Through UNFPA, India funded a project for human capital development in health, social cohesion, entrepreneurship and e-commerce sectors. The aid amounting to USD 1.2 million, included youth in six provinces covering 30 municipalities in Burundi.

Eswatini

Eswatini's Minister of Finance Neal Rijkenberg participated virtually in the Finance Ministers' session in the 3rd edition of the VoGSS held on 17 August.

Eswatini's Minister of Economic Planning and Development Dr. Tambo Gina visited India for the 19th edition of CII India-Africa Conclave held at New Delhi on 20-22 August.

The 2nd FOC between India and Eswatini was held in Mbabane on 19 February. The Indian side was led by the Additional Secretary, East & South Africa Division (E&SA) and Eswatini's side was led by the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. During the FOC, both delegations reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations between the two countries, covering political exchanges, development partnership projects, defence cooperation, trade and economic matters, consular issues, and cooperation in areas including agriculture, education, health, digital technology, renewable energy, art and culture. Both sides also discussed multilateral issues of mutual interest, including UNSC reforms, Peace and Security in Eastern and Southern Africa, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Southern African Customs Union (SACU). They also acknowledged and appreciated India's efforts behind the African Union's membership in G20.

The first India-Eswatini Joint Working Group on Health Cooperation was held in June in virtual mode.

India donated sports equipment and apparel worth USD 4,764 to Eswatini for the SACU/SADC Games.

A total of 30 ICCR scholarship slots were offered during the year.

Ethiopia

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Finance Minister Ahmed Shide participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

On the sidelines of the 79th UNGA Session on 25 September, EAM met the then Foreign Minister of Ethiopia Taye Atske Selassie, and exchanged views on a range of mutual interest issues.

Ethiopian Minister of Industry Melaku Alebel participated in "Bharat Tex 2024" in New Delhi in February. The State Minister of Trade and Regional Integration participated in the Global Pulse Confederation held on 14-17 February, in New Delhi.

Ethiopia became a member of BRICS with effect from 1 January, with India's support.



EAM met the then Foreign Minister of Ethiopia Taye Atske Selassie on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York, September 2024

In February, two Indian business delegations visited Addis Ababa. An 11-member delegation from the Millennial India International Chamber of Commerce and a 7-member delegation from the Global India Business Forum met the Ethiopian Minister of Innovation and Technology, Minister of Mines, Minister of Agriculture and others, to explore business and investment opportunities.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation of India and the Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority signed a MoU on 30 July, to expand the reach of Ethiopian Airlines in India. Ethiopian Airlines will now operate three additional flights to and from Hyderabad, thereby increasing connectivity between the two countries.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) signed a MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Digital Transformation, with the Information Network Security Administration (INSA) of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in September.

An Indian delegation led by Economic Advisor, Department of Economic Affairs of Ministry of Finance participated in the first session of Preparatory Committee of the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) held in Addis Ababa on 21-27 July.

The Governor of National Bank of Ethiopia participated in Global Fintech Fest held on 28-30 August, in Mumbai.

An Indian delegation led by Additional DG (Project Tiger & Elephant) participated in Global Cheetah Summit held on 28-31 January, in Addis Ababa.

A 20-member Ethiopian cultural troupe participated in the 37th Edition of the Surajkund International Crafts Mela 2024 on 02-18 February.

In April, a Jaipur Foot Artificial Limb Fitment camp, sponsored by India, was organized in Ethiopia. More than 600 Ethiopian nationals were provided with artificial limbs.

Kenya

Economic and Trade Cooperation

National Thermal Power Corporation School of Business organized two customized capacity building programs on Smart Grids and Wind Energy systems on 20-24 February and 18-22 March respectively. 40 professionals from the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority, Kenya Electricity Generating Company, Kenya Electricity Transmission Company Limited and Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation attended the courses.

A delegation led by Secretary (ER) visited Kenya on 10-12 April with approximately 25 Indian companies and institutes dealing in the Agriculture sector to assess opportunities for investment in the Kenyan agriculture sector. On 10 April, he held discussions with Principal Secretary ASAL Harsama Kello and Principal Secretary for Agriculture Dr Paul Ronoh, during India-Kenya Business Forum which saw participation by over 100 companies. He also called on Treasury Cabinet Secretary Njuguna Ndung'u, and held meetings with Principal Secretary Foreign Affairs Korir Sing'Oei, Governor of Uasin Gishu County Jonathan Bii and Governor of Narok County Patrick Ole Ntutu. Secretary (ER) also held meetings with Senior Advisor and Head of Economic Transformation and Secretariat, State House, Augustine Cheruiyot and Chairperson, President's Council of Economic Advisors David Ndii.

Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs signed the Host Country Agreement for opening of India Exim Bank's East Africa Representative Office in Kenya, on 12 April. The Secretary (Department of Financial Services) visited Kenya on 29 May-02 June to attend the inauguration of EXIM Bank and Africa-India Partnership Day during the African Development Bank (AfDB) 59th annual general meeting in Nairobi.

A delegation led by Council for Leather Exports (CLE) consisting of 38 Indian companies from leather/non-leather footwear sector visited Kenya from 29-31 May, and participated in AFLEX 2024 at Sarit Expo Center, Nairobi.

Defence Cooperation

The 3rd Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) meeting between India and Kenya took place on 03 September, in

New Delhi. The two nations discussed enhancing defence cooperation in areas such as military collaboration, training, and defence industries. Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Defence Aden Duale participated in the opening session of the 2nd India Kenya Defence Exhibition. He also participated in a seminar co-organized by Kenya Defence Forces and High Commission of India on 30 and 31 January, in Nairobi. More than 21 Indian Defence manufacturers showcased their products.

The Defence Secretary visited Kenya on 25-27 September, in a significant effort to further deepen defence cooperation. He laid the foundation stone of a new Radiology Complex, being built and equipped under the bilateral defence partnership.

Furthering maritime cooperation, on 02 April, INS Tarkash made a port call at Mombasa. INS Talwar made a port call at Mombasa on 22-25 September. A special yoga session was conducted onboard with participation from Kenya Defence Forces personnel.

Development Cooperation

A Quick Impact Project MoU between India and Kenya was signed on 23 January, to set up a CT Scan facility in Kenya Navy Base Mtongwe, under grant assistance to KDF/Kenya Navy.

INS Sumedha, as the first responder, handed over food, relief and medicine supplies for flood victims to Kenya. Indian High Commissioner handed over the second tranche of 40 MT of humanitarian assistance including medicines, medical supplies and other equipment for flood-affected Kenyans on 14 May.

Other Exchanges

A delegation led by Joint Secretary, National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC) visited Kenya on 3-7 June, under a mentorship programme sponsored by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The partnership is designed to extend support to the Kenya National Authority for full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

A delegation led by Director General of Forests and Special Secretary visited Kenya on 22-26 October to finalize the MoU on cooperation in the field of wildlife management and conservation. During the visit, the delegation held a meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Tourism and Wildlife and Director General of Kenya Wildlife Service.

Principal Secretary for State Department for Diaspora Affairs of Kenya, Roseline K. Njogu, CBS visited India on 12-15 November for a benchmarking study visit. She

held a meeting with the Secretary (CPV & OIA), MEA and discussed India's best practices in engaging with its diaspora and preparation for PBD 2025.

Principal Secretary for State Department for Shipping and Maritime Affairs Geoffrey E. Kaituko visited India to attend 'Sagarmathan: The Great Oceans Dialogue' held on 19 November, in New Delhi.

Lesotho

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kingdom of Lesotho Lejone Mpotjoana participated virtually in the Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS, chaired by EAM on 17 August. Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Information, Communication, Science, Technology and Innovation Kanono Ramashamole participated in the Information and Technology Ministers' session, namely 'DPI for Development – A Global South Approach'.

Malawi

India marked a milestone in its ties with Malawi with the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations. Bilateral defence cooperation continued to strengthen with high-level exchanges, joint exercises, capacity-building and training under ITEC, gifting of defence equipment, and building defence industry exchanges through DefExpos.

Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji paid a State Visit to Malawi on 17-19 October. She delivered the key-note address at the India-Malawi business round table, which was attended by several Malawian Ministers and more than 60 companies from both countries. Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji also addressed the Indian Community in Malawi. She met President of Malawi Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera and discussed bilateral cooperation including trade, capacity building, defence, and development partnership. During the visit, four MoUs on art and culture, youth matters, sports and pharmacopoeial cooperation were signed between India and Malawi. India handed over 1000 MTs of rice and the Bhabhatron cancer treating machine to Malawi. Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji also announced the setting up of a permanent artificial limb fitment center (Jaipur foot) in Malawi.

The Indian Economic Trade Organisation (IETO) led a business delegation of 35 Indian companies on 05-13 May to Malawi to explore the trade and investment opportunities. The delegation held various business meetings and also called on President Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera.

Minister of Youth and Sports of Malawi Uchizi Mkandawire and Secretary for Trade and Industry Christina Zakeyo, participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August.



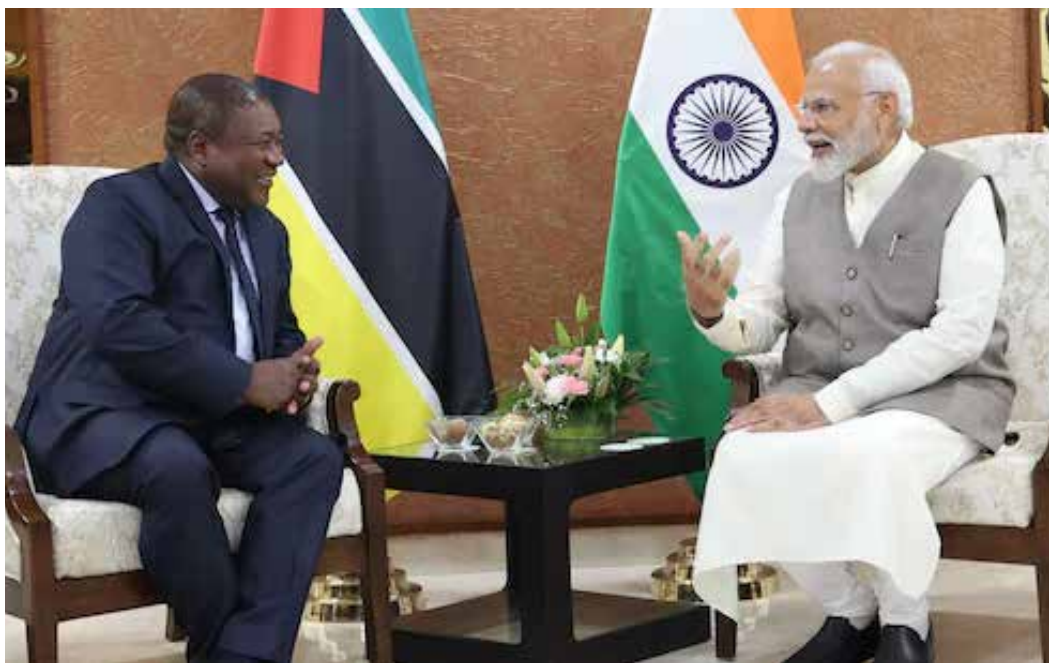
Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji met President of Malawi Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera in Lilongwe, October 2024

Minister of Trade and Industry Sosten Gwengwe led a 40-member delegation, including the Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs and Deputy Minister of Health, to India to participate in the 19th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on 20-22 August. On the sidelines, the Trade Minister held talks with MoS (Commerce and Industry) on 19 August.

Two hybrid business meets on Plastic and Pharma Sector in association with Plastic Export Council of India (PLEXCONCIL) and Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (PHARMEXCIL) were organized on 11 January and 15 February respectively. A large number of companies from both India and Malawi participated in the B2B meetings.

HCI Lilongwe organized a graduation ceremony for 110 Malawian students who had completed their graduation / post-graduation / diploma in various subjects under e-Vidya Bharati and e-Arogaya Bharati (e-VBAB) on 16 May, in Lilongwe. Deputy Minister of Education Nancy Chaola Mdooko handed over the certificates to the students. This was the second graduation ceremony organized by the HCI Lilongwe.

With the intervention of the Ministry, trade impediments being faced by the Malawian pigeon peas exports at



Prime Minister met President of Mozambique Filipe Jacinto Nyusi on the sidelines of 10th edition of Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit in Gandhinagar, January 2024

Nacala and Beira ports in Mozambique were removed, and shipments of Tur Dal/Pigeon peas from Nacala Port, resumed in July. India had signed a MoU with Malawi in June 2021 on export of 50,000 MT of pigeon peas annually from Malawi to India until 2025.

As part of developmental partnership, India organized the second Artificial Limb Fitment Camp (Jaipur Foot) at Kamuzu Central Hospital, Lilongwe, from 24 July-6 September. 599 Malawians were fitted with artificial limbs.

The second Joint Working Group meeting on Health between India and Malawi was held virtually on 21 November.

Mozambique

Prime Minister met President of Mozambique Filipe Jacinto Nyusi on 9 January, in Gandhinagar. Both leaders held productive discussions on ways to further bilateral ties, including in the areas of defence, counter terrorism, energy, health, trade and investment, agriculture, water security, mining, capacity building and maritime cooperation. President Nyusi thanked the Prime Minister for the inclusion of the African Union (AU) in the G-20. The two leaders also discussed issues related to cooperation in multilateral fora, including the UN. The Prime Minister appreciated President Nyusi's participation in the VoGSS in January and November 2023. President Nyusi appreciated India for the various

development projects and capacity building programmes as also for its support in the area of maritime security.

Diplomatic Advisor to the President of Mozambique Gen. Manuel Mazuze, visited India on 13-15 March.

The 2nd edition of India-Mozambique-Tanzania Trilateral Exercise concluded at Nacala, Mozambique on 28 March. The week-long exercise underscored the importance of enhanced maritime cooperation and interoperability between the navies of India, Mozambique and Tanzania. INS Tir and Sujata participated in 'IMT TRILAT 24' from 21-28 March, through a series of joint exercises, training sessions and collaborative activities, enabling the navies to exchange knowledge, enhance capabilities and bolster maritime security in the region.

The first DefExpo was organized in Mozambique on 25-26 April to augment Mozambique's defence arsenal. About 20 Indian companies participated in the event. India gifted two Fast Interceptor Crafts to Mozambique at a ceremony on 8 November, in Nacala.

India and Mozambique signed a MoU for recognition of Indian Pharmacopoeia on 18 July.

In July, the Study in India Fair was held in Maputo, wherein 10 Indian universities had participated. India was a partner country at Maputo International Trade Fair held on 26 August-01 September. FICCI and FIEO led business delegations to the Fair.

Namibia

Lok Sabha Speaker held a meeting with Speaker Peter Katjavivi during the 149th Inter Parliamentary Union meeting at Geneva on 13 October.

Deputy Minister of Industrialization and Trade of Namibia Verna Sinimbo participated at the 19th CII India Africa Business Conclave.

Attorney-General of Namibia Festus Mbandeka, accompanied by the Prosecutor General and a Legal Advisor attended the Commonwealth Attorneys and Solicitors Generals Conference 2024 on Cross-Border Challenges in Justice Delivery on 02-05 February, in New Delhi.

Chairperson of the Electoral Commission of Namibia Dr. Elsie Tuleingepo Nghikembua led a 4-member delegation to India on 3-8 May to participate in ECI's International Election Visitors' Program.

India sent humanitarian assistance in the form of 1000 MTs of white rice and 1000 MTs of yellow maize to Namibia in the backdrop of a serious drought situation created due to El Nino climatic conditions.

India and Namibia embarked on a partnership in the digital domain to promote financial inclusion. India's NPCI International and Bank of Namibia signed a Technology Agreement for deployment of UPI, the real-time payments system in Namibia. The collaborative endeavor involving Reserve Bank of India, Bank of Namibia and NIPL signifies a move towards modernizing Namibia's financial infrastructure and fostering inclusive economic growth.

Rwanda

The Prime Minister congratulated President Paul Kagame on the latter's victory for the fourth consecutive time in the Presidential elections held in July.

Secretary (ER) visited Rwanda on 7 April and participated in "Kwibuka 30: Remember, Unite, Renew" the event marking the 30th commemoration of the 1994 Rwanda Genocide. During the visit, he also held meetings with ministers and senior officials of Rwanda. The visit by the Secretary (ER) is a reaffirmation of India's commitment to further strengthen its ties with Rwanda and to maintain the momentum of high-level contacts between both countries.

The Second India-Rwanda FOC was held on 05-06 December, in New Delhi.

On the request of the Government of Rwanda, a grant of USD 1 million from India-UN Development Partnership Fund was approved in May for the project "Aim for change! Advancing Rwanda's Midwifery to accelerate the realization of Zero preventable maternal deaths through South-South cooperation".

For the first time, an eight-member ICCR cultural troupe 'Bollywood Rockers' visited Rwanda in November, and performed in the capital Kigali and Rubavu district.

South Africa

This year saw the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Republic of South Africa.

Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa Candith Mashego-Dlamini, visited India on 21-24 February to participate in the Raisina Dialogue 2024, in New Delhi. During the visit the Deputy Minister of South Africa held bilateral discussions with the then MoS (ML).

South African Minister of Tourism Patricia De Lille visited India from 02-05 December to participate in the event '30 years of Democracy, 30 years of diplomatic relations and South Africa Assumption of G20 Presidency', organized by the High Commission of South Africa, in New Delhi. She also held a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Tourism.

Minister of Communication and Digital Technology of South Africa Solly Malatsi visited India for the Global Standards Symposium on 14 October, in New Delhi. He also met the Minister of Communication and Development of the North Eastern Region on 14 October. The South African delegation also participated in the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) from 15-24 October, in New Delhi.

Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa Alvin Botes participated in the Foreign Ministers' Session of 3rd edition of VoGSS, on 17 August. South African Director General of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition Malebo Mabitje Thompson participated in the Trade Ministers' Session chaired by the Commerce Secretary.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development led a delegation to South Africa from 01-04 October, for a study tour to hold discussions with the South African Department of Public Works on maintenance of Union Buildings and the Seat of Presidency in Pretoria.

Member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister visited South Africa for the seminar "India – South Africa Connect: Global visions meet digital realities", organized at Johannesburg Business School on 29 February, where she spoke on 'India's Remarkable Economic Growth Story'. Two panel discussions on 'The Digital payments Revolution in India and possible areas of cooperation with South Africa' and 'A South African Perspective on Inevitable India' were also held.

India-South Africa held a Consular Dialogue on 30 January in Pretoria. The Indian delegation also held discussions with

the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development of South Africa on pending extradition and MLAT cases.

On the occasion of 30 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and South Africa, an ITEC media Training Programme on Journalism and Public Relations was organized in Hyderabad and Delhi from 26 February-09 March for 30 South African professional spokespersons.

A 3-Member delegation visited Cape Town to attend the Annual General Meeting of New Development Bank (NDB) on 25-30 August. The Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Power also attended the BRICS Energy Seminar held on the sidelines of the NDB meeting.

South African delegation of Technological Higher Education Network Study visited India on 18-26 October, and held meetings with Department of Science and Technology (DST), Indian Network for Internationalization of Higher Education (INIHE), All Indian Council for Technical Education (AICTE), IIT-Delhi, IIT-B, IISc-Bengaluru and SELCO Foundation, Bengaluru.

A 25-member inter-departmental delegation from South Africa visited India from 01-07 December on a study tour of Digital Public Infrastructure in India and Digital Transformation of the Public Sector.

Defence Cooperation

The then Air Chief Marshal visited South Africa at the invitation of Lieutenant General W.S. Mbabmo, Chief of South African Air Force on 05-10 May, aimed at strengthening bilateral military cooperation between India and South Africa.

A delegation from the South African Navy led by Vice Admiral Monde Lobese visited Visakhapatnam from 18-27 February for the 12th edition of the Indian Navy's multilateral naval exercise MILAN 2024. The aim of the exercise was to strengthen regional cooperation and maritime security, foster interoperability and understanding between participating navies and provide a platform for sharing best practices and expertise.

The 12th India-South Africa Navy Staff Talks were held in New Delhi on 27-28 August. The South African Navy delegation visited Western Naval Command and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders from 29-30 August. The Indian Navy and the South African Navy signed an Implementing Agreement aimed at enhancing submarine rescue support between the two countries.

Indian Navy's INS Talwar visited Cape Town on 07-08 October to participate in the 8th edition of 'India, Brazil and South Africa Maritime Exercise' (IBSAMAR).



INS Talwar visited Cape Town to participate in the 8th edition of 'India, Brazil and South Africa Maritime Exercise' (IBSAMAR), October 2024



EAM met Speaker of President of Inter-Parliamentary Union and Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania in New Delhi, July 2024

Eight defence Public Sector Undertakings and two private Indian companies participated in the Africa Aerospace and Defense Expo held in Pretoria on 18-22 September.

Cultural Exchanges

An eight-Member ICCR troupe 'Tal Chandam' visited South Africa on 23-30 January and conducted performances and workshops in Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Tongaat and in Phoenix, commemorating 120 years of Mahatma Gandhi Phoenix Indian Settlement.

Tanzania

Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania and President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Dr. Tulia Ackson was on an official visit to India from 19-24 July. She called on Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Hon'ble Vice-President, and met EAM. They exchanged views on development challenges in the Global South and reformed multilateralism. She also visited the Parliament and was received by the Speaker of Lok Sabha.

The then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tanzania visited India on 21-23 February, to participate in Raisina Dialogue 2024 in New Delhi. On the sidelines, he held meetings with EAM and the Minister of Commerce and Industry.

The project on rehabilitation and improvement of water supply in Zanzibar funded by Indian LOC of USD 92.18 million was completed. Zanzibar Water Authority (ZAWA) Headquarters 'Maji House' was inaugurated on 07 January, by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy of Tanzania Dr. Doto Mashaka Biteko.

Minister of Transport of Tanzania Makame Mnyaa Mbarawa visited India on 18-21 January to attend Wings India 2024, at Hyderabad. He met the then Minister of Civil Aviation and Steel and the then MoS (Civil Aviation) on the sidelines of the event.

India-Tanzania Friendship Exhibition showcasing people-to-people and historical ties between the two countries was inaugurated at the National Museum of Tanzania by the then Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, on 26 January.

Minister of Finance of Tanzania Dr. Mwigulu Nchemba participated in the Finance Ministers' session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS chaired by the Finance Minister, on 17 August. In his address, Dr. Nchemba called for comprehensive reforms in the international financial system to make it more inclusive and responsive to the needs of developing countries. He emphasized the need for greater representation of developing nations in decision-making processes within international financial institutions.

Minister for Trade and Industrial Development of Zanzibar Omar Said Shaaban and Deputy Minister of State, President Office Planning and Investment of Tanzania Stanslaus Haroon Nyongongo, attended the 19th CII India Africa Business Conclave in New Delhi, on 20-22 August.

Defence relations strengthened with establishment of a defence wing and the joining of Resident Defence Adviser. Two Indian Naval Ships and two Coast Guard ships visited Tanzania this year. Indian Coast Guard Ship Varaha visited Zanzibar from 23-26 February. INS Tir and ICGS Sarathi visited Zanzibar on 21-24 March. During the visit, INS Tir participated in the 2nd India-Mozambique-Tanzania trilateral exercise. INS Suvarna visited Dar es Salaam from 19-21

October for Operational Turnaround, during her ongoing anti-piracy deployment in the Gulf of Aden. During the reception onboard INS Suvarna, the Infantry Weapon Training Simulator gifted by the Government of India was handed to the Tanzania Peoples Defence Forces. The Indian Naval Ships also participated in EEZ surveillance of Tanzania along with the Tanzanian Navy. The 3rd meeting of the Joint Defence Cooperation Committee between India and Tanzania was held in Goa from 26-27 November.

Deputy Minister of Water of Tanzania Kundo Andrea Mathew attended 'Water Week' organized by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, on 17-20 September, in New Delhi. Minister of Jal Shakti held a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Tanzania on 17 September and had fruitful discussion on India-Tanzania cooperation in water and allied sectors.

In 2023-24, Tanzania became India's 2nd largest trade partner in Africa with bilateral trade reaching USD 7.9 billion.

The High Commission of India in association with the National Museum of Tanzania organized a seminar on the 'Role of the Indian diaspora in the developmental journey of Tanzania and shaping India-Tanzania relations', on 7 March. Member of Parliament and Minister of Constitutional and Legal Affairs Palamagamba Kabudi was the Chief Guest of the seminar.

A 28-member delegation from Tanzania led by Minister of Information, Youth, Culture and Sports of Zanzibar Tabia Maulid Mwita participated in 37th Surajkund International Crafts Mela in Haryana, on 2-18 February.

Uganda

EAM, the then MoS (VM) and the then MoS (RRS), along with a delegation visited Uganda for the 19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and 3rd South-South Summits held on 16-22 January in Kampala. On the sidelines, EAM held bilateral meetings with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uganda Gen Jeje Odongo. As a founding member of NAM, India provided assistance to Uganda for the NAM Summit, worth USD 808525.8, which included donation of ten executive buses, five ambulances, ten tractors and trailers; and fully sponsored training of 23 Ugandan diplomats who were directly involved in the organization of the summit.

MoS for Finance, Planning and Economic Development Musasizi Henry Ariganyira, and MoS for Health in Charge of Primary Health Care Margaret Muhanga Mugisa participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

MoS (Trade) of Uganda, along with several prominent businessmen attended the CII India-Africa Business Conclave on 20-22 August in New Delhi.

A high-level delegation led by the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha attended the 27th Conference of Speakers and



EAM met Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uganda Gen Jeje Odongo on the sidelines of 19th NAM Summit in Kampala, January 2024

Presiding Officers of Commonwealth (CSPOC) held from 03-06 January in Kampala.

An India-Uganda Business Meet was organized at the High Commission on 22 March, with Uganda's MoS (Trade) and prominent businessmen of Indian origin in attendance. Further, on 08-09 April, Secretary (ER) led a high level business delegation to Uganda. The High Commission also organised field visits to various facilities, B2B meetings with industry leaders and associations in Uganda. The delegation also held interactions with Ministers for Trade, Finance, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, CEOs of Uganda Investment Agency (UIA), Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) and discussed ways forward for cooperation in these fields for mutual benefits. The visit by the Secretary (ER) is a reaffirmation of India's commitment to strengthen its ties with Uganda, and to maintain the momentum of high level contacts between India and countries in the continent, post the entry of the AU as a permanent member of the G20.

A 15-member delegation from the National Defence College (NDC) visited Uganda on 27-31 May.

There is an ongoing engagement with the government of Uganda for introduction of India's digital public

infrastructures, especially on Modular Open Source Identity Platform (MOSIP) for unique digital identity.

Artists and artisans from Uganda participated in Surajkund International Craft Mela. Uganda also participated in the International Tribal Festival. Bollywood Rockers, an eight-member cultural troupe from ICCR showcased cultural events and workshops at different places in Uganda on 28 October-02 November. The High Commission in association with the Indian diaspora organized the Indian Film Festival on 12-14 November in Kampala.

Zambia

Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji accepted credentials from High Commissioner of Lesotho Lebohlang Valentine Mochaba and High Commissioner of Zambia Percy P. Chanda on 05 January in New Delhi.

MoS (KVS) visited Zambia on 04-07 November, where he co-chaired the 6th Session of Joint Permanent Commission held on 06 November in Lusaka, alongwith Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Mulambo Haimbe.

Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Technology and Science Dr. Brilliant Habeenzu, participated in the Information and Technology Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

A three member delegation led by JS (IC) of the Ministry of Defence visited Zambia on 19- 20 February, to discuss opportunities for enhancing defence cooperation between

the two countries. Industry representatives from Bharat Electronics Ltd. (BEL), Munitions India Limited (MIL), Bharat Forge and SMPP Pvt. Ltd. accompanied the delegation. The delegation called on Minister of Defence Ambrose Lwiji Lufuma and Minister of Commerce, Trade & Industry Chipoka Mulenga.

A three-member delegation from the Ministry of Cooperation participated in 'National MSME and Cooperatives Indaba' held on 10-11 April in Lusaka. The delegation made a presentation on 'India's successful cooperative model' at Indaba. The delegation also paid a courtesy call on SME Development Minister Elias Mubanga.

A 15-member Indian delegation led by the JS (IC) of the Ministry of Mines attended the 2nd meeting of the Joint Working Group on Cooperation in the field of Geology and Mineral Resources held in Lusaka on 10-11 June. The delegation also paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Mines and Minerals Development Paul Kabuswe.

The fourth FOC between India and Zambia was held on 08 August in Lusaka. Both sides held discussions on cooperation in sectors such as defence, health, agriculture, mines and mineral resources, small and medium enterprises, digital platforms, consular issues, and cultural exchanges. Both sides expressed satisfaction over the existing bilateral ties and noted the need to strengthen them further. Discussions were also held on regional and international issues of mutual interest including co-operation in multilateral forums such as the UN.

India provided humanitarian assistance of 3.5 tonnes of ORS sachets and chlorine tablets to Zambia on 17 February, to help in the fight against cholera.

Zimbabwe

A delegation led by Vice-President Chiwenga visited India for attending 19th CII India-Africa Business Conclave on 20-22 August. The delegation included Health and Child Care Minister Dr. Douglas Mombeshora and Chief Executive of Mutapa Investment Fund Dr. John Panonetsa Mangudya, among other senior Government officials and private sector representatives.

An 11-member CII delegation visited Zimbabwe on 20-21 October. The CII delegation called on Vice-President Chiwenga. Defence Minister Oppah Muchinguri Kashiri, Health and Child Care Minister Dr. Douglas Mombeshora, Minister of Industry and Commerce Mangaliso Ndlovu, Deputy Minister for Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion Kudakwashe Mnangagwa also interacted with the delegation.



MoS (KVS) met Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Zambia Mulambo Haimbe in Lusaka, November 2024

Deputy Minister for Industry and Commerce Raj Modi led a delegation to India for the 10th edition of Saurashtra Vepar Udyog Mahamandal (SVUM) 2024 International Trade Show held on 11-15 February at Rajkot, Gujarat.

National Diaspora Taskforce Delegation from Zimbabwe visited India on 13-15 February and held a meeting at the Ministry.

A 20-member delegation from the Border Ports Authority of Zimbabwe traveled to India from 10-16 March and held discussions with the Land Ports Authority of India.

A 17-member agriculture delegation arrived in Zimbabwe from India on 04 May to attend the Indo-Africa Round table Conference hosted by the World Economic Forum for Africa-Asia.

The 3rd Session of the India-Zimbabwe Joint Trade Committee was held on 13-14 May in New Delhi. The 17-Member delegation was led by the Chief Director, Economic Cooperation, International Trade and Diaspora, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. The Indian side was led by the Economic Advisor in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

A Letter of Association was signed and exchanged between the Zimbabwe Institute of Diplomacy and the Dakshin: Global South Centre of Excellence on 25 June.

The Third FOC between India and Zimbabwe was held in Harare on 06 August. Both sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations between the two countries including existing institutional mechanisms such as the joint commission and the joint trade committee. Cooperation in the fields of defence, agriculture, health, mines, minerals and geology, digital platforms, education, training and capacity building and cultural exchanges were also discussed. Both sides exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest, including cooperation in the UN.

The Deka Pumping and River Water Intake system, commissioned with an Indian LoC of USD 48.1 million, was also inaugurated and handed over to Zimbabwe this year.

Information Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services Minister Tatenda Mavetters visited India for International Telecommunications Union (ITU) World Telecommunications Standardisation Assembly (WTSA 24) on 14-24 October.

CHAPTER

8

Europe & European Union

Central Europe

During the year, India's relations with Central European countries gained renewed momentum through a series of high-level meetings and summits. The state visit of the Prime Minister of Greece Kyriakos Mitsotakis on 21-22 February further strengthened and expanded the strategic partnership between the two countries. Prime Minister's visit to Austria in July significantly enhanced political dialogue and overall bilateral partnerships with Austria and the European Union. The Prime Minister's visit to Poland in August elevated bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership level. Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Petr Fiala, during his visit to India for the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024, met the Prime Minister on 10 January, where the two leaders welcomed the adoption of the 'Joint Statement for India-Czechia Strategic Partnership on Innovation' as a significant milestone in India-Czechia bilateral relations. The EAM's visit to Geneva deepened engagement with Swiss leadership and international organizations on key multilateral issues. The new Indian Missions in Riga, Latvia and Tirana, Albania became operational in July and August, respectively.

In a significant development, India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), comprising Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein, signed a Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) on 10 March. The agreement was signed by India's Minister of Commerce & Industry,

Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and Textiles, along with Guy Parmelin, Federal Councillor of Switzerland and Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education, and Research; Bjarni Benediktsson, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iceland; Dominique Hasler, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Liechtenstein; and Jan Christian Vestre, Minister of Trade and Industry of Norway. TEPA includes a binding commitment of USD 100 billion in investment and the creation of 1 million direct jobs over the next 15 years. This landmark agreement is set to boost the Make in India initiative and create opportunities for India's young and talented workforce.

Foreign Ministers from several Central European countries, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Romania, the Slovak Republic, and Sweden, participated in the 9th edition of the Raisina Dialogue, held on 21-23 February. EAM had bilateral interactions with the European counterparts on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue. Additionally, EAM hosted a separate luncheon meeting with the Nordic Baltic (NB8) ministers. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)-India Europe Business and Sustainability Conclave, held in February, witnessed the participation of ministers, officials, and business delegations from various Central European countries. EAM delivered the keynote address during the event.



PM with the Foreign Ministers from several European countries including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Romania, the Slovak Republic, and Sweden at the 9th edition of Raisina Dialogue, February 2024.

Ministerial visits, such as those of the Minister of Labour and Economy of Austria in February, the Education Minister of Denmark in March, the Culture and Innovation Minister of Hungary in April, the Cultural Ministers of Romania and Bulgaria for UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, the Minister of Industry, Business, and Financial Affairs of Denmark for India Water Week and ReINVEST 2024, the Education Minister of Moldova for Education Worldwide India – Education Summit 2024, and the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy of Greece for the "Sagarmanthan: The Great Oceans Conference," enhanced cooperation across diverse sectors. Foreign office and bilateral consultations with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, and Sweden further strengthened bilateral ties. A significant milestone was the inaugural CII India-Mediterranean Business Conclave, co-hosted by the MEA and CII in New Delhi on 6 September. The event saw the participation of ministers, officials, and business leaders from several Mediterranean countries, with EAM delivering the keynote address.

Albania

India-Albania relations are positive, friendly, and forward-looking and both countries also cooperate in multilateral forums. Igli Hasani, the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania visited India to participate in the Raisina Dialogue on 21-24 February. He met with EAM on the sidelines.

The Government of India operationalized its resident Mission in Tirana, Albania on 10 August.

Dr. Entela Ramosaçaj, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Protection of Albania participated in the Health Ministers' Session of 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August. India and Albania held Bilateral Consultations in Tirana on 31 October.

Austria

India-Austria bilateral relations witnessed a high water mark with the visit of the Prime Minister to Austria on 9-10 July. This was the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister in 41 years and coincided with the celebration of 75th Year of diplomatic relations. A Joint Statement on Enhanced India-Austria Partnership was issued. During the visit, the Prime Minister called on the President of Austria Alexander Van der Bellen and held bilateral talks with Chancellor of Austria Karl Nehammer. The Prime Minister and the Chancellor addressed the Austria-India Business Forum during the visit.

The EAM virtually addressed the Ambassadors' Conference of the Austria Foreign Ministry on 2 September. Minister of Labour and Economy of Austria Martin Kocher visited India on 19-23 February. He was accompanied by a business delegation consisting of 38 Austrian companies. In New Delhi Minister Kocher met the Minister of Commerce and Industry. Minister Kocher attended Raisina Dialogue and 2nd CII India-Europe Business and Sustainability Conclave. India-Austria Start-Up Bridge was launched during the visit.



Prime Minister with the Chancellor of the Republic of Austria Karl Nehammer during his visit to Austria, July 2024.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

India's relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to be steady during the year. Elmedin Dino Konakovic, the Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina visited India to attend the Raisina Dialogue 2024 held on 21-24 February in New Delhi. He also met EAM during his visit.

India and Bosnia and Herzegovina held their 4th Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) in Sarajevo on 28 November. During the FOC, both sides undertook a comprehensive review of bilateral, regional and international issues.

Bulgaria

The year 2024 held special significance as India and Bulgaria celebrated the 70th anniversary of establishment of their diplomatic relations with high-level meetings, exchange of greetings, visits by official and cultural delegations among other activities.

The President of Bulgaria Rumen Radev held a telephone call with the Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji on 20 March and expressed his gratitude and appreciation for freeing the Bulgarian merchant ship MV Ruen and its crew, including seven Bulgarians, who were being held hostage by Somali pirates.

The EAM met Mariya Gabriel, the then Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria on 16 February on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference. During the meeting Deputy Prime Minister Gabriel informed that Bulgaria was slated to join the International Solar Alliance.

The parliamentary cooperation between India and Bulgaria was further deepened by the visit of an 11-member Parliamentary delegation led by the then President (Speaker) of the National Assembly of Bulgaria, Rosen Zhelyazkov to India on 4 and 5 January. The delegation met with the Vice President and Chairman of Rajya Sabha, and the Speaker of Lok Sabha.

The Minister of Culture of Bulgaria, Nayden Todorov visited New Delhi on 24-25 July to participate in a meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. He held a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Culture and Tourism.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, led a high-level delegation on an official visit to Bulgaria on 16-19 April. During the visit CAG had an official meeting with the then President of the Bulgarian National Audit Office (BNAO) Goritsa Grancharova. An Agreement on Cooperation in Performance Audits and Data Analysis between the Office of the CAG of India and the Bulgarian National Audit Office was signed to enhance bilateral cooperation in the field of auditing. As part of the agreement a five-member delegation from CAG participated in the 'Strategic Development (SDP) Workshop' and 'Forum for International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) Professional Procurement (FIPP)' on 25-29 November organized by the BNAO in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Croatia

The 11th session of India-Croatia FOC was held between the Indian side led by Secretary (West) and the Croatian side led by Dr. Petar Mihatov, Director General, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia on 30 April in New Delhi. The two sides carried out a comprehensive review of the existing bilateral relations including strengthening of cooperation in areas of trade and economic, defence and maritime, science and technology, innovation, research and development, tourism, culture, and people-to-people ties.

Top genetic forensic scientist, Dr Dragan Primorac met with Prime Minister on 7 September in New Delhi. During the meeting, Dr Primorac and the Prime Minister discussed the intensification of cooperation between India and Croatia in healthcare.

In prominent cultural exchanges, two 8-member Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) -sponsored groups visited Croatia. A Bhangra Folk Dance Group visited Croatia in February to participate in 41st International Carnival Parade in Rijeka, which was attended by over 10,000



Prime Minister met with Croatia's top genetic forensic scientist Dr Dragan Primorac in New Delhi and discussed the intensification of cooperation in the healthcare sector, September 2024.

persons. The group also gave performances in Zagreb and Bjelovar. In July the Ramayana Theatre Group - Roopvani visited Croatia and performed at the Novigrad at the "Indian Summer in Istria" festival on 2 July, the 64th Annual Sibenik Children's Festival in Sibenik, and at the city of Karlovac. During the celebration of Vishwa Hindi Diwas 2024, at the Department of Indology in University of Zagreb, a special Hindi poetry book 'Bharat' was released on 20 March. The poem collection is a presentation of 30 poems translated into Hindi from the Croatian poetry book "Slon Siroče" written by the first Ambassador of Croatia to India Drago Štambuk.

Two journalists from two top media houses in Croatia - Mladen Miletić of the Daily newspaper, Poslovni Dnevnik and Miodrag Šajatovic of the Weekly Business magazine Lider, visited India on a familiarization visit organized by External Publicity Division MEA in mid-March for a period of one week.

Cyprus

In 2024, political relations between India and Republic of Cyprus (RoC) were maintained and enhanced through a series of high-level interactions. Deputy Minister of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy Dr. Nicodemos Damianou, led a Cypriot delegation to India on 5-6 September to participate in the "CII India Mediterranean Business Conclave" in New Delhi. The Conclave aimed at enhancing regional cooperation and business relations between India and Mediterranean countries. On the sidelines, Dr. Damianou had a bilateral meeting with the Minister of State of Commerce

and Industry and Electronics & Information Technology, and discussed ways to strengthen economic and business ties between Cyprus and India, focusing on deepening bilateral cooperation in digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity.

The EAM had a meeting with the Foreign Minister Dr. Constantinos Kombos on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA on 24 September. The 6th round of India-RoC FOC was held on 26 November in Nicosia.

The economic and commercial relationship between India and RoC has shown steady growth in 2024. India participated as a partner country during Reflect Festival 2024, held in Limassol on 30 and 31 May. Eight Indian start-ups and one unicorn under the aegis of Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) participated in the event. On 27 November, Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed an MoU with Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Czech Republic

India's historical relations with the Czech Republic continued to deepen with a number of visits and other interactions. Petr Fiala, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic led a delegation of academicians on an official visit to India on 9-11 January. He attended the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit investment conference in Gandhinagar, met with the Prime Minister, and discussed ways to advance bilateral ties, especially in the knowledge, technology and scientific fields. The leaders welcomed the adoption of the Joint Statement



Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Petr Fiala, receiving their honorary doctorate at NIMS University Rajasthan, 11 January 2024.

for India-Czechia Strategic Partnership on Innovation as a significant milestone in India-Czechia bilateral relations. Prime Minister Petr Fiala also visited the National Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (NIMS) where he received an honorary doctorate.

Jan Lipavsky, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, led a delegation of business persons on an official visit on 23 February. He met with EAM and discussed economic cooperation, diversification of resources and suppliers, defence industrial cooperation and security. He also attended a Business Forum and the Raisina Dialogue.

Denmark

India and Denmark celebrated the 75th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations. During the year the India-Denmark Green Strategic Partnership further strengthened with increased political interactions and exchange of visits between the two sides.

Official visits undertaken by Speaker Soren Gade (3-6 March), Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen (21-22 February), Minister of Business, Industry and Financial Affairs Morten Bodskov (16-18 September) and Minister of Higher Education and Science Christina Egelund (3-9 March) to India imparted momentum to the ongoing collaboration focused on deepening economic and technological ties, especially in the green transition area. Foreign Minister Rasmussen and EAM met in New York in

September 2024 on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs Lars Lokke Rasmussen participated in the 9th Edition of the Raisina Dialogue 2024 in New Delhi in the panel discussion - "Northern Lights and Southern Sun: Sustainable De-risking and the New North-South Partnership". He also spoke at the CII India-Europe Sustainability Conclave in February. India and Denmark held multilateral consultations in Copenhagen in November, where Denmark's UNSC priorities and bilateral coordination with India at UN and international organizations were discussed.

The Indian Naval Ship TABAR paid a goodwill visit at the Port of Esbjerg, Denmark on 17-19 August to commemorate the 75th anniversary. The event was attended by Speaker of the Danish Parliament Soren Gade as Chief Guest.

Various meetings under the laid down institutional mechanisms continued regularly. Meetings of the Joint Working Groups on Health, Water, Renewable Energy, Power and Shipping took place throughout the year. India and Denmark signed a Partnership Agreement on Migration and Mobility in New Delhi in February. Subsequently, an inter-ministerial delegation of senior officials from Denmark visited India in September to hold discussion with the Indian stakeholders. Bilateral calls on Cutting Edge Green Hydrogen Technology jointly funded by the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science and the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India were announced in October.

Cooperation in trade, commerce and economic spheres witnessed robust engagements by visits of business delegations, including those of International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), National Payment Corporation Limited (NPCL) and Federation of Indian Exports Organizations (FIEO). The IFSCA delegation showcased opportunities for investment in the Indian financial market through a range of services offered through GIFT City, Gandhinagar. Danish Minister for Industry, Business and Financial Affairs Morten Bodskov attended the RE-INVEST and India Water Week in September. Separately, Danish business delegations participated in "Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet", "World Food India" and "Windergy India 2024".

Danish Foreign Policy Society (DFPS), a prominent think-tank, took a large delegation on a familiarization visit to India on 24 November to 04 December, and attended CII Partnership Summit and met think-tanks in New Delhi and Bengaluru.

Estonia

India's increasing engagements with Estonia were reflected in the visit of Foreign Minister Margus Tsahkna to India on 21-23 February. He participated as a panel speaker at the Raisina Dialogue 2024. Tiit Riisalo, Minister of Economic Affairs and Information Technology visited India and participated in the Global Vibrant Gujarat Summit on 10 to 12 January.

Continuing cooperation in the cyber and IT fields, the first ever India-Estonia Cyber Dialogue was held in Tallinn on 17 June.

Giving a new direction to bilateral cooperation, Piret Hartman, Minister of Regional Affairs and Agriculture, led a delegation of 10 companies dealing with food production and processing on a visit to Mumbai and Delhi on 2-4 December. She met the Minister of Commerce and Industry and also had meetings in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

Finland

India enjoys warm and friendly relations with Finland. This year marked the completion of 75 years of establishment of Diplomatic relations between the two countries. To commemorate this important landmark, a joint logo was unveiled by the EAM and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland Elina Valtonen during the latter's visit to India on 21- 22 February.



To commemorate the completion of 75 years of establishment of Diplomatic relations between India and Finland, a joint logo was unveiled by EAM and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland Elina Valtonen, February 2024

A High-Level Dialogue on cooperation in Education between India and Finland was held virtually on 31 January at Secretary-level. A Joint Statement encompassing cooperation in areas like early to senior secondary education, higher education, student mobility, and skill development was issued.

The 4th Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Renewable Energy was convened on 20 August at Joint Secretary-level in virtual format. A Finnish Commerce Committee comprising a delegation of nine members including seven



Prime Minister with the Prime Minister of Greece Kyriakos Mitsotakis on his official visit to India. PM Kyriakos was the chief guest at the inauguration session of 9th edition of Raisina Dialogue, February 2024.

Members of Parliament visited India on 9-14 September and met with the Minister of Commerce and Industry. They also met with the Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs. The 5th Joint Science and Technology Committee meeting at Secretary-level was held in Finland on 24 September. The 21st Session of the Joint Commission meeting at Additional Secretary level on 17 October in India.

Startup India led 39 Indian startup companies at SLUSH 2024 event held in Finland on 20 and 21 November. A tourism road show highlighting Madhya Pradesh as an "Offbeat Multispecialty Tourism Destination" was organized in Helsinki on 18 March.

Greece

Efforts continued through 2024 to further build the India-Greece strategic partnership established in the previous year. The Prime Minister of Greece Kyriakos Mitsotakis paid an official visit to India on 21 and 22 February at the invitation of the Prime Minister. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation including Ministers as well as senior officials of the Greek Government and a 60-plus business delegation. This visit was the first Head of State-level visit from Greece after 16 years. The Prime Minister of Greece was the Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker at the 9th Raisina Dialogue, 2024. He also visited Mumbai before returning to Greece.

Bilateral dialogue mechanisms were further elaborated with the signing of a MoU between the National Council Secretariat and the Office of the Greek National Security Advisor, on the occasion of the Greek NSA's visit to India in February.

Chief of General Staff of the Hellenic National Defence Gen. Houpis visited India at the invitation of the Indian Chief of Defence Staff on 7-10 April while the Indian Chief of Naval Staff visited Greece on 26-29 September at the invitation of his Greek counterpart. The first meeting of the Joint Working Group under the 1998 MoU on Defense Cooperation, was held in New Delhi on 3 July. A large Indian Air Force contingent of 7 aircraft conducted a joint air exercise with the Hellenic Air Force on 20-25 June, while paying a transit visit through Greece. On 29 August-14 September, for the first time ever, the Hellenic Air Force participated in the Indian multinational exercise "Tarang Shakti-24" with four fighter jets and two transport aircraft. The Indian Naval Ship TABAR also made a port call at Souda Bay, Crete, on 8-11 September as part of its operational turnaround from the Mediterranean sea.

The Minister of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy Christos Stylianides visited India to participate in "Sagarmanthan - The Great Oceans Dialogue" held in New Delhi on November 18 and 19. On the sidelines of the conference, he met with India's Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways to discuss bilateral cooperation in the shipping and maritime sectors. In an effort to attract the globally influential Greek shipping industry to India, Chairman of Gujarat International Finance Tec-City International Financial Services Centre (GIFT-IFSC) held a special interactive session on "Opportunities for Ship Leasing & Financing at GIFT IFSC, India" in Athens on 27 May. In September, Indian Chamber of Commerce (Kolkata) signed an MoU with Greece's Eurobank S.A. to establish the "India-Greece-Cyprus (IGC) Business Council" that will promote bilateral commercial ties.

The Holy See

India and the Holy See have friendly relations dating back to the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1948. India attaches great importance to its friendly ties with the Holy See. The Prime Minister met Pope Francis during the G-7 Summit in Apulia on 14 June. The Prime Minister met Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York on 23 September.



Prime Minister with the Secretary of State of the Holy See Cardinal Pietro Parolin on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York, 23 September.

Hungary

India's friendly relations with Hungary continued to grow steadily throughout the year.

Zsolt Németh, Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee in the Hungarian National Assembly led a delegation to India. He met the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha on 8 January. Nándor Csepreggy, the Deputy Minister and Parliamentary State Secretary at the Ministry for Construction and Transport attended the Ministerial Plenary on the future trajectory of the civil aviation industry along with other delegates in the Wings India 2024 at Bengaluru on 18-21 January.

Foreign Minister of Hungary, Peter Szijjarto visited New Delhi to participate in CII-India Europe Business and Sustainability

Conclave held on 21-22 February in New Delhi. He also met EAM and noted the significant advances in political relations, bilateral trade and in the investment and education sectors.

An Indian Parliamentary delegation from Rajya Sabha led by the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha visited Hungary on 6- 9 March at the invitation of the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary. During the visit, the Deputy Chairman called on István Jakab, Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly. The Rajya Sabha delegation also met the Hungarian-Indian Friendship Group chaired by Péter Cseresnyés.

Balazs Orban, the Political Director in the Hungarian Prime Minister's Office visited India in late August to inaugurate a replica at Zangla village in Ladakh on the occasion of 200th anniversary of the arrival of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, Hungarian Linguist and founder of Tibetology to India. Director Orban also met EAM during his visit.

Iceland

India and Iceland's bilateral relations received an impetus with the signing of the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) with European Free Trade Association (EFTA) on 10 March in New Delhi. Iceland is among the four EFTA countries along with Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Bjarni Benediktsson, the then Foreign Minister of Iceland visited India on 9-11 March on the occasion of signing of the India-EFTA TEPA. A bilateral meeting was also held with EAM.

The 2nd meeting of the India-Iceland Joint Task Force (JTF) on Geothermal Cooperation was held in Reykjavik on 3 and 4 May. The JTF was co-chaired by the Joint Secretary (IC), Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Iceland's Special Envoy for Climate, Benedikt Hoskuldsson. Discussions spanned across joint R&D, technology sharing, investments and capacity building to tap into India's vast 10,600 MW geothermal potential.

India participated in the 2024 Arctic Circle Assembly meetings held in Reykjavik on 19-21 October. The Indian delegation was led by the Joint Secretary, National Security Council Secretariat.

Latvia

India-Latvia relations continued their positive trajectory during the year, achieving an important landmark in bilateral ties, with the opening of the Embassy of India in Riga on 25 July.

The then Foreign Minister of Latvia Krišjānis Kariņš visited India in February to participate in the Raisina Dialogue. He also attended the India-Nordic-Baltic (NB8) Meeting, the CII India-Europe Business and Sustainability Conclave, on the sidelines of the Raisina Dialogue 2024.



EAM with the then Foreign Minister of Latvia Krišjānis Kariņš, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Estonia Margus Tsahkna, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic Giorgos Gerapetritis at the the CII India-Europe Business and Sustainability Conclave, on the sidelines of the 9th Raisina Dialogue, February 2024.

In September, Foreign Minister of Latvia Baiba Braže joined EAM in a panel organized by ORF, on “Tiger’s Tale: Crafting a New Development Paradigm”.

Principality of Liechtenstein

India and the Principality of Liechtenstein share a close and warm bilateral relationship since establishment of diplomatic relations in 1993. Foreign Minister of Liechtenstein Dominique Hasler visited India on 21-23 February to participate in the Raisina Dialogue. She also met EAM on the margins of the event on 22 February and discussed a range of bilateral and multilateral matters of interest. She visited New Delhi again for the signing of the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) on 10 March.

Lithuania

India and Lithuania share a common link through language. Lithuanian is widely acknowledged as being the language grammatically closest to Sanskrit which signifies close ancient links. Algis Latakas, the Director General of Klaipeda State Seaport Authority of the Republic of Lithuania visited Delhi and Mumbai on 28-31 January and met the Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways and visited the Mumbai Port as well.

Gabrielius Landsbergis, Minister of Foreign Affairs, visited India and participated in the Raisina Dialogue 2024. In

April, one Lithuanian diplomat participated in the 71st Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) organised by Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS). In August, Professor Vytis Vidūnas of Lithuania with support of the Embassy of India in Vilnius organised नदीसंस्कृतम् (*Nadisanskritam* or Sanskrit on the Rivers), a unique method through which he teaches and promotes Sanskrit language. This initiative was mentioned by the Prime Minister in his “Mann Ki Baat” address.

Malta

The close and friendly relations between both the countries continued to gain momentum during the year. EAM met Malta’s Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dr. Ian Borg in September in New York on the sidelines of the UNGA session.

Malta signed the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework Agreement at New Delhi in February and became the 119th country to join the ISA.

Moldova

On 28 December 1991, India recognized Moldova and established diplomatic ties on 20 March 1992. The relationship between India and Moldova is amicable and cordial.

EAM held a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of Moldova Mihai Popșoi on 24 September, on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Moldova Mihai Popșoi visited India on 15-16 December at the invitation of EAM. The Ministers inaugurated the recently opened Resident Mission of Moldova in New Delhi. At the bilateral meeting with EAM a Declaration of Intent on a Migration and Mobility Partnership between the Government of India and the Government of Moldova was signed. Moldova also signed the Framework Agreement to join the International Solar Alliance. The 2nd India-Moldova FOC took place in New Delhi on 4 October, at Secretary-level. Natalia Gavrilita, the former Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova visited India under ICCR's Distinguished Visitor Programme (DVP) on 23 January- 1 February. 11 diplomats from Moldova participated in the 1st Special Course for Diplomats from Pacific Alliance countries and Republic of Moldova held in SSIFS, New Delhi on 10-19 July. Ion Gumene, State Secretary, Ministry of Finance of Moldova participated in the Finance Ministers' Session of the 3rd VoGSS on 17 August. A seminar on Ayurveda was organized in Chisinau on 21 March.

Montenegro

India's relations with Montenegro have traditionally been friendly since the days of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of which it was a constituent republic. EAM met Foreign Minister of Montenegro Erin Ibrahimović on the sidelines of UNGA in New York on 26 September. Discussions were held on sectors for potential investment in Montenegro.

On 28 October the third round of Foreign Office Consultations was held in Podgorica, Montenegro. Both sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations as well as cooperation in international and multilateral forums.

Republic of North Macedonia

Bilateral relations between India and the Republic of North Macedonia further expanded with high-level meetings and exchanges. EAM and the Foreign Minister of North Macedonia Timco Mucunski met on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly on 27 September. North Macedonia actively participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August. The Minister for Implementation of Roma Strategy of the Republic of North Macedonia Prof. Shaban Saliu participated in the Youth Ministers' Session and advocated greater cooperation among the youth of two countries. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Zoran Dimitrovski participated in the second Foreign Ministers' session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS. He called

the VoGSS a significant platform for articulating attitudes, priorities and the challenges of the countries of the Global South and expressed support for activities of the Summit to strengthen the influence of Global South countries in global governance and facilitate dialogue and cooperation among them.

Norway

India and Norway continued to further strengthen their strong and evolving bilateral ties, particularly focused on bilateral trade, blue economy and energy sectors. On 21-23 August, MoS (KVS), visited Norway for the 1st edition of the Track 1.5 Nordic-India Dialogue. He also met the Foreign Minister of Norway Espen Barth Eide and Minister of Environment and Climate Andreas Bjelland Eriksen. On 25 July, the EAM met Foreign Minister of Norway on the sidelines of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in Laos. On 22 and 23 February, Andreas Motzfeldt Kravik, State Secretary in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, visited India to participate in the Raisina Dialogue. On the sidelines, he also joined other Ministers of NB8 countries for a luncheon meeting hosted by EAM.



EAM with the Foreign Minister of Norway Espen Barth Eide on the sidelines of 57th ASEAN meetings in Vientiane, Laos. August 2024.

On 10 March, the then Minister of Trade and Industry of Norway Jan Christian Vestre visited New Delhi to sign the India-European Free Trade Association-Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA). Later, on 14 August, Innovation Norway and the Norway-India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NICCI) jointly organised a special session to TEPA, and the event was attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway.

The 11th round of India-Norway Foreign Office Consultations was held in New Delhi on 14 May, co-chaired by the Secretary (West) and Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway Torgeir Larsen.

In 2024, there were two visits by Norwegian parliamentary delegations to India, first in February, and then in September. Later in November, a 7 member Indian Parliamentary delegation visited Norway. Other official delegations included visits of Director General, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (12-16 March); Chairperson, International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) (13 September); Secretary, Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (20-21 September); and Commerce Secretary (22 November).

In February, the Minister of Fisheries, Government of Goa led a government cum business delegation to Norway.

India started the winter expedition at India's Arctic research station, Himadri at Ny Alesund, Svalbard, Norway, from

December 2023 and effectively made Indian presence at the Svalbard round the year from 2024 onward.

Norway joined as a partner country in the inaugural edition of "Sagarmanthan: The Great Oceans Dialogue," held in New Delhi on 18 and 19 November.

Poland

India and Poland share a long-standing friendly relationship, marked by high level political contacts, vibrant economic engagement and unique people-to-people linkages. At the invitation of the Prime Minister of Poland, Prime Minister paid an official visit to Poland on 21 and 22 August, and marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Poland. This was a historic visit that took place 45 years after the last visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Poland. Prime Minister held discussions with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and also called on President Andrzej Duda of Poland. The two Prime Ministers announced the elevation of the India-Poland bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership, and issued a Joint Statement on the bilateral partnership. The India-Poland Social Security Agreement and Administrative Arrangement to the Social Security Agreement were announced during the Prime Minister's visit to Poland and signed in Warsaw on 25 November.



Prime Minister welcomed by the Prime Minister of Poland Donald Tusk at the Federal Chancellery in Warsaw with a ceremonial welcome in Poland, August 2024.

Wladyslaw Teofil Bartozewski, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs visited India on 19-23 February and met with the then MoS (ML) and Deputy National Security Adviser. He also participated in the 9th edition of the Raisina Dialogue 2024. Michal Gramatyka, Secretary of State for Digital Affairs of Poland visited India on 15 and 16 October to attend the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly 2024 Conference organized by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology in New Delhi.

Economic relations between India and Poland continued to strengthen further with bilateral trade reaching USD 5.72 billion, reflecting a 200 percent increase over the last decade. Indian trade delegations led by CII Regional Office West Bengal, Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), Indian Economic Trade Organization (IETO) participated in major international exhibitions and fairs in Poland. A high-level panel discussion on economic cooperation between India and Poland and investment opportunities available in India was held at the 16th edition of the European Economic Congress in Katowice, Poland.

The Defence Wing of the Embassy of India was re-opened in April with the deployment of a Brigadier-level officer as the resident Defence Attache.

Romania

Bilateral relations between India and Romania are warm and friendly. Luminita Odobescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania visited India to participate in the Raisina Dialogue on 22-24 February. She also met EAM on the sidelines. A Joint Declaration following the 10th Anniversary of the signing of the Joint Statement on Establishing Extensive Partnership between India and Romania was issued during the visit. On 17 September, the EAM, along with the Minister of Communications, and Ambassador of Romania to India released the India-Romania joint commemorative postal stamps marking 75 years of diplomatic relations. The joint stamps were also unveiled in Bucharest by the Ambassador of India to Romania and CEO of Romfilatelia. The EAM held a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of Romania Luminita-Teodora Odobescu on 26 September, on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York.

India-Romania Defence Cooperation Agreement entered into force on 14 April, it was signed on 28 March 2023. The first meeting of the India-Romania Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation (JCDC) was held in Bucharest on 23 April. Ten Indian defence companies/startups showcased their products at Black Sea Defense and Aerospace Exhibition (BSDA) on 22 – 24 May. This was the first time that an India Pavilion was put up at BSDA. The first seminar for Indian and Romanian defense industries was held on 25 May.



EAM with the Foreign Minister of Romania Luminita Odobescu on the sidelines of 9th Raisina Dialogue, February 2024

A “Bridging Cultures” exhibition was held at the Palace of Parliament in Bucharest in August. It displayed 75 watercolor paintings by Dr. Ram Viranjan, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts at Kurukshetra University.

Serbia

India-Serbia bilateral relations, rooted in history and tradition, continued to be strong and friendly during 2024. The State visit of Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji to Serbia in June 2023 has provided a fillip to the relationship. Most recently, both the countries celebrated the 75th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations. EAM met with his Serbian counterpart former Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic at Kampala, on the sidelines of the 19th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in January.

Serbia participated in the Environment Ministers' session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS, which was held in virtual format in August and hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, New Delhi. The Indian Serbian Chamber of Business and Commerce was established in January. The Athletics Federation of India sponsored the visit of an eight-member team to participate in the cross-country World Athletics championship held at Belgrade in March.

Slovakia

India and Slovakia continued their engagement through various interactions. Foreign Minister of Slovakia Juraj Blánár visited India for Raisina Dialogue 2024 on 20-23 February. He met with the EAM and the Defence Secretary in New Delhi. During this visit, the Slovak Foreign Minister was accompanied by a 22-member delegation of business and defence companies. He participated in the 2nd CII India-Europe Business and Sustainability Conclave. The Slovak Innovation and Technology Day in New Delhi was also opened by Foreign Minister Juraj Blánár during the visit, and a MoU was signed between the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Office of Standards, Metrology and Testing of the Slovak Republic.



EAM with the Slovak Foreign Minister Juraj Blánár on the sidelines of 9th Raisina Dialogue, February 2024

Slovenia

The bilateral relations between India and Slovenia continued to strengthen during 2024. The initiative for establishment of India Centre was announced during the visit of the EAM in September 2021. EAM met the Foreign Minister of Slovenia Tanja Fajon on the sidelines of UNGA on 27 September.

Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation of Slovenia Dr. Igor Papic visited India on 4-6 December, 2024 to participate in the 9th India Water Impact Summit and 2nd Climate Investment and Technology Impact Summit in New Delhi.

The first India-Slovenia Day of Science and Innovation was organized on 6 February at Josef Stefan Institute (JSI), Slovenia. A MoU was signed between the Research and Information (RIS), India and Slovenia Science Foundation. A MOU was signed on 16 February between the Nanda Devi Bio Reserves (Valley of Flowers National Park) of Uttarakhand and the Triglav National Park (TNP) of Slovenia at an event marking the commencement of year-long celebrations of the 100th anniversary of TNP.

Network of India and Slovenian experts from Science, Innovation, Technology and Education (SITE) bringing the experts of two countries together for exchange of innovative ideas and inventions was launched with the Indian chapter launched on 9 April and Slovenia chapter launched on 21 June. On 26 July, Ljubljana Zoo welcomed a lioness named 'Jeevana' of the Asian lion lineage from the Gir Forest of India. A MoU between G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology and Agricultural Institute of Slovenia for cooperation in the field of research, faculty and student exchange and development especially in the honeybee protection and honey production sector was signed on 29 August. A 'India Study Centre' was established at Nova University, Ljubljana on 9 September.

Sweden

India and Sweden have deepened their partnership through multiple collaborative initiatives, with a strong focus on technology, trade, climate action, innovation and security. On the sidelines of the 79th UNGA in New York, EAM met the Foreign Minister of Sweden Maria Malmer Stenergard, on 26 September.

MoS (KVS) and the Swedish Minister for Climate and Environment Romina Pourmokhtari, co-chaired the 6th Annual Summit of the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT) during COP-29 in Baku, Azerbaijan. Both Ministers also released the five year report of the Leadership Group for Industry Transition. The report highlights the achievement of this initiative since its launch in 2019.

In 2024, Håkan Jevrell, State Secretary to Minister for International Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, visited India five times. During the last visit on 4 and 5 December, he met Secretary (West) and participated in the 25th India Trilateral Forum. Earlier, on 25 September, he met the Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Secretary of the Department of Space, in Bengaluru. In January, Johan

Davidson, Sweden's State Secretary for Infrastructure, visited India and held a meeting with India's Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs.

Former Swedish Foreign Minister Tobias Billström visited India to participate in the Raisina Dialogue 2024 in New Delhi, emphasizing the strengthening of bilateral ties through collaboration in innovation, green technology, and digitalization. Additionally, he visited the ISRO campus in Bengaluru, symbolizing Sweden's interest in fostering cooperation in space technology to advance sustainable development and scientific innovation.

On 4 March, the Swedish defence manufacturer SAAB performed the groundbreaking of its manufacturing facility for shoulder-launched weapon system Carl Gustaf Mark IV in Jhajjar, Haryana. This marked the first Carl Gustaf manufacturing facility outside Sweden.

In April, the 13th Joint Working Group (JWG) on Health between India and Sweden was convened in Stockholm. The India-Sweden Industry Transition Platform (ITP) launched its work with its inaugural meeting in New Delhi in April. This initiative aims to accelerate industrial decarbonization and promote sustainable practices through collaboration between policymakers, researchers, and industries from both nations. In May, the 7th round of India-Sweden Foreign Office Consultations was held in Stockholm, with the Indian delegation led by the Secretary (West).

The 11th edition of the India-Sweden Innovation Day was held on 14 October, in Stockholm, with a focus on fostering collaborations for sustainable growth under the theme Accelerating Green Growth for Inclusive Transition. The event was attended in-person by Ebba Busch, Sweden's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Energy and Enterprise, and virtually by India's Minister of Science and Technology.

Swedish filmmaker Levan Akin's 'Crossing' won the prestigious International Council for Film, Television, and Audiovisual Communication (ICFT)-UNESCO Gandhi Medal at the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa on 28 November, in recognition of its powerful exploration of peace, non-violence, and the promotion of human rights.

Switzerland

EAM paid his first official visit to Switzerland on 11-14 September. He held a bilateral meeting with his counterpart Federal Councillor Dr. Ignazio Cassis in Geneva on 13 September.

India and Switzerland held the 6th round of Financial Dialogue in March with the objective to strengthen and intensify cooperation in the financial sector.

The bilateral economic ties between India and Switzerland in 2024 achieved a new momentum following the signing

of India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) in New Delhi on 10 March. With this, Switzerland and the other EFTA States became the first European partners to conclude a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with India. With a view to discuss ways to implement this historic agreement, the Minister of Commerce and Industry paid an official visit to Switzerland on 14-15 July.



EAM and the Federal Councillor of Switzerland Dr Ignazio Cassis during EAM's official visit to Switzerland, September 2024

Türkiye

EAM held a bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister of Türkiye Hakan Fidan on the sidelines of the 57th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Vientiane on 27 July.

Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan participated in the Foreign Ministers' Session of 3rd edition of VoGSS held virtually on 17 August by sending a video message. Türkiye's Deputy Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Ahmet Berat Conkar participated in the Energy Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August by sending a video message.

The Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas met Türkiye's Minister of Energy Alparslan Bayraktar on the sidelines of the GASTECH 2024 Conference in Houston, US on 17 September.

Secretary (West) had a bilateral meeting with the Deputy Foreign Minister of Türkiye Dr. Nuh Yılmaz on the sidelines of UNGA in New York in September.



EAM with the Foreign Minister of Türkiye Hakan Fidan on the sidelines of 57th ASEAN meetings in Vientiane, Laos. July 2024

CII India-Mediterranean Business Conclave

MEA, in association with the CII, organized the inaugural CII India-Mediterranean Business Conclave on 6 September in New Delhi. This event served as a platform for businesses to meet, exchange ideas, explore partnerships, and provide industry-specific recommendations at the government level. The conclave facilitated valuable business linkages. The EAM delivered a keynote address at the concluding session titled “India–Mediterranean the Way Forward: Creating Partnerships for the Future.” The Minister of Commerce and Industry spoke at the plenary session, which included participation from Rania Ahmed, Deputy Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade, Syrian Arab Republic, and Dr. Nicodemos Damianou, Deputy Minister of Research, Innovation, and Digital Policy, Republic of Cyprus. The conclave hosted sessions across various tracks, including Trade and Investment, Natural Resources, Future Technology, and Infrastructure. Topics that were covered included Industrial Defence, Digital Transformation, Maritime Cooperation, Manufacturing Innovation, and Urban Infrastructure.

Europe West

Andorra

A bilateral Agreement on exemption of visa requirements for diplomatic and official passport holders was signed between India and Andorra in March. Bilateral trade between India and Andorra stood at USD 3.28 million in 2022-23 with nearly all trade being Indian exports to Andorra (USD 3.27 million) primarily including textiles and garments, leather products and footwear, iron and steel and precious and semi-precious stones.

Around 140 Indians/PIOs live in Andorra. The Indian community has been in Andorra since the 1970s working as business persons selling electronic goods and diversifying to other areas later.

Belgium

India and Belgium share a close bilateral relationship based on shared commonalities and commitment to the rule of law, federalism and pluralism. Belgium supports India's aspiration for permanent membership of the UNSC.

Prime Minister held a telephonic conversation with Prime Minister of Belgium Alexander De Croo on 26 March and exchanged views on strengthening bilateral ties, and advancing India-EU partnership under the Belgian Presidency of the Council and cooperation on regional and global issues.

EAM met Foreign Minister of Belgium Hadja Lahbib on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference on 17 February and discussed bilateral ties and working together during the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

EAM called on Prime Minister of Belgium Alexander De Croo on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA in September in New York.

The 2nd Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on 10 April led by Secretary (West) and Theodora Gentzis, Secretary General and President of the Board, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two sides reviewed bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and international affairs. Gentzis also called on the EAM.

The 18th India-Belgium-Luxembourg-Economic Union Joint Commission Meeting (India BLEU JCM) was held in April 2024 in New Delhi. Comprehensive discussions on a range of issues including bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation were held on the occasion.

The Secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy participated in the 1st Nuclear Energy Summit co-organized by the Government of Belgium and the International Atomic Energy Agency in Brussels on 21 March.



EAM with Foreign Minister of Belgium Hadja Lahbib on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference, February 2024

Belgium ranks as the 18th most important destination for Indian products and India ranks 19th among Belgium's main trade partners. Bilateral trade in goods during January-September 2024 stood at USD 8.16 billion of which Indian exports amounted to USD 4.83 billion and Belgium's exports stood at USD 3.34 billion. The total FDI from Belgium up to September 2024 was USD 3,941.03 million. According to the latest estimates, there are around 24,732 members of the Indian Diaspora in Belgium.

European Union

India and the European Union, exemplars of large vibrant democracies, open market economies, and pluralistic societies celebrated the 20th year of their Strategic Partnership in 2024. The year witnessed regular high-level interactions and further deepening of co-operation covering the fields of trade and investment, emerging technologies, innovation, green transition, security, and migration and mobility.

The then President of the European Council Charles Michel had a pull-aside meeting with the Prime Minister on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in Vientiane on 10 October. President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen met Prime Minister briefly on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro on 19 November. Prime Minister received a congratulatory phone call on his re-election from Ursula von der Leyen on 6 June.

There have been regular Ministerial-level interactions. EAM met the then EU High Representative and Vice President Josep Borrell twice in 2024, first on the sidelines of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Vientiane in July and then at the Munich Security Conference in February. EAM met European Commissioner for Climate Action Wopke Hoekstra on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York in September. Minister of Commerce and Industry met the then European Commission Executive Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis on the sidelines of the G7 Trade Ministers' Meeting in Villa San Giovanni in July. European Commissioner for Budget and Administration Johannes Hahn met the Finance Minister during his visit to India in October.

Institutional dialogue mechanisms that met during 2024 include the Strategic Partnership Review Meeting in Brussels, the Foreign Policy and Security Consultations meeting in Brussels, and the Energy Panel in Brussels, in November. The Science and Technology Steering Committee meeting was held in Brussels in September. The High-Level Dialogues on Migration and Mobility was held in Brussels in November, and on Climate in New Delhi in October. The Joint Working Groups on Environment met in New Delhi and the Water Forum, in New Delhi in September. The Energy Efficiency forum was held virtually in May. The Agriculture and Marine Products meeting was held virtually in February. The Technical Working Groups on Plant Health and Animal Health took place virtually in October and an Ayurveda meeting was held virtually in September.

Under the India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) mechanism priority has been given to areas like semiconductors, high-performance computing, battery technology, marine plastic litter, and waste-to-energy. Working Group-2 of the India-EU TTC on green and clean energy technologies, a matchmaking event on battery recycling technologies for electric vehicles targeting start-ups were held in June followed by market immersion visits from both sides in September and October. Nine rounds of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement, five rounds on Investment Protection Agreement, and six rounds on Geographical Indications (GI) protection Agreement have been held so far. A Work Programme for Phase III (2025-28) of the India-EU Clean Energy and Climate Partnership was adopted in November. A Working Arrangement between the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, (EUROPOL) was signed in March. The European Space Agency (ESA) and ISRO had cross-support arrangements for India's missions including Chandrayaan-3 and Aditya-L1.

The EU is India's largest trading partner while India is the EU's 9th largest trading partner. Bilateral trade in goods from January-September stood at USD 85.43 billion of which Indian exports amounted to USD 36.09 billion and the EU's exports stood at USD 49.27 billion. The India – EU bilateral trade in services in 2023 stood at USD 53.14 billion, comprising Indian exports worth USD 23.32 billion and imports worth USD 29.81 billion. Federation of

European Business in India (FEBI), which is the EU's official Chamber of Commerce in India was launched on 11 October and aims to foster stronger business ties between India and Europe.

France

Over the course of the past decades, and especially since the declaration of the Strategic Partnership in 1998, India and France have developed a partnership of exceptional trust and confidence, consistency and strength, based on shared democratic values, strong belief in sovereignty and strategic autonomy, a shared commitment to a multipolar world, to rule of law, and the principles of the UN Charter. In 2024, India and France further solidified their Strategic Partnership.

Following Prime Minister's visit to France as Guest of Honour at the French National Day on 14 July 2023, the President of France Emmanuel Macron paid a State Visit to India as the Chief Guest for the 75th Republic Day of India. The two leaders being the Guests of Honour at the successive National days respectively, represented a high point in India-France relations.

President Macron was accompanied by a high-level delegation that included the Ministers of Armed Forces, Culture, the European and Foreign Affairs, as well as senior officials of the French Government, and a few CEOs



Prime Minister with President of France Emmanuel Macron, using the UPI-payments app during his State Visit to India. January 2024.

and industry leaders. Three aircrafts of the French Air and Space Force flew together with an aircraft of the Indian Air Force over the Kartavya Path. A French military contingent participated in the Republic Day parade, reciprocating the participation of an Indian Tri-Service contingent and a fighter aircraft in the French National Day on 14 July in Paris.

As a departure from convention, the Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji hosted a banquet in honour of the visiting dignitary on the evening of Republic Day. President Macron joined Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji for an 'at-Home' reception in Rashtrapati Bhavan. In addition to bilateral engagements, President Macron visited Jaipur, and experienced the rich cultural heritage, arts and crafts of Rajasthan. Prime Minister hosted a dinner for the French President in the Pink City.

Both leaders have regularly reviewed the progress of bilateral relations as well the Horizon 2047 Roadmap, agreed between the two sides in July 2023. On 14 June, Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with President Macron on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Italy. Earlier, President Macron made a congratulatory phone call to Prime Minister on 6 June, after his re-election as Prime Minister of India. On 18 November, both leaders met on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Brazil.

On 26 January, EAM met with Stephane Sejourne, the then Foreign Minister of France, and held a discussion on a range of regional and global issues. EAM met with the French Foreign Minister Jean Noel Barrot on 24 September, on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York and on 25 November on the sidelines of Rome Mediterranean Dialogue 2024.

On 30 September, NSA co-chaired the 37th India-France Strategic Dialogue with the Diplomatic Advisor in Paris. During the visit, NSA also met French Foreign Minister Jean Noel Barrot, Minister of Armed Forces Sébastien Lecornu and called on President Macron. Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs met French Minister of Economy, Finance and Industry Antoine Armand on the sidelines of the World Bank and IMF Annual Meeting in Washington DC on 24 October. Minister of Tourism, met the French Minister Delegate for the Tourism Economy, Olivia Grégoire on the sideline of the World Travel Market on 6 November in London. Minister of Food Processing Industries, paid a visit to Dijon, France on 10-14 October and attended the Ministerial Conference in the run up to the 45th World Congress of Vine and Wine, and met the French Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry Minister Annie Genevard. Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, visited Lyon, France, on 9-12 September, leading the Indian delegation at the WorldSkills Competition 2024. MoS (Commerce & Industry) met with French Minister Delegate for Foreign Trade Sophie Primas on 25 October on the sidelines of the G20 Trade and Industrial Ministers' Meeting in Brazil.

Sophie Primas, Minister Delegate for Foreign Trade and French Nationals Abroad, visited India on 27-29 November

and met the Minister of Commerce and Industry of India. Both Ministers addressed the Asia-Pacific Forum (APAC) 2024 of the French Foreign Trade Advisors in New Delhi. The Minister of Commerce and Industry read the Prime Minister's message to the APAC Forum. The two Ministers also took part in the bilateral CEO Forum, which was held simultaneously in New Delhi. The events focused on business opportunities and collaboration between Indian and French companies in India and the Indo-Pacific region.

India-France FOC was held on 5 March at New Delhi. It was co-chaired by the then Foreign Secretary and the Secretary-General (SG) of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Anne-Marie Descôtes.

Parliamentary visits

Exchanges between the two Parliaments received a new impetus in 2024 and contributed to India-France relations. The President of the French Senate Gérard Larcher, along with a delegation of five Senators, paid an official visit to India on 19 and 20 February. This marked the first official visit of a Chairman of the French Senate to India. During the visit, he met with his counterpart, the Vice President of India and Chairman of Rajya Sabha, and the EAM. Larcher also met with business leaders of French companies present in India, and visited sites of French companies making key contributions to "Make in India" and "Skill India". He was also given a guided tour of the new Parliament building.

Defence Cooperation

The year 2024 witnessed unprecedented activities both in the domains of bilateral military capacity and capability development. Major ongoing defense deals include the P-75 Scorpene programme and purchase of 26 Rafale-M aircrafts. A Letter of Intent (LoI) on deepening the Defense Space partnership was signed on 26 January between India and France, which is a testimony to the increasing strategic cooperation in the field of Space along with Defence. A one-member delegation from the Defence Space Agency participated as military observers in the AsterX-24 exercise on 3-6 March at Toulouse, France. As a sign of increasing trust, the status of participation has been enhanced from 'observer' to a 'participant' for the upcoming AsterX exercise in March 2025.

The 20th edition of Army to Army Staff Talks was held between India and France at Delhi on 07-08 November. The 17th round of Navy-to-Navy Staff Talks was held at New Delhi on 06-07 February. Bilateral army exercise SHAKTI 2024 was conducted on 13-26 May at Umroi, Meghalaya, in India. This was the first time that the exercise saw participation of Air Force and Navy observers. French Air and Space Force (FASF) and IAF have been participating in bilateral exercise GARUDA until 2023. In 2024, the IAF

expanded the scope by inviting multiple nations in the form of a new Exercise 'Tarang Shakti' in lieu of Exercise Garuda. FASF participated in the Phase -I of Tarang Shakti held at Air Force Station Sulur and Air Force Station Thanjavur on 06 - 14 August. Sea-Phase of naval exercise Varuna 2024 was conducted on 02 - 05 September off the Coast of Toulon, France. The Indian Navy's fleet of P-8I (Maritime Patrol and Recce Aircraft) was deployed at Istres, France on 01-04 September to take part in Exercise Varuna 2024. French Aircraft Atlantique-2 participated in the multilateral exercise Milan 2024, off the coast of Vishakapatnam.

There were several port calls during the year. INS Tabar made Port Call at Toulon on 29 August- 2 September. The port call also included the harbour phase of Exercise Varuna 2024. INS Talwar made an Operational Turnaround (OTR) at La Reunion on 27-29 October.

Trilateral Cooperation

India and France have robust trilateral institutional exchanges with Australia and UAE, respectively. The 3rd India-France-Australia Trilateral Focal Points Meeting took place on 19 June and the 2nd India-France-UAE Trilateral Focal Points Meeting took place on 9 July.

Space Cooperation

India and France have a rich legacy of cooperation and collaboration in the field of space spanning over six decades, through ISRO and its French counterpart Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (CNES). Ongoing cooperation activities include joint satellite mission TRISHNA (Thermal Infra-Red Imaging Satellite for High-resolution Natural Resource Assessment), maritime domain awareness system, payload accommodation, ground station support, human spaceflight and professional exchange. ISRO has been using the launch services of Arianespace for launching its heavier communication satellites on a commercial basis.

The second India-France Strategic Space Dialogue was held at New Delhi on 4 March, led by the then Foreign Secretary and by the Secretary General, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Anne-Marie Descôtes. India and France reviewed progress made since the first India-France Strategic Space Dialogue, and discussed the ongoing robust bilateral engagement in the space sector. They explored avenues for further cooperation in the G2G and commercial segments, as well as the implementation of the Lol on Defence Space Cooperation, capacity building and training, space exchanges, and defence space industrial cooperation.

Economic Cooperation

Within the EU, France remains India's seventh-largest trading partner, after the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium,

and Italy. For the year 2024-25, between April and October Indian exports to France amounted to USD 4.69 billion. The bilateral trade between India and France has more than doubled in the last decade to USD 15.11 billion in 2023-24 from USD 6.4 billion in 2009-10.

France is the 11th largest foreign investor in India with a cumulative investment of USD 10.94 billion from April 2000 to March 2024 which represents 1.61 percent of the total FDI inflows into India according to data provided by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). Top 5 FDI equity inflows are in: services sector (17.87 percent), cement and gypsum products (8.91 percent), air transport (including air freight) (7.31 percent), miscellaneous industries (7.04 percent) and petroleum and natural gas (6.81 percent). These five sectors represent 47.93 percent of the total equity inflow from France from April 2000 to March 2024.

Several Indian companies have opened their innovation centres in France for joint technology development including Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Larsen & Toubro Limited Tech Service (LTTS). French technologies, especially renewables, sustainable manufacturing and urban infrastructure development, are being integrated in India.

The five key areas identified by India and France for economic diplomacy in 2024 are, advancing digital technology and innovation, clean energy collaborations, research and development, smart manufacturing and critical technologies including defence, enhancing India's exports to France, and global supply chain relocation initiatives.

Digital Cooperation

The process of enabling Unified Payment Interface (UPI) has been a success. During Prime Minister's visit to Paris in July 2023, NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) and France's Lyra Collect executed an agreement to implement UPI in France and Europe. The payment mechanism went live at the Eiffel Tower during President Macron's visit to India on 26 January, as the first merchant in France to accept UPI. Subsequently, UPI payments were launched at Galleries Lafayette on 3 July. With a shared belief in the power of a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) approach for the development of open, free, democratic and inclusive digital economies and digital societies, India and France have advanced multi-stakeholder exchanges through the InFrastructures (India France Structures) and InFinity (India France Innovation in Information Technology) platforms.

Culture and Tourism

Following the Lol on the New National Museum and Cooperation in Museology signed during the visit of Prime Minister to Paris in July 2023, both countries have made

progress on a detailed Agreement between National Museum and France Museums Development. France is working with India's "Yuge Yugeen Bharat" National Museum project. An 'India Pavillion' was set up at the International and French Travel Market (IFTM) Top Resa tourism fair held on 17-19 September in Paris. There were state pavilions from Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh tourism boards.

Civil Nuclear Cooperation

During the state visit of President Macron to India as the Chief Guest for the 75th Republic Day of India, Prime Minister and President Macron stressed that nuclear energy is an essential part of the energy mix for strengthening energy security and transitioning towards a low-carbon economy. Both leaders acknowledged the India-France civil nuclear ties and efforts in cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, notably in relation with the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant Project. They agreed to convene a special task force on nuclear energy in the framework of the Indo-French Strategic Dialogue.

Cooperation in the field of Blue Economy and Environment

Based on the decisions taken during the first bilateral meeting held in October 2023 in Paris, the India-France follow-up dialogue on Blue Economy and Ocean Governance was held on 21 February at NITI Aayog, New Delhi. The Indian delegation was led by the CEO of NITI Aayog and the French delegation was led by Olivier Poivre d'Arvor, the Ambassador for Poles and Maritime Issues. During the follow-up discussions both sides reviewed and identified the status of the collaboration areas.

The 4th meeting of the Indo-French Joint Working Group on Environment was held on 10 July. Recalling the richness of the bilateral cooperation in environment, climate change, biodiversity and pollution, the sides agreed to work under the Blue Economy Dialogue in the areas of coastal ecosystem and services, marine and coastal planning and in coastal ecology and environment.

Science & Technology Cooperation

The 2nd Joint Science and Technology Committee was held on 18 January. The topics discussed at the 2nd Joint Committee Meeting included: (i) Energy: Green Hydrogen, Energy conservation and storage, (ii) climate change and sustainable cities: Carbon capture and utilization and storage technologies, sequestration, (iii) Digital Technologies: AI for sustainability, Autonomous navigation, (iv) Quantum Technology: Quantum computing, sensing and metrology, materials and devices, (v) Health: Cancer research and

innovations, novel therapeutics, novel diagnostics for early detection of emerging diseases, AI application in Healthcare, host-pathogen interactions of emerging infectious diseases etc. (vi) Oceans, and (vi) Applied Mathematics.

An MoU between DST and Agence Nationale De La Recherche (ANR) France, was signed during the 2nd Joint Committee Meeting on 18 January in New Delhi. Two areas selected for the calls under this MoU are: (i) Decarbonated Hydrogen (ii) Applied Mathematics towards digital AI.

A delegation led by the Secretary of DST held various bilateral meetings with the French institutions working in science and technology and also co-chaired the 37th meeting of the Governing Body of CEFIPRA (Indo-French Center for Promotion of Advanced Research) on 25 April in Paris. Another outcome which the Governing Board approved, was the launch of India-France Virtual Node on Health Issues (ILBS-INSERM) under which, the Indo-French Node "Liver & Metabolic Disease Network (InFLiMeN)" was introduced and inaugurated by MoS (Science and Technology) on 04 July at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS), New Delhi.

Indian Diaspora

There is a large presence of Indian diaspora in the French mainland and its overseas territories. There are an estimated 1,19,000 Indians in mainland France. There are around 10,000 Indian students in France.

Germany

The 7th India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) were held on 25 October in New Delhi. It built on the traditional areas of cooperation such as trade, investment and sustainable development, with renewed focus on defence and security engagement, and innovation in new and emerging technologies.

Prime Minister and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, co-chaired the 7th IGC. German Chancellor was accompanied by a high-level delegation including the Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, Robert Habeck, the Federal Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, the Federal Minister for Labour and Social Affairs, Hubertus Heil, and the then Federal Minister for Education & Research, Bettina Stark-Watzinger.

Several agreements were signed in diverse fields such as security, green energy, urban mobility, start-ups, science and technology, education, skill development, labour and health. Significant outcomes included the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) in Criminal Matters and the Agreement on the Exchange and Mutual Protection of Classified Information. It also saw the presentation of the Roadmap on Innovation and



Prime Minister with the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany Olaf Scholz in New Delhi, October 2024.

Technology as well as the launch of the Green Hydrogen Roadmap.

Both sides also decided to strengthen discussions on global issues of mutual interest through the establishment of Consultations on West Asia and North Africa (WANA), in addition to existing mechanisms on Africa and East Asia. The first such Consultation was held on 27 November.

Apart from the 7th IGC, Prime Minister and Chancellor Scholz also interacted on the side-lines of the G7 Summit held in Apulia, Italy on 14 June.

Other High Level Exchanges

The bilateral relationship between the two countries has been further strengthened through key high-level engagements.

EAM travelled to Berlin on a 2-day visit on 10-11 September. During the visit, EAM called on Chancellor Scholz and met with Foreign Minister Baerbock, the Federal Defence Minister Boris Pistorius, Foreign and Security Policy Advisor to the Chancellor, Jens Ploetner, as well as Members of Parliament (Bundestag) and held discussions on a full-spectrum of bilateral relations. EAM was also the Guest of Honor at the Conference of the Heads of German Missions held at the German Foreign Office. He addressed the German Ambassadors, Consuls General, and business and industry leaders. At the 60th Munich Security Conference

on 16-18 February, EAM participated as a panelist on “Growing the Pie: Seizing Shared Opportunities” alongside US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock. EAM held bilateral meetings with several counterparts, including Argentina’s Foreign Minister Diana Mondino, the then UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron, and Javier Gonzalez-Olaechea, the Foreign Minister of Peru and Mariya Gabriel, the Foreign minister of Bulgaria. EAM also participated as the keynote speaker at the ‘MSC in Berlin’, a round table discussion with select German decision-makers and leading foreign and security policy experts, organized by the Munich Security Conference and ORF.

Minister of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), visited Hamburg and Berlin on 6-9 October during which he participated in the Hamburg Sustainability Conference and met with Vice-Chancellor Habeck. The Minister of Communications and Development of the North Eastern Region visited Berlin and Stuttgart on 21-22 November to participate in the International Digital Dialogues Conference and the News9 Global Summit respectively. The Minister of Railways, Electronics and Information Technology and Information and Broadcasting also visited Stuttgart on 21-22 November to participate in the News9 Global Summit. Prime Minister addressed the gathering virtually.

From the German side, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Svenja Schulze visited India to participate in RE-INVEST 2024, the 4th edition of

the flagship event by MNRE, held on 16-18 September in Gandhinagar. Germany was a partner country of the event, which also saw the launch of the 'India-Germany Platform for Investments in Renewable Energies Worldwide.'

Foreign and Security Policy Advisor to the Chancellor, Jans Ploetner also visited India in October and met with the NSA and the EAM.

FOCs, co-chaired by Foreign Secretary and State Secretary Thomas Bagger of the German Foreign Office (GFO), was held on 15 July 2024 in New Delhi.

The 4th Dialogue Mechanism between think-tanks and policy makers from India and Germany, at the track 1.5 level was held on 20 November in Berlin. The participants from India were the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) and Ministry of External Affairs, whereas the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) and the German Foreign Office participated from the German side.

Multilateral Cooperation

India and Germany are committed to the strengthening and reform of the multilateral system, and as members of the Group of Four (G4) the two countries support each other on the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent membership at the UN Security Council.

At the 7th IGC, India and Germany reiterated their call for a UN Security Council that is efficient, effective, transparent and reflective of the 21st century. The two countries called for text-based negotiations at the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) with a 'fixed time-frame.' The last meeting of the G4 at the Foreign Ministers' level was held on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA in September. A working-level consultation on the UN between India and Germany was held in April in Berlin.

India and Germany consult each other and coordinate positions in multilateral fora including the G20 and the UN on global issues such as climate change, sustainable development, and cybersecurity. Germany is also part of Indian multilateral initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA), the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

Economic Cooperation

Germany was ranked as India's 12th largest trading partner in Financial Year (FY) 2023-24. The bilateral trade in goods in FY 2023-24 amounted to USD 26.48 billion. During FY 2024-25 (until September 2024), bilateral trade reached USD 13.8 billion, with exports at USD 5.07 billion, with the rate of increase at 4.67 percent. The imports stood at

USD 8.73 billion, registering a decrease of 3.33 percent, compared to FY 2023-24.

Germany is India's 9th largest foreign direct investor, with the total German FDI FY 2023-24, German FDI in India amounting to USD 507 million. Over 2,000 German companies, and more than 600 joint ventures, are currently active in India. German companies made significant investments in India. In January, Mercedes-Benz invested USD 24 million to expand its automotive manufacturing in Pune. FlixBus launched its bus services in February. Also in February, global biomedical leader Miltenyi Biotec established a Center of Excellence for Cellular and Gene Therapy in Hyderabad. A shipping company Hapag-Lloyd signed a MoU with the Tamil Nadu Government to invest USD 295 million in container terminals and industrial parks. In August, ZF Group announced its plans to invest USD 2.1 billion by 2030 to increase material sourcing in India for global automotive and industrial technology needs, along with a USD 52 million expansion of its Coimbatore wind power unit. In September, Skoda Auto Volkswagen India allocated USD 1.7 billion to establish a new manufacturing facility in Chakan. The Development Finance Institution (DEG) unit of the German State-owned development bank Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) pledged to double its investments in India's energy and infrastructure sectors to USD 1 billion.

Under the motto "Growing Together with Innovation, Mobility and Sustainability", the 7th IGC placed particular emphasis on technology and innovation, green and sustainable development, and upskilling and the mobility of professionals. During the 7th IGC, both countries signed a Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) on Employment and Labour, a JDI on Indo-German Green Urban Mobility Partnership, a JDI on India-Germany Managerial Training Programme (IGMTP) and a MoU on cooperation in the field of Skill Development and Vocational Education & Training.

The 18th Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business (APK) was held in New Delhi on 25-26 October, which further enhanced the bilateral economic partnership. An India-Germany CEO Forum and a Defence Industry Roundtable were also organized on the sidelines of the IGC and the APK.

The Fast Track Mechanism established by DPIIT and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) to address concerns/ grievances of German companies operating in India, held its meeting on 27 March, chaired by Secretary (DPIIT) and the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to India, Dr. Philipp Ackermann.

Development Cooperation

Germany continued to be an important development cooperation partner for India in 2024. Annual Indo-German Negotiations on Development Cooperation were held in New Delhi on 20 September, during which the German

Government committed USD 1,149.07 million for new projects. It included USD 1,109.44 million for financial cooperation, USD 2.92 million for technical assistance, and USD 95.11 million for transforming agricultural and food systems. Key areas for Indo-German development cooperation include energy, sustainable economic development, environment and management of natural resources. Multiple projects are being undertaken in sectors such as energy (renewables, green hydrogen, green energy Corridors), sustainable urban development (water and sanitation, climate friendly urban mobility and smart cities) and skill development. A major impetus for both sides is the growing role of Triangular Development Cooperation (TDC), which brings together the mutual strengths and experiences to offer sustainable, viable and inclusive projects in third countries to support the achievement of SDGs and climate targets in Africa, Asia and beyond. Both sides agreed to commence full-scaling of the TDC pilot projects with Cameroon (agriculture), Malawi (women entrepreneurship) and Ghana (horticulture) in 2024. Further, both sides launched millet-related pilot projects in Ethiopia and Madagascar. India and Germany also established a Joint Steering Committee and a Joint Implementation Group to monitor joint initiatives under TDC.

Migration & Mobility

India continues to place a high priority on facilitating mobility of Indian students and skilled workers to Germany, collaboration on dual-vocational training for Indian students as per German standards and promoting fair migration for employment purposes. On 16 October, the German Government released the 'Skilled Labour Strategy: India' which highlights Germany's focus on the recruitment of skilled workers from India. India is the first country for which such a strategy has been announced by Germany. In February, NORKA Roots of the Department of Non-Resident Keralites Affairs-NORKA (the state-owned recruitment agency of Kerala) and the Federal Employment Agency, the Bundesagentur für Arbeit (BA) expanded the scope of an existing agreement for placement of nurses from Kerala in Germany. Telangana Overseas Manpower Company (TOMCOM), the state-owned recruitment agency of Telangana, signed a similar placement agreement with BA for Nurses. Maharashtra and the State of Baden Württemberg also signed a Joint Declaration of Intent for Cooperation on Skilling and Migration in February.

Cooperation in Science and Technology

India and Germany celebrated the 50th anniversary of science and technology cooperation under the Inter-Governmental Agreement on 'Cooperation in Scientific Research and Technological Development'. The Department of Science

and Technology (DST) and the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) are the nodal agencies for overall coordination. Golden Jubilee events celebrating the 50 years of Indo-German S&T cooperation were celebrated in May in Darmstadt, Germany and in October, in New Delhi.

At the 7th IGC, a JDI on 2+2 calls for Advanced Materials under the Indo-German Science and Technology Centre (IGSTC) was signed. Two MoUs between the Max-Planck Gesellschaft and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research were also signed at the 7th IGC. A total of 49 projects (38 completed and 11 ongoing) have been supported in areas of national priority such as advanced manufacturing, embedded systems and ICT, biotechnology, bio-economy, water, smart cities, etc.

In higher education, there was the launch of the first-ever Indo-German joint Master's degree in August. In "Water Security & Global Change," a collaborative program involving Technische Universität Dresden (Dresden University of Technology), Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule Aachen (Technical University of Aachen), and Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM). A new "transCampus" initiative between TU Dresden and IITM was created with the aim of enhancing bilateral cooperation in teaching, research, innovation, and entrepreneurship on 24 October.

During the 7th Indo-German IGC, 13 agreements were concluded for Higher Education, Science, and Technology. On innovation, India and Germany have initiated a forward-looking initiative, the "India-Germany Innovation and Technology Partnership Roadmap". The countries have extended their commitment to a Facility for Anti-Proton and Ion Research (FAIR) facility and a Deutsche Elektronen Synchrotron (DESY).

Universität Leipzig offered a technology-transfer on Mobile Suitcase Lab on 25 November at no-cost to All India Institute of Medical Sciences and Institute Of Genomics And Integrative Biology, New Delhi. The technology assists rapid diagnosis of infectious diseases and pathogens such as Dengue, Tuberculosis, Zika, Salmonella, etc. in resource limiting conditions especially for rural India. Two Indian firms have entered into the agreement to manufacture the kit in India.

Defence Cooperation

During the 7th IGC meeting, a German delegation led by Chancellor Scholz visited the German Combat Support Ship 'Frankfurt am Main' during its port call at Goa. A Defence Round Table Conference was held at New Delhi on 24 October on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Conference of German Business (APK) 2024 aimed at increasing the defence industrial cooperation between India and Germany.

A delegation led by Jasper Wieck, the Political Director of the German Federal Ministry of Defence visited New Delhi in January. They met the Deputy NSA, the Defence Secretary and the Vice Chief of Naval Staff, among others. Nils Hilmer, the German State Secretary of Defence visited India in October and participated in the Defence Secretary-level talks, co-chaired by the Indian Defence Secretary. Two officers of the German Navy participated in Exercise Milan 2024 carried out by the Indian Navy at Visakhapatnam in February, as observers.

The defence dialogue mechanisms included High Defence Committee Meetings at Defence Secretary-level, Military Cooperation Sub-Group Meeting and Defence Technical Sub-Group Committee Meeting. The 11th High Defence Committee (HDC) meeting between the Defence Secretary and State Secretary was held in Berlin on 27 February. The 17th Military Cooperation Sub-Group meeting was held on 1-2 October in Berlin to finalise the Annual Programme for 2025.

The German Air Force participated in its first ever bilateral exercise Tarang Shakti-I with the Indian Air Force at Sullur, Tamil Nadu on 7-14 August. The German side referred to its engagements in these regions as Indo-Pacific Deployment 2024 and its Air Force exercises such as Pacific Skies-2024.

Air Chief Marshal along with three officers attended the biennial International Aeronautical Exhibition, ILA Berlin 2024, at Berlin Expo Centre Airport on 6 June, followed by a

Eurofighter sortie from the Laage Air Force Base along with Lt Gen Ingo Gerhartz, the German Chief of Air Force. The 64th National Defence College Course delegation from NDC, New Delhi, visited Germany on 2-7 June, as part of their Foreign Country Study Tour (FCST). The Commandant of the National Defence College led the delegation of 16 officers including five foreign officers.

INS TABAR made its port call at Hamburg on 17-20 July followed by a Passage Exercise or a PASSEX with the German Navy. From May-November, the Indo-Pacific voyage of the German Frigate 'Baden-Württemberg', along with a Combat Support Ship 'Frankfurt am Main' participated in Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise in the US from June-August, and took part in the Pacific Security Maritime Exchange (PSMX) in concert with US, Japan and South Korea to enforce the UN sanctions on DPRK. This was followed by a stopover in India, a joint exercise with INS Delhi in the Indian Ocean on 21-23 October and a port call at Goa on 26-29 October. High-level visits and defence exhibitions were organised on-board.

Cultural Cooperation

The Tagore Center of the Embassy of India in Berlin hosted an event to mark the 74th edition of Berlinale which featured a conversation on 'Indian cinema in a global context' with the multiple National Award-winning actor Manoj Bajpayee. A series of concerts were hosted at Duisburg Philharmonie



Indian Navy's stealth frigate INS Tabar during a port call in Hamburg, Germany which was followed by a PASSEX with the German Navy. July 2024.

to mark 30 years of the Tagore Centre and the centenary of Alexander von Zemlinsky's Lyrical Symphony, that is based on Rabindranath Tagore's poetry from 'The Gardener.'

In March 2024, a MoU was signed on the establishment of the ICCR chair of Indian music at the University of Hildesheim.

Indian Diaspora

There are around 1.93 lakh NRIs/Indian Passport holders and around 52,864 Indian-origin people in Germany.

The Indian diaspora mainly consists of professionals, researchers and scientists, businessmen, nurses and students. There are approximately 49,483 (2024) Indian students who are studying in Germany, a number which has doubled in the last 4 years. Indian students are the largest cohort of international students in German Universities, many of whom are pursuing their Master and Doctoral studies in Science, Engineering and Technology. There has been a significant increase in the number of qualified Indian professionals in the fields of IT, banking and finance.

Ireland

India and Ireland ties are characterized by strong political relations rooted in their freedom struggle movements and growing economic and people-to-people connections.

On 14 March, EAM met with the then Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment of Ireland, Simon Coveney, who visited India for the St. Patrick's Day celebrations. Minister Simon Coveney also met with the then MoS (ML) and the then MoS of Civil Aviation during his visit to India.

On 22-25 October, a delegation from the Election Commission of Ireland led by its Chairperson Justice Marie Baker paid a visit to India and met with the Chief Election Commissioner. They held discussions on enhanced collaboration and knowledge exchange in the areas of electoral reforms, electoral integrity, and discussed India's experience in handling parliamentary elections.

Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs of Ireland Joe Hackett visited Delhi on 9 January and met with Secretary (West).

Bilateral trade in goods between India and Ireland was USD 6.3 billion during FY 2023-2024. India's exports to Ireland stood at USD 702.73 million and imports from Ireland stood at USD 5.6 billion.

Electricity Supply Board (ESB), Ireland's leading utility, and National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC Limited) signed a non-binding MoU in January to collaborate for R&D in green fuels/chemicals, knowledge sharing, and pursuing joint pilot projects in the clean energy sector.

There are around 80,000 Indian diaspora members residing in Ireland mostly working in healthcare, IT, engineering and senior management positions.

Ireland has also become a significant destination for Indian students (around 10,000) seeking higher education, particularly post-graduate, doctoral and postdoctoral students in the areas of engineering, technology, medicine and management.

Italy

India-Italy relations continued high-level political dialogue and sustained efforts to elevate bilateral cooperation in all domains. The visit of Prime Minister to Italy to participate in the G7 Outreach Leaders' Summit in Puglia in June was the highlight. The bilateral Joint Strategic Action Plan was announced by the Prime Ministers of India and Italy in Rio de Janeiro on 18 November. It seeks to ensure concrete outcomes from the strategic partnership.

Prime Minister visited Italy on 13 and 14 June to participate in the G7 Summit as the outreach partner on the invitation of Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Melloni. This was his first foreign visit after being elected for a third term. Prime Minister and Prime Minister Melloni reiterated their commitment to the bilateral strategic partnership. Outcomes of the meeting were, inter alia, a LoI for cooperation in energy transition and a MoU on Industrial Property Rights. The Prime Ministers met again in Rio de Janeiro on 18 November on the sidelines of the G20 Summit where they endorsed a Joint Strategic Action Plan for 2025-29, as a five-year road-map that envisages enhanced engagement in key domains such as trade and investment, defence, space, clean energy transition, innovation and mobility. The Action Plan seeks to ensure concrete outcomes by facilitating co-production, industrial partnerships and innovation.

On 24-26 November, EAM visited Italy to attend the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting (FMM). On the sidelines of the G7 FMM, EAM met Italy's Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani. He participated in the Mediterranean (MED) Dialogue, organised by the Italian Institute for International Political Studies, in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. EAM inaugurated the new chancery building of the Embassy in Rome, in the presence of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Senator Giulio Terzi, the Chair of India-Italy Parliamentary Friendship Group and other Italian dignitaries. EAM also interacted with representatives of the Indian community associations and a cross section of the Indian Diaspora in Italy.

Minister of Commerce and Industry participated in the G7 Trade and Investment Ministers Meeting on 16 and 17 July at Reggio Calabria, Italy. He met Antonio Tajani, Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and



Prime Minister and participant World leaders at the G7 Summit in Italy, June 2024

International Cooperation to discuss bilateral trade and investments, industrial co-production, and cooperation in clean technologies.

MoS Tourism represented India at the G7 Tourism Ministers meeting in Florence on 13-15 November and met his Italian counterpart.

Indian delegations were represented at senior official levels in the G7 Culture Ministers' meeting, G7 Industry meeting and G7 Health meeting.

Economic Cooperation

Italy is India's sixth largest trading partner in the European Union with bilateral trade in FY 2023-24 at USD14.56 billion, of which USD 8.77 billion are India's exports. The trade balance is in India's favour at USD 2.97 billion.

Italy's Minister of Enterprises, Adolfo Urso visited India on 29 November-2 December. His visit coincided with the arrival of Italian Navy Ship, ITS Amerigo Vespucci, at the Mumbai Port, as part of its Indo-Pacific tour. Minister Urso met the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, the Minister of State for Space, the Minister of Coal and Mines, Commerce and Industry Minister and participated in the CII Partnership Summit in Delhi.

Secretary (Space) & Chairman ISRO led the Indian delegation to the International Astronautical Congress (IAC) in Milan on 13-17 October. He participated in a bilateral meeting with Adolfo Urso, Italy's Minister of Enterprise and Made in Italy, where India and Italy agreed to enhance cooperation in space exploration and commercial collaborations. 17 Indian space companies and startups participated in the India Pavilion at the IAC exhibition under the aegis of INSpace. During the visit, three MoUs were signed between Indian and Italian

space startups in the areas of satellite services and ground station solutions.

Defence Cooperation

India and Italy defence relationship received an impetus with the holding of a Joint Defence Committee meeting in March led by Defence Secretary and Lt Gen Luciano Protolano, Secretary General in the Italian Ministry of Defence.

India-Italy maritime cooperation received a boost with the visits to Indian ports by vessels of the Italian Navy. As part of Italy's continued focus on the Indo-Pacific, an Italian Carrier Strike Group comprising ships ITS Cavour and ITS Alpino made a Port Call in Goa on 1-4 October. PASSEX exercise was conducted during this period. Representatives from The Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) and Italian Industries Federation for Aerospace, Defence, and Security (AIAD) had an interactive session on 2 and 3 October. Italian Navy's training Ship, ITS Amerigo Vespucci made a Port Call in Mumbai on 28 November- 2 December, as part of its world tour and visit to the Indo-Pacific region.

The inaugural Cyber Dialogue between India and Italy took place on 25 October in New Delhi. Both sides exchanged views on cyber threat landscape, national cyber strategies/policies, protection of critical information infrastructure, mechanisms for capacity building initiatives and collaborative opportunities in multilateral forums

Cultural Relations

In August, a bust statue of Mahatma Gandhi, gifted by ICCR, was unveiled at the port city of Brindisi, by the Ambassador

of India and Mayor of Brindisi Giuseppe Marchionna, at the location from where Gandhiji boarded a ship to Brindisi in 1932.

In September, a MoU was signed between the University of Milan and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) for establishing a Hindi Chair, from mid-2025.

Indian Diaspora

About 2,00,000 Indian diaspora members reside in Italy, which is 3.25 percent of foreign nationals in Italy and forms the sixth largest foreign community in the country. The number of Indian university students in Italian Universities is increasing, with more than 6000 students currently enrolled in engineering, fashion and design, management, economics and medicine.

Multilateral Ties

India is proactively working towards enhancing India's visibility and presence in the top governing bodies and committees of the three Rome-based UN agencies of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) besides the Committee on World Food Security. India was re-elected as the Member of the WFP Executive Board through United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for a 3-year term, from 2025-2027; the Executive Board of IFAD in 2024 for another three-year period i.e. 2024-2026 and as member of Evaluation Committee of IFAD for a period of 3 years.

During the year, India was unanimously elected as the First Vice Chair of two key Technical Sub-Committees within the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for a two-year period. These include the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management for 2024-2025 and the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) Sub-Committee on Livestock for 2024-2026. India's election at these committees is a testament to its global standing and contributions in fisheries management and livestock development. India was elected as the Member of the Steering Committee on the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG).

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

The closing ceremony of the International Year of Millets (IYM) was held on 29 March at the FAO headquarters, Rome, with the participation from senior management of FAO, permanent representatives, representatives of governments, international organizations/entities, farmers, chefs, industry, students, researchers, etc.

Several high-level delegations of the Government of India participated in key meetings at FAO, Rome. The Secretary of Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare participated in the high-level opening ceremony of FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative Forum and the Global Family Farmers' Forum of the UN Decade of Family Farming, during the World Food Forum on 14-16 October. Visits of senior officials for meetings in FAO included the visit of Secretary of the Department of Fisheries, to the FAO Committee on Fisheries on 8-12 July, the visit of Director General of Forests & Special Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, for the FAO-Committee on Forestry, the visit of the Chief Executive Officer of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, to the Executive Committee of Codex Alimentarius Commission and the visit of the Secretary of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, for the FAO Global Conference on Animal Health Innovation.

India along with Ireland, co-sponsored a proposal for declaration by the United Nations of an International Day of Milk. This was endorsed by the 29th Session of the FAO Committee on Agriculture held on 30 September-4 October. This endorsement paved the way for approval by the FAO Council in 2024 and by the FAO Conference and the UN General Assembly in 2025.

Luxembourg

India and Luxembourg enjoy warm and friendly relations characterized by a high degree of mutual understanding and cooperation at bilateral and multilateral levels. The diplomatic relations between India and Luxembourg were established in 1948.

On 22 July, Prime Minister received a congratulatory call from the Prime Minister of Luxembourg Luc Frieden following his re-election for the third consecutive term. During the call, both leaders underlined strengthening bilateral partnership in diverse areas including trade, investment, sustainable finance, industrial manufacturing, health, outer space and people-to-people connect.

The 2nd round of India-Luxembourg FoC was held on 9 April in New Delhi. The Consultations were institutionalized as an outcome of the bilateral summit between the Prime Ministers of India and Luxembourg in November 2020.

The 18th India Belgium Luxembourg Economic Union Joint Commission Meeting (India BLEU JCM) was held in April in New Delhi. Comprehensive discussions on a range of issues including bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation were held on the occasion.

Trade and investment comprises an important element of India Luxembourg relations. India and Luxembourg have a Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty (DTAA), a Social Security Agreement, and a Civil Aviation Agreement, that lays the

fundamental basis for enhanced bilateral economic and trade cooperation.

Luxembourg is an important trading partner for India. Bilateral trade in goods from January-September 2024 stood at USD 6.70 million of which Indian exports amounted to USD 2.37 million and Luxembourg's exports stood at USD 4.23 million.

FDI flows from Luxembourg to India from April 2000 to March 2024 stood at USD 4.8 billion, making it the 14th largest investor in India.

As a follow-up to a MoU signed in 2022 between International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) and Luxembourg's financial regulator, Commission de Surveillance du Secteur Financier (CSSF), a delegation led by Chairman IFSCA visited Luxembourg in February and held meetings with various financial services agencies.

Monaco

India and Monaco established diplomatic relations in 2007 and the Ambassador of India in Paris is concurrently accredited to the Principality of Monaco.

Key areas of India-Monaco cooperation include trade, tourism and tax matters which enrich the overall positive relations between India and Monaco. The two sides endeavour to explore other areas as well, including cultural relations, cooperation on marine biodiversity and clean energy.

Netherlands

India and the Netherlands enjoy long-standing friendly and multifaceted relations with a broad agenda of cooperation marked by shared values of democracy, rule of law and growing convergences on global and regional issues. The year saw an active calendar of engagement between the two countries with various ministerial-level interactions and delegation-level exchanges in the priority areas of cooperation.

High Level Exchanges

Following the Lok Sabha elections in India, the then Prime Minister of the Netherlands Mark Rutte congratulated Prime Minister in a telecon in July. The two leaders discussed India-Netherlands bilateral ties, including Strategic Partnership on Water and cooperation in the key areas of agriculture, health, technology, and emerging sectors of cooperation like semiconductors and clean energy. As a new government led by Prime Minister Dick Schoof assumed office in the Netherlands in July, congratulations were conveyed by Prime Minister and EAM to their counterparts.

Two senior Ministers of the Netherlands attended the Raisina Dialogue in 2024. The then Foreign Minister of the Netherlands Hanke Bruins Slot and the then Defence Minister Kaja Ollongren visited India in February to speak at the Raisina Dialogue. Slot had a bilateral meeting with EAM on the sidelines. It marked the first ever participation of a Dutch Defence Minister at the Raisina Dialogue. The then Defence Minister Ollongren also met with Raksha Mantri and had bilateral talks to discuss bilateral defence cooperation, focusing on maritime security and industrial collaboration.

The Dutch Foreign Minister Caspar Veldkamp who assumed office in July, met EAM in September on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA. Wide ranging discussions were held on opportunities for strategic cooperation, water management, agriculture, trade and investment and other regional and international developments. Marnix van Rij, State Secretary for Finance met with the Secretary of Department of Economic Affairs on 14 March in New Delhi. They exchanged views on international taxation matters and reiterated long standing agreements on the bilateral agreement to avoid double taxation.



EAM with the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands Caspar Veldkamp on the sidelines of UNGA in New York, September 2024

Other Bilateral Exchanges

The 12th Foreign Office Consultations between India and the Netherlands were held in the Hague on 2 May to discuss the entire gamut of bilateral relations. The Indian delegation was led by the then Secretary (West). On 14 October, Marcel de Vink, Director General of Political Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands visited India and met with Secretary (West), and Deputy NSA.

In line with the Dutch commitment to the Indo-Pacific, the Dutch Frigate His Netherlands Majesty's Ship (HNLMS) "Tromp", sailed to the Indo-Pacific and had a port call at Mumbai in April. Liesje Schreinemacher, the then Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation visited India to participate in the port call. During the visit, she met Minister of Commerce and Industries and discussed opportunities for Dutch companies in water, agriculture and energy transition.

Various other important dialogue mechanisms and visits took place during the year. On 7 November, the 1st India-Netherlands Consular Dialogue was held in the Hague to discuss visa, consular and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLAT)/Extradition matters. On 7 November, the 3rd India-Netherlands Cyber Policy Dialogue was held at the Hague. On 10 July, delegation-level talk took place between India and the Netherlands on the proposed bilateral Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement and Diplomatic Visa Waiver Agreement in the Hague.

Economic Relations

The Netherlands is India's 11th largest merchandise trading partner in the world and the largest in the European Union during FY 2023-24. During the FY 2023-2024, the total merchandise trade with the Netherlands stood at USD 27.335 billion. India has a trade surplus of USD 17.403 billion with the Netherlands. In the FY 2023-2024, India exported USD 22.369 billion worth of goods to the Netherlands and imported USD 4.966 billion worth of goods.

During FY 2023-2024 the FDI equity inflows were worth USD 4.924 billion. From April 2000 to March 2024, the Netherlands was the fourth largest investor into India comprising 7 percent of overall investment with a cumulative FDI equity inflow of USD 48.683 billion. During the same period, the Netherlands was the fourth largest destination of foreign investment (Overseas Direct Investments- ODI) by Indian companies worth USD 25.031 billion, accounting for 8.27 percent of investments. In FY 2023-2024, the Netherlands was the fifth largest destination for ODI from India with investments of USD 1.098 million.

Other Sectoral Cooperation

The India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership on Water was taken forward during the year. Following the 1st Ministerial

Meeting on India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership on Water held in India in 2023, Meike van Ginneken, the Water Envoy of Netherlands visited India in July. She met with the Ministry of Jal Shakti, and visited other authorities and think tanks in Delhi. She also visited Kerala and discussed coastal protection and took stock of progress on the Water as Leverage initiative. On 15 July, a 10-member Indian delegation comprising of representatives from Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD&GR), State Government of West Bengal and Kerala called on Director General Jaap Sloomaker of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, and discussed the scope for greater cooperation.

In the healthcare sector, Secretary (Health) visited the Netherlands and met the Director General of Public Health, Marjolijn Sonnema to discuss greater cooperation in digital health, anti-microbial research (AMR), climate change, medical tourism and pharma sector. The 5th Joint Working Group meeting on Health between India and Netherlands took place on 15 February. The two sides agreed to explore opportunities for structured collaboration on pandemic preparedness, infectious diseases, and data driven disease surveillance platforms. They also agreed to work together on AMR at multilateral forums like the World Health Assembly (WHA), the UNGA, and to further cooperate in the field of pharmaceuticals with a focus on supply chain and R&D.

The 7th Indo-Dutch Joint Working Group on Agriculture Cooperation met on 10 April in the Hague, Netherlands focussing on sustainable business models in biodiversity restoration; on international cooperation on convention of biodiversity; development of Indian horticulture, augmenting processing capacity, crop diversification; and improvements to the procedure and working of Centre of Excellences (CoEs). Presently there are 9 CoEs in India, building Greenhouses with Dutch design, to be Made in India. Jan Kees Goet, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Netherlands led a Dutch delegation to India for participation at the CII Krishi Bharat Summit in Lucknow in November, where the Netherlands was a partner country. During this visit Goet met with the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, the Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Ministry of Fisheries.

A MoU on Cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy was signed between India's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and the Dutch Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth on 12 September in New Delhi. The MoU envisaged cooperation in the areas of wind energy, biomass, bioenergy & waste to energy, green hydrogen and green ammonia, solar energy, energy storage, and any other alternative energy sources of mutual interest. An Indian delegation led by Secretary MNRE, participated in the World Hydrogen Summit & Exhibition in Rotterdam on 12-17 April for the first time as an 'exhibitor.' On 7 February, Frederik

Wisselink, the Energy Envoy of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy led the Dutch participation at the India Energy Week in Goa where they released a report titled 'LNG as a Transportation Fuel in Medium and Heavy Commercial Vehicle'. On 23 April, the Secretary of the Ministry of Power visited the Netherlands to participate in the World Energy Congress. Several Indian PSUs and Private Sector companies from CII participated in the conference. An India Pavilion was also set up at the Congress, and was visited by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Rob Jetten, and the Mayor of Rotterdam Ahmed Aboutaleb.

Science and Technology Cooperation

The Dutch Research Council (NWO) and the Indian Department of Science and Technology (DST) funded three new projects under the India (DST)-Netherlands collaboration research programme. The projects will focus on challenges in flood and drought management in India and the Netherlands. The three projects are funded through the joint Call for proposals on 'Water Disaster Management', aims to evolve scientific understanding, technological solutions, governance and societal acceptance to mitigate risks associated with floods and droughts in both India and the Netherlands.

On 29 May, a Space Technology-focused Innovation Mission organized by the Dutch Government consisting of Indian space companies and institutes like the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) visited the Netherlands. The delegation visited various Dutch space companies, the University of Twente and the University of Delft, and held discussions on possible bilateral cooperation in the space sector. A delegation from India consisting of representatives from ISRO, Ministry of Railways, Survey of India, technology providers and industry participated at the four-day, Geospatial World Forum on 13-16 May at the Hague.

People to People Relations

More than 3,500 students (excluding researchers) from India are presently studying in the Netherlands in various Universities. A seminar on, "Shaping Tomorrow: A Dialogue on India-Netherlands Academic Collaboration," was organized in October, where the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, participated with the Deans/Directors from 13 IITs and the faculty members from the Dutch Universities. An MoU between IIT Roorkee and Vrije University was also signed during the occasion. Deans/Directors of IITs visited Dutch Universities to explore the possibilities for future collaboration.

In the field of culture and people-to-people cooperation, India-Netherlands cooperation was further strengthened. India lent 4 artefacts (one from National Museum and 3

from Bihar Museum) for the Asian Bronze Exhibition by Rijksmuseum (national museum of the Netherlands) for display between 26 September 2024 and 12 January 2025. The exhibition is showcasing 75 Asian bronze masterpieces and is the first of its kind in Europe.

Diaspora

The Netherlands hosts the second largest Indian Diaspora (after the UK) in Europe and the largest on mainland Europe, totalling around 2,60,000 comprising 60,000 Indians and 2,00,000 strong Surinami-Hindustani community of Indian origin.

The Netherlands is a popular education destination for Indian students, particularly in the field of science and technology. Many Dutch Universities like TU Delft, Leiden University and Maastricht University have long standing collaboration with Indian universities. The number of Indian students has been growing over the years and more than 3500 Indian students are studying in the Netherlands presently.

Portugal

The bilateral relations between India and Portugal, based on historical maritime connections, cultural and diaspora linkages continued to advance in 2024. The year 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of re-establishment of diplomatic relations.



Prime Minister with Prime Minister of Portugal Luís Montenegro on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro, November 2024

A new government was formed in Portugal in April following the Parliamentary elections held on 10 March. Dr. Luís Montenegro assumed charge as Prime Minister of Portugal on 2 April.

Prime Minister met with Prime Minister Luís Montenegro on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro in November. Foreign Minister Paulo Rangel of Portugal and EAM were also present in the meeting which discussed the long-standing ties between India and Portugal with a focus on enhancing economic linkages, defence cooperation and people to people ties. This was the first meeting between the two leaders and the first high level interaction with the new government.

Despite the global and regional conflicts and external shocks on global trade, there has been a steady growth in bilateral trade which reached USD 1.3 billion in 2023. Trade balance also continued to be in India's favour. Portugal received 26.5 million tourists in 2023 of which 86,200 were Indians.

Regular dialogue and exchanges under institutional mechanisms have contributed to steady progress in the bilateral relationship across several sectors. These include the 4th FOC held in January and the third meeting of the Joint Working Group of Defence held in Lisbon in September. The first India-Portugal Consular Dialogue was held in Lisbon in November in-line with the announcement made during the visit of EAM to Portugal.

High Level Exchanges

Prime Minister met with Prime Minister of Portugal Luís Montenegro on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro on 18 November. Discussions were held on bilateral cooperation in trade and investment, defence, science and technology, tourism, culture, and people-to-people ties as well as cooperation in regional and multilateral fora. The leaders also underscored the growing potential for collaboration in new and emerging areas such as IT and digital technologies, green energy, green hydrogen, startups and innovation, and mobility of professionals and skilled workers. The leaders agreed to jointly celebrate the upcoming 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Portugal in 2025.

The 4th FOC between India and Portugal was held in New Delhi on 31 January co-chaired by the Secretary (West) and Ambassador Rui Vinhas, the then Director General for Foreign Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Portugal. The meeting reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral cooperation with focus on following up on discussions during the visit of EAM to Portugal in October 2023.

The third meeting of the India-Portugal Joint Working Group of Defence was held in Lisbon on 17 September. The meeting was co-chaired by the Joint Secretary (International

Cooperation), Ministry of Defence and the Portuguese and Major General Nuno Lemos Pires, the Director General of Defence Policy, Portugal.

Both sides discussed regional issues and steps to enhance military-to-military ties and explored opportunities for defence industrial cooperation.

The first India-Portugal Consular Dialogue was held in Lisbon on 5 November. The meeting was co-chaired by JS (Consular, Passport and Visa) and Marta Crowling, Directorate-General for Consular Affairs and Portuguese Communities, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Portugal. Both sides discussed issues related to consular, visa and other matters with the objective of strengthening people-people linkages.

Economic and Commercial Relations

Bilateral trade for FY 2023-24 was worth USD 1.36 billion with Indian exports worth USD 1.1 billion and imports from Portugal worth USD 178 million. Major Indian exports included mineral fuels, Iron and steel, cotton, Organic chemicals, Plastics and articles, Electrical machinery, marine products, Apparels and textiles, Machinery, Footwear, Rubber and articles and Coffee and tea.

Major imports from Portugal included wood pulp, machinery and mechanical appliances, Organic chemicals and electrical machinery. Portugal ranks 52nd in FDI into India, with total FDI inflows amounting to USD 125.93 million as of September. Indian investments in Portugal are estimated to be about USD 475 million.

Several commercial delegations from India visited Portugal during this period. This included a visit of a delegation led by the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries which visited Lisbon on 19 April, to promote World Food India 2024. The delegation met with stakeholders in the Portuguese government, attended B2B meetings and visited Mercado Abastecedor da Região De Lisboa (MARL), a food distribution center in Lisbon.

A delegation from Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) visited Portugal on 26 and 27 September and attended networking B2B events in Lisbon and Porto. These events saw the participation of companies and business associations across several sectors.

A delegation led by the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) visited Lisbon on 8 November. They held networking sessions with stakeholders in the local IT, innovations and start-up sectors, including the organisers of the Web Summit and Agency for Modernisation of Administration.

Senior officials from the Department of Space participated in the Management and Sustainability of Outer Space

Activities Conference held in Lisbon on 14-15 May, and delivered India's National Statement. The Conference was organized by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs in collaboration with the Portuguese Space Agency.

Ambassador led the Indian Delegation in the 10th Global Forum to the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) held in Cascais, Portugal on 26-27 November.

The Indian-origin diaspora in Portugal is estimated to be around 1,20,000 including 44,051 Indian nationals and an estimated 90,000 persons of Indian origin, belonging to different walks of life. Indian nationals represent the fourth largest foreign community in Portugal.

San Marino

Relations with San Marino remained cordial and friendly. Both the countries have established a fruitful cooperation, particularly within international fora, but also at a bilateral level on issues of common interest.

The Republic of San Marino has been supportive of India's candidature to various UN bodies including UNIDROIT Governing Council 2024-28. Additional Secretary (L&T) was elected to the governing council of the Rome-based International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT), International Monetary Organisation Council Category-B, 2024-25, and World Health Organisation External Audit, 2024-27.

Bilateral trade between the two countries reached USD 0.59 million in the FY 2023-24, with an increment of 9.26 percent. India's exports to San Marino increased to USD 0.52 million while imports from San Marino stood at USD 0.07 million.

Spain

India-Spain bilateral relations have been cordial since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1956. During the year, the President of the Government of Spain, Pedro Sánchez visited India on 28 and 29 October. This was the first visit by a Spanish Head of Government in 18 years. During the visit, Prime Minister and President Sánchez jointly inaugurated the C295 Aircraft Final Assembly Line. India and Spain signed agreements on cooperation in the field of rail transport, and cooperation in customs matters. They announced the establishment of a Spanish consulate in Bengaluru and the operationalisation of the Consulate General of India in Barcelona. They also designated 2026 as the India-Spain Year of Culture, Tourism, and AI.

EAM met the Foreign Minister of Spain, José Manuel Albares in New York on the sidelines of UNGA in September, where they discussed global issues of mutual concern.



Prime Minister with the Prime Minister of Spain Pedro Sánchez at the Lakshmi Vilas Palace in Vadodra, October 2024

The Third Vice President (Deputy PM) and Minister of Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, Teresa Ribera, visited India on 7-9 February. On the invitation of his Spanish counterpart, the Comptroller & Auditor General of India visited Spain in April.

Defence Cooperation

In a remarkable stride for 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', President Sanchez and Prime Minister Modi jointly inaugurated the Final Assembly Line Plant of C-295 aircraft built by Tata Advanced Systems Ltd. in collaboration with Airbus Spain at Vadodra in October. This plant is expected to roll out the first 'Made in India' C295 aircraft in 2026, out of a total of 40 aircrafts to be manufactured in India. Airbus Spain is also delivering 16 aircrafts in 'fly-away' condition to India.

The Spanish Secretary of State for Defense Amparo Valcarce, visited India along with a delegation of Spanish defense companies in March. During the visit, a MoU on cooperation between the Association of Defence Companies of Spain (TEDAE) and its Indian counterpart the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) was signed.

Vessels of the Indian Navy participate frequently in Passage Exercises (PASSEX) and Port Calls in Spanish coasts, the latest being INS Tabar in August.

Economic Cooperation

India and Spain had bilateral trade at USD 9.9 billion in 2023, reflecting a 4.2 percent growth. Spain is the 16th largest investor in India with cumulative FDI stock of USD 4.2 billion between April 2000 and June 2024. There are more than 230 Spanish companies in India and nearly 80 Indian companies in Spain. During the visit of President Sanchez to India in October, an Agreement on Setting up of Fast Track Mechanism in DPIIT India and in Directorate General of International Trade and Investment, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Business in Spain, was signed for facilitating mutual investments in India and Spain.

Cultural Cooperation

During the visit of President Sánchez to India, a Joint Mechanism was set up under the India Spain Audio-Visual Co-Production Agreement. India was the Guest Country at the Fera de Arte Independiente en Madrid (FAIM) Art exhibition of contemporary art in Madrid, and was also the Theme Country at the Festival de Hogueras in the city of Alicante in June.

A MoU was signed between the Association of Indian Universities and the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities for promoting student exchanges and inter-university cooperation.

Approximately, 75,000 Indian diaspora members reside in Spain. There are about 1,000 Indian students.

United Kingdom (UK)

India-UK ties have transformed into a robust, multifaceted and mutually beneficial relationship over the years. The relations were upgraded to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership along with the adoption of Roadmap-2030 at the Virtual Summit in 2021.

Bilateral relations continue to be strengthened by the regular high-level visits and interactions between the two countries. In the general election held in July, the Labour Party of the UK came to power. Prime Minister congratulated the then Prime Minister-elect, and now Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer over telephone on 6 July and invited him for an early visit to India. Both Prime Ministers met on the sidelines of the G20 Leaders' Summit in Brazil on 18 November. Prime Ministers of UK and India underlined the importance of resuming the Free Trade Agreement negotiations. Prime Minister announced the establishment of two new Consulates General of India in the United Kingdom in Belfast and Manchester. The then UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak met with Prime Minister on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Italy on 14 June and assessed the Roadmap 2030 implementation, reaffirming commitment to strengthen the India-UK partnership. They also spoke over the phone on 12 March and discussed progress on Free Trade Agreement negotiations.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy visited India in July in the first month after assuming office. During his visit, the Technology and Security Initiative (TSI) was signed.

In a historic first, Southampton University announced that it will establish its first offshore campus in India under the National Educational Policy (NEP).

Bilateral Visits

Raksha Mantri visited the UK on 8-10 January, and held bilateral talks with his UK counterpart, the then Defence Secretary Grant Shapps, to discuss a range of defence, security and industrial cooperation issues. He also met with the then UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and the then Foreign Secretary David Cameron, interacted with CEOs and industry leaders of the UK defence industry, and met with the Indian community.

On 25 September, EAM met the UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy on the sidelines of the 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York. EAM again met UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy in Rome on 25 November, during the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

At the G7 Trade Ministers' meeting in Italy on 16-17 July, the Commerce and Industry Minister met UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds and discussed advancing the ongoing Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations, which began in January 2022.

A delegation led by MoS for Law and Justice, visited the UK on 30 September- 3 October, to attend the Opening of Legal Year 2024, and for meetings of India-UK Legal Services Committee and a Joint Consultative Committee meeting.

A delegation led by the Minister of Culture and Tourism, visited the UK on 3-7 November to participate in the World Travel Market 2024 event in London.

The then Foreign Secretary visited the UK on 16 and 17 May for the 16th India-UK FOC. During his visit, he met senior UK officials including Sir Philip Barton, Lord Tariq Ahmad, James Cartledge, the UK's National Security Advisor, Chief Trade Negotiator, and other advisors to the UK Prime Minister.

The second 2+2 Foreign and Defence Dialogue was held on 3-4 December in Delhi. The dialogue was co-chaired by JS(EW) and JS (IC), MoD and their counterparts from the UK. A delegation led by CEO NITI Aayog visited London on 4-6 September to attend the UK-India Infrastructure Financing Bridge (UKIIFB) meetings. On 18 and 19 November, meetings of co-chairs and Working Group members were held in Delhi.

Catherine West, the UK's Minister for the Indo-Pacific visited India on 18-19 November to discuss ways to strengthen the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. She met with MoS (PM) during the visit.

UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy visited India on 24-25 July, for bilateral meetings with EAM and Commerce and Industry Minister, and called on Prime Minister. The highlight of the meetings was the launch of the UK-India Technology Security Initiative, which aims to strengthen collaboration on technology security and innovation between the two nations.

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, the then UK Minister of State for the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, Commonwealth, and the United Nations, visited India on 21-24 February at the invitation of the EAM to participate in the Raisina Dialogue.

Angela Rayner, the then UK Shadow Deputy Prime Minister, visited India on 18-25 February to participate in the Raisina Dialogue 2024. During this event in New Delhi, she had a meeting with the EAM, emphasizing the importance of international dialogue and cooperation and also called on the Vice President.

David Lammy, the then Shadow Foreign Secretary of the UK Labour Party, visited India on 05-07 February along with Jonathan Reynolds, the then Shadow Business and Trade secretary to discuss UK-India trade talks and strengthen bilateral relations. They met with senior Indian leaders, including the EAM to enhance cooperation.

Economic Relations

India-UK bilateral trade grew steadily in 2024. India-UK bilateral trade (goods & services) stood at USD 52.30 billion by the end of 2nd quarter of 2024 as compared to the end of the 2nd quarter of 2023 which stood at USD 49.68 billion, an increase of 12.4 percent or USD 5.47 billion. India's export to the UK amounted to USD 13.09 billion for the year 2024 (January to November) an increase of 15.58 percent of the previous year. India's exports to the UK amounted to USD 31.34 billion by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2024, an increase of 11.3 per cent. Major exports included mineral fuels, machinery, precious stones, pharmaceuticals, apparel, iron and steel, and chemicals, which contributed to 68.72 percent of total exports. Several rounds of FTA negotiations have taken place, which started from 2022. During the bilateral meeting between Prime Minister and Prime Minister Starmer on the sidelines of the G20 Leaders' Summit in November, decided to restart the FTA negotiations.

Education

Education is an important pillar of India-UK relations. The 2024 UK Home Office's study visa data shows that there were 110,006 sponsored study visa grants to main applicants who were Indian nationals in the year ending June 2024 (25 percent of the total). Recent data shows that the majority (81 percent) of Indian students went to the UK to study at Masters level.

India achieved another milestone when a MoU was signed with the University of Southampton to establish the first offshore campus of a foreign university in India under

the new National Education Policy. The campus will be in Gurugram and is expected to start academic programmes by July 2025.

Defence Cooperation

Raksha Mantri visited the UK in January. A Letter of Arrangement between India's Defence Research and Development Organization and the UK's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, focusing on next-generation capabilities was signed.

The Statement of Intent for co-operation on design and development of Electric Propulsion Systems for the Indian Navy, and to demonstrate their commitment to a longer-term relationship and strategic partnership in the field of maritime propulsion design and manufacturing was signed between India and the UK in November.

UK's Littoral Response Group visited India and conducted maritime exercises with the Indian Navy in March. INS Tabar made a port call at London on 07-11 August. The Royal Air Force joined the Indian Air Force in Exercise Tarang Shakti in August.

The Air Marshal of the Indian Western Air Command visited the UK on 17-19 July and attended Global Air and Space Chiefs' Conference (GASCC) and Royal International Air Tattoo 2024.

A 16-member delegation from the 64th course of NDC including 4 officers from Friendly Foreign Countries, led by Commandant, National Defence College, India visited the UK on Foreign Studies Tour on 3-7 June. A delegation of Higher Defence Management Course (HDMC-19) from College of Defence Management, Secunderabad consisting of 21 Officers including one officer from Friendly Foreign Country visited the UK on the International Strategic Management Tour on 5-9 February.

Indian Navy Fleet Operational Standards and Training team led by a Flag Officer Commanding the Eastern Fleet, visited the UK on 12-16 Mar for an engagement with the Royal Navy towards identifying areas of cooperation in maritime safety.

The UK youth and cadet delegation visited India and participated in Republic Day camp 2024 from 16-29 January. A 12-member delegation of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) from India visited the UK from 1-19 July.

The 13th Army Executive Steering Group (ESG) Talks between the Indian Army and British Army was held at London on 1 and 2 May. The 16th Navy ESG meeting between the Indian Navy and British Navy was held at London and Portsmouth from 22-24 October.

Indian Diaspora

An estimated 1.864 million Indian diaspora reside in the UK, as per the 2021 census. It forms about 2.6 percent of the total population of the UK, which is estimated at 68 million (in 2022).

CHAPTER

9

The Americas

North America

United States of America

The India-US Comprehensive Strategic Global Partnership represents a robust commitment to shared values and future-oriented collaboration. Anchored in democracy, freedom, the rule of law, human rights, pluralism, and equal opportunities, this partnership reflects the shared aspirations of both nations to evolve into more perfect unions while addressing global challenges together.

The unprecedented levels of trust and collaboration between India and the US have been pivotal in driving an ambitious agenda for global good. Leadership engagements, such as Prime Minister's meeting with the then President of the US Joseph R. Biden in Wilmington, Delaware, USA on the sidelines of the 6th Quad Leaders' Summit have provided strategic guidance to further deepen bilateral ties. Ministerial and official engagements have also witnessed significant growth, reinforcing mutual priorities.

With over fifty dialogue mechanisms across diverse domains—including foreign policy, defence, trade, finance, energy, climate change, health, and space—the partnership has demonstrated remarkable depth and breadth. These

dialogues ensure continuous engagement and progress across sectors critical to both nations' growth and global stability.

Economic and commercial ties have thrived with increased trade and investment flows. Defence cooperation has advanced significantly, focusing on co-production, co-development, industry partnerships, and joint military exercises. These initiatives strengthen the strategic partnership and enhance both nations' security architectures.

The Initiative for Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) has further cemented India-US strategic cooperation in cutting-edge sectors. Collaboration in semiconductors, advanced telecommunications, AI, quantum technologies, clean energy, biotechnology, critical minerals, and STEM exemplifies shared commitment to innovation and sustainable development.

The enduring vibrancy of people-to-people ties remains a cornerstone of the partnership. The US continues to be a top destination for Indian students, professionals, and travellers, fostering deeper mutual understanding and cultural exchange.

This comprehensive partnership, characterised by optimism and forward momentum promises to reach even greater heights in the decades ahead, delivering on shared priorities for the benefit of the global community.



Prime Minister and the then President of the US Joseph R. Biden held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the 6th Quad Leaders' Summit in Wilmington, September 2024.

High Level Visits

Prime Minister visited Wilmington, Delaware, USA on 21-23 September to participate in the 6th Quad Leaders' Summit along with the then President of the US Biden, the then Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida and Prime Minister of Australia Anthony Albanese. In addition, Prime Minister participated in a Quad Cancer Moonshot event hosted by the then President Biden, on the sidelines of the Quad Leaders' Summit. During the visit, Prime Minister also held a bilateral meeting with President Biden and held separate bilateral meetings with the then Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Albanese. During the India-US bilateral, the two sides exchanged the MoU concerning India-US Drug Policy Framework and India deposited the instruments of ratification pertaining to the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) Agreements under Pillar III (Clean Economy), Pillar IV (Fair Economy), and the Overarching Agreement. Both sides also agreed to further elevate bilateral relations through enhanced collaborations in technology domains, boosting commercial ties, diversifying defence cooperation and strengthening people-to-people relations. The two leaders announced the US-India Roadmap to Build Safe and Secure Global Clean Energy Supply Chains, among other outcomes.

On 22 September, Prime Minister delivered his keynote address at the plenary session of the Summit of the Future Conference, held at the United Nations General Assembly

(UNGA), New York. During his visit, Prime Minister also participated in a Tech CEOs Roundtable moderated by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), wherein he interacted with the CEOs of semiconductor, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. Additionally, he addressed a large gathering comprising members of the Indian diaspora in Long Island, where he announced the Government of India's decision to open two Consulates in Boston and Los Angeles respectively.

On 18 November, Prime Minister participated in G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro and briefly met the then President Biden on the sidelines.

Ministerial Engagements and Bilateral Dialogues

Raksha Mantri made a four-day visit to the US on 22-25 August. He held a bilateral meeting with the then US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin on 23 August. Both sides signed the Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA) and a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers. He also met the then National Security Adviser (NSA) Jake Sullivan and interacted with US defence industry leaders. In November, Raksha Mantri met the then Secretary of Defence Austin on the sidelines of ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Laos.

EAM and the then US Secretary of State Antony Blinken remained in regular contact throughout the year. The Ministers met on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference (MSC), held in Munich, Germany on 16 February. The two Ministers also held a bilateral meeting in Tokyo on 28 July on the sidelines of Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting. EAM visited Washington D.C on 30 September-01 October and held discussions with the then Secretary Blinken, the then Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, the then NSA Jake Sullivan, the then NSA to Vice President Philip Gordon as well as other political and thought leaders.

EAM and Foreign Secretary visited the US in December. During the visit, EAM met key interlocutors including the then NSA Sullivan, the then Secretary of State Blinken and the incumbent NSA Michael Waltz. Additionally, EAM met several members of President Donald Trump's transition team. The purpose of the visit was to ensure continuous dialogue between the two nations, advance mutual issues and strengthen the relationship.



EAM met the then US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in Washington D.C., October 2024.

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas visited Washington D.C. on 16 September to co-chair the India-US Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP) Ministerial, with the then Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm. Following the meeting, the Minister visited Houston, Texas to attend the Gastech Conference on 17-18 September.

Minister of Commerce and Industry (CIM) visited Washington D.C. and New York on 30 September – 03 October. He co-chaired the 2nd revamped India-US CEO Forum on 02 October and the 6th India-US Commercial Dialogue on 03 October with the then US Secretary of Commerce Raimondo. The Minister also met the then US Trade Representative (USTR) Ambassador Katherine Tai at Washington D.C. to discuss the ongoing collaboration under the Trade Policy Forum and deliberate on ways to further amplify two-way trade between the two countries. The MoU to 'Expand and Diversify Critical Minerals Supply Chains', was signed during the Minister's visit to the US.

Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs visited Washington D.C. and New York on 20-26 October. In Washington D.C., the Minister participated in the International Monetary Fund (IMF)-World Bank Annual Meetings. She also held several bilateral meetings including with her counterparts from the United Kingdom, Switzerland and Germany; besides holding one-on-one meetings with heads of World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), as well as CEOs of banking and financial institutions. In New York, the Minister participated in the Pension Funds Roundtable held at New York Stock Exchange, the Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable (GSDR) as well as discussions organised by the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). The Minister also interacted with students and faculty at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, and Columbia University.

The then USTR Ambassador Katherine Tai visited New Delhi to co-chair the 14th India-US Trade Policy Forum on 12 January, along with Minister of Commerce and Industry. The Ministers discussed their desire to work together on shared priorities at the World Trade Organization (WTO), their commitment to address outstanding bilateral agricultural issues, and new ways to enhance the trade relationship between the US and India. Ambassador Tai and the CIM also noted the positive discussions during India-United States Trade Policy Forum (TPF) Intersessional meetings held in New Delhi in September and agreed to reconvene the TPF at the Ministerial level expeditiously, for addressing additional issues impacting the bilateral trade relationship. CIM also met Ambassador Katherine Tai in Abu Dhabi in March, on the sidelines of WTO 13th Ministerial Conference.

A 7-member bipartisan US Congressional delegation comprising the Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX); Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi (D-CA); Rep. Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY); Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA); Rep. Ami Bera (D-CA); Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA); and Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (R-NY) visited India on 16-21 June. During the visit, the Congressional delegation had the opportunity to call on the Prime Minister. The delegation members congratulated Prime Minister on his election for the historic third consecutive



A 7-member bipartisan US Congressional delegation comprising members including Rep. Ami Bera (D-CA), Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX), and Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA) and Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) called on the Prime Minister in New Delhi, June 2024.

term. They expressed deep appreciation for the scale, fairness and transparency of the recently concluded world's largest democratic electoral exercise in India. The delegation described India-US relations as the most consequential one

and expressed their strong support for further deepening Comprehensive Strategic Global Partnership in all areas, including trade, new and emerging technologies, defence, people-to-people exchanges. The delegation also held a



EAM met the then US Trade Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai on the sidelines of the 14th US Trade Policy Forum held in New Delhi, January 2024.

meeting with the EAM. EAM highlighted the significant role played by the consistent and bipartisan support of the US Congress in advancing India-US relations, which are based on shared democratic values, respect for the rule of law and strong people-to-people ties.

The then US NSA Jake Sullivan visited India on 17 June to meet with National Security Advisor for the annual review meeting of the India-US initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET). The leaders took stock of the significant strides made by India and the US towards deepening and expanding strategic cooperation across key technology sectors including space, semiconductors, advanced telecommunications, AI, quantum, STEM, biotechnology, critical minerals and clean energy. They also recognised the immense untapped potential in areas including deeper technology cooperation between the two countries.

Other incoming visits included the then Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources Richard Verma on 18-20 February and 17-22 August, the then Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell on 17-18 June, the then Senior Advisor to the President for International Climate Policy John Podesta on 21-23 August, the then Deputy Secretary of Energy David Turk on 21-23 August and the US National Science

Foundation (NSF) Director Sethuraman Panchanathan in July.

Foreign Secretary visited Washington D.C. on 09-14 April. During the visit, he held meetings with the then Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell, the then Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Richard Verma, the then Deputy Secretary of Commerce Don Graves, the then Deputy Secretary of Energy David Turk, the then Deputy Secretary of Defence Kathleen Hicks, the then Principal Deputy National Security Advisor (PDNSA) Jon Finer, the then Under Secretary of State Uzra Zeya, among others.

Foreign Secretary visited Washington D.C. on 24-27 September and met the then Deputy Secretary of State Campbell, the then Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Verma, the then Deputy Secretary of Defence Hicks, the then PDNSA Finer, the then Acting Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security Kristie Canegallo and interacted with think tanks based out of Washington D.C. During his visit to Washington D.C. on 23-28 December, Foreign Secretary engaged with the then Deputy Secretary of State Campbell, the then PDNSA Finer and the then Deputy Secretary for Management Verma and discussed areas of mutual interest.



Ambassador of India to the US and Foreign Secretary met the then Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell and the then Deputy Secretary for Management Richard Verma in Washington D.C., December 2024.

The 2nd round of the India-US Dialogue on Africa was held in Washington DC on 14-15 May. The Dialogue aimed to share ideas and perspectives and explore ways to develop institutional, technical and bilateral synergies to work together in Africa. The Dialogue also facilitated the identification of developmental projects and programs of cooperation in Africa, leveraging the strengths of India and the US in accordance with African priorities. This was the first such dialogue on Africa between India and the US, after the inclusion of the African Union (AU) as a permanent member of the G20 during India's presidency. Additionally, the then Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Isabel Casillas Guzman visited India on 13 August and signed a MoU to promote cooperation on small and medium-size enterprises with Secretary, MSME.

Defence Cooperation

India and the US have a broad-based and forward-looking defence partnership that encompasses high-level engagement, policy dialogues, defence procurement, co-production and co-development, joint military exercises and capacity building.

On 21 September, Prime Minister and the then President of the US Joseph R. Biden held a bilateral meeting in Wilmington, recognizing the remarkable progress under the US-India Defence Industrial Cooperation Roadmap, including ongoing collaboration to advance priority co-production arrangements for jet engines, munitions, and ground mobility systems. The leaders also welcomed efforts to expand defence industrial partnerships and expressed their commitment to advance ongoing discussions on aligning India and the US' respective defence procurement systems to further enable the reciprocal supply of defence goods and services.

The leaders also hailed the teaming agreement on the C-130J Super Hercules aircraft between Lockheed Martin and Tata Advanced Systems Limited, lauded the growing defence innovation collaboration between the governments, businesses, and academic institutions fostered by the India-US Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) initiative and welcomed the enhanced collaboration between the Ministry of Defence (MoD)'s Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and US Department of Defence (US DoD)'s Defence Innovation Unit (DIU), facilitated through a MoU signed at the Silicon Valley Summit on 09-10 September.

Prime Minister and the then President Biden also hailed the watershed arrangement to establish a new semiconductor fabrication plant focused on advanced sensing, communication, and power electronics for national security, next generation telecommunications, and green energy applications. The fab, established with the objective of manufacturing infrared, gallium nitride and silicon carbide



The then Commander of US Indo-Pacific Command (US INDOPACOM) Adm. John C. Aquilino met EAM on the sidelines of the India-US Defense Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) Summit held in New Delhi, February 2024.

semiconductors, will be bolstered by support from the India Semiconductor Mission as well as a strategic technology partnership between Bharat Semi, 3rdiTech, and the US Space Force.

During Raksha Mantri's visit to the US in August, two major bilateral agreements were signed - Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA) and Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers to US' Commands. Following the visit, Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) approved the acquisition of 31 MQ-9B Predator drones from US company General Atomics in October.

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) visited the US in February and held engagements at Washington D.C. and San Francisco. The then US INDOPACOM Commander Adm. John C. Aquilino visited India in February and held interactions with his counterparts, senior Indian officials and participated in the Raisina Dialogue. The then US Commander Cyber Command General Timothy D. Haugh visited India for bilateral interaction in May.

The Executive Steering Groups Meetings for Army, Air Force and Navy were held in April (New Delhi), May (Hawaii) and September (New Delhi) respectively to deepen military-to-military cooperation. The India-US Advance Domain Defence Dialogue was held in May in Washington D.C.,



US Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for Industrial Base Policy Vic Ramdass and Additional Secretary and Director General (Acquisitions) of Ministry of Defence signed the Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA) in Washington D.C., August 2024.

while the meetings of the Command & Control Compatibility Board (CCCB) were held in June (New Delhi) and December (Hawaii), respectively.

The bilateral 2+2 Inter-sessional meeting led by senior officials of the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence and the US Departments of State and Defence, was held on 16 September in New Delhi.

The 23rd edition of India-US Joint Technology Group (JTG) Meeting co-chaired by Office of the US Under Secretary of Defence for Research & Engineering (OUSD) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was held in October at Washington D.C.

The 21st edition of India-US Military Cooperation Group (MCG) was held in November at New Delhi. The meeting was co-chaired by the Chief of Integrated Defence Staff and Deputy Commander of US Indo-Pacific Command, Lt. Gen. Joshua M. Rudd.

This year, India and the US conducted several joint defence exercises. The Indian Navy participated in US-led multilateral exercise 'Sea Dragon', held in January at Guam and Cutlass Express 2024 held in February, at Seychelles. The US Pacific Fleet participated in India-led

multilateral naval exercise Milan 2024 held in February at Vishakhapatnam.

The tri-services amphibious exercise Tiger Triumph was held onboard INS Jalashwa in March. During the same month, the Indian Coast Guard and US Coast Guard held a comprehensive maritime security exercise 'Sea Defenders 2024' at Port Blair.

Indian Navy assets were deployed in Western Arabian Sea for Maritime Security Operations as part of Combined Task Force 150 in April. Indian Navy also participated in the US-led Exercise 'Rim of the Pacific Exercise' (RIMPAC) held on 27 June – 01 August, in Hawaii. In June, Indian Air Force (IAF) participated in Exercise Red Flag in Alaska. Indian Navy assets undertook a Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with US Naval Carrier Strike Group in Arabian Sea in July.

In September, Exercise Yudh Abhyas was held in Rajasthan with a significant increase in the scope and complexity of the joint exercise, in terms of troop strength and equipment. The 28th edition of Exercise Malabar was held off Vishakhapatnam in October, witnessing the participation of guided missile destroyers, multi-purpose frigates, submarines, fixed wing MR, fighter aircraft and helicopters from India, Australia, Japan and the US. The 15th edition of Special Forces Exercise 'Vajra Prahar' was held in November in Idaho, US. The 9th edition of Exercise Sangam, conducted by the Indian Navy Marine Commando Force (MARCOS) and US Navy Sea, Air, and Land Teams (SEALs) was held at Goa in November.

Under a commercial contract, US Military Sealift Command (MSC) ship USNS Charles Drew underwent repairs at the L&T shipyard in Kattupalli on 23 September – 12 November.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

For the calendar year FY 2023-24, the bilateral trade in merchandise and services has been recorded at USD 190 billion. India exported USD 120.1 billion worth of goods and services to the US, while its imports amounted to USD 70.0 billion. The burgeoning trading relationship between the two countries has been carried forward by rapid growth in industries such as energy, defence, manufacturing, electronics, engineering and information technology. Significant growth has been recorded in the electronics sector, particularly mobile phones and solar panels, marine products, and pharmaceuticals. With both nations leveraging their respective strengths, this economic relationship remains a cornerstone for sustainable growth, innovation, and mutual prosperity.

On the investment front, there has been significant growth with two-way investment between India and the US. The US is the 3rd largest investor in India, with FDI Investment pegged at USD 65.19 billion from April 2000 to March.



US Coast Guard Cutter (USCGS) Beaufort (front) and India Coast Guard (ICG)'s offshore patrol vessel CGS Shaurya (back) held joint drills as a part of bilateral Exercise Sea Defenders in Port Blair, March 2024.



Indian and US troops participated in the 20th edition of joint military exercise 'Yudh Abhyas' held in Rajasthan, September 2024.

According to estimates, there are over 2000 US companies in India.

The 7th India-US Aviation Summit took place on 24-26 June, in Washington D.C. With dedicated sessions on topics from airspace capacity, cargo, and security to advancement in technology, the summit facilitated dialogues between US and Indian experts on civil aviation and served as a showcase for advanced US technology, equipment, services, and best practices to further India's key aviation and airport projects.

Energy and Climate Cooperation

Prime Minister and the then President Biden announced the India-US Roadmap to Build Safe and Secure Global Clean Energy Supply Chains, during the former's visit to the US in September. The Roadmap launched a new initiative to accelerate the expansion of safe and secure clean energy supply chains, supported by manufacturing of clean energy technologies and components in India and the US. Under this initiative, both countries would work together to unlock USD 1 billion of multilateral financing in the initial phase, to support projects across the clean energy value chain for renewable energy, energy storage, power grid and transmission technologies, high efficiency cooling systems, zero emission vehicles, and other emerging clean technologies.

The Steering Committee Meeting of the Renewable Energy Technology Action Platform (RETAP) was held on 22 August, under the joint chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and the then Deputy Secretary US Department of Energy David Turk in New Delhi. The two countries are also collaborating on setting up a new National Centre for Hydrogen Safety in India.

Space, Science & Technology and IT Cooperation

ISRO and NASA signed a Joint Statement of Intent in January to deepen their partnership in space exploration and mount a joint effort to the International Space Station in 2024. Additionally, both organisations signed an Implementation Arrangement (IA) for strategic framework for cooperation in human spaceflight in March. The IA identifies responsibilities towards potential participation in robotic and human spaceflight activities, ground-based research, personnel exchange, advanced training, interoperability of systems and standards and collaboration on technologies. In August, two Indian Astronauts began training at Nasa's Johnson Space Center.

GSAT-N2 (GSAT-20), India's High Throughput Communication Satellite of New Space India Limited (NSIL), built by ISRO was launched successfully by Falcon-9 from Cape Canaveral, US on 19 November.

Principal Scientific Advisor visited the US on 25 August-01 September to participate in the 2nd bilateral meeting on Quantum Coordination Mechanism, held at the State Department in Washington D.C. He also visited the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Chicago Quantum Exchange and Lawrence Berkley University and held meetings with researchers and academicians.

Secretary, Department of Science & Technology visited the US on 08-13 January. He held discussions with TMT International Team at Hilo in Hawaii to steer a multinational collaborative astronomical project i.e. 30m telescope; and met with key officials including Director of NSF Dr. Sethuraman Panchanathan.

Secretary, Earth Sciences visited the US on 06-07 March. He held discussions with the Chief of Office of Naval Research (ONR), the then Administrator of National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) Dr. Richard Spinrad and NSF Director Dr. Panchanathan.

In June, NSF Director Dr. Panchanathan visited India for the first annual review meeting of iCET and held meetings with Principal Scientific Advisor and Secretary, Department of Science & Technology regarding MoU with Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF). He also held separate meetings with Secretary, MeitY; Secretary, Mines; Secretary, Department of Biotechnology and Secretary, Earth Sciences for exploring cooperation in different sectors with the NSF and progressing discussions for collaborative research under new IAs with NSF.

Secretary, MeitY co-chaired the India-US Information and Communications Technology Working Group meeting held on 17 October in New Delhi, with US Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy Ambassador Steve Lang. Both sides committed to further strengthen the partnership in digital and telecom sectors and discussed mobility, data flow, Cross-Border Payments and Reporting (CBPR), AI, Electronic manufacturing and ongoing cooperation in the telecom sector.

US-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)

The then US National Security Advisor (APNSA) Jake Sullivan visited New Delhi on 17 June to co-chair the iCET review meeting. During the visit, he called on Prime Minister and met with EAM and NSA among others. The review meeting of iCET was co-chaired by NSA and the then APNSA Sullivan during the visit. They took stock of the significant strides made by India and the US toward deepening and expanding strategic cooperation across key technology sectors including space, semiconductors, advanced telecommunications, AI, quantum, STEM, biotechnology, critical minerals and clean energy. They also recognized the immense untapped potential in areas including deeper



The then US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan called on Prime Minister on the sidelines of the iCET review meeting held in New Delhi, June 2024.

technology cooperation between the two countries. A Joint India-US Fact Sheet on iCET was released on the occasion.

In addition to the G2G iCET meeting, NSA and the then APNSA Sullivan convened an industry roundtable on 18 June through the CII, bringing together industry leaders from both countries, as India and the US seek to mobilise private sector investment and partnerships across strategic technology sectors. The US industry was represented by companies including Thayer Mahan, General Atomics, Jeh Aerospace, Holtec, Cummins, Alsym Energy and Axiom Space. On the other hand, the Indian industry included leaders from 3rdiTech, Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), Bharat Forge, Bharti Airtel, Bhukhanvala Industries, Centum Electronics, Larsen & Toubro (L&T), Tata Advanced Systems, Tata Power and Tejas Network. The industry enlightened the NSAs on their experiences thus far, in terms of their bilateral collaborations, their vision on how to take the collaboration forward, as well as specific areas where Government facilitation can play a key role in addressing barriers to unshackle further collaboration.

On 14 November, government and industry representatives from India and government officials from the US participated in the inaugural Track 1.5 Dialogue under iCET Advanced Materials R&D Forum, held in New Delhi.

Health Cooperation

India's Department of Biotechnology hosted the inaugural India-US Cancer Dialogue on 05-06 August at the National Institute of Immunology in New Delhi. The dialogue marked a pivotal moment in Cancer research collaboration across various areas including AI-enabled diagnostics and innovation, novel therapeutics, cost-effective therapies, and survivorship care.

Several collaborative programs are underway between Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and US National Institute of Health, Ministry of Ayush and the US Department of Health and Human Services as well as Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) and US academic institutions.

Counter Narcotics Cooperation

The 5th meeting of the India-US Counter Narcotics Working Group co-chaired by the then US Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Dr Rahul Gupta and Director General of India's Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) was held on 23-24 October in New Delhi. The discussions were centered around three pivotal pillars of the India-US Drug Policy Framework, namely- countering illicit drug production and trafficking including precursor chemicals, advancing a sustainable public health partnership and ensuring a secure and growing pharmaceutical supply chain.

Security and Counter Terrorism Cooperation

The then Home Secretary and Acting Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Homeland Security of Kristie Canegallo, co-chaired the Senior Officials Meeting of India-US Homeland Security Dialogue in New Delhi on 27 February.

The 20th meeting of the US-India JWG-CT and 6th Designations Dialogue was held on 05 March in Washington, D.C.

Education, Cultural Cooperation and People-to-People Exchanges

Indian diaspora in the US currently stands at 4.4 million. On 22 September, Prime Minister addressed a large gathering of the Indian community in Long Island, New York, announcing plans to open two new Indian consulates in Boston and Los Angeles as well as a Thiruvalluvar Chair of Tamil studies at the University of Houston. The Indian Consulate in Seattle which opened in 2023, opened two Visa Application Centers (IVACs) on 12 July in Seattle and Bellevue, Washington D.C.

The 11th India-US Consular Dialogue, co-chaired by the then US Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs Rena Bitter and Joint Secretary (CPV) was held in New Delhi on 23 February focusing on areas of mutual interest, including

cooperation to protect vulnerable women and children, inter-country adoption, provision of consular services to expatriate citizens, extraditions, and facilitation of travel.

This year, India and the US continued their robust bilateral exchanges in education. Over 360,000 Indian students are currently pursuing programs in the US' Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs).

The 2nd meeting of the India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development was held in February, marking a significant step towards strengthening collaboration in education and skill development sectors, with the launch of four sub-committees to address the areas of - Matchmaking between US and Indian HEIs, Engaging with private sector, Skilling and vocational education, and Certification and Recognition

In November, Purdue University announced the establishment of its Center for Education and Engagement in India, as well as a US-India Center of Excellence in Semiconductors (CES). The centres have been set-up in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Hyderabad and are supported by the US and Indian government.

On the culture front, both countries signed the first ever Cultural Property Agreement to prevent and curb the illicit trafficking of antiquities from India to the US on 26 July. On Prime Minister's visit to the US in September, the US facilitated the return of 297 antiquities that had been stolen or trafficked from India.

MoUs/Agreements

- Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) Agreements on Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and the Overarching Agreement.

- MoU to Expand and Diversify Critical Minerals Supply Chains
- Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA)
- Memorandum of Agreement between India and US regarding the Deployment of Liaison Officers
- Cultural Property Agreement (Agreement between Government of US and Government of Republic of India Concerning the Imposition of Import Restrictions on Categories of Archeological and Ethnological Material of India)
- MoU for promoting Cooperation on Small and Medium-size Enterprises

Quad Engagement

India and the US continued their high-level engagements and working group meetings under the framework of Quad throughout the year. During the 6th Quad Leaders' Summit held on 21 September at Wilmington, the Leaders discussed geopolitical issues, assessed progress made by the Quad over the last one year and set forth an ambitious agenda for the year ahead that would culminate with India hosting the Quad Summit in 2025. At the Wilmington Summit, the Leaders adopted four documents – 'The Wilmington Declaration', the Quad Joint Statement Factsheet, the Quad Cancer Moonshot Factsheet, and the Quad Principles for Development and Deployment of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).



EAM participated in the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Tokyo, July 2024.

A number of important initiatives for the Indo-Pacific region were announced during the Summit, including the Quad Cancer Moonshot initiative to implement innovative strategies to prevent, detect, treat and alleviate the impact of cervical cancer on patients and their families in the Indo-Pacific; Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI) to enable Indo-Pacific partners to maximise tools provided through Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) and other Quad partner initiatives, to monitor and secure their waters, enforce laws, and deter unlawful behavior. The summit also witnessed the announcement of initiatives such as Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission to improve Coast Guard interoperability and to advance maritime safety; Quad Indo-Pacific Logistics Network pilot project, to pursue shared airlift capacity among the four nations to support civilian response to natural disasters; Quad Ports of the Future Partnership to support sustainable and resilient port infrastructure development; Quad effort to boost energy efficiency through the deployment and manufacturing of high-efficiency affordable cooling systems; scholarships for students of the Indo-Pacific region; space-based web portal for Mauritius to assist in monitoring of extreme weather events and climate impacts as well as USD 2 million worth of off-grid solar projects in Indo-Pacific countries.

Prior to the Leaders' Summit, the Quad Foreign Ministers participated in the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting (QFMM), held in Tokyo on 29 July and reviewed progress on Quad initiatives and working groups. The Ministers discussed regional and international issues and future collaboration to achieve the shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region by addressing contemporary priorities of the region through delivery of public goods. A joint statement was released on the occasion.

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)

The first Ministerial meeting of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) 2024 took place in Bangkok on 14 March. Commerce and Industry Minister and the then US Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo joined the meeting virtually. The second IPEF Ministerial Meeting 2024 took place in Singapore on 05-06 June. Secretary, Commerce and the then US Secretary of Commerce Raimondo attended the meeting in-person.

Ahead of the Prime Minister's visit to the US in September, India signed three IPEF related agreements on IPEF Pillar III (Clean Economy), IPEF Pillar IV (Fair Economy) and the IPEF Overarching agreement. Minister of Commerce and Industry participated at the virtual Ministerial meeting of the IPEF held on 24 September. Minister along with other IPEF Ministers welcomed the upcoming entry into force of the Clean Economy Agreement, Fair Economy Agreement,

and the Overarching Agreement on IPEF on 11 October, 12 October, and 11 October respectively and emphasised the significant opportunities to further deepen economic cooperation and deliver concrete benefits under the IPEF agreements through ongoing collaboration.

Canada

India-Canada relations are based on traditionally strong people-to-people ties and robust economic linkages.

Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau briefly on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Apulia, Italy on 14 June.

Mutual understanding, respect for each other's concerns, as also the Canadian Government's unwavering respect for India's territorial integrity and sovereignty are the prerequisites for a stable bilateral relationship with Canada. In this regard, Government of India has repeatedly urged the Canadian Government to take prompt and effective actions against all anti-India elements operating from its soil.



EAM met Foreign Minister of Canada Mélanie Joly on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference held in Munich, February 2024.

Bilateral Exchanges

Given the current state of bilateral relations, Leader-level visits and bilateral mechanisms did not take place in 2024.

EAM met Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly on the margins of the Munich Security Conference (MSC) on 17 February. Both Ministers also met on the sidelines of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Laos on 27 July.

Minister for Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade of Ontario Province Victor Fedeli, along with a business delegation, visited Mumbai and Bengaluru on 11-16 February. Premier of Saskatchewan Province of Canada Scott Moe visited India, along with a trade delegation including former Prime Minister of Canada Stephen Harper on 20-23 February. Canadian Member of Parliament Chandra Arya visited India and met the Prime Minister and EAM on 12 August.

Secretary, Mines led an Indian delegation to Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) in Toronto on 03-06 March. Secretary, Civil Aviation visited Canada on 12-14 March to attend the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Innovation Conference at Montreal. An Indian delegation officially participated in the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) in September.

Trade and Economic Cooperation

Trade and investment linkages are key components of the India and Canada bilateral partnership. India's export to Canada between January-August were worth USD 2.68 billion and imports from Canada were worth USD 3.03 billion. Total bilateral trade between January-August amounted to USD 5.71 billion. Portfolio investments from Canada into India stand at more than USD 55 billion. This amount is likely to increase further, on account of India's economic growth potential. Canadian Direct Investment in India between April 2000 to March 2023 stood at USD 3.31 billion. More than 600 Canadian companies have established a presence in India and nearly 1000 Canadian companies are pursuing business opportunities in India.

Education, Cultural Cooperation and People-to-People Exchanges

Canada hosts one of the largest Indian Diaspora abroad, with nearly 1.8 million Indo-Canadians and 1 million non-resident Indians accounting for 7.3% of its total population. The diaspora, primarily concentrated in areas including the Greater Toronto Area, the Greater Vancouver area, Montreal (Quebec), Calgary and Edmonton (Alberta), Ottawa (Ontario) and Winnipeg (Manitoba) have contributed significantly to the Canadian economy and society. There are numerous business and Diaspora organisations supporting enhanced bilateral relations between the two countries.

Canada has emerged as a favoured destination for Indian students, with the current numbers standing at approximately 4,27,000. All issues facing Indian students in Canada are regularly discussed and raised with Canadian authorities. The Government of India places high emphasis on the well-being of Indian students pursuing education in Canada.

Latin America and the Caribbean

India and the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) countries have witnessed unprecedented engagements in the recent years. Though geographically separated, the long-established India-LAC ties have moved on a new trajectory, promising diverse engagements between the countries. Additionally, political engagements during the year have further provided a renewed momentum to India's relationships with the LAC countries.

Prime Minister visited Brazil for the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rio de Janeiro on 19 November. On the sidelines of G-20 Summit, he met with the Presidents of Brazil, Argentina and Chile. Prime Minister had previously met the President of Brazil on the sidelines of G7 Summit in Italy. Prime Minister also met President of Guyana, during his visit to the country in November.

Prime Minister undertook a state visit to Guyana on 19-21 November. He held delegation level talks with President of Guyana Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali. At a ceremony held at the State House, Prime Minister was awarded Guyana's highest award 'Order of the Excellence' by the President of Guyana. Prime Minister also participated in the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit in Georgetown, Guyana on 20 November. He co-chaired the summit along with Prime Minister of Grenada Dickon Mitchell, who also serves as the current CARICOM Chair. On the margins of the summit, Prime Minister held bilateral meetings with Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Prime Minister of Bahamas, Prime Minister of Barbados, Prime Minister of St. Lucia, Prime Minister of Commonwealth of Dominica, Prime Minister of Grenada, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and President of Suriname. At a ceremony held in Georgetown, President of the Commonwealth of Dominica conferred the country's highest National Award-"Dominica Award of Honour" on Prime Minister.

President of Guyana Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali visited India on a working visit in February. He called on Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Hon'ble Vice President and held meetings with EAM and Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy. Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago Keith Rowley paid a working visit to Mumbai and Jamnagar in May. Prime Minister of Jamaica Andrew Holness paid an official visit to India in October and met Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Hon'ble Vice President and Prime Minister. Executive Vice President



EAM co-chaired the India-CELAC Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New York, September 2024.

of Venezuela Delcy Rodríguez led a delegation to India on 24-28 October and met the Hon'ble Vice President and the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas on 25 October.

EAM received Foreign Ministers of Panama, Brazil, Chile, Argentina and St. Kitts & Nevis. On the sidelines of the UNGA, he met his counterparts from Guyana, Bolivia, Mexico, Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Dominica, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and Venezuela as well as Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. He also met Foreign Ministers of Colombia, Bolivia and Venezuela on the sidelines of NAM Summit in Uganda, met Foreign Minister of Jamaica on the margins of CARICOM Summit in Guyana and interacted with Foreign Minister of Honduras on the sidelines of Doha Forum in Qatar. Additionally, EAM and Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Honduras Enrique Reina co-chaired the India-CELAC Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New York, on 27 September. During the meeting, India and CELAC decided to institutionalize collaboration by setting up India-CELAC Joint Commission.

The then MoS (VM) visited Brazil in February for the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting. MoS (PM) paid official visits to Dominican Republic, Guatemala, El Salvador, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, Mexico, Grenada, Barbados and Antigua and Barbuda. MoS (Environment, Forest and Climate Change) visited Cali, Colombia to participate in the COP16 meeting.

Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) were organised with Colombia, Uruguay and Argentina. Joint Commission meeting with Peru was held at Secretary-level.

India now has 17 resident Missions in the LAC region, with the opening of a new Mission in La Paz, Bolivia in September.

India evacuated 17 Indian nationals from Haiti under Operation Indravati in March-April.

As of now, seven countries (Suriname, Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago, Cuba, Colombia, St Kitts & Nevis and Jamaica) have signed the INDIA STACK Agreement. In the context of UPI, Peru is the first country in LAC to enter into a commercial agreement with India, followed by Trinidad & Tobago.

South America

Argentina

India and Argentina celebrated the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic ties on 03 February. The countries continued to further strengthen their bilateral relationship through high-level exchanges and interactions during the year.

On 24 April, at an event jointly organised by the Mission and Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales (CARI)- Argentina's most prominent Thinktank, Vice President of Argentina Victoria Villaruel launched the 'India Working Group' in the CARI.

Prime Minister met President of Argentina Javier Milei on 19 November on the sidelines of the 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This marked the first bilateral meeting between the two leaders.

The then Foreign Minister of Argentina Diana Mondino met EAM at the Munich Security Conference in Germany on 16 February. Foreign Minister Mondino visited New Delhi on 05-09 October and co-chaired the 7th Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) with EAM on 08 October. Foreign Minister Mondino also met Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. She was accompanied by an official as well as a 17-member business delegation representing diverse sectors, including mining, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, and nuclear energy. The delegation also participated in a business event with captains of Indian trade and industry, organised by CII and presided over by Foreign Minister Mondino and Minister of State for Commerce & Industry and Electronics & Information Technology.

Commemorating the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations, the Embassy, in association with India-Argentina Business Council (IABC), organised the India-Argentina Business Summit on 29 February. Argentine Minister of Defence Luis Petri and Governor of Catamarca Raul Jalil participated in the event, while the then Foreign Minister Mondino served as the Chief Guest of the summit.

Minister of Human Capital of Argentina Sandra Pettovello and Energy Secretary Eduardo Chirillo, participated in the 3rd edition of the Voice of Global South Summit (VoGSS) on 17 August, in virtual-mode. The then Air Force Chief of Argentina Brigadier General Fernando Luis Mengo participated in Exercise Tarang Shakti on 10-13 September. He also visited M/s Hindustan Aeronautic Limited (HAL), Bengaluru on 14 September.

The 7th Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and Argentina was held on 13 September in Buenos Aires. The FOC was led by Secretary, East and the then Secretary of Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Leopoldo Sahores.

Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (an Indian PSU) and CAMYEN (a public sector undertaking of Catamarca province) signed the Agreement to acquire five lithium blocks in Catamarca province on 15 January.

The Heavy Water Board (HWB), Mumbai, a constituent unit of Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India and M/s Nucleoelectrica Argentina S.A. (NASA) signed an agreement in virtual mode on 04 November.

Bolivia

India and Bolivia carried forward the momentum in their bilateral relations. India opened its resident Mission at La Paz on 17 September.

EAM met Foreign Minister of Bolivia Celinda Sosa Lunda twice this year- first in January, on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement Summit (NAM), Uganda and in September, on the sidelines of UNGA at New York; reinforcing the progress of bilateral relations.



EAM met Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia Celinda Sosa Lunda on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York, September 2024.

Director General of Forest Development and Management from the Bolivian Ministry of Environment and Water Filomon Hinojosa Torrico participated in the Environment Ministers' Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit, held in virtual-mode on 17 August.

Brazil

Prime Minister met President of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva twice this year, during the G7 Summit held in Italy in June and also in November, at the G20 Leaders' Summit held in Rio de Janeiro. Both leaders discussed enhancing the India-Brazil Strategic Partnership across sectors such as agriculture, defence, digital technology, biofuels, and space, while emphasizing cooperation on global and regional issues. During the G20 Leaders' Summit, Prime Minister addressed critical sessions on "Social Inclusion and the Fight Against Hunger and Poverty" and "Sustainable Development and Energy Transition." Prime Minister also praised Brazil's initiative to establish the Global Alliance Against Poverty and Hunger and conveyed India's strong support.

The 9th Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) between India and Brazil was held in New Delhi on 27 August. The meeting was co-chaired by EAM and Foreign Minister of Brazil Mauro Vieira. The Minister discussed issues including trade and investment, biofuel energy, agriculture and livestock, health and traditional medicine, science and technology, digital economy, defence, counter-terrorism, and consular and legal affairs.



Prime Minister met President of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at the G20 Leaders' Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, November 2024.

Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas along with representatives from Indian oil and gas companies visited Brazil in September and held meetings with Minister of Mines and Energy of Brazil Alexandre Silveira, Petrobras President Magda Chambriard, Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira and Advisor to the President Celso Amorim; discussing collaboration in energy, including biofuels, offshore exploration, and critical minerals.

Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Electronics & IT visited Brazil in September and met with Vice President of Brazil Geraldo Alckmin and explored collaboration opportunities in clean energy, green hydrogen, biofuels, digital technology, healthcare, and agriculture. The MoU between the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil was signed during the Global Food Regulators Summit in September in New Delhi.

The Governor of Paraná Carlos Massa Ratinho Júnior visited India in April, accompanied by a high-level delegation and explored opportunities for collaboration in innovation and technology, with a particular focus on high-performance computing through partnerships between Paraná's state institutions and India's Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC). The delegation also visited Tata Group headquarters, where Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) announced the establishment of a new delivery center in Londrina, Paraná.

President of Brazil's Federal Supreme Court Minister Luís Roberto Barroso visited India in September and held meetings with the then Chief Justice of India and the Minister of Law and Justice.

A 6-member Parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha participated in the 10th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' (P20) Summit in Brasilia on 06-09 November and held a meeting with President of the Senate of Brazil Senator Rodrigo Pacheco.

The first-ever Political and Military (2+2) Dialogue between India and Brazil took place in New Delhi in March. The dialogue was co-chaired by Additional Secretary (LAC), MEA; Joint Secretary (International Cooperation), MoD from the Indian side, while the Brazilian side was represented by Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director Marcelo Camara, and Rear Admiral Fernando de Luca Marques de Oliveira from the Ministry of Defence.

The year marked high-level exchanges of defence delegations and visits of defence industries. The Brazilian Navy participated in the 12th edition of the biennial multilateral naval exercise- MILAN 2024 hosted by the Indian Navy in Visakhapatnam under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command on 19-27 February. A delegation from Brazilian Air Force (FAB) led by Commander of FAB participated in Distinguished Visitors (DV) Day and Indigenous Defence Industry exhibition. Brig General Rocha Lima led a Brazilian Army delegation to India on 17-23

March. Brazilian Navy Commander Admiral Marcos Sampaio Olsen visited India on 19-24 August. Commander of FAB Lieutenant Brigadier Marcelo Kanitz Damasceno, visited India on 10-13 September. Indian Navy participated in 79th Sailing Regatta of the Brazilian Navy on 10 –15 October in Rio de Janeiro.

In May, 19 Indian engineering exporters, led by Regional Director (Western Region) and Director (Marketing & Sales) of Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) India participated in the India Pavilion at the FEIMEC 2024 in São Paulo, showcasing India's engineering capabilities and exploring business opportunities in the Latin American market during this prestigious industrial event. In the same month, a 20-member delegation from the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA) and a 10-member delegation from the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) visited Brazil. In July, an 8-member delegation from CHEMEXCIL participated in the 44th Dye+Chem Brazil Expo as well as an India Tourism promotion event, with leading tour operators and travel agents held in São Paulo.

A statue of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled in Cuiabá by Secretary, Economic Relations and Mayor of Cuiabá Emanuel Pinheiro on 25 July, marking a deepening of cultural ties between Brazil and India. A 4-member delegation from Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) visited Brazil in August and collaborated with Brazilian counterparts on public service innovation.

India participated as the 'Focus Country' in the 48th São Paulo International Film Festival, held on 30-17 October. The festival was marked by a special focus on Indian cinema and showcased a range of contemporary Indian films, highlighting both new directors and established filmmakers.

The students of the Vishwa Vidya Gurukulam and led by Jonas Masetti (Acharya Vishwanath), performed 'Ramayana' in the presence of Prime Minister on 19 November in Rio de Janeiro.

Chile

President of Chile Gabriel Boric Font participated in Leaders' Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August and reiterated Chile's support for India in a reformed UNSC. Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with President Font on the sidelines of G-20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in November.

Foreign Minister of Chile Alberto van Klaveren Stork visited India in August and co-chaired India-Chile Joint Commission Meeting together with EAM. Agriculture Minister Esteban Valenzuela Van Treek also visited India during the same period and held meetings with concerned Indian authorities.

Secretary, Mines led a high-level business delegation to Chile in April and held discussions with major stakeholders in mining. India and Chile signed a MoU for cooperation in the field of Medical Products Regulation on 18 October.

Pharmaceutical Export Promotion Council (Pharmexcil) held 'International Exhibition for Pharma and Healthcare'- Latin America (IPHEX LATAM): India-Chile Pharma Business Meet' in February in Santiago. In March, Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) organized a Handicrafts Exhibition & Buyer-Seller Meeting in Santiago. A team from Rail India Technical and Economic Service (RITES) Ltd. visited Chile in September to explore business cooperation with Chile in railways. Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) led a 20-member business delegation in October to participate in the EDIFICA Fair, the biggest international construction sector fair of Chile.

Colombia

The year 2024 marked 65 years of diplomatic ties between India and Colombia. During the year, India and Colombia continued strengthening their bilateral relations through high-level meetings and engagements.

On 20 January, EAM met the then Foreign Minister of Colombia Álvaro Leyva Durán, on the sidelines of the 19th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) held in Kampala. The then Minister of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) of Colombia Mauricio Lizcano, paid an official visit to India on 15-17 February. Minister Lizcano met the then MoS, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), and held bilateral talks on the strengthening of ICT cooperation between India and Colombia. During the visit, a MoU between MeitY and Ministry of ICT of Colombia for 'Cooperation in the field of sharing Successful Digital Solutions Implemented at Population Scale for Digital Transformation' viz. 'INDIA STACK' was signed. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia Luis Gilberto Murillo, participated in the Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August, held in virtual mode.

The 10th round of India-Colombia Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) took place in New Delhi on 15 October. The Indian and Colombian sides were led by Secretary, East (MEA) and Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia Jorge Rojas Rodríguez, respectively. During the consultations, an Audio-Visual Co-production Agreement was signed between the two countries.

MoS (Environment, Forest and Climate Change) led the Indian delegation to the high-level segment of the 16th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-16), held on 28 October-01 November in Cali, Colombia.



MoS (KVS) held a courtesy meeting with Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Colombia Jorge Enrique Rojas Rodriguez in New Delhi, October 2024.

Various Export Promotion Councils such as Pharmexcil, Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) and Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) led Indian delegations to Colombia during the year, providing further impetus to the bilateral trade relations.

Ecuador

Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti was celebrated on 22-30 May at the Cuenca University Museum and Tagore Garden in Cuenca, Ecuador. During the week-long celebrations, around 1500 guests participated in various events and activities. The Indian Film Festival 2024 was held on 27-29 September at the Espíritu Santo University (UEES), Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Paraguay

Paraguay became the 100th country to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA) as a full member in June.

The first Indian IT delegation comprising 14-members from Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC), visited Paraguay on 07 March. The event was attended by Minister of Technologies for Information and Communication (MITIC) Gustavo Villate. ESC and Cisoft signed an MoU for collaboration.

A delegation from Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), led by Commissioner, Ministry of Finance visited Paraguay to

attend the 17th Global Forum Plenary Meeting & Associated Meetings of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes on 23-29 November.

Peru

This year marked the 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Peru. Serpost, the national postal service of Peru, released a commemorative postmark seal in March and the Foreign Ministry of Peru hosted a photo exhibition at the Ministry, to mark six decades of bilateral ties.

In his Mann ki Baat address held on 27 October, Prime Minister appreciated the achievements of Herlinda Garcia and Maria Laura for their contribution in the field of Bharatnatyam and Odissi dances.

The then Foreign Minister of Peru Javier Gonzalez-Olaechea participated in the Second Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit held on 17 August, via video-message. The Summit was held in virtual-mode.

A 20-member delegation from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of Finance visited Peru in February, to hold the 6th round of negotiations of the India-Peru Free Trade Agreements (FTA), while the 7th round of bilateral FTA negotiations were held in New Delhi on 10-13 April.

In September, Secretary, East (MEA) led the Indian delegation to participate in the Joint Commission Meeting held in Peru. The Peruvian side was led by Vice Minister for Foreign Minister Peter Camino. On the sidelines of his visit, Secretary, East interacted with the Minister of Social Inclusion Julio Demartini and the Vice Minister of Health Eric Peña Sanchez.

India and Peru signed a MoU for cooperation in the fields of peaceful use of nuclear energy between Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) of India and the Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy (IPEN) in March. A 12-member delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism of Peru visited New Delhi in April. On 04 June, NPCI International Payments Ltd. (NIPL) entered into contract with the Peruvian Central Reserve Bank (BCRP) to build a UPI-like payment platform in Peru.

15 Judges/Magistrates from Supreme Court & various Superior courts of Lima and the neighbourhood attended the Special Course on "Artificial Intelligence" course in Spanish organized by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), Noida on 22 July – 09 August. On 18 September, the Embassy celebrated ITEC Network Day with participation of more than hundred alumni who had visited India under the ITEC Program. Another 18-member delegation involving 15 judges and 2 officials from the Peruvian Supreme court and one official from the Peruvian



Executive Vice President of Venezuela Delcy Rodríguez called on Hon'ble Vice President during her visit to New Delhi, October 2024.

Embassy in New Delhi attended a special course on Human Trafficking and Citizen Security at the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal on 04-08 November.

Uruguay

President of Uruguay Luis Lacalle Pou and Vice Minister of Ministry of Social Development Andrea Brugman participated in the Leader's Session and Youth Ministers' Session, respectively of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit (VoGSS) held on 17 August, via video-message. Executive Director of AGESIC Hebert Paguas represented Uruguay in the Information and Technology Ministers' Session of Summit.

The 6th FOC between India and Uruguay was held on 16 September in Montevideo, Uruguay was led by Secretary, East and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay Nicolas Albertoni. On 16 September, India and Uruguay signed a MoU on Gainful Employment of Relatives of diplomats.

Venezuela

India and Venezuela celebrated the 65th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations in October.

Executive Vice President of Venezuela Delcy Rodríguez led a delegation to India on 24-28 October. During the visit, she

called on the Hon'ble Vice President and met Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas on 25 October. The visit aimed to scale up bilateral energy cooperation.

Foreign Minister of Venezuela Yvan Gil met EAM twice this year, on the sidelines of NAM Summit at Kampala held in January and on the sidelines of UNGA at New York held in September. During the meetings, they discussed economic, energy and development cooperation and other issues of mutual interest. On the sidelines of BRICS Ministerial Dialogue with Developing Countries held in Russia on 11 June, Foreign Minister Gil met the Indian delegation led by Secretary, Economic Relations and discussed issues of bilateral cooperation, especially trade, energy and multilateral cooperation.

Vice Minister of Gas of the Ministry of Petroleum of Venezuela Juan Santana, participated in the India Energy Week 2024 held on 06-09 February at Goa. Vice Minister of Environmental Management Service of the Ministry of Eco-Socialism Hernán Gabriel Toro Hernández, participated in the Environment Session of 3rd Voice of Global South Summit held on 17 August. In October, Venezuela formally conveyed its interest to join the International Big Cat Alliance, a coalition spearheaded by India. Vice-Minister for Power Sector Development and Industry of the Ministry of Electric Energy, Carlos Alfredo González participated in the 7th Session of the Assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), held in New Delhi on 03 -06 November.

North and Central America

Belize

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Belize Francis Fonseca, represented Belize at the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit held in Guyana on 20 November.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Science & Technology Chief Executive Officer Dian Castillo Maheia participated in the Education Ministers' Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit, held on 17 August, in virtual mode.

Costa Rica

In June, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences led the Indian delegation at the 'High Level Event on Ocean Action (HLEOA): Immersed in Change' in San Jose, Costa Rica. Delegates included experts from Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, National Centre for Coastal Research, and the Department of Fisheries. Discussions emphasized the importance of ocean conservation and included bilateral meetings with Environment Minister of Costa Rica Franz Tattenbach as well as representatives from France, Norway and Brazil.

Vice Minister of Multilateral Affairs of Costa Rica Alejandro Solano participated the Environment Ministers' Session of the 3rd Voice of the Global South Summit held on 17 August, chaired by Vice Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change.

El Salvador

Vice President of El Salvador Félix Ulloa Hijo and Minister of Education, Science, and Technology José Mauricio Pineda participated in the Leaders' Session and Education Ministers' Session, respectively of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit via video messages, held on 17 August in virtual mode.

EAM met Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador Alexandra Hill Tinoco on the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 79th UNGA, held in New York on 28 September.

MoS (PM) visited El Salvador on 19-20 August. During the visit, he called on President of El Salvador Nayib Bukele and met Minister of Foreign Affairs Tinoco, Advisor to the President Bukele, Secretary of Innovation Daniel Méndez, Minister of Transportation & Public Works Romeo Rodríguez, Minister of Housing Michelle Sol, Minister of Economy María Luisa Hayem, and Minister of Education José Mauricio Pineda Rodríguez. A MoU on cybersecurity was signed in San Salvador on 20 August, during MoS (PM)'s visit to the country.



MoS (PM) called on President of El Salvador Nayib Bukele in San Salvador, August 2024.

Advisor to the President Ibrajim Bukele, led a delegation to India on 14-22 April, to gain firsthand experience and oversee the operations of various potential projects that El Salvador and India can collaborate on.

India donated 50 tons of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) materials to El Salvador to support those affected by the tropical storm in June. In December, India signed a MoU for Quick Impact Projects (QIP) with El Salvador, reflecting the growing strength of the countries' partnership.

Guatemala

MoS (PM) paid an official visit to the Republic of Guatemala on 17-19 August. During the visit, he called on President of Guatemala César Bernardo Arévalo de León, and met Minister of Foreign Affairs Carlos Ramiro Martínez Alvarado.

A four-member Indian delegation led Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, visited Guatemala on 03-06 May. During this visit, India and Guatemala signed a MoU between on the 'Conservation of the Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) and the Jaguar (*Panthera onca*). Minister of Foreign Affairs Alvarado, participated in the Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit via a video message on 17 August. The summit was held in virtual mode.

On 14 March, the Indian Embassy donated over one million doses of Made-in-India medicines to the Government of Guatemala, in a ceremony held at the Ministry of Health in Guatemala City. These medicines were aimed at treating Tuberculosis, epilepsy, and type-II diabetes.

Honduras

In December, EAM held a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Honduras Eduardo Enrique Reina, on the margin of the Doha Forum in Qatar. Minister of Education of Honduras Daniel Sponda participated in the Education Ministers' Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit (VoGSS) held on 17 August, through a video message.

In December, India signed a MoU for Quick Impact Projects (QIP) with Honduras, underscoring our commitment to progress and mutual cooperation with the country.

Mexico

EAM met the then Foreign Minister of Mexico Alicia Barcena on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York on 29 September.

Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs led an official and business delegation to Mexico on 16-20 October. During the visit, she met Minister of Finance and Public Credit of Mexico Rogelio Ramírez de la O and Heads of various Parliamentary Committees, including the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Mexican Senate. She addressed an India-Mexico Investment Summit along with Ministers of Finance and Economy of Mexico City and the State of Mexico. She also held a special meeting with select group of prominent industrialists and business persons from Mexico. In Guadalajara, she addressed a Tech Leaders' Forum and held a bilateral meeting with the Governor of the state of Jalisco Pablo Lemus Navarro.

Vice Minister of Energy Transition and Planning Heberto Castillo and Vice Minister of Higher Education Luciano Concheiro Borquez participated in the Energy Ministers' Session and the Education Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August, in virtual-mode.

MoS (PM) visited Mexico on 30 September-02 October, to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Dr. Claudia Sheinbaum as the President of Mexico.

India and Mexico signed a MoU to revive the Octavio Paz Chair of Indian Studies at the El Colegio de Mexico in Mexico City, in March. A delegation of the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India visited Mexico on 11-14 March.

A group of 25 senior police officers from Mexico participated in a specially-curated training course at the Rashtriya Raksha

University, Gandhinagar on 25 June – 05 July under India's ITEC programme.

A 2-day workshop on the "Use of Space Systems for Forest Fire Management" was organized by ISRO on 26–28 August, in coordination with the Mexican National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR) and the Secretariat of Infrastructure, Communications and Transport (SICT) of the Mexican Space Agency (AEM).

The 10th International Day of Yoga was celebrated across several locations in Mexico, including at the Mexican Parliament, UN Office in Mexico, UNESCO, Police Academy to name a few.

Nicaragua

EAM met Foreign Minister of Nicaragua Valdrack Jaentschke, on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA session held on 29 September.

Vice Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Javier Antonio Gutiérrez Ramírez participated in the Environment Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS held on 17 August, in virtual-mode. The session focussed on climate action and sustainable development.

In February, India and Nicaragua signed a MoU on Pharmacopoeia Cooperation, focussed on regulation of medicines. Nicaragua became the first Spanish-speaking country to recognize the India Pharmacopoeia. Two officials from Nicaragua's Ministry of Health participated in a policymaker and regulatory expert visit to India in August. The programme aimed to enhance regulatory standards and deepen collaboration in the healthcare sector. In December, India and Nicaragua signed an umbrella agreement for Quick Impact Projects (QIPs). The agreement targets tangible benefits for local communities in areas such as infrastructure, education, healthcare, and sanitation.

Panama

In February, the then Foreign Minister of Panama Janaina Tewaney participated in Raisina Dialogue 2024 and held bilateral talks with EAM. Foreign Minister Javier Martínez-Acha Vásquez participated in the Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS chaired by the EAM, held on 17 August. Foreign Minister Martínez-Acha Vásquez also met EAM during the 79th UNGA session to discuss bilateral relations, in September.

In August, MoS (PM) visited Panama. He called on President of Panama Jose Raul Mulino and held a bilateral delegation-level meeting with Panama's Foreign Minister and other high-ranking officials, including Panama's Minister of Commerce & Industry, Vice Ministers from Foreign Affairs and Health,

Director General of National Immigration Service, experts from Panama Pacifico, and representatives from the National Secretariat of Science, Technology, and Innovation.

In February, India presided over the 3rd Meeting of Parties (MOP) on illicit tobacco trade and participated in Conference of the Parties (COP10) held in Panama.

In March, Panama ratified the International Solar Alliance (ISA), becoming its 97th member.

In April, Panama signed the Foundational Document on the Global Biofuel Alliance. In the same month, an Indian delegation participated in the 17th Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF) in Panama. The delegation from India consisted officers from the Ministry of Commerce, APEDA, FSSAI and Spices Board.

19 Indian companies participated in the Latin Tyre Expo to explore opportunities in the Latin American market in August.

In October, a delegation from Biological E. Ltd. visited Panama to explore vaccine collaboration opportunities with Panama. In November, the Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Panama María Eugenia López Arias, participated in the 25th International Conference of Chief Justices of the World (ICCJW) in Lucknow, India. In the same month the President of the Maritime Chamber of Panama, José Digerónimo participated in the Sagarmathan Dialogue in New Delhi.

Caribbean Countries

CARICOM

India-CARICOM relations gained momentum with 2nd India-CARICOM Summit, held on 20 November in Georgetown, Guyana. Prime Minister co-chaired the summit with the current chair of CARICOM and also Prime Minister of Grenada Dickon Mitchell. The Summit was attended by Head of states of 11 member countries in addition to Secretary-General of the CARICOM Carla Barnett. To further India-CARICOM relations, Prime Minister put forward seven pillar proposal to the CARICOM Member States as “C-A-R-I-C-O-M”, where “C stands for Capacity building, A for Agriculture and food security, R for Renewable energy and climate change, I for Innovation, technology and trade, C for Cricket and culture, O for Ocean economy and maritime security, and M for Medicine and health care.”

After the India-CARICOM summit, Prime Minister held series of bilateral meetings with the Heads of Governments of Dominica, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, Bahamas, Antigua & Barbuda, St Lucia and Grenada.

The India-COFCOR (India-CARICOM Foreign Ministerial) meeting was held on 27 September on the sidelines of UNGA in New York.

Prior to Prime Minister's visit to Guyana, the 2nd India-CARICOM Joint Commission Meeting was held in virtual-mode on 06 November. The participants reviewed the entire spectrum of relations between India and CARICOM during the meeting.

Antigua & Barbuda

On the sidelines of 2nd India-CARICOM Summit, Prime Minister held talks with Prime Minister of Antigua & Barbuda Gaston Browne in Georgetown, Guyana.

MoS (PM) visited Antigua & Barbuda on 06-08 October. During the visit, he met Governor General Rodney Williams, Prime Minister Gaston Browne, Foreign Minister E.P. Chet Greene and Minister of Tourism & Investment Charles Fernandes. He planted a palm sapling at the Campus of American University in Antigua, commemorating Prime Minister's 'Ek Ped Maa ke Naam' initiative.

Secretary, West (MEA) visited Antigua & Barbuda to represent India in the 4th International Conference of Small Island and Developing States (SIDS) held on 27-30 May.

The Bahamas

Prime Minister of The Bahamas Philip Davies led the country's delegation to the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit held in Georgetown, Guyana on 20 November. Prime Minister held a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Davis on the sidelines of the India-CARICOM Summit.

Minister of Education and Technical and Vocational Training of The Bahamas Glenys Margarat E. Hanna-Martin, participated in the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August, held in virtual-mode.

Barbados

On 20 November, Prime Minister met with Prime Minister of Barbados Mia Amor Mottley on the sidelines of the 2nd India-CARICOM Leaders' Summit in Georgetown, Guyana. Prime Minister Mottley announced the decision of her government to confer the 'Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados' upon the Prime Minister, in recognition of his leadership in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and for strengthening bilateral ties between India and Barbados.

The Minister of Industry, Innovation, Science & Technology of Barbados Marsha K.A. Caddle, M.P represented her country at the Finance Ministers' session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS, held on 17 August.



Prime Minister met Prime Minister of Barbados Mia Amor Mottley on the sidelines of the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit held in Guyana, November 2024.

MoS (PM) visited Barbados on 05-06 October, as part of his official tour to the Caribbean. During his visit, he held informal discussions with Foreign Minister Kerrie Drurard Symonds and engaged with members of the Indian diaspora. He also visited the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and met with officials from Invest Barbados and Export Barbados.

Additional Secretary (Latin American and the Caribbean) met with Barbados' Minister of State for Education, on the sidelines of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) meeting in Suriname on 08 May.

Commonwealth of Dominica

President of the Commonwealth of Dominica Sylvanie Burton conferred the "Dominica Award of Honour", the highest National Award of the country upon the Prime Minister for his statesmanship and support to Dominica during the COVID pandemic and his commitment to strengthening India-Dominica ties. The ceremony was held on the sidelines of the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit held in Georgetown, Guyana on 20 November.

Prime Minister of Dominica Roosevelt Skerrit visited India on a private visit on 25-28 October. MoS (PM) met Prime Minister Skerrit in New Delhi, during which they exchanged views on further strengthening of bilateral ties between India and Dominica. Prime Minister Skerrit also attended the India-

CARICOM Summit held on 20 November, in Georgetown; where he held a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy Vince Henderson met EAM at the India-CARICOM Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 27 September in New York on the side lines of the UNGA.

Minister of Education of Dominica Octavia Alfred, participated in the Education Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

The flagship project for 'Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods and Resilience in the Kalinago Territory', a grant project from India, was completed in Dominica in January.

Cuba

India and Cuba maintained historical support for each other at multilateral fora throughout the year. EAM met Foreign Minister of Cuba Bruno Rodriguez, in New York on the sidelines of the 79th UN General Assembly session on 25 September.

Vice-Minister of Communications Wilfredo Rodriguez visited India in January to participate in the India Electronics Expo/India Soft Expo and signed 'India Stack'- MoU on "Cooperation in the field of Sharing successful Digital Solutions Implemented at Population Scale for Digital Transformation."

A 3-member delegation led by Deputy Chief at the National Staff of Civil Defence (Secretary rank) First Colonel Luis Angel Macareno Veliz, participated in the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure in New Delhi on 24-25 April.

India assisted Cuba with a donation of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) worth USD 11 million in August. These APIs enabled Cuban pharmaceutical manufacturers to make anti-biotic medicines for public health care system for the next six months to one year. Foreign Minister Rodriguez also delivered a video message at the Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd edition of VoGSS on 17 August.

Dominican Republic

MoS (PM) paid official visit to Dominican Republic on 15-17 August to participate in the swearing in ceremony of President Luis Abinader on his re-election as President of Dominican Republic. He also called on Foreign Minister Roberto Álvarez and discussed issues of bilateral interests. MoS (PM) also interacted with members of the Indian diaspora at the Embassy premises.

MoU on Joint Economic and Trade Cooperation (JETCO) between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Dominican Republic

and Ministry of Commerce, Government of India was signed on 12 March to enhance trade, economic and commercial relation between two countries. MoU between India Meteorological Department (IMD) and the National Meteorological Office of DR (ONAMET) for bilateral cooperation in the field of meteorology was signed on 24 April.

12 Government Officials from Government Office of Information and Communication Technologies (OGTIC), MIREX, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MESCYT) and Central Bank participated in the special course in Responsible Artificial Intelligence at CDAC Delhi on 01-12 July.

The 6th Meeting of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Regional Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, hosted by Dominican Republic's Ministry of Energy & Mines, was held on 09-11 September in Santo Domingo. The opening ceremony was attended by Minister of Energy Joel Santos as the Chief Guest, DG International Solar Alliance (ISA) and representatives from 23 member countries.

A delegation led by Executive Vice President of the National Council for Climate Change (CNCCMDL) Max Puig participated in the 7th Assembly of the ISA in New Delhi on 03-05 November.

Grenada

Prime Minister of Grenada Dickon Mitchell and Prime Minister co-chaired the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit held in Guyana on 20 November. Both leaders had a separate bilateral meeting on the margins of the Summit and discussed a range of issues of mutual interest. EAM met his Grenadian counterpart Joseph Andall on the margins of India-CARICOM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New York on 27 September. Minister Andall participated in the Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit held in virtual mode on 17 August.

Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment and Renewable Energy Kerryne Z. James attended the 7th Assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) in New Delhi on 03-06 November. Grenada was elected one of the two Vice Presidents of ISA for the LAC region.

MoS (PM) paid an official visit to Grenada on 03-05 October, during which he called Prime Minister Mitchell, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Export Development Joseph Andall. MoS (PM) also witnessed ceremonial opening of the 3rd Session of the Parliament of Grenada and interacted with Governor-General Cécile La Grenade, and other leaders. MoS (PM) also interacted with the Indian Diaspora based in Grenada.

Grenada appointed their first Non-resident High Commissioner Gita Kishore Kumar Pasupuleti to India during the year, who presented his credentials to Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji on 25 November.

Guyana

Prime Minister of Guyana Brig (Ret'd) Mark Phillips visited India on 06-11 February. He called on Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Hon'ble Vice-President and met EAM and Minister of Power, New & Renewable Energy. He attended the inaugural session of the World Sustainable Development Summit, as a keynote speaker, organized by TERI in New Delhi.

Prime Minister paid a successful state visit to Guyana on 19-21 November, where he held bilateral talks with the President of Guyana Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali. Prime Minister was awarded Guyana's highest award 'Order of the Excellence' by the President of Guyana and addressed the National Assembly of Guyana as well as the Indian community and Diaspora. Prime Minister and President Ali planted a sapling as part of the initiative 'Ek Ped Maa ke Naam' in the State House. During the visit, both countries signed a total of ten agreements, encompassing areas such as hydrocarbons and energy, health and pharmaceuticals, agriculture, digital cooperation, culture and Defence & security studies.

Minister of Natural Resources Vickram Bharrat visited India for the Global South Energy Ministerial Roundtable on 07 February during the India Energy Week at Goa. He met Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Housing & Urban Affairs. Minister of Housing and Water Collin Croal visited Delhi to attend India Water Week in September and met Minister of Jal Shakti on the sidelines of the event.

Chief of Defence Staff Brig Omar Khan visited India from 04-09 November. During visit he had meetings with Defence Secretary, Chief of Defence Staff General, Chief of Army General, Navy Chief Admiral and Chief of the Air Staff. He also visited various Defence manufacturing facilities at Pune, Kanpur and Delhi. Under the rubric of development partnership, India successfully delivered Two HAL-228 Dornier Aircraft to Guyana in March.

Guyana participated in Exercise Tarang Shakti held in September and In-Step Strategic Engagement programme held at NDC, New Delhi on 23 Sept – 05 October.

In 2023-24, under the ITEC Program, three customized courses viz; Rice Milling and Value Addition to Rice, Physiological Interview Techniques in Forensic Investigation and National Security Guard/PSOC-PS was conducted for the Guyanese officials. Additionally, two professors from National Forensic Science University, Gandhinagar visited Guyana to impart training in Polygraphy and a team of 15 member Media Professionals from Department of Public Information visited India for Media trailing.

Haiti

General Director, Ministry of Environment of Haiti Joseph Emmanuel Philippe, participated in the Environment Ministers' session of the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August.

Director in Ministry of Environment of Haiti Vladimir Chery, participated in the 7th Assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) in New Delhi on 03-05 November.

Owing to worsening security situation in Haiti and suspension of all commercial flights to and from Haiti, Operation Indravati was launched by the Ministry on 22 March to evacuate stranded Indians from Haiti. A total of 17 Indian nationals were evacuated to Dominican Republic in March and April.

In August, the Indian government donated 9 tons of blood transfusion essentials, reagents for immuno-hematology, rapid tests, Elisa and others items worth approximately USD 83,000 to support the National Transfusion Safety Program of the Ministry of Public Health and Population of Haiti.

Jamaica

Prime Minister of Jamaica Andrew Holness paid an official visit to India on 30 September - 03 October at the invitation of Prime Minister. This was the first ever bilateral visit of a Prime Minister of Jamaica to India. During the visit, he met Prime Minister and called on Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji and the Hon'ble Vice President. He inaugurated the newly named street in New Delhi as "Jamaica Marg", symbolising friendship between the peoples of the two countries. Four MoUs were signed in the field of Cultural Exchange Programme, Sports, Digital Payment Systems and Digital Public Infrastructure. He visited Saranath and National Crafts Museum and the Dashashwamedha Ghat in Varanasi. The visit heralds a new era in India-Jamaica bilateral relations.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Kamina Johnson Smith, and Minister of Education Fayval Williams, participated in the Foreign Ministers' and Education Ministers' Sessions respectively, in the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit hosted by India on 17 August. Minister Johnson Smith also led the delegation of Jamaica to participate in the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit held in Georgetown, Guyana and met EAM on the sidelines of the Summit.

The Mission organised a Business Event titled "India Jamaica Business Opportunities: Towards a Developed India by 2047: Viksit Bharat", on 13 December. The event witnessed participation by 250 Jamaican Cabinet Ministers, members of Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO), members of parliament, business community and members of the media. The event also included a Business and Ethics interactive Session by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Art of Living Foundation, promoting linkages with Jamaican business community.

St. Kitts & Nevis

Foreign Minister of St. Kitts & Nevis Denzil Douglas visited India on 04-09 August, marking the first ever Foreign

Ministerial visit from St. Kitts & Nevis to India. Minister Douglas met EAM and discussed ways to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in health, IT, sports, commerce, consumer affairs, agriculture and food security. Foreign Minister Douglas also met Ministers of Health, Consumer Affairs, Youth & Sports and Minister of State for Commerce & Industry. As major outcome, Three MoUs were signed during the visit, namely – a MoU on Sports Cooperation, an agreement on India STACK and MoU on Foreign office Consultations.

Saint Lucia

Prime Minister held bilateral discussions with Prime Minister of Saint Lucia Philip J. Pierre on the sidelines of the 2nd India-CARICOM Leaders' Summit in Georgetown, Guyana on 20 November.

Minister of Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology, and Vocational Training of Saint Lucia, Shawn A. Edward, participated in the Education Ministers' session at the 3rd Voice of the Global South Summit, hosted by Minister of Education on 17 August.

Additional Secretary, Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) met Saint Lucia's Minister of External Affairs, International Trade and Civil Aviation, Alva R. Baptiste, on 07 May, on the margins of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS-AEC) Ministerial Meeting in Paramaribo.

Under the India-UNDP Fund, a project titled "Upgrading Saint Lucia's Capacity to Provide Impactful Vocational Training for Marginalized Youth," was completed successfully. A visa waiver agreement for diplomatic and official passport holders was signed between Saint Lucia and India on 16 April.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG)

Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Ralph Everard Gonsalves participated in the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit held on 20 November in Georgetown, which was chaired by Prime Minister. On 26 September, EAM met Prime Minister Ralph E. Gonsalves on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA during the Joint Ministerial Meeting of L-69 and C-10 groupings.

Speaker of Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and a former Cabinet Minister of Govt. of St. Vincent & Grenadines René Mercedes Baptiste visited India on a Distinguished Visitors Programme in March.

India extended humanitarian assistance to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in response to the devastating effects of Hurricane Beryl, which made landfall in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, on 01 July. A flight carrying 10 tons of relief materials arrived in SVG on 27 September and additional supplies amounting to around 50 tons was dispatched by

sea route. A MoU was signed on 30 October, for the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) development through supply of agro-processing machinery from India.

Arrowroot Industry Modernization project under the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, was concluded. It aims to build climate resilience and promote sustainable livelihoods for indigenous communities.

A new Umbrella MoU for implementation of Quick Impact Projects was signed to facilitate further development initiatives in SVG. India successfully implemented four Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in SVG, benefiting various sectors including education, health, and infrastructure.

Suriname

On 05 June, Suriname marked the 151st anniversary of Indian immigration with a series of events in Paramaribo. President of Suriname Chandrikapersad Santokhi along with other dignitaries, paid floral tributes to the first Indian immigrants, commemorating their contributions to Suriname's development. This found a special mention in the Prime Minister's Mann ki Baat address delivered in June.

On 17 August, President Santokhi participated in the Leaders' Session of the 3rd Voice of the Global South Summit via video message and Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning Marciano Dasai participated in the Environment Ministers' Session of the summit. The summit was held in virtual-mode.

Prime Minister met with President Santokhi on the margins of the 2nd India-CARICOM Leaders' Summit in Georgetown, Guyana on 20 November.

EAM met Suriname's Foreign Minister Albert Ramdin during the India-CARICOM Foreign Ministers' meeting on the sidelines of 79th UNGA on 27 September.

The Chairman of the National Assembly of Suriname Marinus Bee led a parliamentary delegation to India on 04-08 February. The delegation met the Speaker of the Lok Sabha as well as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. This marked the first foreign delegation to visit Ram Mandir in Ayodhya.

Additional Secretary, LAC represented EAM at the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) meetings in Paramaribo on 06-09 May. The delegation participated in the 16th Business Forum of Greater Caribbean, the 8th International Cooperation Conference, and the opening ceremony of the 29th Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the ACS. He also separately held a bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister Albert Ramdin of Suriname.

The Chief of the Armed Services of Suriname Colonel Kioe A. Sen participated in the Ex- Tarang Shakti held in India in September.

A bilateral MoU was signed for the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) under the grant of USD 1 million.

Trinidad and Tobago (T&T)

Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago (T&T) Keith Rowley paid a working visit to Mumbai in May to explore trade and investment opportunities. During the visit, Prime Minister Rowley also met the Governor of Maharashtra.

Prime Minister Rowley attended the 2nd India-CARICOM Summit on 20 November in Georgetown, Guyana and held a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister. Both leaders discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations. They witnessed exchange of an MoU for setting up of Integrated Automatic Fruit and Vegetable Primary Processing Activities in Trinidad & Tobago.

Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs Amery Browne met EAM on 27 September at the India-CARICOM Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on the sidelines of the UNGA.

Minister of Digital Transformation Hassel Bacchus led the 2nd Technical Mission to India on 23-29 January to take forward the ongoing bilateral collaboration in the field of digital transformation. NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL) exchanged Technical License Agreement with T&T's Ministry of Digital Transformation in Port of Spain on 26 September, thus making T&T the first country in the CARICOM region to adopt UPI.

MoS (PM) paid an official visit to Trinidad & Tobago on 23-24 August. During the visit, he called on Prime Minister Keith Rowley, and held bilateral talks with Minister Browne to discuss entire gamut of bilateral ties. A MoU for the Authorization of Gainful Employment of Dependents of Members of a Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post was signed during the visit. MoS (PM) also called on President of the Senate Nigel de Freitas, and Speaker of the House of Representatives Bridgid Annisette-George. Additionally, he interacted with the Indian diaspora based in the country in a function.

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Digital Transformation Cory Belfont participated in the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit on 17 August.

With a support of USD 1 million provided by the Indian government, the flagship project for 'Bringing High and Low Technology (HALT)' under the India-UNDP Fund was accomplished following the handover of 6 Health services Robots to Minister of Health of T&T Terrance Deyalsingh on 17 August.

An International Regional Hindi Conference (IRHC) was organised in Port of Spain on 06-08 September by the Mission with participation of scholars from India and the Caribbean region.

CHAPTER

10

Indo-Pacific

India's vision for the Indo-Pacific focuses on a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific. India emphasizes respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations in the region, equality of all nations, peaceful resolution of disputes, avoidance of use or threat of use of force and adherence to international laws, rules and regulations. India's objective is a multi-faceted engagement with all countries in the region and those with interests in it, encompassing political, security, economic, and socio-cultural spheres, aimed at Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).

The year 2024 marked a decade of the Act East Policy. India's engagement with various mechanisms in the Indo-Pacific frameworks including, inter alia, Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), East Asia Summit (EAS), Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) and Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) have witnessed a steady rise.

Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

India's relationship with ASEAN is a key pillar of its foreign policy and the cornerstone of its Act East Policy and the Indo-

Pacific vision that was thereafter built on it. India supports ASEAN unity and centrality in the evolving architecture of the Indo-Pacific. India's formal engagement with ASEAN began in 1992 as the Sectoral Dialogue Partner and subsequently as a Dialogue Partner in 1996, which was upgraded to the Summit level in 2002, Strategic Partnership in 2012 and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2022.

India and ASEAN have a comprehensive engagement covering a wide array of areas at all levels, including six Ministerial engagements in Foreign Affairs, Commerce, Tourism, Agriculture, Digital and Defence, besides official level dialogues in various areas of cooperation.

Engagement with ASEAN is a multi-level interaction process. At the apex is the annual India-ASEAN Summit, supported by the India-ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and the India-ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting. Prime Minister joined ASEAN leaders to review the progress of India-ASEAN Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and chart the future direction of cooperation at the 21st India-ASEAN Summit, held in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 10 October. This was Prime Minister's 11th engagement with ASEAN leaders. Two Joint Statements were issued on the occasion: (i) on Strengthening India-ASEAN Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Peace, Stability and Prosperity in the Region in the context of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) with the Support of India's Act East Policy (AEP) (ii) on Advancing Digital Transformation. EAM visited Vientiane on



1st India-ASEAN Women Scientists Conclave was held in Singapore, April 2024.

25-27 July to participate in India-ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Post Ministerial Conference.

Deep-rooted civilisational linkages between India and ASEAN have been further strengthened through various initiatives including restoration of shared cultural heritage in five ASEAN countries and organisation of various people-centric events. Some of the key highlights towards people-to-people engagement were the India-ASEAN Women Scientists Conclave in Singapore on 24-26 April, visit of cancer specialists and policy makers from ASEAN for the Annual National Cancer Grid Meeting in Mumbai on 06-08 November.

8th Roundtable of India-ASEAN Network of Think Tanks was held on 07-08 November in Singapore. Other highlights of India's engagement with ASEAN included the 3rd India-ASEAN Music Festival held in New Delhi from 29 November to 01 December; India-ASEAN Scale-hub in Bali, Indonesia on 03-05 July; 4th India-ASEAN Startup Festival organised on 28-30 November; visit of Indian media delegation to Thailand and Lao PDR and ASEAN Media delegation to India under India-ASEAN Media Exchange Programme and doubling of Masters Scholarship slot for ASEAN at Nalanda University. The 1st India-ASEAN Cyber Policy Dialogue and operationalisation of India-ASEAN Fund for Digital Future were other key initiatives this year.



EAM delivered the keynote address at the 8th Roundtable of India-ASEAN Network of Think Tanks in Singapore, November 2024.
Singapore, April 2024.

ASEAN has emerged as a key trade partner, a significant source and destination for Foreign Direct Investments and tourist flow. Some ASEAN member states have also emerged as crucial technology partners. Improving connectivity with ASEAN has been India's focus. Currently there are direct flights to seven Member States. Emerging fintech collaborations and digital connectivity shall further strengthen partnerships with ASEAN.

To further expand cooperation, Review of India-ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement is being pursued while efforts are being put to enhance practical cooperation in many areas including maritime, cyber security, digital economy, as well as, in new and emerging sectors. Further, the announcements made at the 21st India-ASEAN Summit including celebration of the year 2025 as India-ASEAN Year of Tourism and finalisation of a new India-ASEAN Plan of Action (2026-2030) will guide both sides in realizing the full potential of India-ASEAN Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

East Asia Summit (EAS)

Established in 2005, the Leaders-led EAS format is the most vital part of the ASEAN-led frameworks, primarily because of the contribution it makes to building an environment of strategic trust in the region. India sees the EAS as the logical platform to promote a free, open, inclusive, transparent, rules-based, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.

India's engagement with EAS is a multilevel interaction process, at the apex being East Asia Summit supported by the EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting (EAS FMM) and the EAS Senior Officials' Meeting (EAS SOM).

On 11 October, Prime Minister participated in the 19th East Asia Summit, chaired by Lao PDR in its capacity as the ASEAN Chair. Prime Minister underlined India's support for ASEAN centrality and called for ensuring a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific. Reiterating the importance of the EAS mechanism and reaffirming India's support to further strengthen it, Prime Minister recalled support received from EAS participating countries on the revival of Nalanda University. Prime Minister took this opportunity to invite the EAS countries for a Heads of Higher Education Conclave to be held at Nalanda University. The leaders also exchanged views on regional and international issues affecting peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. Underlining the severe impact of conflicts in the Global South, Prime Minister highlighted that the path of dialogue and diplomacy based on a humanitarian approach must be adopted for peaceful resolution of conflicts in the world. He further reiterated that there was no solution for them to be found on the battlefield. Prime Minister stressed that terrorism along with cyber and maritime challenges posed a serious threat to global peace and security, and hence, countries must come together to combat it.



India-IORA Cruise Tourism Conference was held in New Delhi, June 2024.



Prime Minister participated in the 19th East Asia Summit held in Vientiane, October 2024.

Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

In 2020, India became an observer member of the Indian Ocean Commission. India continues to engage with the western Indian Ocean countries in the IOC as an observer.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

India is a founding member of IORA since its establishment in 1997. India assumed the role of Vice-Chair of Indian Ocean Rim Association for the period 2023-25. India is also leading the Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security and Blue Economy during this period. These decisions were announced during the Council of Ministers Meeting held in Colombo in October 2023, which was attended by EAM. India also led the formulation of IORA's Outlook on Indo-Pacific in 2023 and is working on a roadmap to implement it.

Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI)

On 01 June 2018, Prime Minister outlined India's vision for the Indo-Pacific region in his speech delivered at the Shangri La Dialogue in Singapore. India calls for a free, open and

inclusive order in the Indo-Pacific, based upon respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations, peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue, and adherence to international rules and laws. India's concept of the Indo-Pacific is inclusive in nature, and supports an approach that respects the right to freedom of navigation and overflight for all in the international seas. India's approach is based on cooperation and collaboration, given the need for shared responses to shared challenges in the region and is premised upon the principle of 'ASEAN-Centrality'.

On 04 November 2019, Prime Minister launched the Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI) at the 14th East Asia Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand. As an open global initiative, the IPOI draws on existing regional cooperation architecture and mechanisms to focus on seven central pillars conceived around Maritime Security; Maritime Ecology; Maritime Resources; Capacity Building and Resource Sharing; Disaster Risk Reduction and Management; Science, Technology and Academic Cooperation; and Trade Connectivity and Maritime Transport.

Responding to India's invitation for international collaboration within the IPOI framework, several countries have assumed leadership roles in various pillars. The UK has agreed to co-lead the Maritime Security pillar; Australia is at the helm of the Maritime Ecology pillar; France and Indonesia have jointly agreed to lead the Marine Resources pillar;



Secretary (East) with the participants of the training module on “Training of Trainers on Computer Networking Technology” under India’s Development Partnership with IMT-GT in New Delhi, September-October 2024.

Germany has agreed to lead in the Capacity Building and Resource Sharing pillar; Singapore and Italy are co-leading the Science, Technology, and Academic Cooperation pillar; and Japan and the US are co-leading Trade Connectivity and Maritime Transport pillar.

In 2024, Thailand joined IPOI as co-lead of the Maritime Ecology pillar and Bangladesh decided to co-lead the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management pillar with India. Greece has also become a member of the IPOI.

Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC)

Established in 2000, Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) is the oldest sub-regional mechanism in the Mekong sub-region. In 2024, India organised the first meeting of the Working Group of Education and the Working Group of Water Resource Management, of which it is the Chair. There are ten Working Groups for the ten identified areas of cooperation. The MGC Business Council was also set up in 2024.

Under MGC, India implements several short-gestation, high impact projects called as Quick Impact Projects (QIPs). These projects with a normal gestation period of up to one year directly benefit the local communities with results that are immediate and visible. Under this scheme, each

CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) country is currently offered to undertake a maximum of 10 projects per year at cost not exceeding USD 50,000 per project. 121 such projects have been sanctioned so far since 2016. For capacity building, India, since 2005, has been offering 50 MGC scholarships per year to students from MGC countries to pursue diploma and degree courses in history and culture, tourism, IT, vocational training, engineering, management, teachers’ training, film direction, among others.

Indonesia–Malaysia–Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT)

Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) sub-regional cooperation was set up in 2005 with the aim of accelerating and facilitating economic development in the participating countries through greater integration of trade and commerce in the sub-region. India joined IMT-GT as its first Development Partner in September 2022. The first Early Harvest Project (EHP), the “Training of Trainers on Computer Networking Technology”, was organised by India at the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) from 23 September to 04 October in New Delhi, as part of the Early Harvest Projects (EHP) under India’s Development Partnership with IMT-GT for 2024-25.

CHAPTER

11

BIMSTEC & SAARC

BIMSTEC

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a grouping of seven member states lying in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal. The organization came into existence on 6 June 1997 through the 'Bangkok Declaration'. Five BIMSTEC Summits have been held so far - 2004 (Bangkok), 2008 (New Delhi), 2014 (Nay Pyi Taw), 2018 (Kathmandu) and 2022 (Colombo-virtual). India hosted BIMSTEC Outreach Summit and Leaders Retreat in Goa in October 2016. The 5th BIMSTEC Summit was held on 30 March 2022 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Leaders participated in the Summit virtually. At the Summit, the Leaders adopted the BIMSTEC Charter, a milestone in the transition of BIMSTEC from a grouping into a regional organization. The BIMSTEC Charter entered into force on 20 May. The sixth BIMSTEC Summit was scheduled to be held in Bangkok on 4 September, but was postponed.

Important meetings

India hosted the 2nd BIMSTEC Foreign Minister's Retreat on 11 and 12 July in New Delhi. India hosted the 1st ever Informal Meeting of BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the 79th Session of UNGA on 27 September,

New York. National Security Advisor participated in the 4th BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs' (BNSCs) Meeting held on 24-26 July, in Myanmar. India hosted the third Meeting of the Expert Group on Maritime Security Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal on 11 September in New Delhi. A report of the BIMSTEC Eminent Persons' Group on the Future Direction of BIMSTEC has been submitted.

The BIMSTEC Youth Water Sports 2024 was organized by India on 5-10 February in New Delhi. The First BIMSTEC Business Summit in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) was held on 06-08 August, New Delhi. India hosted an exposure visit for cancer care professionals for BIMSTEC countries to participate in National Cancer Grid (NCG)'s Annual Meeting in Mumbai, India.

Secretary (East) represented India in the 24th Session of the BIMSTEC Senior Officials Meeting virtually hosted by Thailand on 19 December 2024.

SAARC

India is a founding member of SAARC. India's SAARC engagement is in line with its 'Neighbourhood First' Policy.

The 59th meeting of the SAARC Programming Committee was held on 06 and 07 March 2024, after almost three years, in Kathmandu.



Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports inaugurated the 1st BIMSTEC Aquatics Championships in New Delhi, February 2024.

The SAARC Secretary General Mohammad Golam Sarwar visited India on 11-15 May and called on the erstwhile MoS (RRS), Foreign Secretary and Secretary (East). He also visited New Delhi on 11-13 November and met with Secretary (East), MEA.

India participated in several SAARC meetings at expert level during the year.

C H A P T E R

12

UN & International Organisations

79th Session of the UN General Assembly

Former Prime Minister of Cameroon Philemon Yang was elected on 06 June to serve as President of the 79th Session of the General Assembly (PGA). The 79th Session of the

General Assembly (UNGA) started on 10 September. The theme of the Session was: “Unity and diversity for advancing peace, sustainable development and human dignity, everywhere and for all.” India actively participated and effectively articulated its position at the session on relevant issues, including those impacting the Global South.



Prime Minister delivered his remarks at the United Nations Summit of The Future in New York, September 2024



EAM delivered India's National Statement at the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, September 2024

The highlight of this year's UNGA session was the 'Summit of the Future', a high-level event held during the High-level Week of the 79th UNGA in September, bringing different world leaders together. Prime Minister addressed the summit and presented India's human-centric approach to sustainable development. Prime Minister also expressed solidarity with countries of the Global South and called for balanced regulations to promote safe and responsible use of technology. He noted that India is open to sharing its digital public infrastructure for greater public good. Prime Minister intervened that "reform is the key to relevance" and that "global action must match global ambition".

The Summit adopted a "Pact for the Future" with 56 action points across five areas. These were, Sustainable Development & Financing for Development, International Peace and Security; Science, Technology and Innovation and Digital Cooperation, Youth and Future Generations, and Transforming Global Governance: Besides the Pact, two other documents, the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations were annexed with the Pact.

Prime Minister also held bilateral meetings with several leaders including the Prime Minister of Nepal and Crown Prince of Kuwait. He also met the Presidents of the State of Palestine, Vietnam, and Ukraine.

EAM led the Indian delegation for the high-level week at the 79th session of UNGA and addressed the General Debate

of the High-level Segment of the 79th UNGA in New York on 28 September. In his statement, EAM presented the unprecedented challenges being faced by the world and the achievements of India in harnessing the transformative potential of digital innovation, people-centric policies, and empowerment of vulnerable groups. EAM also noted that a modernised UN must prioritise collaboration, equitable growth, and conflict resolution to leave no one behind and build a better future.

On the sidelines of the UNGA, EAM called on the Prime Minister of Belgium and held bilateral meetings with the Foreign Ministers of Algeria, Bolivia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Burundi, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, El Salvador, France, Greece Jordan, Malta, Montenegro and Liechtenstein. He also held bilateral meetings with the Foreign Ministers of Guyana, Iraq, Moldova, Morocco, Nicaragua, The Netherlands, North Macedonia, Panama, Romania, Russia, Turkmenistan, Syria, Sweden, Somalia, Slovenia, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, UAE, UK, Uzbekistan, Venezuela and Yemen.

EAM also met the UN Secretary-General António Guterres and PGA Philomen Yang. During the visit, EAM also participated in plurilateral meetings of the Foreign Ministers of the G4, G20, IBSA, BRICS, CARICOM, CELAC, L.69 + C-10 and BIMSTEC. In addition, EAM addressed events organized by Observer Research Foundation and Asia Society during the High Level Week.



EAM with the Foreign Ministers of BIMSTEC countries on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York, September 2024

Debates and processes

India continued its active engagement in debates, negotiations and processes of the UNGA in 2024. For India, development issues, multilateral reforms, including UNSC reforms, formed a thrust area of India's focus and activities. India took forward the discussions by pushing its agenda on key issues like debt sustainability and socio-economic equality for all, Financing for Development (FfD4), ICTs for sustainable development, eradication of poverty, agricultural development, food security and nutrition, existential threat posed by sea-level rise etc. India's positions were driven primarily by the development priorities of the Global South and paved the way for projecting our growing credentials as a leading South-South development partner.

Social issues pertaining to women, children, population and urbanisation were also advanced during the year. India's participation in debates on peace, security, and political dimensions reinforced India's traditional positions in these areas. The side-events during the High-level Week in September on existential threats posed by sea-level rise attested to India's firm commitment to combating climate change and underscored our views on climate equity and justice. This also highlighted our leadership on climate change including through the Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) movement, the International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), and

Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA). Through our efforts on issues of climate finance, India highlighted the principle of common but differentiated responsibility for addressing the concerns of the Global South.

In addition, India's abiding faith in dialogue and diplomacy was highlighted during the debates on major geopolitical issues such as Palestine, Gaza etc.

UN Security Council Reforms

India continued to push for reformed multilateralism, particularly UNSC reforms through proactive engagement including on the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) process. India also focused on the fifth cluster in The Pact for the Future pertaining to transforming Global Governance.

India's outreach and coordination with reform-oriented groupings like G4, L.69 and C-10 continued. EAM met Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Germany and Japan during the G4 meeting at the Ministerial level in New York, on the sidelines of the high-level week. The Ministers underscored the need for undertaking urgent UNSC reforms through text-based negotiations. The first ever Joint Ministerial Meeting of L.69 and C-10 was also held in New York. EAM stressed the need for comprehensive UNSC reform in both permanent and non-permanent categories, by calling for concrete outcomes in a time-bound manner.



EAM participated in the Joint Ministerial Meeting of L-69 and C-10 groupings of nations on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York, September 2024



The 10th International Day of Yoga themed “Yoga for Self and Society” celebrated at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, June 2024

India strongly reaffirmed its position at the IGN process during the 79th session of the UNGA. India stressed the need for reforming the UNSC to enable it to respond effectively to the current global challenges. It called for greater representation, particularly in the permanent category of the-Council. On the IGN process itself, India called for text-based negotiations and an outcome-centric approach, in a time bound manner.

International Day of Yoga

The 10th International Day of Yoga themed “Yoga for Self and Society” was celebrated at the United Nations Headquarters on 21 June. Deputy Secretary General Amina J Mohammed joined by Permanent Representatives (PR) and delegates from the UN member states, including senior UN officials and staff and members of the Indian community, participated in the yoga day celebrations.

Non-Aligned Movement

As a founding member of NAM, India continued its engagement in the grouping. EAM represented India at the NAM Summit in Kampala from 17-20 January. At the NAM Ministerial Meeting in New York in September 2024, Secretary (West), MEA emphasised that NAM remains fit for purpose, reflective of contemporary realities, thus making the organisation more appealing to the youth.

Peacekeeping

India remains cumulatively the largest Troop Contributing Country (TCC) with about 2,90,000 personnel deployed since 1950. A total of 180 Indian Peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty. Currently, India is the fourth largest contributor with more than 5000 peacekeepers deployed in 09 out of 11 UN peacekeeping missions.



Major Radhika Sen of the Indian Army, was conferred with the 'UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year' Award by Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres at UN Headquarters, May 2024

In its engagements, India continued to call for involving the TCC in formulation of mandate for peacekeeping missions. India stressed on the need for strategic communication in peacekeeping to allow for clarity amongst all stakeholders on mandate delivery. India stressed having realistic and clear exit strategies as part of our advocacy on peacekeeping operations. India also highlighted in various forums that peacekeepers should be adequately equipped and funded to not only ensure their safety but also achieve effective mandate objectives. India took the initiative in technology infusion into peacekeeping as we proceed to support systems like "Unite Aware" initiative towards its wider adaptation.

In supporting greater participation of women in peacekeeping, aligning with the Action for Peacekeeping, India is also the first country to deploy an all-women police unit to a peacekeeping mission – United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) from 2007 to 2016. Since 2019, an all-women Female Engagement Team (FET) with women soldiers of the Indian army have been deployed in the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), Sudan and recently in July 2024, in UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

Major Radhika Sen, who served with the MONUSCO peacekeeping force in the eastern DRC from March 2023 to April 2024 was named the United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year for her work. India also supported the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda co-hosting an event with Germany and Switzerland during the WPS week in New York. Director General of the Medical Services (DGMS) in the Indian Army represented India at the event.

India has been actively promoting accountability and the rule of law for crimes against Peacekeepers through the Group of Friends for Promoting Accountability for Crimes against Peacekeepers. India is also taking the lead in the establishment of a Memorial Wall for Peacekeepers in the UN headquarters.

In November 2024, the India-UN Strategic Dialogue on peacekeeping was held, which touched upon and paved the way for enhanced cooperation between India and the UN on all aspects of peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding

In its engagements, while supporting peacebuilding efforts, India continued to maintain that peacebuilding needs to be post-conflict with due consideration for sovereignty of nations. Having a holistic approach towards prevention of conflict while ensuring host nation participation and consent was stressed upon by India.

India has actively participated in the meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in the discharge of its advisory and bridging roles. India welcomed sustained and predictable financing of peacebuilding activities and upholds the central principle of national ownership of projects and development trajectories funded through the peacebuilding

fund. India welcomed USD 50 million in assessed contribution to the peacebuilding fund as a means of flexible and sustained financing for peacebuilding activities and encouraged appropriate transparency and oversight mechanisms. As one of the top TCCs, India will continue to be a member of the Peacebuilding Commission for another term of two years from 2025-2026.

Counter Terrorism

One of the top priorities for India at the UN is Counter Terrorism (CT), where India advocated for a comprehensive multilateral action to counter terrorism, provision of capacity-building support to member states, effective implementation of UN CT-related sanctions as well as strengthening collective action against terrorism.

India actively supported the capacity-building efforts of the UN Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT), and has been supporting a call for greater autonomy of the office. India also emphasised for greater synergies between UNOCT agencies and international forums such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), to promote and implement terror financing standards, counter the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes and advocate for the 'right to justice' for victims of cross-border terrorism, among others. Heightened interactions among these forums will facilitate the early finalisation and adoption of the Convention on Countering of International Terrorism (CCIT) thereby providing a legal definition of 'International Terrorism.' In 2024, India contributed USD 500,000 to the UN Trust Fund for Counter Terrorism.

India participated in the 23rd Coordination Committee meeting held on 25 September and the 14th Ministerial meeting of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) on 27 September, held in New York. India also participated in the Ministerial meeting of the Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism (GOFVOT) held on 25 September. India further participated in the periodical meetings of the Advisory Board to the UN Counter Terrorism Centre (UNCCT), held on 25 March and chaired by Saudi Arabia.

In keeping with its commitments on CT issues, India participated in the Global Conference on Victims of Terrorism held on 08-09 October in Vittoria, Spain. Ambassador of India to Madrid represented India at the Conference and spoke at the panel discussion on "Institutional action to ensure victims and survivors are granted their rights and supported in their need".

Fourth Committee on Special Political and Decolonisation

India has been at the forefront of the fight against colonisation in the debates of the Fourth Committee. India advocated for

a pragmatic approach towards decolonisation that would lead to fulfilment of legitimate wishes of the people of 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories. India has always underlined that national ownership is critical to all political solutions in the debate on special political missions.

Committee on Information

The 46th session of the Committee on Information was held from 29 April to 07 May. India underscored its role in successfully bridging digital divides, emphasising that "information is the currency of democracy." India called for an enhanced global outreach in languages beyond the official UN languages, advocating for a more proactive dissemination of information in Hindi to reach broader audiences. India appreciated the UN's support in commemorating the International Day of Yoga, which has fostered global awareness of this ancient tradition. The Committee adopted two resolutions viz. 'Information in the service of humanity' and 'United Nations Global Communications policies & activities' by consensus. India co-sponsored the UN Resolution declaring 21 December as the 'World Meditation Day', which was adopted on 06 December.

Hindi in the United Nations

The MoU that India signed with the UN in 2017 to promote the usage of Hindi in the UN has been extended till March 2025. So far, India has contributed a sum of USD 6.45 million in voluntary contributions towards the dissemination of news in Hindi via UN channels. To support multilingualism at the UN, India has also co-sponsored the Resolution on Multilingualism which was adopted with an overwhelming majority on 06 September. Usage of Hindi in UN public communications (UN news, weekly audio bulletins on UN radio and UN social media) that began in March 2018 has been steadily increasing, including on social media. The Hindi Website of UN News started carrying in October 2019 UN News Hindi social media accounts etc. There are over 240 posts on average every month on social media handles. Themes include health, development, environment, human rights, international peace and security, UN matters, general affairs etc.

A newsletter subscription service and RSS feed of UN News in Hindi is also offered. The UN has developed a Hindi extension on the UN News app (available at iOS and Android). There has also been a rise in the Social media reach of the Hindi@UN Social Media accounts - [Twitter 51,800+ followers], Instagram (29,700+ followers), and Facebook (6.1 million global page)].

The Indian Mission organised the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Hindi Diwas on 22 November in New York. The event was attended by a multi-party delegation of

Members of Parliament from India and PRs and Deputy PRs from over 40 countries, senior officials of the UN, academics, diaspora members, and winners of Hindi competitions that were held in the run-up to the event.

Financial Contributions

India regularly contributes, in full and on time, to the UN's regular budget as a member of the UN, which reaffirms its strong commitment to multilateralism. As in previous years, in 2024, India paid its assessed contribution in full and has consequently figured in the 2024 'Honour Roll' of the United Nations, which list the member states that fulfil their financial obligations in full and on time to the UN's Regular Budget.

Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting (CHOGM)

Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting (CHOGM) was held in Apia, Samoa from 24-26 October. The Indian delegation was led by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs. Heads elected Shirley Botchway, then incumbent Foreign Minister of Ghana as the next Secretary General of the Commonwealth. She will assume office on 01 April 2025. Antigua and Barbuda will host the next CHOGM in 2026.

Human Rights, Humanitarian and Social matters

The Third Committee of the General Assembly continued to focus on examining human rights questions and addressed important social development questions. The committee held meetings from 03 October to 22 November in the 79th Session of UNGA. It adopted a total of 48 resolutions covering subjects like trafficking, drugs and crimes, disability, violence against women and girls, freedom of religion, promotion and protection of human rights, social development, and country-specific resolutions. India co-sponsored 18 resolutions.

The 62nd Session of the Commission for Social Development was held from 05-14 February. India chaired the 62nd session of the Commission. It is the first time since 1975 that India has held this position. Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, delivered India's national statement. The 68th session of the Commission on the Status of Women was held from 11-22 March. PR delivered India's national statement. India is a member of the Commission for the tenure 2021 to 2025. The 57th Commission on Population

and Development was held from 29 April to 03 May. India highlighted its significant progress in the fields of population, education, and sustainable development.

The Declaration on Future Generations was adopted, on 22 September, at the Summit of the Future in New York. Annexed to the Pact for the Future, this declaration closely aligns with India's core priorities: poverty eradication, the right to development, gender equality, inclusive growth, climate justice, and youth empowerment. India's endorsement underscores its commitment to sustainable development and equity, supporting global efforts to protect the rights and welfare of future generations in an interconnected world.

Legal matters at UNGA

During the 79th session of the UNGA, held from 2 October to 22 November, India played a key role in the Sixth Committee (Legal), demonstrating a thoughtful and constructive approach to a wide range of legal issues. India advocated for greater inclusivity and the enhanced representation of developing nations within UN legal bodies. India actively participated in debates on crimes against humanity and put forward national statements on various agenda items, with a particular focus on the agenda on "Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism". With consistent efforts, India contributed to the adoption of a resolution by the General Assembly, which underscored its commitment to promoting global cooperation in preventing and suppressing terrorist activities. In addition to addressing terrorism, India engaged in discussions on strengthening the UN's role in the international legal system, enhancing international trade law, and upholding core legal principles.

India's contributions also extended to a wide range of important topics, including the criminal accountability of UN officials and the rule of law. India also contributed to discussions on universal jurisdiction, the work of the UN Commission on International Trade Law, the protection of persons during disasters, the role of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and issues relating to the law of the sea. Through its active participation, India underscored its dedication to advancing global legal norms and addressing a diverse array of pressing challenges in international law.

Economic and Social issues

The Economic and Finance Committee (Second Committee) of the UNGA commenced its General Debate and discussions on various agenda items on 07 October, building upon the outcomes of the Summit of the Future held on 22-23 September, during the high-level week of the 79th session of the UNGA. Other important high-level events of the high-level week included the High-level Meetings on Sea-Level

Rise and Antimicrobial Resistance. The Committee also adopted the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) which is a resolution adopted once every four years to provide strategic direction to the UN Development System.

During the 79th session of the UNGA, the Second Committee conducted its meetings for the main Session from 03 October– 27 November in which a total of 15 agenda items were dealt with, including 39 resolutions, one decision and one draft programme of the work of the next session. Of the 39 resolutions, 5 were voted upon. India voted in favour of all the resolutions. In the general debate of the Second Committee, India highlighted its response to the various challenges facing the international community, especially sustainable development. These include empowering women and youth, deploying digital technology, fostering South-South cooperation, and focusing on climate action.

Third South Summit

The Third South Summit was held on 21-22 January in Kampala, Uganda, on the theme 'Leaving No One Behind'. The Summit happened after a span of 18 years and aimed to bring new dynamism among the 134 Member States of G-77 and China. The then MoS (VM) represented India at the Summit and delivered the national statement.

SIDS4 Conference

The decennial Fourth International Conference on Small Island developing States (SIDS4) was held on 27–30 May in Antigua and Barbuda, on the theme 'Charting the course Toward Resilient Prosperity'. At the conference, the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), a ten year programme for SIDS was adopted, succeeding the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action pathway adopted in 2014. India had contributed USD 300,000 towards the organisation of this Conference. Secretary (West) led India's delegation. India also participated at the UNSG-led High Level Meeting on 'mobilising resources for SIDS' and participated in the interactive dialogue on 'Leveraging data and digital technologies and building effective institutions for a resilient future in SIDS'. CDRI launched the second call for proposals to support resilient projects in SIDS.

Global Digital Compact

In September, the General Assembly adopted the Global Digital Compact as an annex to Pact for the Future at the Summit of the Future. The Compact serves as a broad framework for cooperation between member states for an open and secure digital future for all. The emphasis on

artificial intelligence, data governance, and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in the compact complements India's aspirations in these areas.

HLPF on Sustainable Development

The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) under the auspices of the ECOSOC was held on 08-17 July with the Ministerial segment being held between 15-17 July. India was represented by the Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog. The 2024 HLPF was the first forum under the auspices of ECOSOC after the 2023 SDG Summit, which was convened by the General Assembly in September 2023. The 2024 HLPF supported the implementation of the Political Declaration and other outcomes of the SDG Summit for advancing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. 36 countries presented their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), sharing their progress on the 2030 Agenda. Permanent Mission of India (PMI) New York organised two events on the sidelines of the HLPF. The first, along with the Permanent Mission of France and International Solar Alliance on "Solar Brilliance: Empowering Lives with Universal Energy Access". The second event was organised along with NITI Aayog, UNDP and UN India on "Leaving No One Behind: India's Experience in Accelerating SDGs".

Financing for Development

The 2024 ECOSOC Financing for Development (FfD) Forum was held on 22-25 April at UN Headquarters, New York. The FfD Forum is held every year in line with its mandate laid out in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, to advance the objectives laid out in the Action Agenda. This edition of the Forum focused on critical issues related to sustainable development financing, especially in preparation for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) scheduled for 2025. Debt management, especially for developing countries, was a dominant theme, besides the need to advance towards a UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation.

Sea Level Rise

The PGA convened a high-level plenary meeting to address the existential threats posed by sea-level rise on 25 September, during the high-level week of the 79th session of the General Assembly. The overall theme of the high-level meeting was "Addressing the threats posed by sea-level rise". India was represented by Secretary (West), who shared India's approach to responding to this challenge in its own coastal regions.



EAM signed the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Agreement at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, September 2024

India-UNDP and IBSA Fund

The India-UN Development Partnership Fund was established in 2017 with a budget of USD 150 million. The Fund operates under General and Commonwealth Windows and provides voluntary funding from India to the countries of the Global South, with emphasis on SIDS (Small Island Developing States), LDC (Least Developed Countries), LLDC (Landlocked Developing Countries) and countries affected by disaster. The Fund provides end-to-end support: the host government identifies a sectoral need and the UN provides assistance in project formulation and implementation, guided by the priorities and approaches of the requesting Government. So far, the Fund has supported 84 projects in 57 countries valued at USD 68 million. Of these, till date, 44 projects have been completed and successfully handed over to the host countries and 40 are in various stages of implementation.

Following the establishment of the India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) Fund in 2004, the trilateral partnership became fully operational in 2006 to help partner countries in the Global South in the common pursuit of their broad development objectives. IBSA Fund has supported 47 projects in 34 countries, allocating USD 51.57 million. The IBSA Fund and India-UN Fund held a side event during the 4th International Conference on SIDS at Antigua and Barbuda in May. The Foreign Ministers of India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA-FMM) met during the High-level Week on 26 September and took stock of the situation.

United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS)

EAM signed the “Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction” or the “BBNJ Agreement” on 25 September in New York. The primary intent and objective of the Agreement is to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. The Agreement is a significant step forward in the codification of maritime law, addressing the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. India's signing of the BBNJ Agreement is a reflection of India's commitment towards ensuring that the oceans remain healthy and resilient.

International Day of Non-Violence

PMI New York commemorated the “International Day of Non-Violence” in the United Nations Headquarters, on 02 October, coinciding with the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The event witnessed participation of Permanent Representatives, senior UN officials, and members of the Indian community.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

The 112th Session of the International Labour Conference (112 ILC) was held in Geneva on 03-14 June. The Indian tripartite delegation comprising representatives from Workers, Employers and the Government, was led by Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment. Secretary (Labour and Employment) addressed the 112 ILC Plenary on the theme "towards a renewed social contract"; met ILO Director General Gilbert Houngbo, and senior ILO officials, and held several bilateral meetings on the sidelines of event. The Conference marked the inaugural forum of ILO Director General's flagship initiative Global Coalition for Social Justice. A side event on India's e-Shram portal was organised in the PMI on 04 June to showcase the social security schemes operating in India for the benefit of workers.

Secretary (Labour and Employment) led India's delegation to the 350th, 351st, and 352nd Sessions of the ILO Governing Body (GB), held in March, June and October-November respectively. The announcement of a feasibility study on an international reference framework on classification of occupations, a major outcome of the Employment Working Group under India's G20 Presidency in 2023, was made on the sidelines of the 352nd GB session.

International Maritime Organisation (IMO)

India, having been re-elected into the IMO Council under Category B (countries with largest interest in international seaborne trade) for the biennium 2024-25, continued to actively participate in various meetings and discussions.

The Captain and crew of the Indian Naval Ship INS Visakhapatnam received a letter of commendation from IMO for their remarkable courage and resolve in joining the fire-fighting efforts on board the Marshall Island flagged commercial vessel Marlin Luanda which caught fire in a Red Sea attack in January.

A delegation led by Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) accompanied by DG Shipping participated in the 132nd and 133rd session of the IMO Council held at the IMO Headquarters in London from 08-12 July and 18-22 November respectively. A delegation consisting of officials from MEA, MoD, Indian Navy and NSCS visited London from 01-03 October and interacted with Secretary General IMO, members of the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCOC) countries, and Friends of DCOC. India also participated as one of the eight members of the 3rd Joint ILO/IMO Tripartite Working Group (JTWG) to Identify and Address Seafarers' Issues and the Human Element which discussed and adopted guidelines on the fair treatment

of seafarers detained on suspicion of committing crimes. This was held from 26-28 November at ILO in Geneva, Switzerland.

International Organisation of Migration (IOM)

India participated in IOM Council's 115th Session from 26-28 November, which included a video statement by Secretary (CPV & OIA) in the high-level segment.

In May, India assumed the Chair of the Colombo Process (CP) for a period of two years. Secretary (CPV & OIA), MEA visited Geneva on 28 June to lead the first CP meeting after India's assumption of office as CP Chair, and outlined India's action plan for the CP, including discussions on regular migration pathways, diaspora engagement, social security portability of Indian skilled workers and use of technology to facilitate regular migration.

UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

India's candidate, Kamal Kishore, was selected to become Assistant Secretary General and Head of UNDRR through his appointment as the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction, in March.

Director General of CDRI briefed the PRs of UN member States in Geneva about CDRI's work in an event on 19 March organized by PMI in collaboration with CDRI and UNDRR.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

A delegation from the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), led by Director General, IMD attended the WMO Executive Council meeting in Geneva on 10-14 June. A delegation from IMD attended the 3rd session of WMO's Commission for Observation, Infrastructure and Information Systems (INFCOM3) meetings in Geneva on 15-19 April. A delegation from the Ministry of Earth Sciences attended the 44th meeting of WMO's Financial Advisory Committee (FINAC44) in Geneva on 06-07 June.

UNEP

India's delegation led by, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), took

part in the sixth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) which was held at Nairobi, Kenya from 26 February to 01 March. India proposed a resolution titled "Promoting sustainable lifestyles" which got adopted at UNEA-6 by consensus. This resolution, which was in line with India's global initiative- Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE), was the first such resolution adopted by a UN body. The UNEA-6 adopted 15 resolutions, focusing on the management of metals, mineral resources, chemicals and waste, water policies, ocean and seas, highly hazardous chemicals, land degradation, armed conflict, as well as the one sponsored by India on the sustainable lifestyles.

The fourth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC-4) to develop an International legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment was held in Ottawa from 21-29 April. The fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC-5) was held in Busan, South Korea from 25 November – 01 December. India's delegations in these conferences were led by Additional Secretary, MoEFCC.

India has become a Board member of the 10-Year Sustainable Framework Program (10YFP) in UNEP for the term 2024-2026.

Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention, Musonda Mumba, visited Delhi on 30-31 January and Indore on 01-03 February, to participate in the World Wetlands Day (WWD) in Sirpur, Madhya Pradesh, which is a Ramsar-recognised site. This was the first time that a Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention hosted the World Wetlands Day. The theme for WWD was "wetlands and human well-being". Ramsar Secretary General met the Minister for Forests, Environment and Climate Change on 31 January and discussed further areas of global collaboration in the field of wetland conservation.

UN-Habitat

As a member of the 36-member Executive board of UN-Habitat, India participated in the Board's 1st session from 06-08 May and the second session from 04-06 December. India has nominated Joint Secretary and Mission Director, Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs to the 30-member Expert Working Group established to develop international guidelines on people-centred smart cities as a non-binding framework for developing national/ local smart city regulations, plans and strategy.

Elections

India's performance in elections at the UN and related international organisations is listed as below:

- (i) India's candidate Jagjit Pavadia won the election to the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) for the term 2025-30 in the Government category.
- (ii) India was elected to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) for the term 2025-2029 in April 2024
- (iii) India was elected to the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the term 2025-2027 in April
- (iv) India was elected to the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) for the term 2025-2027 in April.
- (v) India was elected to the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women for the term 2025-2027 in April.
- (vi) India was re-elected to the International Seabed Authority (ISA) Council under 'Group B' during the 29th Session of the ISA held from 29 July - 02 August at Kingston, Jamaica.
- (vii) Director-General, National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad was elected as Director General of Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) for the term 2024-28 during the 24th Governing Council Meeting of CIRDAP for which elections were held on 6th June in Bangkok, Thailand. CIRDAP is a regional, intergovernmental and autonomous organization consisting of 15 member countries.
- (viii) Member Secretary, Central Silk Board, Bangalore was elected as the Secretary General of the International Sericulture Commission (ISC), Bangalore, India for the term 2025-27 for the 5th consecutive term during the election held during 10-12 October in Bucharest, Romania.
- (ix) India was elected as a member to the steering committee of the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GlobE Network) during the elections held from 24-27 September in Vienna, Austria.

UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC)

As a member of the UNHRC for the term 2022-2024, India continued its engagement and participation in UNHRC sessions this year, and in related human rights mechanisms and processes. India continued to highlight its support for the global promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to development, as well as technical assistance and capacity building cooperation among UN member States.



EAM met United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk in Geneva, September 2024



EAM inaugurated new building, which houses India's Permanent Missions to UN, WTO and CD, as well as Indian Consulate in Geneva, September 2024

EAM visited Geneva, Switzerland, on 12-13 September. During his visit, EAM interacted with the leadership of international organisations in Geneva, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Turk, and the Director General of the World Health Organisation, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. EAM inaugurated a newly

built state-of-the-art building of the PMI in Geneva. EAM dedicated a statue of Bhimrao Ambedkar at the PMI. Further, the multipurpose hall of the PMI was dedicated to Hansa Mehta by the EAM, in honour of the memory of her contribution to the drafting of the UDHR.

India actively participated in the 55th, 56th and 57th UNHRC Sessions held on 26 February-05 April, 18 June-12 July and 09 September-11 October, respectively. India co-sponsored UNHRC resolutions on the right to development, and human rights and unilateral coercive measures. India also joined Joint Statements by groups of countries at the UNHRC Sessions, including on various thematic issues of importance like health, women and children, local governance etc.

During the 57th UNHRC Session, India organised a side event on Children's Right to Development on 19 September, along with the Special Rapporteur on the right to development, which was well-received and attracted participation by delegations of several member states.

India successfully concluded its fourth periodic review by the Human Rights Committee of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in Geneva on 15-16 July. The Indian delegation, co-led by the Attorney General of India and Solicitor General of India, included the Secretary (West), MEA and senior officials from the Ministries of Women and Child Development; Social Justice and Empowerment; Electronics and Information Technology; Minority Affairs; External Affairs; Tribal Affairs; Home Affairs; and the Offices of Attorney General and Solicitor General. During the review, the Indian delegation engaged in constructive dialogue with the members of the Human Rights Committee on a wide range of issues related to civil and political rights, and showcased India's commitment, actions and achievements in these areas.

On the occasion of the 76th anniversary of the adoption of the UDHR, celebrated across the world as Human Rights Day, India hosted a special event on 09 December in the Hansa Mehta Hall of its Permanent Mission in Geneva, with participation of the UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Special Procedures Mandate Holders, and the diplomatic community in Geneva, highlighting the seminal contribution of Hansa Mehta to the drafting of the UDHR.

World Health Organisation (WHO)

An Indian delegation led by Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), participated in the 77th World Health Assembly (WHA 77) in Geneva on 27 May to 01 June. Secretary (MoHFW) chaired one of the two main Committees of WHA 77.

- i. In a landmark decision, the WHO member States adopted amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005, during WHA 77. India played a constructive role in the drafting of the IHR amendments, especially regarding provisions for operationalisation of an equitable response to public health emergencies.

- ii. India collaborated with WHO for taking forward a global traditional medicine agenda. The Government of India and WHO signed a Donor Agreement on 31 July for India to support the operations of the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre in Jamnagar, Gujarat. During WHA 77, India organized a side event on "Traditional Medicine: The Way Forward" at its Permanent Mission in Geneva on 31 May, which had speakers from the Ministry of Ayush.
- iii. India actively participated in the 2024 meetings of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB), which is negotiating the WHO Pandemic Agreement, where India has been voicing the concerns and priorities of the Global South, especially on provisions regarding equity. Delegations from MoHFW attended the 8th, 9th, 11th and 12th INB meetings in Geneva from 19 February-01 March, 18-28 March, 09-20 September and 04-15 November, respectively.
- iv. A delegation from MoHFW attended the 54th meeting of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/Aids (UNAIDS) in Geneva on 25-27 June, and the UNAIDS Global Targets Task Team meeting on 24 June.
- v. A delegation from MoHFW led by Additional Secretary and Director of National Health Mission attended the 33rd meeting of the Board of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health, in Geneva on 04-05 July.
- vi. A delegation led by CEO, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, participated in 87th session of the Executive Committee of Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) on 18-22 November, and 47th session of CAC on 25-30 November, in Geneva.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Prime Minister inaugurated ITU's World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly (WTSA) hosted by India on 14-24 October in New Delhi. This was the first time that WTSA, which is organised every 4 years, was held in the Asia-Pacific region. The pivotal global event brought together more than 3700 delegates including industry leaders, policy-makers and tech experts representing telecom, digital, and ICT sectors from over 160 countries, marking the highest ever participation in a WTSA.

The New Delhi WTSA adopted eight resolutions on emerging telecom areas, such as artificial intelligence, DPI, sustainable digital transformation, promoting and strengthening metaverse standardisation, and provision of handset-derived caller location information for emergency communications.



Prime Minister addressed the inauguration of the ITU- World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly in New Delhi, October 2024

India secured the maximum ever number of leadership positions in ITU Telecom Standardisation Sector (ITU-T). Indian experts were elected in 10 ITU-T Study Groups and in the Standards Committee on Vocabulary. More than 15 high-level side events were organized at WTSA, including AI4GoodIndia Impact, Network for Women, Kaleidoscope, Regulators Conference, UN Disaster Risk Reduction Conferencing, ITU-WHO Safe Listening and Hackathon.

There were 57 meetings in 2024 of ITU's standards-setting deliberations mechanisms such as Working Parties and Study Groups. Of these, 46 meetings were held in Geneva and 11 in Cambodia, China, France, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malta, and the UK. India participated actively in all 57 meetings with expert-level delegations from the Department of Telecommunications.

UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

India participated in UNCTAD's 60th anniversary celebration on 12-14 June in Geneva, in which a high-level Global Leaders Forum discussed the multi-dimensional challenges

facing countries, strategies for advancing the UN 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, and the need for innovative solutions that promote resilience, economic growth and sustainable development.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

India participated in the 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva from 28-31 October. The Conference, held every four years, was attended by 191 State parties to the Geneva Conventions, along with 186 national societies, the ICRC, and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, providing a platform to discuss global humanitarian issues.

The Conference adopted five resolutions, by consensus, on international humanitarian law; the potential human cost of ICT activities during armed conflict; strengthening disaster risk governance; enabling local leadership, capacity, and delivery in principled humanitarian action; and the humanitarian impacts of extreme climate and weather events.

In addition to the Government of India delegation, headed by the Permanent Representative of India, a delegation from the Indian Red Cross Society also participated in the Conference. An Indian Air Force team set up a stall demonstrating the state-of-the-art, Made-in-India portable Project Aarogya Maitri BHISHM Cube, which contains medical equipment and essentials designed for rapid deployment in emergencies and disaster zones. India was the only country to set up a stall at the Conference.

During the Conference, India reiterated its commitment to the Geneva Conventions and its full compliance. India also highlighted the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations it has undertaken across the world.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

India attended the 75th annual session of the Executive Committee of UNHCR, in Geneva from 14-18 October. The Committee reviewed the work of the preceding year and established its programme of work for the next year, as well as examined UNHCR's financial requirements for 2025 and approved the annual programme budget. India renewed its commitment to UNHCR in fulfilling its mandate and reiterated the view that the safe, speedy, and sustainable return of displaced persons and refugees to their homes is the best long-term solution to address refugee influxes.

World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)

India actively participated in WIPO Assemblies and Standing Committee meetings this year. A delegation from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), led by Secretary (DPIIT), participated in the 65th WIPO General Assemblies (GA 65) on 09-17 July in Geneva. During the GA 65, India set up a pavilion on “Creative India: Innovative India” showcasing India’s achievements in Intellectual Property (IP). Secretary (DPIIT) and WIPO Director General jointly launched the IP diagnostic tool on Indian adaptation in multiple Indian languages during the inauguration event of the India pavilion.

WIPO member States concluded two Treaties in 2024 on Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge during the Diplomatic Conference held in Geneva on 13-24 May; and on Design Law in Riyadh on 11-22 November, respectively. Indian inter-ministerial delegations, led by DPIIT, actively participated in the negotiations for both Treaties and joined their adoption in the respective diplomatic conferences.

WIPO’s Global Innovation Index (GII) ranks economies on innovation parameters comprising about 80 indicators including measures on political environment, education, infrastructure and knowledge creation. GI 2024 covered 133 economies across the world, in which India was ranked first among the 10 economies in Central and Southern Asia; first among the 38 lower-middle-income group economies; and improved its overall ranking, moving to the 39th position.

A delegation from DPIIT attended the 47th session of the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications, in Geneva on 18-20 March 2024. A delegation from DPIIT attended the 45th session of the Standing Committee on Copyright and related rights, in Geneva on 17-19 April 2024.

A delegation from Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog attended the meeting of WIPO’s Committee on Development and Intellectual Property, in Geneva on 01-03 May. A delegation from the Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and Trademarks attended the 22nd session of the Working Group on the legal development of the Madrid System for the International Registration of Mark, in Geneva on 07-11 October.

The 2024 WIPO Intellectual Property Judges Forum, held in Geneva on 09-10 October, was attended by judges from the Supreme Court of India and the Delhi High Court.

UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

On UNITAR’s request, India seconded a senior officer from the Indian Air Force as Team Leader, Military Pillar in UNITAR, in September for a period of one year.

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

UPU celebrated its 150th Anniversary on 09 October. The Permanent Representative of India attended the anniversary’s commemorative event held in Bern.

Secretary, Department of Posts, visited Switzerland on 06-08 November to attend the meetings of UPU’s Council of Administration and Postal Operation Council.

Government of India seconded a senior Indian Postal Service Officer to UPU, who joined the UPU on 07 October.

UNESCAP

Indian delegations actively participated in the 80th Commission Session of UNESCAP (80CS) which was held from 22 – 26 April at UN Conference Centre, Bangkok, on the theme “Leveraging digital innovation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific”. India also participated at the Digital Innovations Fair organised by UNESCAP and showcased the “PM-Gati Shakti” initiative to showcase the transformational approach to integrated planning adopted under the program for multi-modal connectivity as well as in various inter-governmental meetings of UNESCAP during the period.

UNESCO

Permanent Delegation of India to UNESCO actively pursued India’s interests at UNESCO. India’s commitment to education and cultural preservation, aligning with UNESCO’s values were highlighted.

India hosted the 46th World Heritage Committee session, showcasing its heritage and where The Moidams, ancient burial mounds of Assam’s Ahom dynasty, was inscribed as its 43rd World Heritage Site. India pledged USD 1 million for global conservation efforts. Indian Mission organised UNESCO-led events on open science and geoparks, and celebrated cultural occasions like International Yoga Day. Additionally, the Permanent Delegation of India in Paris represented India in UNESCO’s Executive Board sessions, focusing on education, Vishwa Bandhutva and Vasudaiva Kutumbakam, emphasising the importance of cultural



Prime Minister with the Director General of UNESCO Audrey Azoulay reviewing the artifacts returned from abroad at the 46th Session of the World Heritage Committee in New Delhi, July 2024

values and ethics. World Hindi Day, International Day of Yoga, Partition Horrors Remembrance Day and other such occasions were regularly observed as well.

Key highlights of the year 2024 are as follows:

1. 46th Session of the World Heritage Committee, New Delhi: Prime Minister inaugurated the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee which took place in New Delhi from 21-31 July, marking the first time India hosted this prestigious event. Held at the Bharat Mandapam International Exhibition and Convention Centre, the meeting was significant not just for its deliberations but also for showcasing India's cultural and natural heritage on the global stage. India also pledged USD 1 million to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to support conservation efforts in developing countries. The meeting featured several side events, including forums for young professionals and site managers, aimed at knowledge exchange and best practices in heritage preservation.

2. Other Significant Achievements/Events:

a) Return of Artefacts: At the 24th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return

of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation (ICPRCP) from 29 to 31 May 2024, India asked for the return of the Chola-era Copper Plates (at present at the Leiden University, Netherlands).

- b) Participation at ICH: India participated in the 10th session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).
- c) Scientific Collaboration: India co-hosted the Chief Science Advisors Roundtable with UNESCO, focusing on open science and knowledge sharing in Paris. The Roundtable was conceptualized and launched as a Sherpa-track initiative during India's G20 Presidency in 2023. Representatives from 29 countries, and 06 international organizations participated in the event.
- d) Capacity building: The 1st Capacity Building Training-cum-Workshop on UNESCO Global Geoparks' was organised in New Delhi to introduce and explore the concept of UNESCO Global Geoparks within the Indian context. The event was organised by NATCOM, Ministry of Mines in collaboration with UNESCO.

- e) India submitted nominations of Bandhavgarh Area (Madhya Pradesh) and Dehang-Debang Biosphere Reserve (Arunachal Pradesh) for consideration of entry in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR).
- f) Mumbai submitted an application proposing to be the Host City of the XVIII UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) Annual Conference in 2026.
- g) International Oceanographic Commission (IOC): India continued to contribute to UNESCO's Decade of Ocean Science (2021–2030). The IOC endorsed a new series of "Decade Actions," which include scientific collaborations and initiatives on ocean conservation. India was active in projects under this umbrella, focusing on areas such as marine biodiversity, climate resilience, and sustainable ocean management.
- h) An amount of USD 86,162 was allotted for UNESCO's 3 conventions for the year. These were (i) World Heritage Fund; (ii) Fund for Safeguarding the ICH; and (iii) International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD).
- i) UNESCO Chairs :
 - a. Renewal of the agreement of the UNESCO Chair on Community Based Disability Management and Rehabilitation Studies, University of Calicut, India till 30 June 2028.
 - b. Renewal of the agreement of the UNESCO Chair on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, India till December 2028.
 - c. Renewal of the agreement of the UNESCO Chair on Experiential Learning for Sustainable Innovation and Development, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, India till 30 June 2028.

3. High level visits

Incoming

- a) 23 March - Minister for Home, Industries, Culture of Gujarat, accompanied by Minister for Higher Education, Gujarat, visited Paris to receive the Certificate of Inscription of "Garba of Gujarat" on ICH list. The Gujarat delegation, accompanied by Ambassador/PR of India to UNESCO met Director General, UNESCO.
- b) 03 May - Secretary (Sports) participated in the Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP9) to the Anti-Doping Convention.
- c) 09 – 14 June –Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, led a 3-member delegation to attend the Information Session on the 46th World Heritage Conference.

- d) 11-15 September - Minister for Arts And Culture of Meghalaya, led an 8-member Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) delegation to UNESCO to understand the working of the UNESCO archives.

Outgoing

- a) 21-22 July: Director General, UNESCO visited India in connection with the 46th World Heritage Committee (WHC) meeting in Delhi. The event was also attended by Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO, and Director, World Heritage Center, UNESCO.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

During 2024, several official delegations of the Government of India participated in key meetings at FAO, Rome.

Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare participated in the high-level opening ceremony of FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative Forum and the Global Family Farmers Forum of the UN Decade of Family Farming during the World Food Forum from 14-16 October 2024. He met the Director General and Executive Director of WFP and Heads of delegations and Permanent Representatives of key developing countries. Secretary (DAFW) interacted with Indians employed in RBAs and Indian nationals working in agricultural farms in Italy.

Secretary, Department of Fisheries to the FAO Committee on Fisheries from 08-12 July, Director General of Forests & Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for the FAO-Committee on Forestry, Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India to the Executive Committee of Codex Alimentarius Commission and Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying for the FAO Global Conference on Animal Health Innovation.

In 2024, India was unanimously elected as the First Vice Chair of two key Technical Sub-Committees within FAO for a two-year period. These include the Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management for 2024-2025 and the Committee on Agriculture Sub Committee on Livestock for 2024-2026. India's election is a testament to its global standing and contributions in fisheries management and livestock development. India was elected in 2024 as the Member of the Steering Committee on the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG).

India along with Ireland, co-sponsored a proposal for declaration by the United Nations of an International Day of Milk, that was endorsed by the 29th Session of the FAO Committee on Agriculture held from 30 September to 04

October. This endorsement paves the way for approval by the FAO Council in 2024 and by the FAO Conference and UN General Assembly in 2025.

Closing Ceremony of the International Year of Millets (IYM) was held on 29 March in FAO headquarters, Rome with participation from senior management of FAO, Permanent Representatives, representatives of governments, international organisations/entities, farmers, chefs, industry, students, researchers, etc.

Director, Fisheries Division, FAO, addressed the World Fisheries Day 2024 on 21 November in New Delhi, highlighting strategic partnerships between India and FAO in fisheries and aquaculture, driven by South-South and Triangular Cooperation frameworks.

World Food Program (WFP)

In 2024, India was re-elected as the Member of the WFP Executive Board through ECOSOC for another 3-year term from 2025-2027. Given India's rich contributions to WFP, its presence on the WFP Executive Board is crucial for the interests of Global South. India-UN Development Partnership Fund awarded USD 1 million to WFP for a rice fortification programme to be implemented in Lao PDR.

WFP Assistant Executive Director visited India in August and met senior government officials to know more about India's successful food security programs implemented in partnership with WFP India. An agreement was signed between the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and WFP on a regional adaptation project to build capacity of smallholder farmers, especially women, in dryland areas. India was also elected to the Executive Board of the WFP for the term 2025-2027 in April.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

India has extensive policy engagement with IFAD through its Governing Bodies. India was re-elected to the Executive Board of IFAD in 2024 for another three-year period i.e. 2024-2026 and was re-elected as member of Evaluation Committee of IFAD for a period of 3 years.

In April 2024, the Indian Mission secured the approval of IFAD Board for an important project for Jammu and Kashmir namely "Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors in Jammu and Kashmir" at a project cost of USD 217.2 million with IFAD loan component being USD 100 million.

The United Nations Committee on the World Food Security (CFS) elected India as the Rapporteur to steer the CFS

policy process on strengthening urban and peri-urban food systems to achieve food security and nutrition, in the context of urbanisation and rural transformation. The CFS is an important intergovernmental body whose work is cross-cutting across the three Rome-based agencies.

India together with Ethiopia, Guinea and the Dominican Republic organized a side event during the 52nd CFS on "Right to Food and the Role of Social Safety Nets in food security and nutrition". The event was aimed at assessing the role and impact of social safety nets in fostering food security and nutrition and achieving SDG2 i.e. zero hunger. Member, Niti Aayog delivered the keynote address, while invitees from FAO, WFP, Ethiopia and Dominican Republic spoke during the event. The side event was well received, garnering high praise from attendees, with large participation, notably from African and Latin American countries.

Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU)

The 148th and 149th IPU Assemblies were held in Geneva on 23-27 March and 13-17 October, respectively. Indian Parliamentary delegations participated in both IPU Assemblies.

The Indian Parliamentary delegation to the 148th IPU Assembly was led by the Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha, and comprised Secretary General of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 5 Members of Parliament from Rajya Sabha, and 8 Officers from the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Secretariats. In addition to attending the plenary sessions and panel discussions of the 148th IPU Assembly, the Indian delegation held bilateral meetings with the President of IPU, Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania Tulia Ackson; and with the delegations of Armenia, Serbia, Thailand, and Tunisia.

The Indian Parliamentary delegation to the 149th IPU Assembly, was led by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, and comprised of the Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha, 5 Members of Parliament from Lok Sabha, 3 Members of Parliament from Rajya Sabha, Secretaries General of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Secretariats, and 11 Officers from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Secretariats. In addition to attending the plenary sessions and panel discussions of the 149th IPU Assembly, the Indian delegation held bilateral meetings with the President of IPU, Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania, as well as with the delegations of Algeria, Armenia, Maldives, Namibia, Oman, Seychelles, Switzerland, Nepal, Bhutan, and Thailand. The Speaker paid floral tributes at Gandhiji's statue in Ariana Park in Geneva and addressed the Indian Diaspora in a community event held at the Hansa Mehta Hall in the PMI.

Antarctic and Arctic matters

India, led by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, hosted the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM-46) and the 26th Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP-26) Meeting from 20-30 May at Kochi. Over 400 delegates from 56 countries participated at the global meeting on Antarctic affairs. ATCM-46 was inaugurated by the Minister of Earth Sciences and Food Processing Industries. From MEA, Secretary (West) attended the inaugural session. A dedicated working group for regulating tourism in Antarctica

was formulated for the first time at the 46th ATCM, hosted by India.

India started the winter expedition at India's Arctic research station-Himadri at Ny Alesund, Svalbard, Norway, from December 2023 and effectively made Indian presence felt at the Svalbard round the year from 2024 onward. India also participated in the 2024 Arctic Circle Assembly meetings held in Reykjavik on 19-21 October. The India delegation was led by the Joint Secretary, National Security Council Secretariat.

CHAPTER

13

G20

Following its successful G20 Presidency in 2023, India continued to play a pivotal role as an influential Troika (India, Brazil, South Africa) member during Brazil's G20 Presidency in 2024. Building on the work done during India's Presidency, Brazil identified three priorities:

- (i) Social inclusion and the Fight against Hunger and Poverty.
- (ii) Energy Transitions and the promotion of Sustainable Development in its Economic, Social, and Environmental dimensions; and
- (iii) Reform of Global Governance Institutions, under the overarching theme of 'Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet'.

With proactive participation, India acted as a bridge builder on contentious issues like geopolitics, climate change etc. which were crucial for the success of the Brazilian G20 Presidency. Concurrently, India supported Brazil in ensuring that the development agenda takes the centre-stage and champions the interest to the Global South in the G20.

Major Developments

Brazil's G20 Presidency 2024

As a part of the Troika, there was high level of participation from India during the Brazilian G20 Presidency to

meaningfully contribute to the outcomes. The Ministerial meetings saw substantive participation, including by EAM, Finance Minister, and other ministers across portfolios such as Culture, Tourism, Commerce and Industry, Education, Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, and Labour & Employment.



EAM participated in the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York, October 2024



Prime Minister with other G20 Leaders at the Leaders' Summit in Rio de Janeiro, November 2024

EAM also attended the 2nd G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting, held on 25 September, alongside the 79th UN General Assembly's high-level week. During the meeting, a landmark "Call to Action on Global Governance Reform" was adopted. The then MoS (VM) participated in the 1st G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on 21-22 February in Rio de Janeiro.

India's G20 Sherpa participated in the three Sherpa meetings organised in Brazil and another one held virtually. Secretary (ER) led the Indian delegation at the G20 Development Ministers' Meeting held on 22-23 July in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Two outcome documents – (i) the G20 Development Ministers' Declaration for Reducing Inequalities; and (ii) the Ministerial Call to Action on Strengthening Drinking-water, Sanitation and Hygiene Services were adopted during the meeting.

Brazil also organised meetings of 13 Engagement Groups to have wider stakeholder and societal participation in the G20 process. The Chief Justice of India (CJI) participated in the Summit of Judiciary20 held in Rio de Janeiro on 12-14 May. Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha led the Indian Parliamentary delegation to the Parliament20 Summit held in Brasilia on 06-08 November. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) participated in the meeting of the Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI20) on 16-18 June in Belem.

Prime Minister participated in the 19th G20 Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro on 18-19 November. In his interventions, he highlighted India's success in reducing multidimensional poverty and delivering social services through people-centric policies, while stressing the need to address challenges faced by the Global South. Prime Minister also highlighted the growing influence of AI and importance of affordable energy transition in the developing world. The remarks were widely appreciated across the spectrum of developed and developing countries for being human-centric, constructive and development-oriented. This was the first G20 Summit in which African Union participated as a permanent member, following their inclusion during India's Presidency.

The flagship deliverable of the Brazilian G20 Presidency was the Global Alliance against Hunger & Poverty, which was launched during the inaugural session of the Rio Summit. India joined the Alliance as a founding member. The Rio G20 Leaders' Declaration adopted during the Summit endorsed India's G20 legacy with multiple references made to the New Delhi Summit. In addition, key outcomes of the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration, including mainstreaming LiFE, accelerating the G20 Varanasi Action Plan on SDGs, leveraging DPI and data for development, promoting women-led growth, and valuing traditional medicine, were taken forward. Building on the mandate from the New Delhi

Summit, a Roadmap for better, bigger, and more effective Multilateral Development Banks was endorsed by the Leaders at Rio. India also successfully pushed for ambition on bolstering climate finance from billions to trillions of dollars and a successful New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) outcome on climate finance.

Further, on the sidelines of the various Working Group meetings, side events on key Indian priorities were organised. Side events highlighting the importance of LiFE were also held ahead of the Development Ministers' Meeting in Rio de Janeiro, and at UN Headquarters in New York on the margins of the 2nd Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Finally, on the sidelines of the Rio Summit, India hosted a side-event on DPI, AI and Data for Governance. Prime Minister was joined by the Prime Ministers of Italy, Spain, Portugal, Norway and Singapore, UN Secretary General, Energy Minister of Mexico and the heads of World Bank, IMF, WTO and WHO. The event also witnessed the endorsement of a Joint Troika declaration.

South Africa's G20 Presidency 2025

South Africa assumed the G20 Presidency on 01 December. At the 1st Sherpa meeting held on 9-11 December, the

South African Presidency underlined their overarching focus on Africa's development agenda, mobilisation of support for developing economies of Africa and the Global South, and building on the successes of the Indonesian, Indian, and Brazilian G20 Presidencies. Under the overall theme of 'Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability', South Africa has instituted three temporary Task Forces:

- (i) Inclusive Economic Growth, Industrialisation, Employment and Reduced Inequality,
- (ii) Food Security, and
- (iii) Artificial Intelligence, Data Governance and Innovation for Sustainable Development for delivery of high – level outcomes and will constitute a Cost of Capital Commission to address the issue of high cost of capital in developing countries.

In addition, the South African Presidency will review the work of G20 in the first cycle and deliberate as this cycle's Presidency ends in 2025.

CHAPTER

14

Multilateral Economic Relations

BRICS

16th BRICS Summit

The 16th BRICS Summit on the theme 'Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security', was held under Russia's chairship on 22-24 October, in Kazan.

Prime Minister led the Indian delegation on the second day of the Summit on 23 October. EAM led the Indian delegation in the 'BRICS Plus / Outreach' Session of the Summit on 24 October. During the Summit, the leaders adopted the '16th BRICS Summit Kazan Declaration', and 'Modalities of the BRICS Partner Country Category' and the 'List of potential BRICS Partner Countries' were finalized.

Meeting of the BRICS Foreign Ministers and International relations

EAM represented India in BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting on the sidelines of 79th UNGA on 26 September, in New York. A standalone meeting of the BRICS Foreign Ministers was hosted by Russia on 10-11 June in Nizhny Novgorod. Additionally, it also had a ministerial session titled 'BRICS Dialogue with Developing Countries'. Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia Prince Faisal Bin Farhan also participated in the meeting.

Under the BRICS framework, several ministerial meetings were held. The Transport Ministers' Meeting was held on 6-7 June, in St. Petersburg. The Tourism Forum and Tourism Ministers' Meeting were held on 20-21 June, in Moscow. Sports Ministers' Meeting was held on 22 June in Kazan. The Environment Ministers' Meeting was held on 28 June, in which the Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and MoS (MoEFCC) participated virtually. The 4th BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting was held on 28 June, in Moscow. BRICS Ministers' Meeting for Disaster Management was held on 10-11 July. The 10th BRICS Youth Summit and Youth Ministers' Meeting was held on 22 - 26 July, in Ulyanovsk, in which MoS for Youth Affairs and Sports participated. The BRICS Youth Summit Declaration was adopted during the meeting. The 14th BRICS Trade Ministers' Meeting was held on 26 July, in Moscow. The 8th BRICS Industry Ministers' Meeting was held on 16 August, in Nizhny Novgorod. A high-level Dialogue on Climate Change was held on 30 August in virtual mode, in which the Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change participated.

Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting was held on 9-10 September, in Sochi. The Culture Ministers' Meeting was held on 11 September, in St. Petersburg. The Justice Ministers' Meeting was held virtually on 18 September. Ministerial Meeting on Women's Affairs was held on 20 September, in St. Petersburg. Communication Ministers' Meeting was held on 23-27 September, in Innopolis. The 9th BRICS Energy Ministers' Meeting was held on 26 September,



EAM addressed the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting on the sidelines of 79th UNGA in New York, September 2024

in Moscow, in which MoS (Ministry of Power) participated virtually. A Communique of the 9th BRICS Energy Ministers' Meeting was adopted at this meeting. The 12th BRICS Science, Technology & Innovation Ministerial Meeting was held on 27 September, in Moscow. The BRICS Health Ministerial Meeting was held on 10-11 October. BRICS Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting was held on 11 October. The 10th BRICS Parliamentary Forum was held on 11-12 July in St. Petersburg, in which the Speaker of Lok Sabha participated. A joint statement on BRICS Parliamentary Forum and a protocol to MoU of BRICS Parliamentary Forum was adopted at the meeting. The meeting of BRICS high-level representatives responsible for security issues was held on 10-12 September, in St. Petersburg.

India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA)

IBSA Foreign Ministers Meeting

On the sidelines of the 79th UNGA in New York, EAM participated in the IBSA Foreign Ministers' Meeting. The then MoS (VM) led the Indian delegation for the IBSA Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 22 February, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. A Ministerial Declaration was adopted during this meeting.



EAM along with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil Mauro Vieira and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa Ronald Lamola participated in the IBSA Foreign Ministers' Meeting on the sidelines of the 79th UNGA in New York, September 2024

IBSAMAR Exercise 2024

The 8th edition of IBSAMAR Exercise was held off the coast of South Africa, on 6-18 October. Indian Navy's stealth frigate, INS Talwar participated in the exercise.



EAM attended the Outreach Session of G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Fiuggi, November 2024

Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)

19th ACD Ministerial Meeting

Secretary (ER) participated in the 19th ACD Ministers' Meeting on 24 June, in Tehran. The Rules of Procedure of Asia Cooperation Dialogue, Guiding Principles for the Functioning of the ACD Secretariat and Tehran Declaration were adopted during the Meeting.

3rd ACD Summit

MoS (KVS) addressed the 3rd ACD Summit on 2-3 October in Qatar. The Doha Declaration was adopted during the meeting.

G7

50th G7 Summit 2024

Prime Minister participated in the outreach session of the 50th G7 Summit on 14 June in Apulia, under the Presidency of Italy. This session focused on AI, Energy, Africa and

the Mediterranean. Italy invited 11 outreach countries- Algeria, Argentina, Brazil (G20 troika), Holy See, India (G20 troika), Jordan, Kenya, Mauritania (AU President), Tunisia, Turkiye, UAE, and five international organizations including African Development Bank (AfDB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), World Bank (WB), and United Nations (UN) to the Summit. On the sidelines of the G7 Summit, Prime Minister held bilateral meetings and discussions with the leaders of the G7, other invited countries and international organizations.

India participated in multiple G7 ministerial meetings. Outreach Session of Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held on 26 November in Fiuggi. India was invited as a guest country, and EAM participated in the meeting.

Outreach Session of the G7 Trade Ministerial was held on 16-17 July, in Giovanni Reggio Calabria, in which Minister of Commerce and Industry participated. Culture Ministers' Meeting was held on 20-21 September in Naples, in which the Secretary (Ministry of Culture) participated. Innovation and Technology Ministers Meeting was held in Rome on 10 October, in which Secretary (MEITY) participated. Health Ministers' Meeting was held on 9-11 October, in Italy, in which Secretary (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare) participated. Tourism Ministers' Meeting was held in Florence, on 13-15 November, in which MoS (Ministry of Tourism) participated.

C H A P T E R

15

Disarmament & International Security Affairs

In the year 2024, India participated actively in multilateral forums relating to disarmament, non-proliferation and international security, taking into account its national security interests and priorities in the international security arena. Over the course of the year, India also held bilateral engagements and presented its perspectives in regional forums on these issues. India's contributions underlined its longstanding commitment to the goal of universal and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and support to global peace and security in areas such as space, maritime, and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, while responding to evolving international security environment and initiatives by various countries.

First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

India participated constructively and presented its principled positions and views on disarmament and international security matters at the 79th session of the First Committee of

the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York from 07 October - 08 November.

The 79th UNGA First Committee adopted four resolutions which are annually tabled by India. Resolutions on "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction" and "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" were again adopted by consensus by the Committee. India's two other resolutions in the First Committee, "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons" - which calls for negotiations on an international Convention for prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons - and "Reducing Nuclear Danger" - which calls for immediate steps to reduce the risk of intentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons - were also adopted by a broad support of the UN member States.

Conference on Disarmament (CD)

India was the first of six Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament (CD)'s 2024 session, presenting its positions

on all the core agenda items of the CD including nuclear disarmament, prevention of nuclear war and all related matters, prevention of an arms race in outer space, new types of weapons of mass destruction and transparency in armaments. In a significant breakthrough, the CD was able to reach consensus on a Programme of Work in June 2024, which was largely based on the Indian proposal presented in the beginning of the year.

India also participated in the sessions of the 25-member Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Nuclear Disarmament Verification (NDV) during the year. India participated in meetings on disarmament related issues in other forums, including those organized by United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and other think tanks.

United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC)

The UNDC held its annual substantive session for 2024 in New York from 01-19 April, with a new 3-year cycle commencing this year. The two working groups will discuss the topics of nuclear disarmament and security implications of emerging technologies. India participated actively in the meetings of the UNDC.

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

At the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), India engaged on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in terms of chemical weapons destruction, industry verification, national measures and international cooperation. India participated constructively in the 29th Conference of State Parties at The Hague that evaluated the Convention's implementation and the activities of the OPCW over the previous year and set out future priorities for the OPCW. India presented its perspectives on matters relating to the Convention and its implementation, especially on industry verification and inspection regime.

India fulfilled its obligations under the Convention during the year and extended support to the OPCW for smooth conduct of scheduled inspections of chemical facilities in India. India contributed to the capacity building activities of the OPCW through courses on developing analytical and laboratory skills conducted by the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) in Hyderabad in collaboration with the OPCW Technical Secretariat. India participated in the OPCW sponsored Mentorship Programme to offer capacity building assistance and training for Kenya towards

the implementation of the CWC. India also participated in the first Global Conference on AI in CWC Implementation hosted jointly by the OPCW and Morocco on 25-26 October.

The 2024 OPCW Hague Award was conferred upon the Indian Chemical Council (ICC) on 25 November 2024, the first time that the Award recognised the efforts of a chemical industry body. This Award acknowledged the role played by ICC in promoting chemical safety, compliance with the convention, and enhancing industry-wide security practices in India.

Biological & Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC)

India actively participated in meetings of the Working Group on Strengthening the BTWC from 09-13 August and 02-13 December and the annual Meeting of States Parties to the BTWC from 16-18 December. During the meetings, India outlined its priorities including the strengthening of the Convention, enhancing national implementation, promoting efforts for response and preparedness, reviewing international developments in the field of science and technology, international cooperation and assistance in general, and establishment of scientific review mechanism under the BTWC.

India also continued its annual submissions, as part of Confidence-Building Measures (CBM), to the BTWC and engaged constructively with other countries on specific issues.

Forums on Conventional Weapons

India participated in the meetings of Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (GGE on LAWS) under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), held at Geneva from 04-08 March and 26-30 August, where it emphasized the need for a shared and common understanding of LAWS and reiterated the importance of the CCW forum for further progress on the subject. India also participated in the 17th Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V related to Explosive Remnants of War (02 September) and the 25th Annual Conference of Amended Protocol II related to Mines, IEDs and Booby Traps (03-04 November). At a side event, India showcased the contributions by the Horizon Group towards 'Humanitarian Mine Action for a Safer World'.

India also participated as an Observer at the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention - Intersessional Meetings and First

Preparatory Meeting for the Fifth Review Conference - 18-20 June in Geneva, Switzerland. India reiterated its respect and due consideration for the provisions of international humanitarian law in this regard and outlined its contribution towards training on de-mining and capacity building of various countries.

Additionally, India participated in the regional preparatory meeting for South and South East Asia from 23-24 January in Kathmandu, Nepal. Thereafter, India participated in the Preparatory Committee and the final Review Conference-4 of the UNPoA, SALW from 12-16 February and 17-28 June in New York. The meeting adopted an outcome document aimed at strengthening the implementation of the Programme of Action as well as the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) against illicit trafficking of SALW.

India participated in the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific meeting on implementation of Global Framework on Ammunition (GFA) on conventional ammunition management, Asia and Pacific, from 04-05 December at Kathmandu, Nepal. In this event, two Indian women armament and ammunition technical officers showcased India's pre-eminence in the field of ammunition management and inspired women from other nations to work towards objectives of the GFA.

AI in the Military Domain

India participated in the 2nd Responsible Artificial Intelligence in the Military Domain (REAIM) Summit co-hosted by Republic of Korea, Netherlands, UK, Singapore and Kenya in Seoul on 09-10 September which brought together stakeholders from governments, international organizations, industry, academia and civil society to discuss norms and principles to guide the development and use of artificial intelligence for military applications.

Non-Proliferation Matters and Strategic Export Control Regimes

India engaged with relevant committees of the UN on specific matters relating to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and associated developments pertaining to Syria, DPRK and other UNSC Committees and Panels.

Under India's WMD Act 2005 and its Rules, the various Advisory Committees held their review meetings pertaining to policy, implementation and other relevant issues during the year.

India engaged as a member of multilateral export control regimes towards the goals of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, related

materials, equipment and technologies. This included sharing of best practices or implementation experiences in the area of export controls, participation in the development/ amendment of guidelines for export controls and lists of materials, equipment and technologies regulated under the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) and Australia Group (AG), and harmonizing India's national export control list or Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment, and Technologies (SCOMET) with that of these regimes and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

India participated in the Australia Group (AG) Inter-sessional meeting (January - February) at Berlin and the AG Plenary meeting (June) at Paris; the Experts Group and the General Working Group meetings of WA (April, May, September and October) at Vienna; the MTCR Technical Experts meeting (March) at The Hague, related to consultations on evolving the control lists and best practice guidelines of the respective export control regimes, as well as information exchange on implementation experiences, technological developments, proliferation trends, and addressing these issues as they emerge.

India's Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Mutual Evaluation (that began in 2023) culminated with the FATF Plenary at Singapore in June, wherein our FATF Mutual Evaluation report, related to assessment of India's legal framework and regulatory/implementation system on, inter alia, Proliferation Financing (PF) pertaining to FATF recommendations, was finalised. The FATF Plenary concluded that India has reached a high level of technical compliance with the FATF requirements, and that its Anti-Money Laundering, Counter Terror Financing and Counter Proliferation Financing (CPF) regime is achieving good results, including inter alia in its CPF measures. On the FATF Recommendations and Immediate Outcomes pertaining to PF, India has been rated as 'Largely Compliant' and 'Substantially Effective'.

MEA continued to contribute to the export licensing processes of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group (IMWG), led by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) for export controlled dual-use items under India's SCOMET list; by the Department of Defence Production (DDP) for export of Category 6 (Munitions List) military items of SCOMET; and by the Department of Atomic Energy for export of nuclear-related items.

MEA has also been working with DGFT on streamlining the licensing process for certain categories of dual-use items, taking into consideration the item of export, end use, end user and destination, among other things, and moving towards enhanced digitalization of the licensing process and integration with relevant agencies. MEA has also engaged with the enforcement mechanisms and agencies including the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) and its organisations, in the context of our national non-proliferation objectives.

The MEA, together with its partners such as the DGFT, DDP, CBIC, various industry chambers and other stakeholders, participated in outreach activities to enhance awareness of India's strategic export controls throughout the year. Along with the focus on region-specific and sector-specific outreach programmes that has continued in the last few years, there was also a thrust on reaching out to start-ups, micro, small and medium enterprises, academic and research institutions, etc., through the relevant organisations.

In January, MEA partnered with DGFT and other Government of India agencies in organising the National Conference on Strategic Trade Controls (NCSTC) at New Delhi, focussing on India's Strategic Trade Control system and international best practices, towards further enabling compliance related to the export of dual-use and military goods and technologies. While four such National Conferences have been organised earlier, the NCSTC is devised in a new format comprising larger international participation (foreign delegates and experts), and wider involvement of various Government organisations, industry stakeholders across the relevant sectors, academia and research institutions, which totalled more than 550 participants. Chair of the UN Security Council's 1540 Committee and Chair of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) participated in the 2024 NCSTC as keynote speakers.

Additional Outreach events on SCOMET and Export Control Compliance and Regulations organized during the year included a program in July at Hyderabad, and an event in November at Mumbai, which focussed on industries in and around these regions from sectors such as aerospace, IT, biotech, chemicals, defence, and engineering.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

India participated in the 68th session of the IAEA General Conference held in Vienna from 16 to 20 September, as well as the meetings of the Board of Governors held in March, June, September, October and November. At these meetings, India contributed to deliberations relating to nuclear safeguard issues, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, technical cooperation and nuclear security and safety-related issues. India and the IAEA engaged on deepening the cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including through the flagship IAEA programs.

India's Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) collaborates with IAEA and various partner countries for capacity building in areas such as advanced nuclear energy systems, nuclear security, application of radioisotope and radiation technologies, radiological safety, nuclear material characterization, etc., on a regular basis.

Civil Nuclear Cooperation

India engaged with various countries in the area of nuclear power generation and other peaceful uses of nuclear energy, such as radioisotope applications in the field of medicine. GCNEP entered into an MoU with Peru in March and renewed the MoU with France in September, for cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

India also continued to contribute to projects involving various partners towards scientific research. As an Associate Member of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) India participated in the sessions of the CERN Council and Committees.

As a full partner of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) since 2005, India participated in meetings of the ITER Council and continued to contribute towards its construction. India also continued its cooperation with the Square Kilometre Array Observatory and with the US on the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) and Proton Improvement Plan-II projects.

Outer Space Matters

India continued to participate actively and present its perspectives on matters related to outer space at the Conference on Disarmament, as well as meetings of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies. As Chair of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, India continued to closely engage with the UN Member States during the Working Group meetings towards advancing the goal of safe and responsible use of outer space.

An Indian expert was part of the 25-member Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, established by UNGA resolution 77/383 in 2022, that met for its second session from 05-16 August. It operated by consensus and submitted its report recommending further consideration of substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

India continued to implement the provisions of the Hague Code of Conduct (HCoC), such as prelaunch notifications of India's ballistic missile and space launches and submission of annual declarations to the arrangement. India participated in the 23rd Annual Regular Meeting of the HCoC held at Vienna on 11-12 April.

Maritime Security Affairs

As an important stakeholder in maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region and globally, India maintained active engagement with countries and multilateral organizations. India expanded engagement at the Information Fusion Centre Indian Ocean region (IFC-IOR) where various countries positioned their liaison officers during the year towards enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation in the maritime domain.

India participated in the High-Level meeting of the Djibouti Code of Conduct – Jeddah Amendment (DCoC-JA) in November in Tanzania, where avenues for increased engagements of India with DCoC-JA member States were discussed. A multi-ministerial delegation engaged bilaterally with the International Maritime Organization, Friends of DCoC and Member States of DCoC-JA in London on 01-03 October. India committed to assist in the development of a regional maritime security strategy (RMSS) and facilitated the First DCoC workshop on RMSS, at Jeddah, Saudi Arabia from 11-21 November.

India participated in the Plenary Meeting of the Friends of Gulf of Guinea (G7++ FoGG) from 01-03 December at Rome, Italy, showcasing its long naval deployments in the Gulf of Guinea in 2022 and 2023, as well as various initiatives towards capability development. India also virtually participated in the 2nd plenary meeting of Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities (CGIMA) on 05 September.

India also continued to engage with Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) based in Singapore. The Indian candidate was elected as the next Executive Director of ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre for the period of 2025-2028.

In addition to the above, India also continued to engage the Indo-Pacific region towards building and enhancing maritime resilience through the Quad Maritime Security Working Group (QMSWG). India attended the QMSWG meeting at Sydney, Australia, 06-07 June in which the Indian delegation proposed various initiatives towards collaborative efforts of QUAD partners for enhanced maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region. India leads the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) IOR Programme and is looking to operationalise it soon. India has also scheduled the first event of MAITRI (Maritime Initiative for training in the Indo Pacific Region) for Q1/2025.

Dialogue with other countries

India held separate maritime security dialogues during the year with Australia (13 August), Vietnam (16 August) and Philippines (inaugural dialogue on 13 December) to exchange assessments of maritime situations, perspectives

about the developments in areas of interest, cooperation opportunities and strengthening of maritime security internationally.

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus)

Secretary (East), represented India at the East Asia Summit Senior Officials' Meeting (EAS SOM) and the ASEAN Regional Forum Senior Officials' Meeting (ARF SOM) on 07-08 June in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Participants appreciated the co-chairing by India of the 15th ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Maritime Security along with Indonesia and the US in May. India also led the training module on International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, along with Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and the US.

India continued to engage actively in ARF activities and initiatives on maritime security, counter terrorism and transnational crime, information and communication technologies, non-proliferation and disarmament, disaster relief, etc. In 2024, India, along with the US, Philippines and Papua New Guinea co-chaired the third part of the ARF Training Series and Best Practices Manual on Intentional Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code in Papua New Guinea on 23-25 April.

This year, India assumed the Co-chairmanship, along with Malaysia, of the Expert Working Group on CT (Counter Terrorism) at ADMM+. Raksha Mantri led India's participation at the 11th ADMM+ meeting at Vientiane, Lao PDR from 20-22 November wherein he delivered a talk on regional and international security issues.

India participated in the 12th Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum at Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 13 November to discuss maritime issues pertinent to the region, such as maritime connectivity and capacity building, infrastructure and equipment upgrading, seafarer's training, marine environment, promoting eco-tourism and a sustainable blue economy in East Asia. India hosted the 6th iteration of the East Asia Summit Framework Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation on 04-05 July in Mumbai.

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

Kairat Sarybay, Secretary General of CICA, paid a visit to India on 20 February and met with the then MoS (ML), and Joint Secretary (D&ISA). India is a Member State of CICA,

and during the meetings, discussions were held on CICA's proposed gradual transformation into a regional international organisation, as well as India's engagement with various initiatives of CICA. India participated in the virtual CICA Ministerial Council Meeting hosted by Azerbaijan, on 17 December.

India also attended and shared its perspectives at various CICA events such as CICA Ministerial Conference on Environmental Issues (August); Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders of CICA Countries and CICA Youth Council Meeting (October); and CICA Business Council and Business Forum meetings (November).

Fellowship Programme on Disarmament and International Security Affairs

As part of India's commitment to promote disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control education, and to equip young diplomats with knowledge and skills in these fields,

Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service in collaboration with D&ISA Division organized the 4th edition of the Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship for foreign diplomats from 22 January - 09 February. It saw the participation of diplomats from 24 countries. The initiative fulfils the mandate of UNGA Resolution 'United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education' and is in line with the focus on 'Disarmament Education' in UN Secretary General's Agenda for Disarmament 'Securing our Common Future'.

CHAPTER

16

Economic Diplomacy

Economic Diplomacy (ED) Division is an economic arm of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India that works in coordination with Indian Missions/Posts abroad, territorial Divisions of the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministries/Departments of the Government of India, State Governments, and Foreign Missions/Posts in India to enable foreign investment flows and promote bilateral trade, tourism, technology and education. It also handles matters relating to healthcare, energy security, grain diplomacy, International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), the partnership between India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States (I2U2), Social Security Agreements (SSA), etc.

Trade and Investment

To emphasize the promotion of trade, tourism, and technology, ED Division created a comprehensive dashboard along with EG&IT Division to monitor these three parameters. This dashboard facilitates Missions abroad in reporting data and progress related to trade, technology, and tourism, as well as the activities undertaken to achieve these objectives. This in turn enables the Ministry to assess the performance of Missions in advancing trade, tourism, and technology. Access to the dashboard has been provided to all relevant Ministries and Departments, including the Department of Commerce (DoC), the Ministry of Electronics and Information

Technology (MeitY), and the Ministry of Tourism (MoT). ED Division, in collaboration with the Department of Commerce (DoC), engaged with Indian Missions abroad to support merchandise export efforts. These joint initiatives contributed to achieving notable progress during the year.

I2U2 (India, Israel, the UAE and the USA)

I2U2, comprising of India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States, embodies a strategic partnership among these nations. The initiative emphasizes collaborative investments in six critical sectors: water, energy, transportation, outer space, health, and food security. Its primary aim is to harness private sector expertise and resources to develop infrastructure, reduce industrial carbon emissions, improve public health, and foster innovation in emerging and green technologies. By leveraging shared strengths in innovation, technology, skilled labour, and entrepreneurship, I2U2 seeks to drive sustainable development across member countries.

In July 2022, Prime Minister joined the inaugural virtual summit of I2U2 leaders, alongside his counterparts from Israel, the UAE, and the USA. Discussions during the summit focused on two major projects in India: food parks and renewable energy initiatives. Significant progress has

been made in the Food Parks Project. An MoU between the UAE and the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MOFPI) was signed during the Vibrant Gujarat Summit in January. Additionally, on 9 September, an MoU between the Government of Gujarat and Abu Dhabi Developmental Holding Company PJSC (ADQ) was signed, advancing food park development in India. ED Division continues its engagement with stakeholders to further I2U2 objectives and ensure the successful implementation of its initiatives.

Higher Education Institutes (HEI) Abroad

ED Division actively promotes the establishment of IITs abroad as part of the New Education Policy (NEP) by coordinating with the Ministry of Education and the IIT Council. MoUs have been signed between the UAE and IIT Delhi (the campus is operational in Dubai), and between Tanzania and IIT Madras, which has started operations in Zanzibar. In July, ED Division organized a virtual meeting with the Indian Mission in Malaysia to open an IIT campus in Malaysia. Efforts are also being made by the Ministry to establish more IIT campuses in other approved countries.

Acquisition of Critical Minerals Abroad

ED Division coordinates on matters related to the acquisition of critical minerals abroad in collaboration with the Ministry of Mines. It ensures the timely sharing of information on discovered reserves, investment opportunities, and potential resource collaborations reported by Indian missions overseas. Through proactive engagement, the ED Division has played a key role in securing access to critical mineral resources abroad, supporting initiatives like the National Critical Minerals Mission (NCMM) and fostering partnerships with key regions such as Africa and Australia.

Settlement of Payments in Indian Rupee (INR)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allowed the International Settlement of Trade in INR for the export and/or import of goods and services as an additional arrangement for invoicing, payment, and settlement of exports/imports in INR. MEA in close coordination with its Diplomatic Missions has put in concerted efforts to encourage opening of INR Denominated Special Vostro Account (SV Account) to facilitate trade settlement in INR with various countries.

Currently, RBI has permitted opening of 99 Special rupee Vostro Accounts of partner banks from 22 countries. In addition, MoUs for Local Currency Settlement System (LCSS) have been initiated with Kuwait, Mauritius and Vietnam. Similar arrangements are under consideration with Tanzania and Nigeria. LCSS framework has a wider coverage and includes all current account and permissible capital account transactions between the partner countries. Entering into an LCSS arrangement would help in further internationalization of the INR.

Tourism Expansion Activities

ED Division in collaboration with the State Tourism Departments, has successfully undertaken initiatives to boost international tourism. On 28 June, the Bodhi Yatra event was organized to promote the Buddhist Circuit in India, with participation from dignitaries representing 15 foreign missions in Delhi, who expressed keen interest in promoting the circuit in their respective countries. Additionally, a curtain raiser event for Kumbh Mela 2025 was conducted in Delhi, highlighting its cultural and spiritual significance. These efforts have effectively increased global awareness and engagement, reinforcing India's position as a premier cultural and spiritual tourism destination.

Unified Payment Interface (UPI)

ED Division works as an interface to promote interoperable mobile payment solutions, UPI, in other countries. In this regard, the division has been facilitating National Payments Corporation of India-(NPCI) International Payments Limited (NIPL) which is an initiative of RBI, to interact with central banks of respective countries through our Missions. NIPL is exploring opportunities with countries, which are looking to establish a real time payment system and alternate to traditional card payment rails. In such cases NIPL has proposed to provide licenses of online payment system, back-office system, Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) App or all under the Government to Government or Central Bank to Central bank arrangement in a completely sovereign way through transfer of Source code.

Health & Medical Value Travel

To increase Medical Value Tourism in India, our Missions provide valuable guidance to the Ministry of Health on region-specific demand from tourists in their countries. ED Division coordinated meetings on India-Saudi Arabia investment and exports in the Pharmaceutical sector in the month of November. Separately, efforts are being made to get Indian pharmacopoeia recognized in various countries.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched India's official Heal in India portal for Medical Value Travel (MVT) under India's G20 presidency in Gandhinagar. It is a "One-Stop" portal developed for the convenience and ease of providing information to those who want to avail medical treatment in India from abroad. The portal helps streamline the information and patient journey of international medical travellers to India.

International Solar Alliance (ISA)

The International Solar Alliance aims to contribute to the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement in bringing together countries to provide a collective response to the main common obstacles in the massive deployment of solar energy in terms of technology, finance and capacity.

With Lebanon signing the Framework Agreement on 27 August, 120 countries have signed the Framework Agreement of the ISA, out of which 104 of these countries have also ratified the Framework Agreement, Armenia being the latest country to ratify and deposit on 15 October. ED Division facilitated the successful organization of the International Solar Festival, a one of its kind solar festival with delegate participation across nations, for solar companies, incubators and accelerators to increase the deployment of solar energy.

ED Division being the Depository of ISA, coordinated with the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) (Nodal Ministry) and the ISA Secretariat. It facilitated the organisation of the 7th General Assembly of the ISA in New Delhi on 4 November. During the Assembly, India was re-elected as the President of the ISA General Assembly for the fourth consecutive term from 2024-2026. ED Division campaigned for India's candidate, for the post of DG, ISA who was selected for the post (2025-29) by overwhelming majority.

Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)

CDRI functions as an inclusive multi-stakeholder partnership where knowledge is generated and exchanged on different aspects of disaster resilience of infrastructure. The coordination efforts between ED Division and CDRI are intended towards engaging additional members, countries, and international organizations, representing varied geographic and socio-economic contexts, disaster risk profiles as well as capacities to mitigate and adapt to climate change and disasters.

As of 29 November, the Coalition membership has grown to forty national governments and seven international

organizations. Vietnam is the latest country to join CDRI. India and France as co-chairs of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) have extended joint demarches to 14 countries from Africa and SouthEast Asia, inviting them to join the coalition.

Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA)

The Global Biofuels Alliance, a unique multi stakeholder alliance, was launched during India's G20 Presidency by the Prime Minister, along with leaders of 8 other countries i.e. Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Italy, Mauritius, Singapore, UAE and USA, on 9 September 2023 as chair's initiative.

On 3 October, the Union Cabinet approved the signing & ratification of the Host Country Agreement (HCA). On 11 October, the Government of India & Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA) signed the HCA. The HCA facilitates GBA to set up the alliance's physical Secretariat in India, comprising both Indian and international staff, enabling GBA to fulfill its intended objectives. Further, the HCA will provide necessary legal status to GBA, including immunities and privileges under the United Nations (Privilege & Immunities) Act, 1947, enabling efficient discharge of its functions and programs in accordance with the laws, rules and regulations of India. The HCA has recently entered into force on 23 November after completion of internal legal procedures by both parties.

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

The ED Division participated in the Commission session of UNCITRAL, where the Joint Secretary (ED) delivered the statement on behalf of the Government of India. The Division has been participating actively by providing its inputs to six working groups of UNCITRAL.

Under the Working Group I on Warehouse Receipts, the UNCITRAL Commission finalized and adopted the UNCITRAL-International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) Model Law on Warehouse Receipts, and approved in principle the draft guide to enactment

Working Group II on Dispute Settlement, which has been deliberating on UNCITRAL Model Clauses on Specialized Express Dispute Resolution (SPEDR), finalized the same along with draft explanatory notes and held a two-day colloquium, after which the Working Group preliminarily considered the topic of recognition and enforcement of electronic awards.

Working Group III on Investor-State Dispute Settlement Reform continued its deliberations on the draft statute of a standing mechanism for the resolution of international investment disputes and further considered the procedural and cross-cutting issues as well as a multilateral instrument on investor-State dispute settlement (ISDS) reform.

Working Group IV on Electronic Commerce continued its work on the formulation of default rules on data provision contracts under the mandate given by UNCITRAL at its fifty-fifth session. The Working group also reviewed the guide to enactment of the UNCITRAL Model Law on Automated Contracting.

Working Group V on Insolvency Law has completed its review of the second and third drafts of a text on asset tracing and recovery in insolvency proceedings and of a draft toolkit for expedited asset tracing and recovery in insolvency proceedings. Furthermore, the Working Group will transmit both texts, as revised for consideration and finalization by the Commission at its fifty-eighth session, in 2025.

Working Group VI on Negotiable Cargo Documents continued its article-by-article review of the revised preliminary draft provisions for an instrument on negotiable cargo documents.

Permanent Court of Arbitration

The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) is an intergovernmental organization, of which India has been a member since 1950. The PCA, headquartered at The Hague has administered final hearings in the Ras Al Khaimah Investment Authority (RAKIA) case under the India-UAE Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT); Case Management Conference (CMC) hearings in the GPIX case under the India-Mauritius BIT, Maxis Communications Berhad under the India-Malaysia BIT and Global Communication Services Holdings Limited under the India-Mauritius BIT among others.

India had signed a HCA with PCA in 2008 to set up a permanent facility in India. This year, the PCA marked 125 years since its inception. To commemorate the event, the PCA in coordination with the Supreme Court of India conducted a conference on, "International arbitration and the rule of law" which was held at the Supreme Court's auditorium from 13-15 September. During the closing ceremony of the conference, the PCA India office, which was deliberated to be established under the PCA India Host Country Agreement (2008), was soft launched by the Chief Justice of India. The Secretary (ER) and the Attorney General of India were present for the ceremony.

Energy Security

ED Division serves as the primary body facilitating engagements between the line ministries and energy agencies including International Energy Agency (IEA) and International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). Besides facilitating India's energy engagements at the multilateral forum, ED Division is also a part of the group of line ministries, involved in pursuing the bilateral energy dialogues and improving institutional ties with various countries. ED Division in coordination with the Ministry of Power and the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas is working towards attaining India's IEA membership.

Market Expansion Activities

To advance the goals of trade, tourism, and technology and to enhance the global visibility of Indian business and industry, the Ministry allocates financial resources through its Missions and Posts abroad under the "Market Expansion Activities" budget. These funds play a pivotal role in enabling Missions to address routine trade and investment inquiries, evaluate economic and business conditions in their host countries, and conduct market surveys. Additionally, the resources support organizing seminars and engaging with local Chambers of Commerce, industry representatives, and business associations. For the current period, ED Division has allocated INR 9 Crores for these activities across various Missions and Posts globally.

Website and Global Mapping of Resources

The official website of ED Division, Ministry of External Affairs, www.indbiz.gov.in, was launched by EAM on 16 December 2020. This platform serves as a comprehensive repository of information, offering a wealth of resources that cover state-specific data, investment opportunities, general facts, statistics, and detailed insights into various sectors of the Indian economy. The website aims to showcase 'Brand India' in a modern, inclusive manner and facilitate a two-way exchange of information between Indian businesses and foreign enterprises.

One of the key features of the website is the section titled 'World Resource Endowments and Opportunities', which provides a thorough database on global resource supply and demand dynamics, including information on minerals, trade, agricultural exports, and more. The site is regularly updated with trade-related data and market surveys conducted by Indian Missions abroad, helping businesses identify emerging trade opportunities.



Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji addressed the Indian diaspora and interacted with children at the Indian Community Reception held in Algeria, October 2024

Investment Treaties

ED Division actively participates in investment treaty negotiations and has been involved in coordinating these negotiations and providing requisite inputs from a policy/political perspective and from an international law perspective. India is actively engaged with various countries in negotiating investment treaties based on the new model BIT of 2015. The MEA is an International Marketing Group member and an integral part of BIT negotiations and also provides requisite inputs. Correspondence about BIT with other countries is routed through the Ministry by means of Note Verbales, etc. through ED Division which is the nodal division in the Ministry for Investment Treaty and related such matters.

India has been faced with close to 40 investment treaty claims with the cumulative sums in claims amounting to over USD 100 Billion. The cases are at various stages including some cases where awards have been rendered. So far, there have been close to 40 dispute notices by investors against India, of which India has won 06 arbitrations, lost 05 arbitrations, 02 disputes have been resolved amicably and currently there are over 06 active disputes. ED Division as a part of the Inter-Ministerial Group of the Government of India is actively involved at every stage of the dispute by providing necessary inputs, facilitating the hearings and also

coordinating other related actions in these cases in foreign jurisdictions. These cases are before international tribunals seated abroad and involve questions of international law where the advice of the Ministry is sought.

In 2023, two new disputes were filed against the Republic of India; the *Indo Gold v Republic of India* under the India – UK BIT and the *Vedanta v Republic of India*. In the first case, *Indo-Gold* claims that the Indian government expropriated its investment in Bhukia through amendments to the Mines and Minerals Act in 2021. *Vedanta v Republic of India*, concerns the Indian government's refusal to divest 30 per cent of its share held in Hindustan Zinc in favor of Vedanta in alleged breach of a share purchase agreement.

Industrial Outreach and Investment Promotion and Publicity

During the State Visit of Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji to Algeria from 13-15 October, ED Division in collaboration with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) mounted a 25-member business delegation from diverse sectors including defence, automobiles, food processing, energy and infrastructure for the business event.

During the State Visit of Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji to Malawi from 17-19 October, ED Division in collaboration with ASSOCHAM, CII and FICCI mounted a 36-member business delegation.

During the State Visit of the President of the Republic of Maldives Dr. Mohamed Muizzu from 6-10 October, business events were organized in Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru in association with Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), and FICCI.



President of Maldives Dr. Mohamed Muizzu during the State Visit to India participated in events with ASSOCHAM, CII, and FICCI, October 2024.

ED Division in collaboration with PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) organised the 2nd edition of International Week 2024 from 11-15 March. The event focused on exploring the new possibilities of partnering in key sectors such as food, energy, healthcare, education, skill development, tourism etc.

ED Division in collaboration with Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council (TEPC) organized the Defence Sector ICT Conclave on 29 July. The event was organized to promote export of ICT equipment and services to the defence sector of African countries.

ED Division in collaboration with Millennial India International Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture (MIICCIA)

organised a Business Conference on Opportunities in Nordic and Baltic Countries on 05 August with the objective to explore suitable economic opportunities in the Nordic Baltic Region and to find reliable business partners for the Indian business and industry.

ED Division in collaboration with Payment Council of India (PCI), National Payment Council of India (NPCI) and Fintech Convergence Council (FCC) organized the Global Fintech Fest (GFF)- 2024 from 28-30 August. GFF served as a platform for global policymakers, regulators, central bankers, industry captains, thought leaders, academics and senior industry professionals to discuss and debate issues related to the fintech ecosystem.

ED Division in collaboration with POWERGEN International India organized the Indian Utility Week 2024 from 4-6 September. The key objective of the event was to provide a platform for global energy ecosystem stakeholders to explore, collaborate and access the opportunities offered by India's evolving energy mix.

ED Division in collaboration with CII organised the Energy Security Conference on 19 November. The key objective of the event was to facilitate the wider discussion to come out with specific strategies to ensure India's energy security as well as to secure a sustainable and low carbon future.

Civil Aviation

Economic Diplomacy Division is the nodal division in MEA for all matters relating to Air Services Agreements with foreign countries/airlines and works closely with the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA) on these matters. The Division also provides inputs on these issues and on requirements of flight operations or code sharing to promote tourism and to strengthen bilateral/multilateral relations.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) engagements

ED Division on behalf of MEA provides inputs on the issues of ICAO like Long Term Aspirational Goals (LTAG) & Carbon Offsetting & Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), etc.

The ICAO audit conducted in the last week of August was a significant milestone for India's civil aviation sector. Representing MEA, the ED division ensured comprehensive responses to all queries raised during the audit. Key issues related to international standards and practices were addressed, and concerted efforts were made to demonstrate India's commitment to meeting global aviation norms. The successful completion of the audit underscored India's readiness to align with ICAO's requirements,



Prime Minister attended the 2nd Asia-Pacific (APAC) Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation, in Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, September 2024

further strengthening our position in the global aviation community. India successfully scored 82 points beating the Global average (72.36) and Asia-Pacific region (APAC) average (64.91) by a significant margin.

The 2nd Asia-Pacific (APAC) Ministerial Council, held on 11-12 September, marked a significant effort to enhance regional cooperation in civil aviation. As part of the coordination committee, ED division facilitated MEA's assistance in obtaining visas for attending officials and worked closely with foreign missions to promote the event within their territories. The Council emphasized collaborative initiatives to increase air traffic, enhance connectivity, and foster sustainable growth in the aviation sector. This event was instrumental in strengthening India's leadership role in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly with the adoption of the Delhi Declaration under the able leadership of Prime Minister.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation participated in the 16th ICAO Air Services Negotiation (ICAN2024) hosted by the Malaysian Civil Aviation Authority from 21 to 25 October in Kuala Lumpur. Bilateral meetings were held in various countries. Negotiations for Liberalisation of the Air Services Regime including more points of call, code-sharing arrangements by Indian Airlines also took place. ED Division in association with the MOCA is also involved in designation of national

and foreign carriers to operate between India and other countries.

Arbitration Cell

Economic Diplomacy Division of MEA handles various legal issues which include handling numerous arbitrations and litigations including the investment treaty disputes and related court proceedings, investment treaty negotiations, the work related to United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA). Apart from this, the Division also handles various other commercial legal issues and also legal aspects pertaining to the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

There are over 40 disputes as on date where India has been made a respondent State and these investment treaty disputes involving India are at various stages including some cases which are pending before arbitral tribunals and certain other cases which are at a very advanced stage of enforcement of arbitral awards in various jurisdictions across the world.

The stakes in these cases are high and require a holistic

approach and continuous monitoring and reporting with time bound actions. Some of these cases are monitored by the Prime Minister's Office, National Security Advisor and the Cabinet Secretary and have regular meetings and case hearings which are to be attended by representatives of this Division. These hearings are in courts in India and abroad and also before arbitral tribunals abroad. In parallel, India is also negotiating investment treaties with over 30 countries.

Below are the subjects handled by Arbitration Cell:

Inputs to Various Boards/Committees

As a member, ED Division serves on various boards and committees, including the India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO), Invest India, the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), the Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC), the Project Exports Promotion Council (PEPC), the Export Promotion Council for Export Oriented Units (EOUs) and Special Economic Zones (Export Promotion Council for EOUs & SEZs- EPCES) with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Sectoral Group of Secretaries (SGoS)

The SGoS Groups 3 and 7, which deal with Resources and Commerce & Industry, and represented by Secretary (East) and Secretary (ER), respectively, are handled by ED Division. The groups' overriding goal is to enhance India's investment climate by increased physical connectivity, competitive approvals, investor-friendly policies, enhanced exports, and lower import dependence.

Social Security Agreement (SSA)

Social Security Agreements (SSAs) are bilateral accords between India and other nations aimed at protecting the

interests of workers who cross borders. These agreements apply to Indian nationals working abroad and foreign nationals employed in India, with the primary objective of eliminating issues of "no coverage" or "double coverage" and ensuring equal treatment for workers in both countries. SSAs offer significant advantages for Indian professionals and skilled workers abroad, such as avoiding the payment of double social security contributions, enabling the exportability of benefits, and aggregating contribution periods across both countries to prevent the loss of benefits. MEA acts as the "competent authority" for negotiating these agreements, while the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) serves as the Liaison Agency responsible for managing SSA provisions and issuing Certificates of Coverage (CoC) to employees of covered establishments. In November, India signed an SSA with Poland, bringing the total number of social security agreements to 21.

Foreign Direct Investment

ED Division is the nodal division in MEA for processing FDI cases. FDI cases are received through Foreign Investment Facilitation Portal of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). The cases are referred to concerned Missions and Territorial Divisions for their views/ comments. On the basis of comments received, ED Division conveys its inputs to DPIIT and the concerned administrative Ministries after the approval of competent authority within a stipulated time, wherever necessary. ED Division also takes part in FDI meetings organized by DPIIT on a regular basis to review the pending FDI proposals. Generally, these meetings are organized on a monthly basis.

As per the FDI fact sheet as provided by DPIIT, India saw a significant surge of 47.8 percent increase in FDI inflow during the first quarter of FY 2024-25 as compared to the first quarter of FY 2023-24, amounting to USD 16.178 million.

CHAPTER

17

Counter Terrorism

India continued to engage partners on cooperation on counter terrorism. India has Joint Working Groups on Counter Terrorism (JWG-CT) with 26 countries.

India has also been engaging with regional and multilateral bodies such as BIMSTEC, G20, ASEAN Regional Forum, SCO, BRICS, EU, FATF and the QUAD Forum on Counter Terrorism.

Bilateral Engagements (JWG-CT)

During the year, Joint Working Group meetings on Counter Terrorism (JWG-CT) were held with USA (4-5 March), Kazakhstan (8 April), France (15 April), European Union (7 May), UK (21 May), Japan (29 May), Australia (12 August), Indonesia (23 August) and Saudi Arabia (3 October), Russia (19-20 December).

Regional Engagements

RATS-SCO

India participated in the meeting of the Group of Legal Experts (GLE) of Regional Anti Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (RATS SCO) Council

held in Beijing, China, on 16-19 January, and subsequently on 8-11 September.

ASEAN

The 11th ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC)+India Consultation was held on 27 and 28 June in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

BRICS

The 9th Annual BRICS Counter Terrorism Working Group Plenary and its Sub-Groups' Meetings were held on 22-24 July in Moscow, Russia.

BIMSTEC

India participated in the 8th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Sub-Group on Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals held on 19-20 December 2024 in New Delhi.

Multilateral Engagements

India engaged with various multilateral bodies during the year. India participated in the regional workshop on sharing



13th meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism (CT) and 6th round of India-Russia consultations on United Nations related issues, December 2024.

good practices for enhancing rehabilitation and reintegration strategies which was organised by UNODC in association with Government of Sri Lanka in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 13-15 February.

FATF

The FATF Working Group meeting and Plenary were held on 23-28 June in Singapore. India's Mutual Evaluation Report was adopted during this Plenary, placing India in the "regular follow-up" category. This status indicates that India has achieved a high level of compliance with FATF Recommendations and immediate outcomes. India also attended FATF's Working Groups and Plenary meeting in October.

GCTF

India participated at the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) Trans-regional Group Meeting and 23rd Coordinating Committee Meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya on 26-29 February, and the 24th Coordinating Committee Meeting and the Ministerial Meeting of GCTF held on 25-27 September

in New York.

EAG

India participated in the 40th Plenary meeting of Eurasian Group on Money Laundering and financing of terrorism (EAG) held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic on 29-31 May.

Dushanbe Process

India participated in the 'Dushanbe Process High-Level Conference - the Kuwait Phase' held in Kuwait city on 4-5 November.

QUAD

India participated in the QUAD Technical Exchange and Workshop on C-WMD Threats on 4-6 November in Sydney, Australia.

The 2nd meeting of the QUAD Counter Terrorism Working Group and 5th QUAD Table Top Exercise were held on 20-22 November in Tokyo, Japan.

CHAPTER

18

Development Cooperation

DPA I

Development partnership is an important pillar of India's foreign policy. As a leader of the Global South, India has been making consistent efforts to meet the needs and aspirations of its partner countries.

India's development projects are spread across Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Caribbean and Pacific Islands. They cover a wide range of sectors including education, health, agriculture, water, energy, connectivity, construction, defence and security etc.

Lines of Credit (LoC), which are concessional loans offered to partner countries, are governed by the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS) of the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, last amended in 2022.

Some of the major lines of credit projects which have been completed in 2024 include a 20 MW hydro-electric project in Kabu in Burundi; the upgradation of water supply systems in Zimbabwe and Tanzania; a railway track upgradation project in Sri Lanka and the supply of aircrafts to Guyana.

The period saw the first-ever Rupee denominated LoC extended by India for project financing under the IDEAS initiative. The Credit Line is worth INR 487.60 Crores and was extended for a water pipeline replacement project in Mauritius. An additional Line of Credit of USD 700 million to

Mongolia was signed in January for financing of Package-IV of an Oil Refinery Project.

India has been striving to provide debt relief to countries in economic distress. In 2024, India agreed to restructure its debt with Sri Lanka and Zambia. India was also the co-chair of the Official Creditors Committee in the debt restructuring negotiations with Sri Lanka.

During the State Visit of President of Sri Lanka to India in December 2024, grant assistance of USD 20.66 million was extended to settle the payments related to seven completed line-of-credit projects in Sri Lanka. Further, grant assistance was extended for rehabilitation of Kankesanthurai Port in the Northern Province (valued at USD 61.5 million) and the signalling system project in respect of the Maho Anuradhapura segment of Sri Lanka Railways (valued at USD 14.9 million). Extension of grant in lieu of Line of Credit projects were designed to reduce the debt burden and assist in sustainable economic recovery of Sri Lanka.

The Lines of Credit have been able to create a multiplier effect, and have helped partner countries to move ahead on their own development trajectory. They have served as strong enablers for the 'Make-in-India' initiative; have increased India's export of goods and services, and have facilitated the process of Indian industry going global.

LoC agreements worth USD 300 million were signed between India and Vietnam during the State Visit of Prime

Minister of Vietnam, Phạm Minh Chính to India from 31 July-01 August.

A LoC of USD 2.5 million for installation of Solar PV power plant at Cheddi Jagan International Airport in Guyana was signed on 29 February.

Completed Projects

India has completed several infrastructure projects in partner countries across the globe. Some of the key LoC projects completed in the year 2024 include:

Mauritius: Two new LoC projects were started in Mauritius- construction of a Forensic Science Lab (valued at USD 13.5 million) and construction of National Archives and National Library (valued at USD 13 million) in March and October respectively.

Togo: A rural electrification project (valued at USD 5.3 million) covering 46 remote villages/localities in Togo was started in June, under an LoC of USD 500 million extended to ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID).

Burundi: A 20 MW hydro-electric project in Kabu was handed over to the Government of Burundi on 25 October in the presence of Évariste Ndayishimiye, the President of Burundi. This was built under USD 80 million LoC. This is the largest power generation project in Burundi and has enhanced Burundi's power generation capacity by around 30 percent.

Zimbabwe: A pipeline construction and water supply project in Deka in Zimbabwe was completed in August. The project provides water to the Hwange Thermal Power Plant, the largest power plant in Zimbabwe, and ensures safe drinking water to Hwange township serving about 40,000 people. The project has been financed through an Indian LoC of USD 48.1 million.

Tanzania: A water supply project that provides treated clean water to around 1 lakh people in Zanzibar was completed in August. The project cost is around USD 92.18 million funded under a LoC.

Guyana: A LoC of USD 23.37 million for supply of two Hindustan 228-201 aircrafts from Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd to Government of Guyana was signed on 15 March. The aircrafts were delivered to Guyana on 1 April.

Procurement and installation of solar lighting systems for around 30,000 homes in the hinterland communities in Guyana was completed in January under a LoC of USD 7.29 million.

Sri Lanka: Upgrading of a railway track of around 130 kms from Maho to Omanthai was completed in September. The project worth USD 91.26 million is funded under a LoC to Sri Lanka. This is the first upgrade of this track over the last 100 years.

Seychelles: A LoC of USD 2.83 million was extended to the Government of Seychelles for supply of 60 buses. The last tranche of buses were handed over in December.

Projects Under Implementation

India remains committed to further strengthening its role as a strong development partner for countries in the Global South. Some of the major projects expected to be completed over 2025-2026 include upgradation of airports in Maldives; power transmission projects in Nicaragua, Togo, Democratic Republic of Congo; irrigation and water supply projects in Benin and Cote d'Ivoire and road projects in Nepal.

DPA II

Capacity building through Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)

DPA II Division administers various capacity building initiatives, including the flagship ITEC scheme. Over the years, the ITEC scheme has not only become a visible tool of India's bilateral diplomacy but has also become a recognised name in the global capacity-building landscape.

With a rich domestic training landscape, ITEC has been able to offer courses ranging from conventional development subjects like agriculture and entrepreneurship to advanced technology oriented subjects like AI, biotechnology and cyber. Given India's track record of implementing population-scale solutions and championing their cause on global platforms like G20, there has been strong interest in courses pertaining to good governance, data for development and Digital Public Infrastructure. The strength of Indian institutions like the Election Commission and judiciary are recognised globally and MOU-driven training by such institutions are also being covered under ITEC.

The ITEC scheme provides fully funded training opportunities at eminent Indian training institutions for government professionals-civilian, defence and paramilitary--of the Global South countries. On the civilian side, these training courses are designed as short duration, residential, immersive courses with both classroom and experiential content, supplemented with cultural exposures to India's vibrant cultural landscape. Government professionals interested in availing the ITEC training apply through the Indian embassies but are required to be nominated by their governments to participate in these courses. Courses are offered both on a multi-country basis, as well as on a country specific customised basis. On the defence side, courses are offered at the specialised training facilities of all three armed forces, along with higher defence management

courses at prestigious officer training facilities. An emerging aspect of ITEC training is the trainings provided to police and armed paramilitary forces especially for countries in the neighbourhood, under a dedicated modality of ITEC-Security.

Civilian training under ITEC

A total of 216 menu-based/multi-country and more than 100 single-country and customised courses have been approved for implementation in the current financial year. As of December 2024, more than half of these courses have been completed with 4200+ foreign government professionals having availed of these courses. Compared to the previous year, this reflects a healthy increasing trend. Specific packages providing assured capacity building support for specific geographies like Sagar Amrut (for Pacific Island countries), Quad Infrastructure Fellowship (for Indo-Pacific countries), and LAC countries are being implemented.

During the current financial year, DPA II strived to include innovations in the delivery of training programmes. This included partnering with international alliances like Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) to deliver practice-oriented courses for senior level officials. Similarly, joint training for civilian and defence officials with a focus on strategic engagement was conducted through an ITEC-Executive course by the NDC. A specific course on sensitizing the global community to linkages between good governance and human rights is being implemented through a series of courses by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India. A unique course on site-specific nature and wildlife conservation is being conducted for the first time not at a training institute, but at an eminent national park. Another innovation implemented in the current year is the conduct of technical courses for chartered professionals under the new modality of ITEC-Professional; under this the first course was conducted by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) on sharing the Indian accounting story. One of the special features of the ITEC programme in the current financial year has been the implementation of women-only courses on gender relevant themes. About 10 courses on subjects relating to gender relevant themes like women led entrepreneurship, primary healthcare and corporate leadership are being implemented in the current financial year.

Some of the highlights of courses being conducted in the current year are, courses for Bhutanese judiciary at National Judicial Academy (NJA), Bhopal; courses on Agritech startups for Indonesia at MANAGE, Hyderabad; flood forecasting courses for Nepal at National Water Academy (NWA), Pune; media professional courses for Vietnam, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Guyana; courses on financial intelligence/

Anti-Money Laundering (AML)/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (CFT); courses on e-commerce taxation and induction training for commercial representatives of Egypt; courses on digital pedagogy and early childhood care and education in partnership with Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP), and UNESCO Center established by India; and Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme for social workers of Myanmar dealing with children with disabilities at Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai.

A large number of courses dealing with power sector subjects ranging from grid management to EV technology, with forensic science related subjects, data and computer science related subjects were conducted by NTPC School of Business, National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU), Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) and Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) respectively. English language training was provided by English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU) through a bouquet of 08 courses catering to both country-specific and multi-country requests and serving both the needs of professional teachers as well as administrators. National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) conducted 13 courses for mid-career training for civil servants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Tanzania and other countries, and another 06 such courses are expected to be conducted for Sri Lanka, Myanmar and BIMSTEC countries. In all, close to 500 civil servants have been trained under such programmes.

In order to provide policy-oriented courses for senior level officials, DPA II Division regularly organises high value training courses under the ITEC-Executive modality. Till date, 06 courses have been conducted in the current financial year, and another 06-08 courses are likely to be conducted till March 2025. Some of the more important courses include: global trends in infrastructure by Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Indore; power sector resilience by Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI); International Strategic Engagement Programme (INSTEP) by National Defence College; data for development by National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development (NILERD), and human rights by National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC).

As part of its ongoing improvement process, several improvements are being implemented in the online portal that enables full-cycle automation from participant registration to billing. An app is being developed to enable the three key ITEC stakeholders—the participant, the training institution, and the ITEC coordinator in the mission—to seamlessly interact with each other and ensure ease of doing business. The website (www.itecgoi.in) has been upgraded with a live dashboard which graphically displays the performance of the scheme.



The upgraded section of the ITEC website with a live dashboard with provisions for seamless interaction between the participant, the training institution, and the ITEC coordinator in the mission

Apart from courses organised in the country, DPA II also extends capacity building assistance in the onsite mode. Tamil language teachers are being provided to the diaspora schools in Fiji through M/s Educational Consultants India Limited (EDCIL). Similarly, National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU) provided on-site training to police organisations of Guyana for operationalising forensic equipment. Such support is in line with our past experience of deploying individual experts under the ITEC-Expert modality, when civilian experts in Ayush subjects, fisheries and plant science have been sent on foreign deputations.

Defence training under ITEC

Defence related training for friendly foreign countries (FFC) are provided under the Defence-ITEC modality. Since 2014, close to 12,000 defence personnel have been trained at 100+ defence training institutes in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Coastguard. In the current year, 3316 slots were being provided to 79 FFCs. In particular, 41 slots have been offered to 30 countries for the year-long course on "National Security and Strategic Studies" at National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi. Similar high-value/defence management courses are also provided at institutions like College of Defence Management, Secunderabad; Defence Services Staff College (DSSC) Wellington; and National Defence Academy (NDA), Pune.

These trainings are complemented by deployment of defence training teams abroad on a multi-year basis. Since

2014, close to 200 Indian defence personnel have been deployed by MEA in more than 20 countries.

DPA II Division has developed a dedicated modality called ITEC-Security for addressing the training needs of police and paramilitary forces. Under this modality, administration of the course has been both simplified for ease of participation, and adapted for meeting security protocols. High value courses at institutions like the National Police Academy and National Security Guard (NSG) are provided along with tactical courses at training institutions catering to disaster relief, intelligence, detective training, forensic analysis and border management. Training is provided both in tactical/operational subjects as well as technology oriented subjects like AML/CFT, economic intelligence, crypto, cyber fraud and mobile forensics. Since its initiation, more than 50 courses have been conducted under this modality, training more than 800 defence force personnel. In the current financial year, close to 45 courses are being conducted for training approximately 800 personnel.

In addition to the above, DPA II Division is the administrative division for implementing Centre of Excellence in IT (CEIT) projects, under which implementing agency C-DAC operates IT training centres abroad; and the "India for Humanity" scheme, under which funds are provided to the implementing agency Bhagwan Mahavir Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS) for conduct of artificial limb fitment camps.

A total of 58 CEIT projects in 47 countries have been implemented till date, with nearly 2 lakh trainees being trained in subjects like high performance computing,

Artificial Intelligence/ Machine Learning (AI/ML) and big data. Currently, CEIT projects at Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Argentina are operational. Training support is being provided for centres in Jordan and Tanzania. C-DAC is also supporting the upgradation of the CEIT established in Kazakhstan.

A total of 30 'India for Humanity' camps have been organised in 21 countries till date, resulting in fitments of more than 16,500 limbs. In the current financial year, camps have been conducted in Ethiopia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Malawi and Madagascar. Given the fast appreciation received for this initiative, the Prime Minister has announced that such camps would be organised on a regional basis for the Pacific Island countries and countries in the Caribbean. Accordingly, future camps are planned in Papua New Guinea, Trinidad and Tobago, apart from Mozambique, Tanzania and Nicaragua.

Given their depth and range, Indian training institutions are being increasingly sought by developed countries for meeting their international training commitments. As part of this trend, DPA II Division is partnering with the United States Agency For International Development (USAID) to implement the India-US Triangular Development Partnership. As part of this programme, training programmes for third countries are being designed in partnership and implemented by Indian institutions. Training has been conducted for the Philippines and Fiji (on psycho-social care and telemedicine); for Indonesia (on sustainable coffee plantation practices) and for Tanzania (on powergrid management). Additional programmes under consideration are knowledge sharing activities with Thailand and Indonesia on disaster resilience, and with Tanzania for renewable energy related themes.

DPA III

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

As the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) arm of the Ministry of External Affairs has gained experience over the years, sustainability of projects, besides project delivery and implementation, has received increased attention. India's development partnership model has received a high degree of acceptance from its partners because of its demand-driven nature and the focus on keeping the requirements and priorities of the partner country at the heart of projects executed abroad.

India's development partnerships have extended to new areas of focus such as Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and healthcare, public transport, renewable energy, small and medium enterprises, among other areas, based on the priorities of the partner countries involved. Further, India's developmental partnership portfolio continues to intensify with new projects in the neighbourhood, and also extends to Africa, Latin America and Caribbean region, West Asia and Oceania.



The signing of MoU between India and Malawi on Pharmacopoeial Cooperation. October 2024



PM and President of Ukraine with the first batch of BHISHM Cube from India, August 2024.

In addition, DPA has evolved through - (i) greater partnerships with line Ministries in Government of India and Public Sector Units (PSUs) for execution of projects abroad; and (ii) onboarding of a Project Management Unit to impact professional expertise in project monitoring and technical guidance.

India's development assistance has been a major catalyst for creation of much needed infrastructure in partner countries such as railway links, roads & bridges, waterways, border-related infrastructure, transmission lines, power generation, hydropower etc. and also extends to socio-economic areas such as healthcare, education, and housing.

Afghanistan

India has been a steadfast partner in the reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan despite serious security challenges. The principal focus of India's development assistance to Afghanistan has been to build capacities of Afghan nationals and its institutions for governance and delivery of public service, develop socio-economic infrastructure, secure lives and promote livelihoods.

Some of the key Indian projects in Afghanistan are the Parliament Building in Kabul (2015), and the Afghan-India

Friendship Dam, earlier known as Salma Dam (2016) which underline India's commitment to the rebuilding of a united, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan. Both countries launched together the 'New Development Partnership' in September 2017 to further enhance India's development assistance to Afghanistan.

India supported High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) spread across all the 34 provinces of Afghanistan by extending grants assistance. Since 2005, three phases of community-based projects funded by Indian grants and covering areas like agriculture, education, labour, rural development and public health have been implemented by the Afghan government agencies, thus building local capacity towards project management. Under Phase I and II implemented during 2005-2009, USD 20 million was provided for undertaking 116 projects. Under the Phase III launched in 2012, funding of USD 100 million was provided for 420 projects of which 350 have been completed. At the 2020 Afghanistan Conference held in Geneva in November 2020, the EAM announced the launch of Phase-IV of HICDPs with grants assistance of USD 80 million for implementing around 100 new projects in Afghanistan. India also supplied 75,000 metric tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan as humanitarian assistance despite challenges caused by Covid-19.

Support for education and capacity building programmes is an important aspect of India's development partnership with Afghanistan. Under the Special Scholarship Scheme for Afghan Nationals (SSSAN) administered by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), 1000 annual scholarship slots are provided to Afghan students for studying in universities and institutes across India. Since 2006, more than 10,000 Afghan students have been trained under this scheme. In addition, another 500 scholarship slots are provided for children/dependents of martyrs of Afghan National Defence and Security Forces and 614 fellowships for Agricultural studies, administered through the Department of Agricultural Research and Education and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. India also supported establishment of the Afghanistan National Agriculture Sciences and Technology University (ANASTU) in Kandahar - which is the first university of its kind in Afghanistan - through post-graduate courses for Afghan students.

Due to the current political and security situation, Grant-in-Aid projects in Afghanistan are on hold. However, India extends support of scholarship programmes to students presently enrolled in Indian Universities.

Myanmar

India is executing two major road connectivity projects in Myanmar which aim to strengthen regional connectivity by building the road network between Myanmar and the North-Eastern States of India. Under the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project (KMMTTP) Project, an international port has been built at Sittwe in Myanmar. The stretch of Kaladan river connecting Sittwe Port with Paletwa has been developed for navigation and an Inland Water terminal has been established at Paletwa. Sittwe port was inaugurated

in May 2023 and is now operational. However, due to the ongoing security situation, inland waterways from Sittwe to Paletwa are not in operation. Operation and Maintenance (O&M) operations at Sittwe Port are currently being undertaken by India Ports Global Ltd (IPGL), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, since April. Work is also ongoing to build a road between Paletwa and Zorinpui on the India-Myanmar border. India has supported implementation of the India- Myanmar-Thailand (IMT) Trilateral Highway and upgrade of the Kalewa-Yargi road section. Once completed, the Trilateral Highway will provide seamless connectivity for North Eastern states of India with Myanmar, Thailand and other ASEAN countries and facilitate movement of goods and traffic. Besides, the connectivity project will also facilitate India's economic and cultural ties, and strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations with Southeast Asian neighbours.

India has also provided support for capacity building projects in Myanmar, namely establishment of the Myanmar Institute of Information Technology (MIIT) in Mandalay, India Myanmar Centre for Enhancement of IT Skills (IMCEITS) in Yangon and the Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research and Education (ACARE) near Naypyidaw. The Government of India (GoI) has been assisting the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (GoM) for establishing and running the IMCEITS in Yangon since 2008. Since its inception, 2839 students have graduated from IMCEITS benefiting the region in creating skilled manpower and capacity building for employment generation. Furthermore, IMCEITS has made a significant impact by producing industry-ready IT specialists, employed by both local and international companies. Graduates hold positions such as Software Engineer, Network Engineer, Mobile Developer, System Administrator, Multimedia Specialist, Operation/Project Manager. The project has been appreciated by GoM



Operation Sadbhav: HADR aid to Myanmar after the typhoon Yagi. September 2024



HADR Assistance supplies from India to Nepal, June 2024.

as well as the population for its positive impact and benefits, as outlined above.

Nepal

India-Nepal developmental partnership extends to a wide spectrum of projects, including infrastructure projects in areas of railways, road, electricity transmission lines, police training and vocational training. India is undertaking development of rail links with Nepal for enhancing the ease of movement of people and goods. Under the first phase, Jayanagar-Bardibas Rail Link (68.72 km) and Jogbani-Biratnagar Rail Link (18.60 km) are being developed at an estimated cost of around USD 10.8 million.

India has completed construction of three Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) at Birgunj, Biratnagar and Nepalgunj in Nepal along the India-Nepal Border to facilitate trade and movement of goods and traffic. These were handed over to the Government of Nepal in 2018, 2020 and 2024 respectively. Development of ICP Bhairahawa is currently underway and is expected to be completed and handed over to the Govt of Nepal in 2025. A decision has been taken to construct another ICP - the fifth along the India-Nepal international border-at Dodhara Chandani.

Government of India is funding the establishment of a National Police Academy (NPA) at Panauti, Nepal with a grant assistance of USD 752 million. NPA is one of the largest projects to be fully funded by Gol under Grant-in-aid. The Central Public Works Department was appointed as

the Project Management Consultant (PMC) and the project commenced in July 2022 and is expected to be complete by 2025. India is also in the process of supplying 20 Electric Buses to Nepal.

Sri Lanka

A modern state-of-the-art Cultural Centre has been constructed at Jaffna under India-Sri Lanka development partnership. The Cultural Centre includes a 2-storied museum, 12-storied learning tower, an auditorium block, a public square and a floating stage for cultural performances. The project was inaugurated by the EAM in March 2022.

India is also implementing the Indian Housing Project Phase III and IV in Sri Lanka. Under Phase III, there are 4,000 houses being constructed under a community-driven approach in the Central, Uva and Southern Provinces of India. Under Phase IV, a total of 10,000 houses are proposed to be built across Northwest, Central, Uva, Southern, Western and other provinces. The overall aim of the Indian Housing Project is to provide sustainable houses to Internally Displaced Persons and Indian-origin Tamils.

Maldives

India and Maldives have a growing development partnership involving both grant and LoC assistance. India is assisting in construction of a new Ministry of Defence building for Maldives which is expected to be completed by 2025.

The Construction of National College for Policing and Law Enforcement (NCPLE) (formerly ISLES) in Maldives has been completed and the project was inaugurated by the EAM in March 2022. India provided a grant for construction of additional facilities at the Composite Training Centre at Maafilaafushi Island, built with India's assistance.

The construction work of India-supported Greater Malé Connectivity Project (GMCP) through a grant of USD 100 million and a LOC of USD 400 million is ongoing. The Prime Minister and the then President of Maldives jointly laid the foundation of this project in August 2022. The GMCP involves construction of bridge and causeway links between the Islands of Vilingli, Gulhifalhu and Thilafushi with Malé and is expected to be completed by September 2026. The project is the largest infrastructure project to be undertaken in the country and once completed, will become an economic lifeline and a force-multiplier for Maldives.

Mauritius

India has been providing development assistance to Mauritius in various sectors, including infrastructure, health, education and capacity building. Some of the significant infrastructure and capacity building projects undertaken this year are the building of an ENT Hospital, and the E-Tablet project to provide teaching aids for primary schools in Mauritius.

India is also providing grant assistance for construction of a Civil Services College in Port Louis which is nearing completion. Another project includes the Indian grant-in-aid for Forensic Science Laboratory which is expected to be complete in 2025. The Medi-clinic at Grand Bois was inaugurated on 17 July and is running successfully for patient service. The construction of Area Health Centres in

New Grove and Cap Malheureux were completed on 15 October and 28 October, respectively. Work on setting up of Renal Transplant Unit at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Hospital in Mauritius under Government of India grant assistance of USD 10 million is underway and likely to be completed early 2025.

India is also in process of procuring and supplying 100 electric buses on grant-basis to Mauritius. The delivery is expected to be completed in 2025.

Zambia

The Government of India is supplying medical equipment to the Government of Zambia worth USD 9.6 million through Grant-in-aid. The medical equipment is expected to reach Zambia in January 2025. India is also in the process of supplying 600 sewing machines as a gift to Zambia.

South Africa

With a view to promote quality vocational education and training to meet with the training requirements of young people and the artisanal skill requirements of South Africa, an MoU for setting-up of Gandhi Mandela Centre of Specialization for Artisan Skills (GMCOS) was signed between India and South Africa during Prime Minister's visit to South Africa in July 2018. The MoU entails setting-up of Centres of Excellence in South Africa. The Government of South Africa identified Tshwane South Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College, Pretoria as the first location of the Gandhi-Mandela Centre. Under Indian assistance, machinery and equipment, computer hardware, software, peripherals and video conferencing



EAM with the then Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravin Kumar Jugnauth at the inauguration of Jan Aushadi Kendra in Mauritius. October 2024.



Three 9-ton trucks donated by India to Commission Electorale Nationale Independante, Madagascar. December 2024

facilities in skills-under-demand in South Africa have been supplied. The GMCOS at TVET College was launched in October 2021. Given the utility of the project, the Government of South Africa has requested for an extension of the project which India has agreed to. The annual maintenance of the facility is also underway.

Mongolia

India is providing support for construction of India-Mongolia Friendship Secondary School in Ulaanbaatar. The Raksha Mantri laid the foundation stone of the project in September 2022. A MoU for the project was signed during the Prime Minister's visit to Mongolia on 17 May 2015. Upon receipt of necessary clearances from Mongolian side, the excavation work at the site commenced in October 2024. The project is expected to be completed by 2026.

Madagascar

India gifted three 09-ton Trucks to Commission Electorale Nationale Independante, Madagascar in December 2024.

Comoros

India is supporting Comoros in the supply of public transport vehicles including buses, ambulances and pick up vans intended to improve the access to mobility for the people of Comoros. The supply is expected to be realized in 2025.

LAC Countries

India is supplying machinery for the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) at a cost of approximately USD 1 million, per project (on grant-in-aid basis), to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Central American Integration System (SICA) countries, for creation/development of sustainable and viable enterprises. Small and Medium-sized

Enterprise (SMEs) proposals for Suriname, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Dominican Republic and Barbados are being undertaken in the initial phase of the project.

Suriname

The Government of India is supporting the implementation of the Integrated Social Welfare Program of the Government of Suriname under the Extended Fund Facility of the International Monetary Fund with procurement and supply of 28 different items of food grains for a period of 6 months. The first lot of consignment with 425 metric tonnes departed from India on 17 November.

Pacific Island Countries (PIC)

India is in the process of supplying 16 sea-ambulances to 9 PICs which is one of the deliverables announced by the Prime Minister during the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) III summit held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on 22 May 2023. The sea-ambulances are intended to improve emergency medical services across the PICs, which often face challenges due to their remote locations and lack of access to timely medical care. This commitment underscores India's role as key development partner for the PICs, focusing on humanitarian assistance and sustainable development.

Fiji

The Government of India is working closely with the Government of the Republic of Fiji in developing a new 100-bedded Super Specialty Cardiology Hospital in Suva as a Government of India Grant-in-aid project, which was announced by the Prime Minister at the 3rd FIPIC Summit in 2023. In this regard, a draft Government to Government

(G2G) MoU is under finalization, in consultation with the Fijian Government.

Palau

India is in process of supplying 12 heavy duty, high temperature resistant water tanks to Palau. The contract has been awarded and goods are in transit to Palau.

QUAD

Delivering on its Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) commitments, Government of India has committed around USD 2 Million to provide solar cold storage, solarization of health care facilities and solar water pumping system to Comoros, Fiji, Madagascar and Seychelles in the Indo-Pacific region.

Digital Public Infrastructure

India is promoting digital public infrastructure incubated in India, through the digital offerings of UPI, Aadhaar or the Modular Open Source Identity Platform (MOSIP), DigiLocker, eSanjeevani, among others, worldwide, especially among countries of the Global South. This emanated from deliberations under the Voice of the Global South Summits held in 2023 and 2024. India's push for DPI is in furtherance of digital transformation in both India and foreign countries and to enhance cooperation in ecosystem-centric digital initiatives (such as India Stack). Governmental efforts to promote IndiaStack DPI with Foreign Governments has fructified into seventeen MoUs.

For the export/promotion of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) abroad, six LoI have been signed between RBI and

the Central Bank of host countries-Guyana, Peru, Uruguay, Namibia, Fiji and Nigeria. Commercial Agreements between NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) and their counterparts have been signed for Namibia, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Bangladesh whereas MoUs to further cooperation on UPI have been signed with Guyana, Jamaica and Maldives.

Government of India is assisting the implementation of Sri Lanka Unique Digital Identity Program with India's grant assistance. The implementation of the project would lead to more effective and efficient delivery of government services and enhanced socio-economic inclusion. Further, a similar project is underway with the Government of Myanmar for a digital identity for their population to be undertaken by the Government of India on pilot basis.

DPA IV

DPA IV Division is entrusted with the responsibility to deal with the projects for restoration and conservation of heritage sites, which define the cultural landscape of partner countries as a part of India's cultural diplomacy outreach. While these projects are implemented by ASI, the designated technical agency under the Ministry of Culture, these are coordinated and funded by MEA. This Division also collaborates with other organizations to implement projects related to restoration and conservation of intangible heritage assets like murals, manuscripts etc.

Work is in progress in full swing in all three ongoing restoration projects of heritage sites. These include projects in Cambodia (Ta Prohm and Preah Vihear) and Lao PDR (Vat Phou). Two new projects are being undertaken in Vietnam.



Medical supplies handed over to the Government of Fiji, and the marking of 75 years of India's diplomatic presence in Fiji. April 2024.



Website of the digitised archive/ catalogue of 1100 Indic manuscripts under SAMHiTA

Ta Prohm Temple, Cambodia: This is MEA's oldest project, having commenced in February, 2004. The current ten-year-long phase III of the project is likely to be completed in November 2026. During the current financial year, conservation work has been completed for major segments like the Hall of Dancers, bringing the overall physical progress to more than 70 per cent.

Preah Vihear Temple, Cambodia: This is the latest project taken up by MEA and the second project in Cambodia. Sanctioned in 2020, this project is likely to be completed in 10 years. During the current financial year, implementation of project activities have picked up pace with completion of baseline assessments, scientific studies and creation of tourist accessibility facilities. The overall progress is under 20 per cent.

Vat Phou Temple, Lao PDR: The project is currently in its second phase, after successful completion of the first phase (May 2007- May 2017). The 10-year long second phase commenced in November 2018. After disruption in the Covid years, pace of work has been restored and works on the central ceremonial pathway and its attendant quadrangles were carried out, bringing the overall physical progress close to 20 per cent. 2024 marks 15 years of work undertaken by ASI at Vat Phou UNESCO World Heritage site. A special publication on restoration and conservation work of Vat Phou published by ASI was launched by Minister of Home Affairs, Vilayvong Bouddakham and Minister of Education and Sports Association, Phout Simmalavong of Laos on 4 November.

My Son group of Temples, Vietnam: Successful restoration of three groups of temples - H, K & A at My Son complex in Quang Nam Province of Vietnam was carried out as part of

a development partnership between two Governments. The project was formally handed over to My Son Management Board on 22 December 2022. Thereafter, conservation of "E" and "F" groups of Temples has been undertaken. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) team was deputed to the site in December to commence the conservation work.

Conservation of murals at Wat Raja Bo Pagoda, Cambodia: This project is being implemented as a grant-in-aid, with ASI providing supervisory and technical expertise to the Cambodian officials. Restoration work is underway, and two instalments of the grant amount have been released.

New Projects

Apart from "F" and "E" group of temples at the My Son site, conservation of Dong Duong Buddhist Monastery and conservation of Nhan Tower are also under consideration in Vietnam. These projects were announced by Prime Minister during the India-Vietnam virtual summit held in December 2020.

An effort to promote restoration and revival of Intangible Cultural Heritage like language, rituals, practices, performing and other fine arts in an institutional manner, India International Centre (IIC), New Delhi carried out a research project for digitization of Indic manuscripts held in various locations in the UK, Denmark and Nepal. The results have been put in public domain as the 'South Asian Manuscript Histories and Textual Archive' (SAMHiTA), which displays 1100 indic manuscripts in catalogued and digitized format. A second phase to this project, aiming to catalogue and digitize 3000 manuscripts at 8 countries and repositories is under consideration.

CHAPTER

19

Policy Planning & Research

Policy Planning and Research is the nodal division of the Ministry for initiatives relating to medium-term policy planning, research and outreach to the strategic, thinktank and academic community specialising in foreign policy, as well as engaging bilateral partner countries on policy

planning dialogues. Policy Planning Division is also the nodal Division for the Voice of Global South Summit (VoGSS) initiative of the Government and for coordinating India's Neighbourhood First Policy in the Ministry.



EAM virtually addressed the first Foreign Ministers' Session of the 3rd VoGGS on the theme 'Charting a Unique Paradigm for Global South', August 2024.



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During the year, the 3rd edition of VoGSS was held on 17 August in virtual format, with the overarching theme, "An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future". Prime Minister inaugurated the Summit and hosted the Inaugural Leaders' Session. The Inaugural Session was followed by 10 Ministerial sessions, which included two Foreign Ministers' Sessions, and one Session each hosted by the Health, Finance, Energy, Education, Commerce, IT, Youth, Education and Environment Ministries. The Summit witnessed the participation of 173 dignitaries from 123 countries across the Global South, including 21 Head of States/Governments, 34 Foreign Ministers and 118 Ministers and Vice Ministers.

During the year, the Division held Policy Planning Dialogues with counterpart Policy Planning Divisions/bureaus of the Foreign Ministries of Japan, France, Norway and jointly with Quad Member-States of Australia, Japan and the US. A joint India-Japan-Korea trilateral Policy Planning Dialogue was also held during this period.

Division in collaboration with leading think tanks and academic institutions spearheads India's foreign policy outreach through its four flagship initiatives the Raisina Dialogue, Indian Ocean Conference, Asia Economic Dialogue, and Global Technology Summit. It also organizes a range of high-impact strategic dialogues, including the India-US Forum, India-Japan Forum, among others, reinforcing India's engagement on global and regional issues.

The 9th Raisina Dialogue, with the theme, "Chaturanga: Conflict, Contest, Cooperate, Create" was held on 21-23 February in New Delhi, organised in collaboration with the Observer Research Foundation. This year's edition

saw participation of over 2500 representatives from 115 countries, making it one of the largest global gatherings of foreign policy practitioners and experts.



Prime Minister with the Prime Minister of Greece Kyriakos Mitsotakis at the 9th Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, February 2024.



EAM addressed the inaugural session of the 9th Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, February 2024.



EAM delivered the keynote address at the 7th Indian Ocean Conference in Perth, February 2024.

The 7th Indian Ocean Conference was held on 9 and 10 February in Perth, organized in association with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Australia, along with S. Rajaratnam School of International

Studies, Singapore and Perth-US Asia Centre in Australia. The theme of this Conference was "Towards a Stable and Sustainable Indian Ocean."



EAM along with former President of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe, Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs Penny Wong, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore Vivian Balakrishnan during the 7th Indian Ocean Conference in Perth, February 2024.



EAM virtually addressed the 8th Asia-Economic Dialogue 2024 held in Pune, February 2024.

The Asia Economic Dialogue was held on 29 February - 02 March in Pune, organized in collaboration with Pune International Centre. The theme of the 7th edition of this Summit was "Geo-economic Challenges in an Era of Flux".

The inaugural edition of Global Technology Summit Innovation Dialogue was held on 8-9 October in Bangalore, organised in collaboration with Carnegie India. It convened

tech-focused discussions on Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and Artificial Intelligence (AI), focusing on how these technologies can promote inclusive growth, improve governance, support sustainable development, and forge international partnerships.

The 7th India US Forum was held on 27-29 January in Delhi, organised in collaboration with Ananta Aspen Centre.



EAM at the 7th India-US Forum in New Delhi, January 2024

The first India-Nordic Track 1.5 Dialogue was organized on 22-23 August in Oslo, Norway, in collaboration with Ananta Aspen Centre. The discussions at the Dialogue revolved around the themes of geopolitics & security; emerging technologies; the Arctic; green transition.

The India-EU Track 1.5 Dialogue was held on 21-22 October in New Delhi in collaboration with the Ananta Centre. It brought together policymakers, business leaders, think-tank experts, and academics to explore new ideas and opportunities for strengthening India-Europe relations. The discussions focused on regional and global geopolitical issues, future of India-EU partnership; trade, technology and security cooperation between India and the EU.

The 23rd India Korea Dialogue was held on 13-14 November in Delhi, organised in collaboration with Ananta Aspen Centre.

The 7th India Japan Indo Pacific Forum was held on 18-19 November in Delhi, organised in collaboration with the Delhi Policy Group. The theme of this edition was "India and Japan: Partners for Asian Stability and Progress".

The 3rd India Japan Forum was held on 6-7 December in Delhi, organised in collaboration with Ananta Aspen Centre.



Mos (KVS) alongside Foreign Minister of Norway Espen Barth Eide at the inaugural address of the 1st India-Nordic Track 1.5 Dialogue in Oslo, August 2024.

In addition, in line with the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, in its 24th report on “India’s Policy Planning and Role of Think Tanks with Special Reference to ICWA and RIS”, the Division expanded foreign policy outreach to various parts of the country and organised a number of Track 1.5/Track 2.0 dialogues in various states across the country.

Through such Track 1.5/2.0 dialogues, the Division continued to expand institutional engagement with think-tanks and academic institutes across different Indian states throughout the year. These include the 4th India Japan Intellectual Conclave ‘Kizuna’ held in Shillong on 12 February, in collaboration with Asian Confluence; Asian African Treaty Law and Practice Conference held in Gandhinagar on 28-29 February, in collaboration with Rashtriya Raksha University; 3rd Maharana Pratap Annual Geopolitics Dialogue held in Udaipur on 22-23 March in collaboration with Usanas Foundation; 1st Track 1.5 Polar Dialogue held in Bengaluru on 30-31 August in collaboration with National Institute of Advanced Studies; 1st India- Indonesia Track 1.5 Dialogue held in Mumbai on 23-24 September in collaboration with Gateway House; 17th All India Conference on China Studies held in Manipal, Karnataka on 21-23 November in collaboration with Manipal Academy of Higher Education; 2nd International Conference on Purvodaya Perspectives held in Bhubaneswar on 14-15 December in collaboration with The Energy Forum.

The Division produced a number of research papers and policy briefs, covering foreign policy trends and international developments. The research output is utilised by the Ministry and Indian Missions abroad. The focus of these papers ranged from immediate response options to emerging issues to medium and long-term trends and developments in the world and India’s evolving role and interests over this strategic horizon. The Division produced a range of publications, including the Foreign Policy Daily Report, NITI series, Think tank Compendium, Monthly Summary of the Cabinet and Annual Report of the Ministry.

During the year, the Division ideated and operationalised the Niti Shakti Initiative under which Divisions in the Ministry can commission short term study/research projects on any topic of interest through think tanks and academic institutions across the country. Several relevant research proposals are under process under the Niti Shakti Initiative.

Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA)

The Division is the administrative and nodal division in the Ministry for all matters relating to the Indian Council

of World Affairs (ICWA). During the year 2024, ICWA continued with its mandated activities with a view to promote the study of Indian foreign policy and international affairs, as well as analysing geo-political and geo-strategic trends and developments. These activities included research, publications, discussions, and foreign policy outreach initiatives. ICWA published its research outputs in the form of 87 Issue Briefs, 78 View Points and 17 Special Reports. The Council also published 4 Sapru House Papers which are comprehensive future-oriented policy research papers on selected topics on foreign policy and international affairs. ICWA’s Journal ‘India Quarterly’ was brought out regularly in both English and Hindi. It published 16 Books [9 single authored books, 5 edited books, and 2 Translations] on global and regional developments, trade, culture, civilization, SDGs, and grey zone governance. It also published 16 special publications and guest columns that contained papers by eminent experts on various subjects. It continued its efforts to translate its publications in Hindi and other Indian languages.

ICWA hosted Sapru House Lectures by visiting foreign dignitaries with the objective of giving them a platform to interact with an informed audience on issues of bilateral relations and international affairs. Prime Ministers of Vietnam and Malaysia, President of UN General Assembly, Secretary General of ASEAN and Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand were among the foreign dignitaries who delivered Sapru House Lectures in 2024. The Council organized a ‘Curtain Raiser’ Seminar on ‘UN Summit of the Future’, and several Panel Discussions focused on various themes of contemporary relevance and importance.

The Council organized various Track 2 and Track 1.5 dialogues, seminars, conferences and book discussions. Some important bilateral Track 2 dialogues held were with ICWA’s MoU partners in Iran, Russia, South Korea and Vietnam; and Track 1.5 Dialogue was held with the partner in Germany.

The Council entered into MoUs with several Universities, through which students pursuing graduation and post-graduation in international relations are given an opportunity to intern at ICWA. In 2024, ICWA expanded the scale and scope of its youth engagement programmes with the enrolment of 42 Research Interns - 16 paid interns (6-month duration) and 26 non-paid interns (2 month-duration). It also conducted lectures by ICWA faculty in universities and colleges and invited students to participate in ICWA programmes.

Functioning since 1955, the ICWA Library, popularly known as Sapru House Library, has emerged as a premier resource center for Indian and foreign scholars over the past seven decades. In order to facilitate the research activities and meeting requirements of scholars in the niche areas of foreign policy, new books of topical importance were added

to the Library collection. Special attention was given to procure more books on international affairs in Hindi for the convenience of Hindi scholars, students and readers.

Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS)

PP&R is the nodal division for all matters relating to Research and Information System (RIS) for developing countries. RIS is an autonomous policy research institute that specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment, and technology. It fosters policy dialogue and capacity building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues. The primary focus is on promoting South-South Cooperation and collaborating with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums.

Housed at RIS, the Global South Centre of Excellence (DAKSHIN) fosters knowledge sharing and mutual learning for building capacities and developing sustainable solutions for countries of the Global South. DAKSHIN has organized a number of workshops on agriculture, health and digital public infrastructure. It has also collaborated with partner think tanks from across the Global South and held numerous interactive sessions with them.

RIS organized an international conference titled "Global Conclave 2024: Advancing Human Development in Global South" on 11-13 January, at New Delhi. About 350 national and international scholars, experts, policymakers, development practitioners and other stakeholders participated in this major conference.

On 27 February, the Ministry of AYUSH and RIS signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance academic

cooperation, and facilitate research, policy dialogue, and publications in the field of Indian traditional medicine.

RIS organized the 8th Roundtable of the ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT) in Singapore on 7-8 November. The roundtable carried the theme "*Navigating a World in Transition: Agenda for ASEAN-India Cooperation.*" The event brought together over 100 scholars, policymakers, and experts from India and ASEAN member states to deliberate on enhancing ASEAN-India relations amid global and regional transitions.

RIS also organized an international symposium entitled "Strengthening India-Japan Economic Relations: Opportunities and Challenges in context of Changing Global Order" on 20 November, in Tokyo. The symposium was attended by over 500 delegates.

RIS has initiated capacity building programs that have become an important modality of South-South cooperation. In 2024, RIS organized two capacity building programs for participants from neighbouring countries representing diverse sections from academia, practitioners of development cooperation, civil society and other stakeholders.

MEA Library

The Ministry's Library acts as a Resource and Information Centre for the use of officers and staff members of MEA at headquarters as well as for Indian Missions and Posts abroad. The library is currently housed at Patiala House and Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan (JNB) in Delhi. The library has over one hundred thousand books, rich resource materials and a large collection of maps, microfilms and official documents. It is also equipped with modern facilities to support policy, planning and research.

C H A P T E R

20

Legal & Treaties Division

The Legal and Treaties Division oversees the Ministry's legal affairs, advising from the international law perspective. In 2024, the Division continued to provide advice on key issues handled by the Ministry and Government of India as a whole, vetting and facilitating ratification of numerous bilateral and multilateral treaties, besides, participating in the international negotiations.

Engagement with the United Nations and Other International Organizations

United Nations

Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly

The 6th Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), also known as the Legal Committee, is dedicated to addressing legal matters, fostering the development of international law, and resolving various legal questions. It reviews reports from the International Law Commission and formulates recommendations on critical legal issues,

which are then presented to the General Assembly for consideration and action. Historically, the Committee's work has been lauded for promoting and developing a cohesive and progressive international legal framework.

During the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly, held from 2 October to 14 November, India played an important role in the 6th Committee. By advocating for increased participation of developing nations in UN legal bodies, India demonstrated a balanced and constructive approach that emphasized inclusivity and representation. India made significant contributions to discussions on crimes against humanity, highlighting its steadfast commitment to international criminal justice and the accountability of perpetrators.

Furthermore, India's active engagement extended to various other agenda items, such as measures to eliminate international terrorism, reinforcing its dedication to fostering global cooperation in preventing and suppressing terrorist acts. Through its participation, India underscored the importance of upholding legal principles and ensuring justice, showcasing its role as a key player in shaping the global legal landscape.

International Law Week

India, as one of the co-organisers, participated in the 34th Informal Meeting of Legal Advisers, held on 21-22 October

during the international law week at the UN Headquarters in New York. The thematic issues tabled for panel discussions included the Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the International Law Commission, Peaceful Resolution of International Disputes, and the Relevance of Freedom of Navigation. On 23 October, India also co-sponsored a side-event organised by The Hague Academy of International Law on the theme, 'Is International Law A Babel's Tower'.

UNCITRAL

The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), established in 1966, operates as a subsidiary body of the United Nations General Assembly. It stands as the primary legal entity within the UN system devoted to international trade law. UNCITRAL's principal goal is to modernize and harmonize the rules governing international business, thus promoting international trade and investment.

Since its inception, the Legal & Treaties Division has been representing India in UNCITRAL Working Groups, actively participating in sessions and making significant contributions to international trade law evolution. This year also, the Division maintained its continuous involvement, closely following selected Working Group activities and providing valuable inputs. This reflects India's commitment to shaping international trade law and highlights its influential role within UNCITRAL. Latest developments of UNCITRAL working groups in 2024 are:

- i. Working Group I (Warehouse Receipts): This Working group focuses on developing a legal framework for warehouse receipts to facilitate international trade. The group's primary objective is to modernize and harmonize laws related to warehouse receipts, making it easier for businesses to use these receipts as collateral for financing.
- ii. Working Group II (Dispute Settlement) deals with technology-related dispute resolutions and model clauses for specialized express dispute resolution.
- iii. Working Group III (Investor-State Dispute Settlement Reform) works on reforming Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), including the development of a standing mechanism for resolving international investment disputes and a multilateral instrument on ISDS reform.
- iv. Working Group IV (Electronic Commerce) addresses issues related to electronic commerce, including automated contracting and default rules for data provision contracts.
- v. Working Group V (Insolvency Law) focuses on civil asset tracing and recovery in insolvency proceedings and applicable law in insolvency proceedings.

- vi. Working Group VI (Negotiable Cargo Documents) works on draft provisions for an instrument on negotiable cargo documents, focusing on draft articles concerning negotiability.

Law of the Sea

India demonstrated proactive engagement in various international maritime forums. Participating in the informal Consultations of State Parties to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (ICSP17), held on 15-17 May, India showcased its commitment to collaborative efforts for sustainable fisheries management. The 34th Meeting of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, held on 10 - 14 June, acknowledged and appreciated India's active involvement, highlighting the commendable work of Indian institutions under the Convention.

India's commitment extended to the 29th Session of the Council and Assembly meeting of the International Seabed Authority, where discussions centered on draft regulations for mineral resource exploitation. Playing a crucial role in the Finance Committee of the International Seabed Authority, India participated actively in preparing the committee's report presented to the Assembly, emphasizing responsible and sustainable marine resource management. Actively participating in the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, India engaged in discussions on "the oceans as a source of sustainable food" during its 24th meeting on 18-21 June.

India played a crucial part in the 34th Meeting of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in June. India's participation in the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole of the General Assembly, particularly in the 20th and 21st meetings, focused on taking stock of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects. Furthermore, India made substantial contributions during informal consultations on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, including its Omnibus resolution. Under the framework of the United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, India actively participated in informal consultations on the Omnibus Resolution on Sustainable Fisheries throughout September, October, and November.

COP 29 Negotiations

India participated in the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held on 11-24 November, in Baku, Azerbaijan. Among other things, a major decision on a New Collective Quantifiable Goal on climate finance

(NCQG) was adopted. This decision aims to significantly increase funding for climate action, ensuring that financial resources are accessible to countries most affected by climate change. Additionally, the Division contributed to discussions on crucial topics such as adaptation, mitigation, compliance mechanisms under the Paris Agreement, response measures, and the implementation of the Paris Agreement commitments.

Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

The Legal & Treaties Division participated in the 60th session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), held in Bonn, Germany on 03-13 June. The session focused on a range of critical issues related to climate change, including the global stock-taking process, adaptation measures, and the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

International Legally Binding Instrument on Plastics Pollution, including in the Marine Environment Negotiations

The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution (INC) was established in March 2022 following a resolution at the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2) to develop a legally binding international Instrument on plastic pollution including in the marine environment. The INC has held five sessions since its inception, starting with the first session in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in November 2022, followed by sessions in Paris, Nairobi, Ottawa, and most recently in Busan, South Korea, in November.

India has opposed regulating the production of primary plastic polymers, arguing that such measures could impact India's development. During the 5th session in Busan, India emphasized the need for the Instrument to focus solely on plastic pollution without extending to polymer production regulation. India also called for financial and technical assistance for developing countries to comply with the Instrument's provisions.

Outer Space

The Division participated in the 63rd Session of the Legal Sub-Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in Vienna on 15- 26 April. The meeting discussed various legal questions related to peaceful exploration and use of outer space. Topics on the Legal Sub-Committee agenda included among others: national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space; activities of international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

relating to space law; legal mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation and remediation measures; non-legally binding United Nations instruments on outer space; legal aspects of space traffic management; application of international law to small-satellite activities; and potential legal models for activities in the exploration, exploitation, and utilization of space resources.

The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO)

The Asian- African Legal Consultative Organisation (AALCO) is an inter-governmental organization headquartered in New Delhi mandated to serve as an advisory body in the field of International Law for its member States and functions as a forum for Asian-African cooperation in legal matters of common concern. India actively contributes towards the mandate of AALCO and participated in the 62nd Annual Session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) was held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 8-13 September

India held the Presidency of the 60th Annual Session of AALCO, with the Additional Secretary (L&T) serving as the President. An Open-ended Sub-committee of Liaison Officers, chaired by India, reviewed and revised the Statutory Rules of AALCO, with the updated version being adopted at this session.

In addition to presenting a General Statement, the Indian delegation delivered statements on various agenda topics, including the International Law Commission, the Law of the Sea, International Law in Cyberspace, Legal Issues in Outer Space, Asset Recovery, International Environmental Law & Sustainable Development, and International Terrorism. India's comprehensive engagement underscored its active role in shaping the discourse at the AALCO forum and advancing the Global South agenda.

Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH)

During the year, the Legal & Treaties Division continued its active engagement with the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH), an intergovernmental organization with the mandate of the progressive unification of the rules of private international law. The Division contributed to various projects and initiatives of the HCCH, focusing on key areas such as the Service and Evidence Conventions, Parentage and International Surrogacy Arrangements and Access to Justice under the private international law.

India actively participated in the meetings of the Working Group on Parentage/Surrogacy and the Council on General Affairs and Policy (CGAP-2024). These engagements

aimed to support the development of a new international instrument on legal parentage, including parentage resulting on international surrogacy arrangements. The Working Group's efforts focus on establishing clear, consistent rules for the recognition of parental rights, the legal relationship between children and intended parents, and the protection of surrogate mothers' well-being. Additionally, the Division being a National Organ coordinating activities of the HCCH, participated in the Special Commission on the Service Convention, Evidence Convention and Access to Justice Conventions, on 2-5 July held at the Hague. This Commission focused on updating and refining country profiles and revising the handbooks for the Service and Evidence Conventions to promote greater clarity and consistency in their application. These efforts are aimed at enhancing the operational guidance for Contracting States and ensuring more effective cross-border judicial cooperation.

Secretary-General of HCCH visited India on 24 October and met with Senior Ministry Officials and discussed ways and means to further deepen India's engagement with HCCH. The benefits of the 2005 Choice of Court and 2019 Judgments Conventions, as well as the 1980 Child Abduction, 1996 Child Protection, and 2007 Child Support Conventions were highlighted. Further, discussions were held on how India could promote and support the possible issuance of e-Apostilles in India under the e-APP project of HCCH.

Antarctic Treaty System

The Legal & Treaties Division's involvement in the Antarctic Treaty System focused on preserving the unique environment of Antarctica and promoting scientific research in the region.

The Division participated in the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting and the 26th Meeting of the Committee for Environmental Protection in Kochi, Kerala. It focused on promoting peace, scientific cooperation, and environmental protection under the theme of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. Key discussions included the establishment of a new Antarctic research station, Maitri-II, climate change implications, and the development of a tourism framework.

Seminar and Events advancing the International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

On 15 May, The Legal & Treaties Division participated in the AALCO-ICRC Webinar on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, which explored critical humanitarian challenges and contributed to broader discussions on international humanitarian law.

Subsequently on 12 August, in an event organized by International Conference of the Red Cross (ICRC) Regional

Office, New Delhi to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Geneva Convention, AS (L&T) delivered Special Address on the theme 'The Geneva Conventions at 75: A Common Heritage of Humanity'.

The Division actively participated in the 34th ICRC and Red Crescent Movement held in Geneva on 28 to 31 October and contributed to the negotiations from India's perspective, the resolutions on IHL adopted by the Conference.

Mutual Legal Assistance in criminal matters and Extradition

The Legal & Treaties Division examines Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Treaties (MLAT) and Extradition Treaties and requests. As the central authority overseeing MLAT matters, the Ministry of Home Affairs provided comprehensive texts of draft treaties for legal scrutiny. These drafts pertain to several countries, including the Philippines, Guyana, Turkmenistan, Brunei, Lithuania, Botswana, Nigeria, and Peru.

Additionally, the Legal & Treaties Division also participated in the extradition treaty negotiation between India and Cambodia and examined a wide range of queries relating to extradition and MLAT, including the question concerning the "grounds of refusal" in the extradition treaties. Many Mutual Legal Assistance in Civil and Criminal Matters and Extradition requests, both originating from India and foreign countries, underwent meticulous scrutiny in the Legal & Treaties Division and comprehensive legal opinions were provided.

Information Technology Law

Apart from vetting of MoUs/Agreements concerning cyber security/cybercrime, the Legal and Treaties Division also participated in the negotiations of the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee (UN AHC) to elaborate a "Comprehensive International Convention for countering the use of ICTs for Criminal Purposes", which was concluded and the text was adopted by the AHC during the reconvened session held from 29 July to 9 August at New York.

Trade and Investment

IPEF Negotiations: The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), launched in May 2022, and consisting of 14 countries including India, aims to strengthen economic ties and tackle 21st-century economic challenges in the Indo-Pacific region. The framework focuses on four key pillars: Trade, Supply Chains, Clean Economy, and Fair Economy, plus Overarching Framework Agreement. India is part of all the Agreements, except Pillar I, relating to Trade. Legal

& Treaties Division actively participated in the negotiation of IPEF Agreements and was also involved in the legal scrubbing and signing process.

Legal & Treaties Division participated in the negotiation of the India and Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement which is to replace the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (INDAUS ECTA) between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Australia. Legal & Treaties Division also participated in the negotiation of India-UK Free Trade Agreement. Legal & Treaties Division involved in the conclusion of the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) between India and European Free Trade Association. It was signed on 10 March. Legal & Treaties Division participated in Bilateral Investment Treaty negotiations between India and United Arab Emirates; Kuwait; UK; Saudi Arabia and other countries.

International and Domestic Dispute Settlement

i. Investment Arbitration Cases

The Legal & Treaties Division provides advice to various Ministries on arbitration cases filed against the Government of India, alleging violations of Bilateral Investment Treaties.

ii. Climate Change case before ITLOS

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) invited the States Parties to UNCLOS and others to present written statements on the questions submitted to the Tribunal for an advisory opinion in the case "Request for an Advisory Opinion submitted by the Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law". The Division assisted in the preparation of the written statement, and the delegation was led by Joint Secretary (L&T), who presented India's statement emphasizing the need for international cooperation to mitigate climate impacts on marine ecosystems.

iii. ICJ Case on Climate Change

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), in the Advisory Opinion on "Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change", referred to by the General Assembly of the United Nations through resolution A/RES/77/276 started its hearings. The request was initiated by Vanuatu and supported by numerous countries. It seeks an advisory opinion on the obligation of States under international law to protect the climate system and the consequences for those failing to do so. The Division participated in the proceedings and argued that the developed countries which have historically been the major largest contributor to anthropogenic greenhouse

gas emissions must be held accountable for the harm caused by climate change. India emphasized the need for developed countries to fulfil their commitments on emission reductions and climate finance.

iv. Neutral Expert on Indus Water Treaty

There is disagreement between India and Pakistan as to whether the technical design features of Kishenganga (completed in 2018) and Ratle (under-construction) hydroelectric power projects located in Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir contravene the Indus Water Treaty. The point of differences could not be resolved at the Permanent Indus Commission level comprising of Permanent Commissioners from India and Pakistan. On 13 October 2022, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), pursuant to Article IX and Annexure F of the Indus Waters Treaty 1960, and after consultation with each of the Parties, appointed Mr. Michel Lino as Neutral Expert in these proceedings (administered by the, PCA).

So far, the Neutral Expert held two meetings with the Parties and a site visit (along with the Parties) regarding the two projects. The Legal & Treaties Division provided its advice and legal support on the matter.

v. Domestic Court cases

The Legal & Treaties Division has a major role to play in case litigations filed by or against the Ministry before the domestic courts. As the nodal point for all court cases involving the Ministry, it offers comprehensive legal support, including the thorough vetting of affidavits and preparation of responses to petitions filed against various Divisions. The Division also liaises with the panel advocates representing the Ministry in court, ensuring legal representation and assistance on issues related to the Ministry. Throughout the year, Division efficiently managed numerous such cases, and safeguarded the legal interests of the Ministry.

Treaty Practice and Online Treaty Database

The Legal and Treaties Division plays an important role in facilitating the signing and implementation of treaties on behalf of India. To sign the treaties on behalf of India, the division issued Instruments of Full Power, as detailed in **Annexure-I**. Similarly, the implementation of signed bilateral and multilateral treaties was achieved through the issuance of Instruments of Ratification, a process handled by the Legal & Treaties Division, with a list available in **Annexure -II**.

In its capacity as the depository of all treaties signed on behalf of India, the Division ensures accessibility and transparency. **Annexure -III** provides a detailed list of non-classified Agreements/Treaties signed by India during the year. The Legal and Treaties Division further provides its

service by indexing and uploading the text of these treaties into the Indian Treaties Database, which is consistently updated. This comprehensive database, accessible through the web link <https://www.mea.gov.in/TreatyList.htm?1> encompasses treaties from 1950 to 2024, exceeding 4000 Agreements and is open to the public, emphasizing the commitment to transparency and providing valuable historical and contemporary insights into India's international engagements.

Examination/Vetting of Legal Documents

The Legal & Treaties Division has undertaken examination of various international law instruments, including Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), treaties/agreements, as well as Cabinet notes, covering a diverse array of subject matters. These instruments span a wide spectrum of areas, reflecting the multifaceted nature of India's international engagements. Noteworthy categories include treaties, agreements, MoUs etc., on Culture, Personnel Management, Employment and Repatriation of workers, Assistance in the field of Investigation, Gainful Employment, Knowledge Partnership, Customs and Excise, Petroleum Infrastructure, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Investment and Innovation Relations, Combating Corruption, Transfer of Health Technologies, Financial Services, Agriculture and Forest, Medicine, Bilateral Investment and Innovation Relations, Air

Services, Local Currency Settlement Mechanism, Protection of Classified Information, Privileges and Immunities, Space, Cross-Border Trades, Migration Mobility Partnership, Audio-Visual Cooperation, Ozone-Depleting Substances, Tourism, Twinning/Sister City Agreements, Protection of Natural Resources, Solar Alliance, Projects to be implemented in foreign countries, and Defence Cooperation. Thus, the Legal & Treaties Division's work helped in addressing a broad spectrum of legal and diplomatic issues, facilitating cooperation and collaboration on a global scale.

Legal Opinions and Legal Research

This year, Division offered legal opinions on the Montreal Protocol on Ozone-Depleting Substances. Its legal opinions extended to a broad spectrum of areas, encompassing local employee cases, inter-country adoption, child repatriation, consular, immunities and privileges, international human rights and humanitarian law matters, international criminal law, and legal assistance matters. Additionally, the Division has provided insights on topics ranging from the transfer of sentenced persons, space and air law, to application of international law in cases involving the return of space objects. Notably, the Division has contributed in addressing environmental matters, Indus Water Treaty issues, court cases, tender documents, and various other legal instruments of Government of India and State Governments.

CHAPTER

21

e-Governance & Information Technology (eG&IT)

The e-Governance and Information Technology (eG&IT) Division is involved with the design, development, implementation and maintenance of various e-Governance initiatives of the Ministry. The Division also provides end-to-end support in respect of all Information Technology (IT) related matters to the Ministry and Missions/Posts abroad viz. Procurement, maintenance and upkeep of the IT infrastructure.

During the period from January to December, eG&IT Division has undertaken several steps towards the implementation of various components of the Digital India Programme in the Ministry and all Missions/Posts abroad to have a transparent, secure, accessible and participative IT ecosystem. Automation and network are being harnessed as tools to achieve synergy at all levels of functioning in the Ministry and render efficient IT services to Government officials.

Major initiatives undertaken by eG&IT Division during the year 2024 are as under:

- (i) As part of the broader vision of using e-governance solutions for improving accessibility and efficiency of government initiatives, an exercise to streamline and rationalize the number of portals of the Ministry has been initiated.
 - Several new utility modules have been added to

the Ministry of External Affairs Online Working System (MEADOWS) namely, Intranet Module, Induction Coordination Updation Module, and Module on Karmayogi Certification.

- An in-house application dashboard has been developed for the Global Estate Management (GEM) Division which shows details of projects/properties of our Missions/Posts abroad in addition to other projects of MEA within India.
 - A separate portal for e-Political Clearance for incoming visitors (Conference related events) has been developed by eG&IT Division as per the requirements of the Coordination Division.
- (ii) The Division from time to time, has organized a number of lectures/seminars on the Fundamentals of Cyber Security and Cyber Hygiene for government officials, for the purpose of spreading awareness among the officials of the Ministry and Missions/Posts abroad about the basic concepts of cyber security. In this regard, 'Cyber Jagrookta Diwas' is observed on the first Wednesday of every month. Further, special cyber awareness/hygiene sessions are incorporated in the induction training of newly recruited officers, and promotion related training and special training for officers going on posting abroad.

C H A P T E R

22

Consular, Passport & Visa Services

Consular, Passport and Visa (CPV) Division is the nodal Division to provide consular and visa services to Indian nationals and foreigners including Indian Diaspora in India and abroad.

Consular Services

As an integral part of welfare measures for Indian nationals living abroad, our Missions and Posts provide various consular services, including the attestation of documents, registration and solemnization of marriages, and the registration of births and deaths of Indian nationals. Additionally, they facilitate the transportation of mortal remains of deceased Indians and the serving of summons received from Indian courts to Indian nationals residing abroad. For Indian nationals arrested or imprisoned abroad, Missions and Posts offer consular access to visit them in prisons and ascertain their welfare. Open Houses and Consular Camps are regularly organized by most Missions and Posts at different locations. Furthermore, our Missions and Posts in Gulf countries and Malaysia have specialized Community Welfare and Labour Wings to address

employment-related issues faced by Indian nationals in these regions.

The CPV Division, in consultation with the line Ministries/ Departments in Government of India, States Governments and foreign Diplomatic Missions in India, also deals with the consular matters of foreign nationals in India, mainly concerning issues related to their safety and security in India.

Consular Dialogue Mechanism

The Consular Dialogue mechanism is aimed at discussing outstanding consular, visa, and diaspora-related matters with a view to engage in discussions and resolve issues faced by the Indian diaspora abroad. India has so far established bilateral Consular Dialogue mechanisms with over 33 countries. During 2024, Consular Dialogues/ Consultations were held with Bangladesh, Belarus, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Philippines, Portugal, South Korea, South Africa, UAE, UK, USA, Ukraine. The meetings with Belarus, Portugal, and the Netherlands were inaugural dialogues.

Visa- Exemption Agreements

India has so far signed 'Visa Exemption/Waiver Agreements' for the holders of diplomatic and official/service passports with 135 countries. This year, Visa Exemption/Waiver Agreements for holders of diplomatic and/or official/service passport were signed and operationalised with the Governments of Andorra, Micronesia, Togo, Nauru and Moldova.

Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) Card Scheme

The Ministry is committed to strengthening the connection between the Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) to their roots in India, encouraging them to visit the country, invest, and foster deeper ties. In line with this objective, the CPV Division, in close coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs, has worked to facilitate the easier issuance of OCI cards. The OCI facility has been extended to Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) in the French Caribbean territories of Guadeloupe and Martinique on 11 July and to Guyana on 20 November, for up to the 6th generation. Additionally, the facility for Indian-origin PIOs in Mauritius has been expanded to include up to the 7th generation.

Since the introduction of the OCI card, more than 5.12 million cards have been issued, with a total of 316,211 issued this year.

eVisa Scheme

The e-Visa facility, which has gained significant popularity, is now available to nationals from 172 countries, making it more convenient for a wider range of travellers to visit India.

Extradition

MEA is the Central Authority for extradition matters in India. The Ministry has been actively pursuing negotiations with various countries for bilateral extradition treaties to broaden the legal framework to bring back accused persons involved in international terrorism, money laundering, financial frauds, drug-trafficking and other criminal offences. Extradition requests are also made on the assurance of reciprocity, where there is no bilateral Extradition Treaty/Arrangement.

To facilitate extradition of fugitive criminals, 48 Extradition Treaties are currently in force. India also has Extradition Arrangements with 12 countries. The Ministry also facilitates negotiations for Agreements on Mutual Legal Assistance in

Criminal Matters and in Civil and Commercial Matters and Agreements on Transfer of Sentenced Persons. The CPV Division is currently negotiating with the concerned countries to replace Extradition Treaties entered into prior to 1947.

Passport Seva Programme

The Passport Seva Programme (PSP) Division provides passport-related services across India and abroad. Passport issuance has emerged as one of the most prominent statutory and citizen-centric services provided by the Ministry. To ensure timely, transparent, accessible, and reliable passport delivery in a comfortable setting, the Ministry implemented significant quantitative and qualitative improvements through streamlined processes and a dedicated, trained, and motivated workforce.

Indian passports (along with other travel documents such as Certificates of Identity for Stateless persons, Emergency Certificates for returnees to India, Police Clearance Certificates, Surrender Certificates, and Line of Control Travel Permits in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir) were issued by the Ministry of External Affairs through the PSP Division, the Central Passport Organization (CPO), and its all-India network of 37 Passport Offices, the CPV Division (Diplomatic and Official passports), and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Administration.

There are 93 Passport Seva Kendras (PSK) in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode and 442 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSK) in association with the Department of Posts as extended arms of the 37 Passport Offices. The total number of Passport Seva Kendras functioning in the country stood at 535 as of December, including PSKs and POPSKs. For Indians living abroad, Passports and Emergency Certificates are being rendered through 194 Indian Missions/Posts abroad connected to the PSP system.

Passport Seva Programme (PSP Version 2.0)

The upcoming PSP V2.0 would further enhance and improve the ease of passport services for citizens in the country and for the diaspora availing passport-related services through Indian Missions/Posts abroad. A state-of-the-art secure digital ecosystem will be connected to all Passport Issuance Authorities, PSKs/POPSKs, and other stakeholders (Police, Department of Posts, and India Security Press Nashik) for end-to-end processing of passport-related services in a paperless and cashless environment.

In April, Passport Version 2.0 was launched in RPO Bhubaneswar and Nagpur on a pilot basis. PSP V2.0 offers an interactive portal for online filing of applications, document upload, payment of requisite fees, etc., guided by Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled "bot" and Robotic Process

Automation (RPA). PSP V2.0 would leverage advanced, high-end, and emerging technologies to deliver the next level of citizen experiences. PSP V2.0 is expected to go live next year.

Passport services in India and Missions/Posts abroad

The Passport Seva Programme (PSP), an IT-driven mission-mode project, successfully provided efficient, secure, user-friendly, transparent, and accountable passport services to citizens across the country. The leverage of technology and outsourcing of front office operations enabled a large number of citizens to access passport services easily and quickly. With a volume of only 55 lakh passports issued in the country in 2010, the number of passports issued in this year stood at 1.30 crore.

mPassportSeva Mobile App

The mPassport Seva Mobile App, with additional facilities to apply, pay, and schedule appointments for passport services, is available on both Android and iOS platforms. Citizens do not require access to a computer and printer to apply for passport services. The mPassport Seva App now supports an enhanced set of passport services, such as:

1. New User Registration
2. Sign In to Registered User Account
3. Application form filing to apply for Passport and Police Clearance Certificate
4. Payment for Passport Services
5. Appointment Scheduling
6. Application Availability Status
7. Document Advisor
8. Fee Calculator

Applying from anywhere in India

An applicant can now apply for a passport from anywhere in India. This initiative enables applicants to choose the Passport Office (PO) and, thus, the desired Passport Seva Kendra (PSK)/Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) under the PO where they wished to submit their application, irrespective of whether the present residential address specified in the application form lay within the jurisdiction of the selected PO or not. Police verification would be conducted by the Police Station in whose jurisdiction the address mentioned in the form fell, and the passport was

also printed and dispatched to the same address by the PO selected for application submission by the applicant. Nearly 25.2 lakh applications were submitted under this scheme until 30 November.

Appointments

The Ministry released nearly 85,000 appointments per day, including nearly 23,000 appointments at the 442 POPSKs. Securing online appointments for submission of passport applications at PSKs has been simplified. The current provision allows applicants to choose any appointment date from the earliest five available dates (working days) for scheduling/rescheduling an appointment for passport related services. It made the process of issuing passports easier and quicker.

Outreach of Passport Services

The objective of the Government has been to cater to the growing demand for passports and to reach out to the people located far away from the Passport Offices.

a. Passport Office

(Annexure: The list of the 37 passport offices in India is at Annexure - V)

b. Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs)

There are 93 PSKs functioning in the country as of December 2024. (Annexure - VI)

c. Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSKs)

The Ministry, in association with the Department of Posts (DOP), announced an innovative initiative on 24 January 2017 to open Passport Seva Kendras at the Head Post Offices (HPO)/Post Offices (PO) in the country, called 'Post Office Passport Seva Kendras' (POPSKs). The Ministry has functionalized 442 POPSKs till date, with 08 new POPSKs established during the year. (Annexure - VII)

Applicants, who apply for their passports online through the passport portal, can schedule an appointment and then visit the designated POPSK to complete the formalities similar to those at the PSK, necessary prior to the issue of the passport.

d. Integration of Indian Missions/ Posts abroad into the PSP

The process of integrating the Indian Missions/ Posts abroad into the PSP is an ongoing exercise that

commenced in October 2018. The aim is to provide a uniform centralized passport issuance application process working on a single centralized database for the Indian citizens living abroad and seeking Passport-related services. The Ministry has successfully integrated the passport issuance systems in 194 Indian Missions/Posts into Global PSP (GPSP) system. The Ministry is working to complete the integration of all Indian Missions/ Posts abroad at the earliest.

Simplification of Procedures

The Ministry has taken steps to simplify the procedure for getting passports. These involve simplification of the passport rules and outreach to the people in the delivery of passport related services.

1. Issuance of Passport to Inter-Country Adopted Children

To further simplify the process of issuance of passport to adopted children, Ministry pursued the matter with Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA). Accordingly, instructions have been issued to all passport issuing authorities in India and abroad prescribing revised documents required for issuance of passport to adopted children.

2. Surrender of Passport by Goan origin Indian nationals.

References were received about the issuance of a revocation order in lieu of a surrender certificate of Indian passports to Goan-origin foreign nationals who obtained Indian passports after acquiring Portuguese nationality. The issue was examined in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs. After due consideration, the Government of India decided to accept the revocation order issued to such former Indian nationals for OCI.

3. Priority issuance of passport to Haj pilgrims

In response to the request from the Ministry of Minority Affairs to expedite the processing of passport applications for pilgrims intending to undertake Haj-2025, the Ministry directed all passport issuing authorities to accord high priority for timely issuance of passports for Haj pilgrims.

ePassport

e-Passport is a combined paper and electronic passport with a Radio Frequency Identification chip and an antenna embedded as an inlay. The main benefit of the e-passport is its enhanced ability to maintain the integrity of its data, thereby increasing the level of confidence in the Indian passport. e-Passport also facilitate the ease of travel for

Indian citizens, making their interface with immigration authorities smoother.

The e-Passport project involved the setting up of a complex technical ecosystem, including Public Key Infrastructure (PKI), Key Management System (KMS), Inter-operability test bed, Project Management Unit (PMU), e-personalization, as well as the creation of an e-Passport verification setup at Immigration Check Points by the Bureau of Immigration.

Currently, Passport Offices at Bhubaneswar and Nagpur are issuing e-Passports to citizens since 01 April. A total of approximately 1,08,125 e-Passports have been issued until 31 December.

Production and Personalisation of Travel Documents

Indian travel documents are produced by India Security Press, Nashik, which is a unit under the Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited (SPMCIL). All Regional Passport Offices in India and select Missions/ Posts abroad have been provided with machine-readable passport printers. All Passport Issuing Authorities issue machine-readable passports (MRPs) as per the guidelines laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

At 25 Indian Missions/Posts, the passport/OCI printing is done locally. For the majority of Indian Missions/Posts abroad (wherever passport printing facilities are not available), Machine-Readable Passports and OCI are printed at the Central Indian Passport Printing System (CIPPS) of PSP Division of the Ministry, New Delhi.

Certificate of Identity (Col)

The Passports Act of 1967 provides for the issuance of Col for the purpose of establishing the identity of a stateless person residing in India. During the year, a total of 2,521 Col's were issued.

Appeals under Section 11 of the Passports Act 1967

Under Section 11 of the Passports Act, an appeal against the decision of Passport Issuing Authorities (PIAs) is a statutory right conferred upon the affected persons. The Joint Secretary (PSP) & Chief Passport Officer is the Appellate Authority for such cases. During the year, 92 appeals have been heard and disposed of.

Inspection of Regional Passport Offices

PSP Division coordinates the study tours of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and inspections of Regional Passport Offices by the First Sub-Committee of Parliament on Official Language on the Progressive Use of Official Language in RPOs.

During the year, the First Sub-Committee of Parliament on Official Language inspected the RPOs at Ahmedabad (18 October) and Bareilly (20 November)

Regional Passport Officers' Conference 2024

The Regional Passport Officers' Conference was held by Ministry at New Delhi on 22-24 June. All the 37 Regional Passport Officers and stakeholders of the Passport Seva Programme (PSP) deliberated in detail upon the functioning of the passport issuance system, its achievements, challenges faced, and future initiatives to make the process smoother and more effective for the citizens of India.

International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)

Since February 2009, India has been a participating member of the 'Public Key Directory (PKD) on e-passport' of ICAO, which has been implementing the guidelines on machine-readable travel documents. India participated in the below-mentioned meetings:

- (a) Technical Advisory Group on the Traveler Identification Programme (TAG/TRIP) meeting held on 16 - 17 September and the New Technology Working Group (NTWG) meeting held from 18-20 September at Copenhagen, Denmark.
- (b) 31st ICAO PKD Board Workshop and meeting held on 24-26 September at Xi'an, China.
- (c) 39794-5 Application Profile Interoperability Testing during 15-18 October at Sydney, Australia.

Public Grievance Redressal Mechanism

Under the Passport Seva Programme, the Ministry has put in place a robust Grievance Redressal System, whereby a multilingual National Call Centre with a toll-free number (1800-258-1800), operating in 17 languages and on a 24 x 7 basis, has been set up to disseminate information about various passport-related services, including handling grievances and citizens' feedback. The passport portal also has an email-based helpdesk, where suggestions and grievances can be posted. Citizens can also monitor the status of their passport applications/grievances online through this portal.

A Public Grievance Redressal Cell (PGRC) has been set up in the PSP Division under the supervision of the Joint Secretary (PSP) & CPO, who is also designated as the officer in-charge of Public Grievances of the Ministry for the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS). It deals with grievances received through telephone, e-mail, and post, directly from the general public and also references from various Government offices, such as the President's Secretariat, Prime Minister's Office, Cabinet Secretariat, and Central Vigilance Commission, etc. The names and contact details of the Public Grievance Officer are also displayed in the RPOs/PSKs and on the website of the RPOs.

During the period January-November, 17, 865 grievances were received at CPGRAMS, of which 17096 grievances, i.e., 95%, were disposed of.

Central Passport Organization

The Central Passport Organization (CPO) was created in 1959 as a subordinate office of the Ministry and is headed by the Joint Secretary and Chief Passport Officer, who also act as Appellate Authority under the Passports Act 1967.

The personnel of the CPO Cadre are deployed in 37 Passport Offices, 93 PSKs, and 442 POPSKs across the country. As on 01 December, the sanctioned strength of the CPO is 2,737 and the working strength is 1,747.

CHAPTER

23

Emigration Policy, Welfare & Diaspora Engagement

Emigration Policy and Welfare Division

In recent times, international migration has assumed a pivotal role in the global economy. India is a leading country in the international migration dynamics and is advantageously poised with its demographic potential. By 2030, India's working-age population is set to peak at 68.9%, reaching 1.04 billion people. At present, India's diaspora is over 35 million strong and it is the top remittance receiving country in the world with inward flow of remittance to the tune of USD 120 billion in the year 2023. Recognising their potential, the Government of India works to promote safe, orderly, and regular migration to provide employment opportunities for workers, professionals and other categories of citizens travelling abroad.

Mobility Arrangements

The Emigration Policy and Welfare Division (EP&W) has been working towards establishing institutional mechanisms to foster the global mobility of Indian workers, students,

academicians, researchers, business persons and so on. The Ministry has been proactively promoting the mobility for Indian workforce through diverse MoUs/agreements such as, Migration and Mobility Partnerships (MMPA), and Labour Mobility and Labour Welfare with partner destination countries. These arrangements aim to establish a robust framework for legal migration. These agreements/MoUs foster people-to-people ties, streamline visa procedures, prevent irregular migration, strengthen bilateral relations, and support skill development. During the year, a MMPA was signed with Denmark and Labour Mobility Agreements (LMA) were signed with Taiwan and Malaysia.

Major developments related to the Migration and Mobility/Labour Mobility Agreements signed with various countries during the current year are as below:

Denmark

India and Denmark signed an Agreement on Mobility and Migration Partnership on 22 February in New Delhi. The MMPA was signed by EAM and the Foreign Minister



EAM and Foreign Affairs Minister of Malaysia Mohamad bin Hasan exchanged the MoU on Recruitment, Employment, and Repatriation of Workers between India and Malaysia, in New Delhi August 2024.

of Denmark, Lars Løkke Rasmussen. The Agreement represents a major milestone in enhancing the people-to-people contacts and mobility of business people, students, academics, researchers, professionals, skilled and self-employed workers. It aims to strengthen cooperation on issues related to irregular migration and trafficking in human beings between the two countries.

Israel

The agreement between India and Israel on the facilitation of temporary employment of Indian workers in specific labour market sectors in Israel has been in effect since 04 January.

Malaysia

MoU on Recruitment, Employment, and Repatriation of Workers between India and Malaysia was signed during Prime Minister of Malaysia Anwar Ibrahim's visit to India on 20 August.

Taiwan

The MoU between India Taipei Association (ITA) and Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre (TECC) on the Facilitation of Employment of Indian Workers in Taiwan was signed on 16

February via a video-conference call, witnessed by Secretary (CPV & OIA).

UK

An event to launch the Young Professionals Scheme (YPS) for the year 2024, under India-UK MMPA was organised on 20 February at Anna University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The Scheme was launched by the then High Commissioner of the UK in India in the presence of Minister of Higher Education, Govt. of Tamil Nadu. The ballot/lottery for the scheme was open for 48 hours from 20-22 February for 3000 slots on offer. The scheme allows Indian citizens between 18 and 30 years old to live and work in the UK for up to 2 years. More than 3 lakh youth participated in the ballot.

Moldova

During the visit of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Moldova to India, a Declaration of Intent on the Migration and Mobility Partnership between India and Moldova was signed on 15 December. EAM was present at the signing and the declaration envisages to establish a common framework of understanding and cooperation in the fields of migration and mobility and to facilitate mobility of students, academics, researchers, professionals and businesspersons and their return. The declaration also aims

to establish a framework to prevent illegal migration, people smuggling and human trafficking.

In addition, significant progress has been achieved in negotiations with Croatia, Finland, Greece, Guyana, Russia, and Switzerland regarding similar agreements.

Joint Working Group meetings with various countries under the MMPAs/LMAs :

India-UK

A delegation led by Emigration Policy and Welfare Division including representatives from various departments of Government of India, participated at the 3rd India-UK Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting under India-UK MoU on Migration and Mobility Partnership held in London on 24-25 April. The JWG meeting saw deliberations over important issues, inter alia, the implementation of the MoU on circulation of persons, diplomatic visa waiver agreement, promotion of legal migration and mobility, information dissemination of job opportunities on Indian government portals, and cooperation relating to the prevention and combating of illegal migration.

India-Italy

The 1st JWG meeting under the MMPA between India and Italy was held in Rome on 27 June. Following the JWG, the Ministry is working closely to register Italian prospective Foreign employers on the eMigrate portal to initiate the recruitment of seasonal and non-seasonal workers as per the quota allotted by Italy under the Flows Decree. The quota for seasonal workers for the years 2023, 2024, and 2025 is 3000, 4000, and 5000 respectively, while the quota for non-seasonal workers for the same period is 5000, 6000, and 7000 respectively.

India-Taiwan

The 1st India-Taiwan labour cooperation working-level meeting was held on 05-07 November, in Taipei, Taiwan to discuss the implementation of the recently signed MoU on the Facilitation of Employment of Indian Workers in Taiwan.

Collaboration with International/Multilateral Organisations

Apart from bilateral arrangements on migration and mobility and labour migration, the EP&W Division engages with international and multilateral organisations to enhance the horizon of India's initiatives in fostering safe, orderly, and regular migration pathways.

7th Ministerial Consultations of Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD)

The 7th Ministerial Consultations of ADD was held in Dubai on 10-11 February. The Indian delegation was led by the Secretary (CPV&OIA) and accompanied by officials from MEA and Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). ADD has been operational since 2008 and serves as a regional, voluntary, and non-binding consultative process among 11 Asian countries of labour origin and 7 destination countries. It serves as a platform to facilitate regional cooperation on contractual labour mobility, sharing of best experiences and learning from one another's experience. On the sidelines of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, Secretary (CPV & OIA) held a bilateral meeting with the Minister of Human Resources and Emiratisation of UAE to discuss various measures taken by the two governments to ensure welfare of Indian migrant workers in UAE.

Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) Advisory Committee 2024-2026

On the invitation of the ADD Secretariat based in Abu Dhabi, India joined the Advisory Committee of ADD for the period 2024-26 under the chair of Oman. A virtual meeting of the Advisory Committee of ADD held on 01 October was attended by JS (EP&W).

Budapest Process

On 07-08 May, representatives from the EP&W Division attended the Thematic Working Group Meeting on legal pathways for migration under Budapest Process in Istanbul, Türkiye. The meeting saw the participation of 27 European countries and representatives from European Commission, International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Migration Policy Institute, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and Budapest Process Secretariat. Budapest Process Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) was held in Stockholm on 27 June and was attended by a representative from the Embassy of India in Stockholm. This meeting served as the 2nd preparatory meeting at senior official-level, in view of the 7th Ministerial Conference of the Budapest Process. During the SOM, both drafts of the Ministerial texts (i.e. the Draft Ministerial Declaration and the Action Plan) were reviewed. The 7th Ministerial Conference of the Budapest Process was held on 12 November in Budapest, Hungary. The meeting was attended by our Mission in Budapest.

International Dialogue on Migration (IDM)

The 1st Session of the IDM was held in New York on 21-22 May. IDM is an open platform for the IOM Members and Observers States, International and Non-Governmental organisations, private sectors and other partners to discuss the issues related to migration worldwide. The dialogue was attended by Secretary (CPV&OIA).

Colombo Process (CP)

India assumed the Chair of CP for 2024-26 for the first time since its inception on 29 May. CP is a regional consultative process of migrant worker origin countries from South and South East Asia. It serves as a forum for exchange of best practices on overseas employment. India is committed to promote and protect the rights of migrant workers and facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration. India chaired its first meeting as Chair of the CP at the Permanent representative level meeting in Geneva on 28 June, at the IOM Headquarters. India presented an outline of an action plan for the next two years, focusing on key priorities and initiatives to further strengthen the CP.

India's priorities for CP (2024-26) include:

- (a) Reviewing the financial sustainability of the Colombo Process,
- (b) Broadening the membership by including new member states and observers,
- (c) Reconfiguring technical-level collaborations,
- (d) Implementing a structured rotation for the chairmanship,
- (e) Conducting a regional review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) and;
- (f) Engaging in dialogues with the ADD and other regional processes.

Thematic area working group meetings of the CP took place in Bangkok on 26-28 November.

International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

The 115th session of the IOM Council was held on 26-28 November in Geneva. The session of IOM council aimed at implementing and operationalising solutions to strengthen regular migration pathways.

India-EU High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Mobility (HLDMM)

The 8th India-EU HLDMM, led by Additional Secretary (EP&W), was held on 28 November in Brussels along with a Workshop on Return and Readmission on 29 November. The

HLDMM reviewed the working of project advisory committee and approved the plan for 2025 under Phase 2 of India-EU Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM). Launched in 2006, HLDMM is a key platform for discussing various aspects of migration and mobility between India and the EU and focuses on enhancing cooperation in the field of migration. It has been convened eight times so far.

Welfare Schemes for Indians Overseas

The government accords high priority to safety and welfare of Indian citizens living abroad. Welfare schemes like Indian Community Welfare Fund, Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, Pre-Departure Orientation Training etc. proved to be critical tools towards this objective.

Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF)

Established in 2009, the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) is aimed at assisting overseas Indian nationals in times of distress in the most deserving cases on a means tested basis by providing emergency medical assistance, air passage to stranded Indians, legal assistance, emergency medical assistance, boarding & lodging, assistance to Indian women facing marital issues and transfer of mortal remains to India. The scheme has been revised in 2017 and has been set up in all Indian Missions and Posts abroad. Number of Indian nationals assisted in distress situations abroad has reached 3,53,369 with a total expenditure of INR 683 crores till September 2024.

Pre-departure orientation training program (PDOT)

The PDOT programme was launched by the MEA in January 2018 under the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY). The programme aims to enhance soft skills of Indian migrant workers bound for the Gulf and other Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries. Under this programme, the emigrant workers are given free-of-cost one-day orientation training to enable them to understand the culture, language, tradition, and local rules and regulations of the destination country. The orientation training also helps to sensitise the migrant workers about pathways to safe and legal migration and various government programmes for their welfare, safety and protection such as ICWF, MADAD, PBBY etc. Since inception of the PDOT programme, a total of 1,56,659 emigrant workers have been imparted training through 41 PDOT Centres as on 31st October 2024.

Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana (PBBY)

The Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) is a mandatory insurance scheme for all ECR category workers going to ECR

countries. The scheme provides an insurance cover of INR 10 lakhs in case of accidental death or permanent disability and other benefits at a nominal insurance premium of INR 275/- for two years or INR 375/- for three years validity. The scheme was revised from 01 August 2017, to include ECNR category workers on a voluntary basis and to make settlement of claims simpler for the benefit of our workers and to ensure expeditious settlement of claims. The PBBY scheme has so far provided insurance cover to 80,09,035 Indian migrant workers till October 2024.

Diaspora Engagement Division

The Diaspora Engagement division implements several diaspora engagement schemes, including Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention, Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award, Regional Pravasi Bhartiya Divas, Know India Programme, Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children, Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz, Pravasi Rishta portal and Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora. The Division also deals with marital disputes and child custody cases involving Overseas Indians, issues related to Indian students abroad, and miscellaneous grievances received from diaspora.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention

Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) is the flagship event of the government and is celebrated on 09 January biennially, to mark the contribution of overseas Indian community in India's development, and to reconnect and deepen India's engagement with diaspora at the apex level. It provides a platform to the overseas Indian community to engage with the Indian government by sharing issues of concern and ideas to promote India overseas. The 17th PBD Convention was organised at Indore, Madhya Pradesh from 08-10 January 2023 in partnership with the Government of Madhya Pradesh. During the PBD Convention, prominent Indian diaspora members are conferred with prestigious 'Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Awards' (PBSA) by Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji. It is the highest honour conferred on a NRI, PIO or an organisation or institution established and run by NRIs or PIOs, to recognise their achievements and honour their contributions in various fields, both in India and abroad.

Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC)

The SPDC was introduced in the academic year 2006-07 for the children of People of Indian Origin (PIO) and those of NRIs to enable them to pursue undergraduate courses in Indian Universities/Institutions and promote India as a centre

of higher studies. Under SPDC Scheme, Ministry offers 150 scholarships of up to USD 4000 at undergraduate level in professional and non-professional courses including medical and related courses, out of which 50 seats are reserved for Children of Indian workers in ECR countries. SPDC can be availed by children of PIOs and NRIs from all over the world. Since the inception of SPDC, a total of 1687 scholarships have been awarded till the academic year 2023-24.

Know India Programme (KIP)

KIP is a flagship initiative of the Government of India to engage the youth within Indian diaspora. It aims to strengthen the connection of PIO youth aged 21-35 years with their motherland, while also promoting their awareness of various facets of life in contemporary India and giving them exposure to the ongoing socio-economic transformations within the country as well as various aspects of India's art, heritage and culture. In the calendar year 2024, 8 editions of KIP have been conducted (from 71th to 78th edition) till November 2024, with participation of 310 diaspora youth from various countries. 81 editions of KIP have been completed till date.

Promotion of Cultural Ties With Diaspora (PCTD)

Under the PCTD scheme, Ministry provides grants to Indian Missions/Posts abroad to support their initiatives aimed at strengthening ties with the overseas Indian community, and to preserve, maintain and showcase their Indian heritage and culture. The scheme aims to nourish and strengthen the cultural bonds between India and its diaspora. The grants are also provided to think-tanks and organisations in India which organise events pertaining to the overseas Indian community. In FY 2024-25, financial assistance has been provided to 66 Indian Missions/ Posts abroad under this Scheme.

Videsh Sampark Programme

The Videsh Sampark Programme was started in 2017 as an outreach initiative of MEA aimed at engaging with relevant stakeholders within the State Governments. MEA initiated State Outreach Programmes under the "Videsh Sampark Programme", which is an in-depth dialogue between the Ministry and the State governments. State Outreach Events are being organised in partnership with the State Governments to seek cooperation in addressing issues pertaining to welfare and protection of our citizens abroad and brief the State Government about the MEA's initiatives on engagement and welfare of the overseas Indian community and curbing illegal migration. During the year, 3 Videsh



EAM launched the revamped e-Migrate portal and Mobile app along with Minister of Labour and Employment and MoS (PM), October 2024

Sampark Programmes were conducted with the states of Bihar & Tripura in July and Uttarakhand in September.

addressed by Ministry in consultation with concerned Indian Missions/Posts abroad.

Assistance to NRI women affected by Marital issues

The MEA receives complaints on marital issues, including abandonment, desertion, harassment, and child custody cases from distressed women married to overseas Indians. The aggrieved women are provided appropriate counselling, guidance, and information about legal procedures & mechanisms in such cases. The Ministry has addressed 283 such complaints this year.

Global Pravasi Rishta Portal

Global Pravasi Rishta portal is an online digital portal for connecting Diaspora (NRI, PIO, and OCI) with the Government of India, through Missions/Posts abroad. It is a three-way communication channel between the MEA, concerned Missions/Posts, and the diaspora. This helps in the dissemination of information and creation of a database of our diaspora based on voluntary registrations. The Diaspora Engagement (DE) division is currently in the process of consolidating all its existing portals, including the Global Pravasi Rishta Portal. The portal has been temporarily taken down.

Student Issues

Approximately 1.33 million Indian students are pursuing higher education abroad. Many issues relating to Indian Students enrolled in foreign universities have been

OE&PGE Division

The process of emigration of Indians holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) category passports is regulated under the Emigration Act, 1983, which is administered by the MEA. The 18 notified ECR countries for employment are Afghanistan, Bahrain, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Emigration of ECR passport holders is regulated by way of grant of Emigration Clearance (EC), which is given by the Protector of Emigrants (POE) offices. The Protector General of Emigrants (PGE) enforces the Emigration Act with the help of 16 offices of the Protector of Emigrants (POEs) located at Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Cochin, Thiruvananthapuram, Jaipur, Raebareli, Patna, Bengaluru, Guwahati, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar and Agartala. Registered Recruiting Agents (RAs) are required to obtain Registration Certificate (RC) from the PGE before they could engage in recruitment for overseas employment. Presently, issue of Emigration Clearances for Libya and Yemen have been suspended due to prevailing conditions.

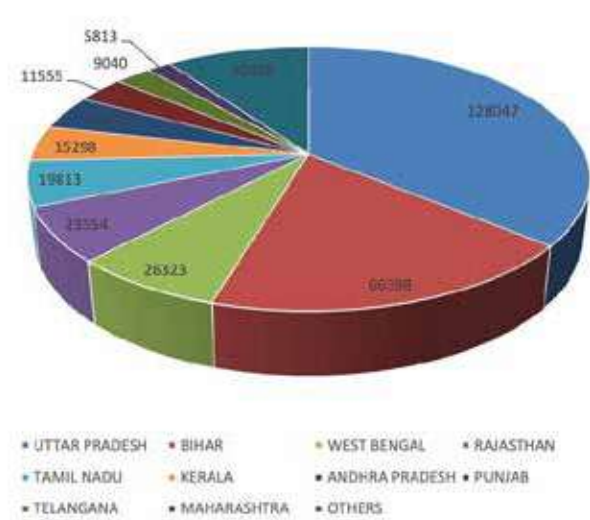
Launch of revamped eMigrate V2.0 portal and eMigrate mobile app

The revamped eMigrate V2.0 portal and eMigrate Mobile App were formally launched by the EAM on 14 October in

the presence of the Minister of Labour and Employment, Youth Affairs and Sports and MoS (PM). The eMigrate project was launched in 2015 and is designed to facilitate emigration of workers holding ECR category passport holders. The revamped eMigrate 2.0 portal connects foreign employers, recruiting agents, and emigrants on a single platform, offering enhanced services like document storage through DigiLocker and emigration related services via over 5.6 lakh Common Services Centers (CSC). It integrates with UMANG for nationwide e-Gov services, BHASHINI for regional language support, and SBI for digital payments with no transaction fees. Additional features include seamless travel support from the Bureau of Immigration and e-verification through the Passport Seva Portal. The eMigrate mobile app has been developed and is available on Google Play store and Government App store. The app allows the stakeholders to have easy access to major services available on the portal, including tracking of application status, obtaining list of registered as well as unregistered recruiting agents, filing grievances etc. The portal is a significant technological initiative in promoting ease of emigration.

Trends in migration in 2024

Every year, many people from India go abroad for employment purposes. Major outflow of emigrant workers from India in the last few years has been to the Gulf countries. This year a total of 3,87,075 Emigration Clearances (ECs) were issued through eMigrate Portal for ECR passport holders emigrating to the ECR countries. This includes 14,570 ECs issued to nurses emigrating to ECR countries. The eMigrate Portal has also added 9,805 new Foreign Employers (FEs) and 165 new registered Recruiting Agents (RAs). During the year, 1,741



State-wise issuance of Emigration Clearances in 2024

new employment related Grievances (GRs) were registered, and 512 GRs were resolved. In December 2023, the Ministry implemented the Credit/Security Insurance scheme to provide an additional option, alongside the existing Bank Guarantee system, for Recruiting Agencies (RAs) to meet the financial security requirement for obtaining or renewing Registration Certificates (RC) under the Emigration Act. Till date over 200 RAs have availed benefit under this scheme. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Telangana and Maharashtra, were the top 10 states in terms of the number of EC issued during 2024.

CHAPTER

24

States Division

States Division facilitates external outreach of States and Union Territories through the network of Indian Missions and Posts abroad and through MEA Branch Secretariats. The mandate was pursued proactively, taking steps to organize events to facilitate diplomatic outreach of States/UTs and promote economic diplomacy at the federal level.

Liaising with States and Union Territories through their Resident Commissioners in Delhi continued apace to facilitate various matters. The signing of several MoUs between State Governments and their entities with foreign counterparts was facilitated on trade/ investment promotion, skill development, agriculture research, among other things. The Division also processed and facilitated Sister City/State agreements to establish friendly and cooperative relations between Indian States/Cities with foreign provinces/cities. Details of important events held are given below.

Funds Disbursed Under States Facilitation Abroad (SFA) Budget Head

An amount of Rs. 8 Crore was sanctioned under “State Facilitation Abroad” (SFA) to Indian Missions/Posts abroad. These funds were utilized by our Missions/Posts to facilitate promotional activities of States and Union Territories abroad.

Funds Disbursed Under States Facilitation and Knowledge Support (SF&KS) Budget Head

States Division sanctioned funds to Branch Secretariat Guwahati for 3rd North East Export Promotional Meet. Funds were also sanctioned to the Branch Secretariats in Kolkata, Hyderabad and Chennai and the RPOs at Trivandrum, Srinagar and Jammu for promoting external outreach of States/UTs.

Events Organized/Facilitated by the States Division

- (i) The Division organized a meeting of the Resident Commissioner and other officers of Government of Kerala on 10 May to familiarize them with the functioning of MEA and ways to promote the external engagement of the State.
- (ii) The Division hosted webinar on 25-29 September to promote the 2nd edition of the Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show (UPITS) 2024, in which representatives from MEA Headquarters, Indian

Missions/Posts abroad and the Uttar Pradesh Government participated.

- (iii) The Division facilitated an Ambassadors' Meet in Delhi on 03 October as a prelude for the Utkarsh Odisha: Make in Odisha Conclave '25, presided over by the Chief Minister of Odisha and attended by several Heads of foreign Missions accredited to India.
- (iv) The Division facilitated an Ambassadors' Meet in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh on 18 October during the International Kullu Dussehra Festival from 13-19 October, which was presided over by the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh and attended by several of Heads of foreign Missions accredited to India.
- (v) The Division in collaboration with the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), North East Initiative, organized the 3rd North East Export Promotion Meet (BSM) on 21 November in Guwahati with the aim to create a platform for both buyers and sellers.

Facilitation of Visit of Foreign Dignitaries

Visits of more than 100 foreign Delegations/Ambassadors based in New Delhi to various States/ Union Territories of India during the period 01 January to 31 December were facilitated.

Clearance to North Eastern State Projects, Funded by External Agencies

In 2024 MEA's approval to 10 Externally Aided Projects to be undertaken in North Eastern States (Assam, Sikkim, Mizoram and Manipur) funded by multilateral and bilateral agencies such as IFAD, ADB, JICA and NDB was processed.

Twinning of Cities/ States/ UTs, MoUs between States/ UTs and Foreign Entities

Sr. No.	MoU/ Agreement	Parties	MEA's NOC Date
1.	Memorandum of Understanding between Maharana Pratap Horticultural University, Karnal, Haryana and Western Sydney University, Australia	Maharana Pratap Horticultural University, Karnal, Haryana and Western Sydney University, Australia	18 January
2.	Memorandum of Understanding between Water Resources Department (WRD), Government of Bihar and Deltares, Netherlands.	Water Resources Department, Government of Bihar and Deltares, Netherlands	30 January
3.	Agreement between Javni Zavod Triglavski Narodni Park (Triglav National Park Authority), Slovenia and Valley of Flowers National Park, Government of Uttarakhand, India.	Triglav National Park Authority, Slovenia and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Government of Uttarakhand, India.	16 February
4.	Memorandum of Understanding between Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences (SSUHS), Assam and Novo Nordisk Foundation (NNF), Denmark	Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Science, Assam and Novo Nordisk Foundation, Denmark.	28 May
5.	Memorandum of Understanding between Chandigarh Administration and Milton Keynes City Council, UK-reg.	Chandigarh Administration and Milton Keynes City Council, UK.	30 May

6.	Memorandum of Understanding between Medical Education and Research Department of Assam and Singapore- India Partnership Office and MoH holdings Pvt Ltd. on the Singapore- State of Assam Nursing Talent Skills Cooperation.	Singapore- India Partnership Office (SIPO) and Government of Assam.	02 September
7.	Agreement for carrying out Phase 1 of Goa erosion studies and capacity building between Goa Coastal and Environment Management Society and Deltares, Netherlands.	Goa Coastal and Environment Management Society and Deltares, Netherlands	09 September
8.	Memorandum of Understanding on geothermal energy between Government of Uttarakhand and M/s Verkis, Iceland	State of Uttarakhand and M/s Verkis, Iceland	12 December

CHAPTER

25

New Emerging and Strategic Technologies (NEST) & Cyber Diplomacy

NEST

The New Emerging and Strategic Technologies (NEST) Division focuses on advancing India's technology diplomacy. Since its inception, the Division has actively engaged to develop and coordinate India's positions in negotiations on technology governance rules, standards, and architectures within multilateral and plurilateral forums, including the United Nations and other international organizations. It has also played a pivotal role in fostering policy collaboration with key partner countries and international organizations while empowering Indian Missions to act as 'field synapses' in facilitating supply chains for emerging technologies. These engagements have strengthened India's role as a key influencer in shaping national and global perspectives on emerging and strategic technologies.

During 2024, the Government of India made consistent efforts to strengthen partnerships in critical and emerging technologies with various countries. The second review meeting under the U.S.-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) was held in July. Led by the National Security Advisors, the meeting focused on enhancing strategic technology partnerships and defence

industrial cooperation between the governments, businesses, and academic institutions of the two countries. Discussions prioritized sectors such as defence, space, quantum computing, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, high-performance computing, advanced telecommunications, biotechnology, clean energy, and critical minerals.

In July, India and the United Kingdom announced a new Technology Security Initiative (TSI) to foster collaboration between the British and Indian governments, industry, and academia in critical and emerging technologies (CET) across priority sectors. In October, India and Germany signed the India-Germany Innovation and Technology Partnership Roadmap. In September, India and Singapore agreed to explore cooperation in critical and emerging technologies such as advanced manufacturing. A MoU on the India-Singapore Semiconductor Ecosystem Partnership was signed to promote resilient semiconductor supply chains. Additionally, a MoU on cooperation in digital technologies was also exchanged. Division provided its inputs to line ministries in formulating India's policy positions and responses in the technology areas covered under these initiatives, facilitating and strengthening cooperation and collaboration between the countries.

During the year, Division actively involved in the final negotiations of outcome documents, including the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) New Delhi Declaration 2024, GPAI Serbia Declaration 2024, the UNGA Resolution on Seizing the Opportunities of Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence Systems for Sustainable Development, the UNGA Resolution on Enhancing International Cooperation on Capacity-Building of Artificial Intelligence, the Global Digital Compact, and the United Nations Pact for the Future, adopted at the United Nations Summit of the Future in September.

The Division also played an instrumental role in leveraging India's growing expertise in areas such as digital public infrastructure, fintech, space exploration, telecom, and artificial intelligence to foster international collaboration and enhance India's global influence. It assisted line ministries in organizing international events, including the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) Mid-Year Summit, Global India AI Summit, the 2nd International Conference on Green Hydrogen, the 4th RE-Invest 2024, India Mobile Congress, the International Telecommunications Union - World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (ITU-WTSA 2024), and the Global Fintech Festival 2024, among others.

Over the past year, the Division has adopted a proactive outreach strategy to monitor and disseminate developments in new and emerging technologies globally. Monthly newsletters were prepared to document these advancements, while information on technological innovations was gathered through Indian Missions abroad and other sources. This data was subsequently shared with various stakeholders in India to strengthen collaboration and foster partnerships in critical technology domains.

The Division also organized discussions and briefing sessions on strategic and emerging technologies, such as semiconductors, green hydrogen, fintech, and geo-spatial technologies. These sessions included industry representatives briefing Indian Missions on technological advancements in India and identifying market expansion opportunities abroad.

The Division also serves as the nodal entity for the BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment, and Employment) Policy to foster international cooperation, collaboration, and knowledge exchange with foreign countries and multilateral institutions, advancing India's national interests. It also supported the Survey of India in engagements with counterpart agencies in several foreign countries, including signing Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Nigeria and Russia.

During the year, Division officers participated in global technology-related events, such as European Hydrogen Week, the Global DPI Summit, the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipation (GESDA) Summit, ITU-WTSA

2024, the 10th edition of Cybertech Global Event 2024, the 4th edition of the Cyber and Tech Retreat 2024, the GPAI Summit 2024 in Belgrade, Serbia, among others. At the national level, they attended events such as the Global Fintech Festival 2024, the India Geospatial Leader Summit 2024, the Global India AI Summit, the ET 5G|6G Congress, and the India Mobile Congress.

Cyber Diplomacy

The Cyber Diplomacy Division of the Ministry is a specialized division dealing with international cyber governance issues and is engaged with countries at bilateral, regional, and multilateral fora, including the United Nations. Bilateral Cyber Dialogues serve as an important tool for India's cyber outreach and diplomatic engagements with various countries. These dialogues facilitated collaboration with partner countries to enhance cyber security capabilities through the exchange of best practices, joint capacity-building initiatives, and cooperation against cyber crimes. On the regional and multilateral fronts, India actively advocated its interests and concerns in global cyber governance developments and policies under various multilateral and regional forums, such as the United Nations, BRICS, and SCO.

Bilateral Cyber Engagements

During the year, India held bilateral cyber dialogues with South Korea, Estonia, the United Kingdom, ASEAN, Singapore, Italy, and the Netherlands.

Established mechanisms such as the 2nd India-South Korea Cyber Dialogue, held in South Korea on 28 May, the 6th India-UK Cyber Dialogue, held in New Delhi on 3 July, and the 3rd India-Netherlands Cyber Dialogue, held in The Hague on 6 November, focused on bilateral cooperation in areas such as cyber capacity building and training, the cyber threat landscape, national cyber policies and strategies, and the exchange of best practices in cyber security, including the protection of critical information infrastructure. These dialogues also facilitated the exchange of perspectives on contemporary developments in global cyber governance and policies, helping partner countries better understand India's positions and interests in these areas.

India held its inaugural bilateral cyber dialogues, including the first India-Singapore Cyber Policy Dialogue held in Singapore on 17 October, the first India-ASEAN Cyber Policy Dialogue held in Singapore on 16 October, the first India-Estonia Cyber Dialogue held in Tallinn on 17 June, and the first India-Italy Cyber Dialogue held on 25 October in XX. The first India-Singapore Cyber Policy Dialogue focused on practical bilateral cooperation on combating cyber crimes, capacity building and coordination on the United Nations

cyber space developments. The first India-ASEAN Cyber Policy Dialogue provided enhanced understanding of ASEAN priorities on cyber capacities, challenges of cyber threats/crimes and prospects of capacity building cooperation. The inaugural bilateral cyber dialogues with Italy and Estonia were useful in developing better understanding of cyber policy orientation and legal frameworks in the European Union, priority on cyber resilience/defense against cyber attacks, data protection measures and perspectives on global cyber governance policy developments.

Institutionalization of these four new dialogues opened India's cyber engagements including to those regions where convergence of interests and views on cyber space could be explored.

Regional and Multilateral Cyber Engagements

India's key cyber engagements during the year included meetings of the Ad-Hoc Committee to elaborate international convention on ICT crimes, the Open-Ended Working Group on ICT security within the United Nations and negotiations of the Global Digital Compact.

India participated and advocated for enhanced international cooperation on combating cross-border cyber crimes during the Ad-Hoc Committee meetings held in August. These meetings adopted the draft United Nations Convention against Cyber Crime, which aimed at strengthening international cooperation in addressing crimes committed using information and communication technology systems and facilitating the sharing of electronic evidence of serious crimes. The adoption of the Convention provided an international legal framework to support global cooperation in combating cyber crimes.

India also participated in the 8th substantive session held on 8-12 July and the 9th substantive session held on 2-6 December of the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on the

security of and in the use of ICTs. Member countries agreed to continue discussions on key issues, including identifying and addressing existing and potential threats, developing rules, norms, and principles of responsible state behaviour in the use of ICTs, applying international law to ICTs, and implementing confidence-building measures. These measures included establishing a directory for global points of contact, enhancing understanding of technical ICT terms and technologies, capacity building, and institutionalizing a permanent dialogue mechanism under the United Nations framework. India supported the continued exchange of perspectives through a single-track, member-led process to bridge gaps and to enhance understanding on these issues among countries.

The adoption of the Global Digital Compact by the United Nations in September marked a significant step toward promoting international cooperation for a safe and secure digital future for all. India's efforts during the negotiations focused on fostering an equitable global digital landscape that benefits all stakeholders while addressing challenges such as cyber security, data protection, and the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence. India advocated for global collaboration to bridge the digital divide and promote inclusive growth, contributing to a transformative, transparent, and trusted digital future.

On regional engagements, India took part in consultations of the BRICS Working Group on the use of ICTs and the SCO Expert Group on International Information Security. These consultations facilitated the identification of regional cyber capacity-building opportunities and the exchange of perspectives among developing countries on global negotiations and dialogues in cyberspace. India also actively supported and participated in capacity-building initiatives undertaken within the ASEAN Regional Forum and the IBSA framework.

CHAPTER

26

Protocol Division

The Protocol Division of the Ministry of External Affairs is responsible for handling all high-level foreign visits of Indian dignitaries abroad and visits to India by their foreign counterparts. The Division also provides support for the organisation of international conferences and meetings held in India and is responsible for the welfare of the Resident Diplomatic Corps, including all matters related to their privileges and immunities.

During the year, the Division successfully supported the organization of the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers and BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting. In addition, in the year 2024-25, the Division facilitated 7 State visits, 4 official visits at the Head of Government (HoG) and Head of State (HoS) level and 56 Vice President/Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister-level visits to India. The Division also provided support for the organisation of 3 virtual International Conferences.

The Division organized the visit of Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji to 7 foreign countries, Vice-President to one foreign country, and Prime Minister to 16 foreign destinations. The Division also organized the Credential Presentation Ceremony for 37 new Heads of Mission.

During this period, 4 new Resident Foreign Missions were opened in New Delhi, taking the total of such foreign Missions to 160. In the same period, 7 new Honorary Consulates were opened. The period saw an addition of 134 new diplomatic posts in the Foreign Diplomatic Corps in India.

The Protocol Division also coordinates the establishment of property-related issues of Foreign Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations (IOs) and is also responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the historic Hyderabad House. The Division also helped organize the excursion trip to Odisha for Resident Heads of Mission during the year. The Division facilitated more than 8600 requests for facilitation at the airport and helped organize 400 entertainment events at the level of HoS/HoG/Ministers/Secretaries.

Protocol – I Section

Protocol-I section, under the charge of Deputy Chiefs of Protocol (Ceremonial), is mandated to handle incoming visits of Heads of State/Heads of Governments/Vice-Presidents and Foreign Ministers, outgoing visits of President, Vice President and Prime Minister, entertainment (official lunches, dinners and receptions on behalf of the Ministry of External Affairs) and ceremonial functions, airport passes, access to ceremonial and reserve lounge etc.

Protocol-I Section facilitated around 8600 requests for airport passes, lounges (ceremonial and reserved) and exemption from frisking during the period. Also, 400 entertainment events at the level of HoS/HoG/Minister/Secretaries were handled during the period.

Protocol-III Section

Protocol-III Section has carried out various duties during the period (01 January -30 November 2024), which are as follows:

- (i) Providing Protocol facilities to Heads of Missions on their first arrival and final departure.
- (ii) Arranging the Credential Ceremony online and in Rashtrapati Bhawan, where incoming Heads of Missions handover their Credential papers to Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji.
- (iii) Facilitating Heads of Missions and Diplomats (wherever applicable) during Republic Day, Independence Day, Joint Session of Parliament, Swearing-in Ceremony of Prime Minister of India, Yoga Day etc.
- (iv) Processing permanent Airport Entry passes every year with respect to Foreign Diplomatic Missions/ Posts in India subject to reciprocity, which is determined after obtaining and scrutinizing inputs from all our Missions/Posts abroad.
- (v) Approval for establishing new Consulates General, Deputy High Commissions, Trade Offices, and Cultural Centers.
- (vi) Appointment of Honorary Consuls, Consuls General, Deputy High Commissions (Head of Posts for Commonwealth countries) of foreign countries and preparing Exequaturs/Gazette Notification thereafter.
- (vii) Processing approval of installation of Satellite Earth Stations in foreign mission premises.
- (viii) Processing approval regarding awards given by foreign countries to Indian Officials.
- (ix) Appointment of Defence Attaches and defence personnel in foreign diplomatic missions.
- (x) Processing for approval of the creation of new diplomatic or official posts in foreign diplomatic missions.

- (xi) Arranging Chief Guest for National Days of foreign countries celebrated by foreign Missions in India and ensuring protocol guidelines are maintained in the venue.
- (xii) Forwarding messages from VVIP (Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Vice President, Prime Minister, EAM) to Heads of State and Heads of Government of foreign countries. Onward transmission of messages from Heads of State and Heads of Government of foreign countries to Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Vice President, Prime Minister, EAM and Government of India Officials.
- (xiii) Handling court cases pertaining to payment related disputes between foreign diplomatic missions and Indian local staff.
- (xiv) Courtesy requests by HOM/HOPs and other official work entrusted.
- (xv) Extending protocol felicitation to the Head of Mission and other diplomats during Independence Day and managing the concerned enclosures in tandem with the Ministry of Defence.

List of Resident Missions/ Trade offices/ Consulate Generals/Deputy High Commissions/ Honorary Consuls approved from 01 January to 31 December 2024:

- **Resident Missions:** Albania, Timor-Leste, St. Kitts & Nevis, Mauritania and Benin
- **Trade Offices:** Nil
- **Cultural Centres:** Nil
- **Consulate Generals/ Deputy High Commissions:** Nil
- **Consulates:** Nil
- **Honorary Consulates General/ Honorary Consulates:**
 1. New Zealand – Kolkata
 2. Sri Lanka – Ahmedabad
 3. Romania – Bengaluru
 4. Finland – Ahmedabad
 5. Japan – Ahmedabad
 6. Uruguay – Bengaluru
 7. Costa Rica – Chennai

Month-wise list of newly created posts in Foreign Diplomatic Missions in India from 01 January - 31 December 2024:

Month	Number of new posts created
January	12
February	04
March	03
April	11
May	10

Month	Number of new posts created
June	14
July	37
August	25
September	05
October	03
November	10
December	18
TOTAL	152

Protocol Housing Section

The Protocol Housing section looks after establishment-related matters of foreign diplomatic Missions and International Organizations in India. These include clearances for construction, renovation, purchase, sale or lease of property and allotment or lease of land in diplomatic enclave. The section acted as liaison between foreign missions and IOs with Housing Departments, Municipal and Civic bodies like L&DO, NDMC, MCD, DDA, Jal Board, Electricity Board, and MTNL, in Delhi and with State Governments. It also

liaised in matters of disputes and court cases between foreign Missions and Indian property owners.

The Section is also responsible inter alia for the maintenance and upkeep of Hyderabad House, and it carried this out in coordination with the civil, electrical and horticulture departments of CPWD. In addition, the section also effectively managed ITDC's contract for operations and catering at Hyderabad House as well as contractual obligations of maintenance of the VIP Receptorium at Air Force Station Palam, New Delhi.

CHAPTER

27

External Publicity & Public Diplomacy

The External Publicity and Public Diplomacy (XPD) Division continued with its efforts to effectively articulate India's position and India's foreign policy priorities. This has been achieved through extensive media engagement and by expanding its public diplomacy footprint both domestically and internationally. Leveraging digital media and modern public diplomacy and outreach tools was crucial in maximizing these objectives. The Division regularly engaged with the media through press briefings, press releases, advisories, and other engagements, providing comprehensive insights into the Government's stance on various foreign policy issues.

New Initiatives

XPD Division undertook the following new initiatives to advance its objectives:

Expanding MEA's Digital Presence

Keeping pace with the ever-expanding social media landscape, the Ministry strengthened its digital presence by launching a WhatsApp channel on 24 July.



MEA launched a new WhatsApp channel to strengthen its digital presence, July 2024

Strengthening Regional Media Outreach

To take foreign policy initiatives to different regions of the country, the XPD Division expanded its regional and vernacular media outreach over the past year. Information was shared in regional languages on a real-time basis to media outlets. Additionally, public diplomacy efforts by Indian Missions/Posts and relevant India-related stories abroad were disseminated among regional media. This regular and timely communication has increased interest and coverage of foreign policy issues in regional media.

Engaging Social Media Content Creators

XPD Division expanded its foreign media engagement by inviting content creators and social media influencers (SMIs) from abroad. A key objective of these visits is to foster collaborations between Indian SMIs and their international counterparts, thereby amplifying Indian voices abroad. For the period January to November 2024, 5 visits of content creators from Sri Lanka, Nepal, UAE, USA, Maldives and Western European countries were organized.

Anchoring Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz

XPD Division organized the 5th Bharat Ko Janiye (BKJ) Quiz, introducing new elements to the format. Virtually launched by India's EAM on 11 November, the quiz remained open for a month until 11 December. Nearly 1.25 lakh participants registered, with 1.09 lakh taking the quiz, marking an eightfold increase in registrations and a 23-fold increase in participants. The quiz was attempted more than 4.5 lakh times.

XP Documentaries on OTT

XPD Division provided 100 documentaries/short films produced by the Division for broadcasting on Prasar Bharti's newly launched OTT platform WAVES in August.

Engagement with the Media

Press Coverage

XPD Division maintained daily interactions with the media to ensure consistent coverage of foreign policy developments. Information was disseminated through various channels, including media briefings, press releases, statements, and advisories. Weekly media briefings were held to inform a broader audience about India's stance on international issues. Additionally, these briefings were live-streamed on the MEA's YouTube channel to reach a wider audience.

The Division also provided a translation of press releases, background notes, answers to media queries etc. in 12 regional languages including Hindi. These were disseminated to over 100 regional media outlets.

The Division coordinated logistical arrangements, including setting up and operating fully equipped media centres, organizing media briefings, and facilitating media coverage for the Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Vice President, Prime Minister, and EAM during their international visits. Additionally, the Division facilitated media coverage for the visits of world leaders and other foreign dignitaries to India.

XPD Division covered 38 incoming and 37 outgoing visits of VVIP/VIPs between January and November. In addition, four multilateral meetings were also covered. These visits and interactions were given due publicity by the Division. Highlights of important visits were prepared in video form and disseminated through MEA's social media platforms. The details of the visits covered are placed in Annexures IX and X.

Engagement with Foreign Media

Facilitation of Foreign Media

XPD Division facilitated visa, accreditation, and relevant permits for foreign journalists. The Division also facilitated the grant of special permission to undertake journalistic activities in India to OCI cardholders of foreign media organizations. The Division issued guidelines/necessary clearances to foreign media personnel/agencies for the filming of 70 documentaries in India.

The Division also arranged briefings for foreign media by various Ministries of the Government of India.

Familiarization Visits

XPD Division organized visits of foreign journalists as a part of India's public diplomacy and media outreach efforts. These visits were aimed to acquaint foreign media members with various facets of India, promoting a deeper understanding and awareness of the country's priorities, growth narrative, contemporary society, as well as its rich heritage and vibrant culture.

A total of 259 journalists and content creators from 91 countries visited India in the current year under this programme. Besides, 08 Indian media persons visited Lao PDR and Thailand under the ASEAN-India Media Exchange Programme in July.

Digital Outreach

Social Media Platforms

Embracing evolving digital technologies, the Ministry led the way with its robust presence on various social media platforms for information dissemination and public engagement. Regular and timely updates were provided on MEA's foreign policy initiatives, VVIP visits (incoming and outgoing), bilateral and multilateral engagements, advisories, media responses, statements, and speeches.

The Ministry has an impressive social media presence on major social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Flickr, and SoundCloud. The Division also maintains and regularly updates the MEA's website, ensuring it remains current and informative.

X has been the most crucial medium for communication and information. MEA maintains two X handles - the Official Spokesperson's handle (@MEAIndia) and the Public Diplomacy handle (@IndianDiplomacy). The @MEAIndia account has around 2.3 million followers and @IndianDiplomacy has around 1.5 million followers. @MEAIndia continues to be one of the most followed X handles among all Foreign Ministries across the world.

With the Ministry's policy of encouraging social media engagement, 204 Indian Missions/Posts are now on X, 198 on Facebook, 163 on Instagram, and 117 on YouTube. Additionally, 35 Regional Passport Offices maintain a presence on X. These platforms have enabled Missions and Posts to effectively engage the world, including with the Indian community and diaspora. They also used local languages for broader information dissemination in their respective countries.

The social media handles used creative audio-visual content (such as text-based, images, short videos, reels, infographics, quote cards, GIFs, and live streaming) for quick and efficient disbursement to the targeted audience.

'MEAIndia' YouTube channel was used for live streaming of press briefings and uploading videos of other events. Full-length documentaries and short films found an exclusive online presence through the Indian Diplomacy YouTube channel @IndianDiplomacy.

MEA's current following (subscribers) on various social media platforms is:

- Facebook- 21.6 lakh
- Instagram- 9.57 lakh
- LinkedIn- 73,000
- YouTube MEA -2.46 lakh
- YouTube Indian Diplomacy- 1.56 lakh
- WhatsApp channel- 27,000

The Flickr (MEAphtogallery) account continued to serve as a photo repository for MEA's major events, including the events abroad.

The Mobile application of the Ministry (MEAIndia) continued to act as a single window source of all information related to the Ministry's citizen-centric services and outreach activities. The application is available on the Play Store and App Store for downloading.

The Ministry, along with the Missions and Posts abroad, effectively leveraged social media to engage the global audience on various Government initiatives and campaigns. These included Mann Ki Baat, Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz, International Day of Yoga, Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam (Plant4Mother), Chalo India and International Day of Millets celebrations.

XPD Division continued to promote Indian cinema internationally. The Division also commissioned documentaries aimed at positively projecting India's image abroad.

Indian Film Festivals Abroad

The Division acquired non-commercial screening rights for 34 Indian films (13 Hindi, 2 Gujarati, 7 Tamil, 2 Kannada, 1 Malayalam, 3 Marathi, 3 Punjabi, 2 Assamese/Bodo, and 1 Spanish/English) for organising Indian film festivals by the Indian Missions and Posts and screening of these films in international film festivals abroad. The Division facilitated film festivals in Jaffna, Colombo, Oslo, and Riyadh. The Division supported the dubbing, voicing over, and subtitling of Indian films and content into foreign languages.

The Division also facilitated the effective implementation of the Development, Communication & Dissemination of Filmic Content or DCDFC Scheme of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting for the promotion of Indian media and film sector by Indian Missions/Posts.

Documentaries

The following documentaries/shorts were produced and uploaded on the official YouTube Channel 'Indian Diplomacy':

1. Short film on India-BIMSTEC
2. Short film on India & Africa
3. Short film 'India Votes' on recent general elections.
4. Short film on 'Nalanda University'.
5. Short film on 'Restoration of temples in Vat Phou'.
6. Short film on 'Restoration of temples in ASEAN countries'.
7. Short film 'Return of Antiquities' on the repatriation of 297 antiquities from the USA.

The Division also commissioned a documentary on India and the Global South.

Articles Commissioned

XPD Division commissioned articles on various themes on the occasion of 78th Independence Day and 75th Republic Day. The articles were authored by retired Indian diplomats and eminent experts and were published by Indian Missions/Posts abroad in their respective countries.

India Perspectives Magazine

XPD Division initiated revamping of India Perspective, the Ministry's flagship magazine. The Magazine was started more than 35 years ago, with the first issue published in July 1988. The magazine has since been published in 16 languages - Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese, English, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Pashto, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Sinhala, Spanish, and Tamil.

‘एक पेड़ मां के नाम’ (Plant4Mother)

As the nodal point for the ‘Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam’ campaign, the XPD Division, ensured worldwide implementation of this campaign by the Missions/Posts abroad. Till date, more than 27,000 trees have been planted by Indian Missions/Posts as well as the Regional Passport Offices in India.

Coffee Table Books and Booklets

The Division commissioned a limited edition coffee table book on repatriation of the Indian artefacts from the United States titled ‘Bringing Back Antiquities: Reclaiming India's Cultural Heritage’. The book catalogues the return of 297 pieces of antiquities, spanning a vast timeline of Indian history from 2000 BCE to the 19th century, that were handed over by the United States to India, during the visit of the Prime Minister to the United States from 21-23 September.

The Division produced a pocket-sized information booklet titled ‘Engaging the World’. It covered a decade of foreign policy achievements from the year 2014 to 2024 in the field of bilateral and multilateral engagements, relief and rescue missions, citizen-centric services, development partnerships and diaspora engagement.

Book Committee

The 44th Book Committee selected 370 book titles for dissemination by the Missions/post abroad. The titles

covered categories such as Indian Classics, Foreign Policy and Strategic Affairs, Technology and Popular Science, Hindi & Sanskrit, Art & Culture, Religion & Spirituality, Children's Books and Politics & Economy. Demand for approximately 37,000 copies of these titles was received from 95 Missions/Posts.

Children Books

In order to engage young minds and familiarize them with Indian history, art, culture and heritage by way of storytelling, XPD Division supported initiatives of Indian Missions/Posts of translating children's books containing Jataka Tales and other stories into foreign languages. Five Amar Chitra Katha (ACK) Jataka Tales comic books were translated into nine foreign languages. Additionally, six ACK Jataka Tales comic books are being translated into the Norwegian language.

India Corners

XPD Division continued to establish India Corners in schools, universities, colleges and public libraries abroad. In the past one year, books were provided to 15 Indian Missions/Posts in Seoul, Munich, Abuja, Erbil, Seattle, Abidjan, Lagos, Belgrade, Georgetown, Kandy, Brasilia, Nom Penh, Moscow, Dubai, and Ho Chi Minh City for establishing more than 50 India Corners in various schools and universities in the respective countries.

Supporting Public Diplomacy Initiatives Abroad

XPD Division continued to support several Public Diplomacy initiatives of the Missions/Posts abroad, such as,

- Logo design contest to commemorate 25 years of diplomatic relations, by Embassy of India Santo Domingo;
- Publication of an India edition of the Acumen magazine of Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), University of Pretoria by Consulate General of India Johannesburg;
- Organizing events to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations by the Embassy of India Warsaw;
- An academic research project on ‘Oral history of Indian Diaspora in Thailand by Embassy of India Bangkok;
- Hosting of India Majlis 3.0 event by Embassy of India Abu Dhabi;
- Events to mark the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations by the Embassy of India Helsinki;

- Exhibition at 30th edition of Minsk International Film Festival “Listapad” by Embassy of India Minsk;
- Indian Movie Week by Embassy of India, Minsk;
- Radio Niketan Program in the Spanish language to promote Indian culture by the Embassy of India Buenos Aires.

Distinguished Lecture Series

XPD Division revamped the Distinguished Lecture Series (DLS) program. The program engages universities and other academic institutions in India to inform the discourse on India's foreign affairs, its achievements and challenges, among students and youth across the length and breadth

of the country. The program also serves as a strategic communication tool aimed at building a positive narrative about Indian foreign policy as well as the Ministry's people-centric initiatives.

SAMEEP Initiative

XPD Division continued to organize SAMEEP lectures. Launched in January 2018, SAMEEP supports the visit of serving Indian diplomats to their alma mater for sharing experiences, key elements of India's Foreign Policy and the role and functions of MEA with students at the visiting schools and colleges. SAMEEP lectures were organized in Raipur (Chhattisgarh), Basti (Uttar Pradesh) and Chennai (Tamil Nadu).

C H A P T E R

28

Administration, Establishment, Global Estate Management & Right to Information

Administration

The Administration Division in the Ministry of External Affairs is responsible for human resources management and capacity building, both at its headquarters and in Indian Missions/Posts abroad. This involves overseeing cadre management exercises including recruitment, training, postings/transfers, deputations, and career progression. The Division is also mandated with formulating and amending rules and regulations pertaining to Indian personnel posted abroad and local employees serving in Indian missions and posts.

As of 01 December, the current sanctioned strength of the Ministry stands at 4772 (Appendix I). Out of this, 54.2% of these personnel are located in Missions and Posts abroad. These positions span various cadres within the Ministry, such as the Indian Foreign Service (IFS), IFS General cadre, Branch B, Stenographers cadre, Interpreters cadre and Legal & Treaties cadre, among others. The Ministry also periodically reorganises its Divisions and their responsibilities, to adapt to new developments and functional priorities.

During the year 2024, the Ministry opened new Missions in Latvia, Georgia, the Gabonese Republic, and Timor-Leste. New Consulates opened in Auckland (New Zealand), Barcelona (Spain), Belfast (United Kingdom), Brisbane (Australia), Manchester (United Kingdom), and Marseille (France) started their operations this year. These Missions and Posts will establish India's presence in key partner countries, strengthen diplomatic outreach, advance India's foreign policy goals and enable the Ministry to expand services to the Indian diaspora.

The Administrative division focuses on increasing efficiency and effectiveness through the active use of technology such as the MEA e-Samiksha portal, which provides an online interface between headquarters and the missions/posts and Ministry of External Affairs Digital Online Working System (MEADOWS), which is used for transfer related matters, and e-Office for official work. This also reflects the Ministry's innovative approach to optimizing communication and coordination between its various units, both domestically and internationally. The Division uses the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal to hire its manpower and vehicle suppliers.

The Division also works dedicatedly on capacity building of personnel. The Capacity Building Plan of the Ministry was adopted and operationalized in 2024. All members of the Ministry were encouraged to actively engage on the iGot Karmayogi Portal for multi-faceted training. Pre-departure training and mentorship programs have been institutionalized for new recruits to enable them to adapt to their new roles.

MEA's Internship Programme continues to bring foreign policy closer to citizens and engage youth for contribution to foreign policy formulation and decision-making. The MEA Internships Programme received an enthusiastic response in 2024, and sixty (60) students were offered internships over two terms, reflecting our commitment to nurturing future talent in foreign policy and diplomacy.

The Administration Division's approach to fulfilling its essential responsibilities within the Ministry of External Affairs is characterized by the efficient management of human resources, strategic expansion of diplomatic engagement, a focus on people-centred initiatives, and the adoption of modern technological tools, all of which demonstrate its dynamic, proactive and forward-thinking strategy in addressing the Ministry's evolving priorities.

Establishment

The Establishment Division plays a vital role in the functioning of the Ministry. It is mandated to provide all support to the employees daily in the discharge of their duties, including office space, furniture, equipment, stationery, telephone, newspapers, accommodation, maintenance and repair of all its buildings and utilities. The Division also extends services to Indian Missions and Posts abroad, including their establishment-related requirements, purchase of vehicles, contracting for various utilities and other services required for their functioning. The Division also supplies Object d'Art (Od'A) to Missions and Posts and is the repository of gifts received by the Prime Minister, Ministers and officials from foreign countries.

In the discharge of these functions, the Establishment Division followed a transparent procurement process, mainly from the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal, including for award of contracts for Integrated Facility Management Services for the upkeep of office and residential buildings. These procedures and processes were further streamlined in consultation with the Integrated Finance Division (IFD) of the Ministry. Further, in consultation with the Principal Controller of Accounts, approximately 150 long pending, audit paras and observations were discussed for their early resolution.

From the Toshakhana, the Division has identified items for e-auctioning, open to Indian citizens, and the proceeds are

proposed to be given to either public or charitable causes. The portal for the pilot e-auctioning is ready.

The Establishment Division acts as the nodal agency for the Swachhata Mission. From 13 September to 02 October 2024, under the 'Swachhata Hi Seva Abhyaan' 2024, the Division, along with Missions and Posts abroad and RPOs in India, organized 1085 'Jan Bhagidari' activities, 282 Cleanliness Targetted Units, 81 medical camps for 'SafaiMitra' and carried out 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' plantation drives. The Division is working with Metal Scrap Trade Corporation Limited (MSTC), a Central Public Sector Undertaking (PSU), for the auctioning of condemned and obsolete items, including old vehicles.

The official residence of the Foreign Secretary is being renovated. Transit facilities for short stays of officers and officials are being upgraded. The Division has established a creche facility at the Chanakyapuri residential complex. Creche facilities are similarly being set up at the Common Wealth Games (CWG) and Dwarka residential complexes. A CGHS clinic was opened at the Chanakyapuri residential complex. First-aid kits have been installed at multiple locations in MEA buildings for emergency use.

Global Estate Management (GEM)

The Global Estate Management Division actively pursued the acquisition, construction, redevelopment and renovation of properties for Indian Missions and Posts abroad, and RPOs, ICCR, POEs and Branch Secretariats within India. The initiative to augment the available residential accommodation in New Delhi for officers of the Ministry was taken ahead to effectively address the existing shortfall in the availability of such accommodation and to meet housing requirements in the long term.

Acquisition of Built-up properties in Rome (for Chancery), Oslo (for Chancery), and Zagreb (for Embassy Residence) was accomplished successfully. Significant progress was made towards the acquisition of built-up properties at Tel Aviv (ER & Chancery), Marseille (Chancery), St. Petersburg (Chancery) and a plot of land at Lilongwe (Chancery), Mbabane (Chancery and Residences), Accra (Chancery), Tehran (Chancery), Fiji (Chancery, Cultural Centre & other Residences), and Georgetown.

Major projects viz., construction of Chancery, ER and Staff Residences for High Commission of India (HCI), Brunei were completed in August 2023, and Redevelopment of ER at Embassy of India (EOI), Amman was completed in March. Ongoing construction projects at Amman (Redevelopment of Old Chancery), Kuala Lumpur (redevelopment of Chancery & Residences), Seychelles (redevelopment of Chancery, Culture Centre and Residences), Jakarta (redevelopment of Chancery, ER and Staff Residences), Phuentsholing

(construction of Chancery and residences) are progressing satisfactorily. Construction of the Chancery cum residential complex at CGI, Jeddah is about to commence.

Major projects in Design Section taken up after 1st January 2024 are Athens (redevelopment of India House), Abuja (construction of additional residences), Washington (construction of Chancery complex), The Hague (redevelopment of Chancery building), Helsinki (construction of Multipurpose Hall cum Consular area) and Thimphu (construction of Chancery Annex project).

Notable achievements on the Redevelopment and Renovation front include the completion of major renovations in Jakarta (India House), Kampala (boundary wall repair of India House), Kuwait (refurbishment of auditorium in the Chancery), New York (rehabilitation of facade of PMI building), and Pretoria (DHC's residence). Major repairs/renovation projects have been initiated and are in progress in Colombo (Chancery), Kuwait (Chancery), Moscow (DCM Residence, Chancery & Embassy Residence), New York (Chancery-cum-CG's Residence), Prague (Embassy Residence), Pretoria (Extension of Chancery building), Rome (Chancery building), The Hague (India House and DCM's Residence), and Vienna (Embassy Residence).

Renovation of RPO Bengaluru and Bhubaneswar premises were completed during the year. Major construction projects have been initiated for new RPO premises in Kolkata, Srinagar (Jammu & Kashmir) and a residential complex in INA, New Delhi.

The Ministry has also undertaken the establishment of a Permanent Court of Arbitration at 4th Floor of V. K. Krishna

Menon Bhawan (ISIL building), New Delhi which is due to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

Right to Information

The RTI Cell for the Ministry leads the processing of applications received under the Right to Information Act, 2005. Following section 4(b) of the RTI Act 2005, the Ministry uploads and regularly updates the maximum information in the public domain. The Ministry and its 203 Missions/Posts abroad have been accepting online and physical RTI applications and disposing of them in a time-bound manner.

A total of 3291 RTI applications and 182 First Appeals under the RTI Act 2005 were processed in the Ministry from 01 January to 31 December. The applications varied in subjects such as foreign relations, administrative issues, bilateral visits and other relevant topics.

During the period, a total of 83 Central Information Commission (CIC) hearings were attended by the concerned Central Public Information Officers (CPIOs) and a representative of the Division. All the hearing matters were disposed of satisfactorily. The quarterly returns have been filed with CIC within the prescribed period. In collaboration with the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), the Ministry and Missions/Posts abroad, participated in third-party audit (suo motu disclosure) in a time-bound manner.

C H A P T E R

29

Implementation of Official Language Policy

Implementation of the Official Language Policy of the Government of India has always been a priority for the Ministry. It is implemented through a comprehensive scheme for the promotion of Hindi in India as well as abroad.

A detailed network involving Indian Missions/Posts abroad, PIOs and NRI bodies, local NGOs, Cultural Organisations and Associations has been co-opted for the promotion and propagation of Hindi Language abroad. The Rajbhasha and Bharatiya Bhashayein, I&T (RBB&IT) Division supplied teaching materials to Missions and Posts abroad for the promotion of Hindi. The Ministry extended financial support of approximately INR 88.80 lakhs to Missions/Posts abroad to engage teachers to conduct Hindi classes during the period.

The Division also coordinates work related to the grant of scholarships to foreign students to study Hindi at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. The responsibility for monitoring the progressive use of the Hindi language in the Regional Passport Offices (RPO) is also entrusted to the Division. During the year, four RPO inspections, namely, Kochi and Trivandrum from 28-30 May, and Chandigarh and Shimla

from 11-13 June 2024 were successfully carried out by the Division.

During the year, the first Sub-Committee of the Committee of Parliament on Official Language carried out an inspection of the Ministry's autonomous/subordinate offices and four RPOs. The inspection was focused on the progressive use of Hindi in the official work of the Ministry/subordinate offices and suggested various ways to further maximise the use of the official language.

For the promotion of Hindi outside, International Regional Hindi Conferences (IRHCs) were organized from time to time. Regional Hindi Conferences are organised by our Missions abroad in association with local institutions engaged in the promotion and propagation of Hindi and Indian culture. World Hindi Day was celebrated by all our Missions and Posts abroad as well as at the Headquarters on 10 January. Hindi Pakhwada was organised to mark Hindi Diwas 2024, which saw enthusiastic participation by Regional Passport Offices as well as our Mission and Posts abroad. An amount of INR 2.4 crores was granted to Missions/Posts for World Hindi Day and INR 2.2 crores for Hindi Diwas/Hindi Pakhwada

celebrations. Various competitions and activities, including Hindi Essay Writing, Hindi Noting and Drafting, Hindi Poetry Competition, Official Language Quiz Competitions and Hindi Vakyansh Translation Competition were organised on this occasion.

IRHCs were organised by our Missions/Posts abroad in association with local institutions engaged in promotion and propagation of Hindi and Indian culture or Universities. During the period, four IRHCs were organized as follows: (i) Our Mission in Tokyo organized an IRHC on "Status of Hindi in South East Asia" in February in association with the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies; (ii) Our Mission in Astana

organized an IRHC on "Hindi in Eurasia and India: Present & Future" in association with Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty in March; (iii) Our Mission in Port of Spain organized an IRHC in association with the Hindi Foundation of Trinidad & Tobago Inc (Hindi Nidhi) in September and (iv) Our Mission in Singapore organized an IRHC in association with National University of Singapore (NUS) in September.

During the period, the Division timely carried out translation work in Hindi from English and vice-versa, as per the requests received from various Divisions at the Headquarters of the Ministry and our Missions and Posts abroad.

C H A P T E R

30

Finance & Budget

The total budget allocated to the Ministry of External Affairs for the Financial Year (FY) 2024-25 is Rs 22154.67 cr at the Budget Estimates (BE) stage.

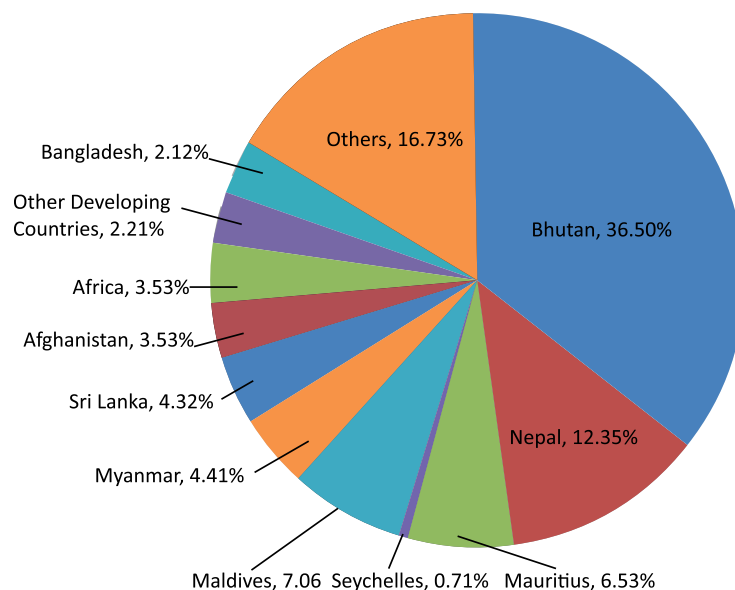
The sectoral distribution of the budget for major allocations is as mentioned below:

Sector		Allocation (In Rs cr)
Technical and Economic Cooperation (TEC) with foreign countries	Grants	4677.86
	Loans	989.70
	Total TEC	5667.56
Indian Missions and Posts Abroad		3867.64
Special Diplomatic Expenditure		4659.01
Passport and Emigration		970.66
International Cooperation		659.32
Capital Outlay on Public Works and Housing		574.00
MEA Secretariat		789.68
Assistance to Autonomous Bodies and Other Institutions		369.85
Transfer to Reserve Fund(Guarantee Redemption Fund)		4383.40
Others		213.55
Total BE for FY 2024-25		22154.67

Development Partnership portfolio (or the Technical and Economic Cooperation) which constitutes India's Aid to various countries continues to be the focus and priority with the largest allocation in the Ministry's budget. In FY 2024-25, of the total budget of Rs 22154.67 cr, the Technical and

Economic Cooperation Heads (TEC) outlay is 25.58% or Rs 5667.56 cr, of which Rs 4677.86 cr (21.11%) is for grant programmes and Rs 989.70 cr (4.47%) is for loans. The head-wise distribution of the TEC outlay in FY 2024-25 is given below:

Technical and Economic Cooperation (TEC) Heads		Allocation (In Rs cr)	% of Total TEC Allocation
Aid to Bangladesh		120.00	2.12 %
Bhutan	Grant	1078.86	36.50 %
	Loan	989.70	
	Total Bhutan	2068.56	
Aid to Nepal		700.00	12.35 %
Aid to Mauritius		370.00	6.53 %
Aid to Afghanistan		200.00	3.53 %
Aid to Seychelles		40.00	0.71 %
Aid to Myanmar		250.00	4.41 %
ITEC Programme		160.00	2.82 %
Aid to African Countries		200.00	3.53 %
Aid to Sri Lanka		245.00	4.32 %
Chahbahar Port, Iran		100.00	1.76 %
Aid to Maldives		400.00	7.06 %
Aid to Other Developing Countries		125.00	2.21 %
Investment Promotion and Publicity Programme		539.00	9.51 %
Indo-Pacific Cooperation		50.00	0.88 %
Aid to Eurasian Countries		20.00	0.35 %
Multilateral Economic Relations Programme		10.00	0.18 %
Aid to Latin American Countries		30.00	0.53 %
Aid for Disaster Relief		10.00	0.18 %
SAARC Programmes		5.00	0.09 %
Aid to Mongolia		5.00	0.09 %
Aid for Cultural and Heritage Projects		15.00	0.26 %
QUAD Co-operation		5.00	0.09 %
Total			5667.56



Technical and economic outlay across countries in 2024-25

The bulk of the Ministry's Development Partnership budget, comprising about 70%, is allocated to the neighbouring countries under the Government's "Neighbourhood First" Policy, followed closely by allocation to the extended Indian Ocean Region (7.24%), extended neighbourhood (4%), Africa (3.53%), Latin American countries (0.53%), with the remainder going towards other regions or region-agnostic programs.

Of the total budget for FY 2024-25 of Rs 22154.67, the

bifurcation of allocations between establishment heads and non-establishment heads is 25.52% (Rs. 5655.46 cr) and 74.48% (Rs. 16499.21 cr) respectively. The Ministry has consistently maintained its expenditure on Establishment heads within 30% of its total budget.

The Ministry has been optimally utilising the funds allocated to it in the Revised Estimates (RE) stage of a financial year, as given below for the past ten FYs:

FY	BE Allocation	RE Allocation	Actual Expenditure	Utilization as % of BE	Utilization as % of RE
	In Rs cr; Rounded Off				
2013-14	11719	11794	11807	101 %	100 %
2014-15	14730	12620	12149	82 %	96 %
2015-16	14967	14967	14541	97 %	97 %
2016-17	14663	13426	12772	87 %	95 %
2017-18	14798	13690	13750	93 %	100 %
2018-19	15011	15582	15526	103%	99%
2019-20	17885	17372	17272	97%	99%
2020-21	17347	15000	14362	83%	96%
2021-22	18155	16000	14174	78%	89%
2022-23	17250	16973	16685	97%	98%
2023-24	18050	29122	29003	161%	99%

The Ministry has revenue receipts of Rs. 5822.16 cr in FY 2023-24, from passport services (Rs. 3543.66 cr), visa fees (Rs. 1396.91 cr) and other receipts (Rs. 881.59 cr). The revenue receipt for the last five financial years from FY 2019-2020 to FY 2023-2024 is given below:

Year	Heads	Amount (In Rs cr)	Percentage
2019-20	Passport	2522.71	49%
	Visa	1792.11	35%
	Others	856.16	17%
	Total	5170.98	
2020-21	Passport	583.56	77%
	Visa	24.85	3%
	Others	149.73	20%
	Total	758.14	
2021-22	Passport	2332.50	66%
	Visa	316.93	9%
	Others	874.18	25%
	Total	3523.61	
2022-23	Passport	3360.03	59%
	Visa	1440.10	25%
	Others	937.89	16%
	Total	5738.02	
2023-24	Passport	3543.66	61%
	Visa	1396.91	24%
	Others	881.59	15%
	Total	5822.16	

During the year 2023-24, one (01) C&AG Para against the MEA was included in the C&AG Report No. 25 of 2023. During the year 2023-2024, 12 PAC Observations/Recommendations were also included against MEA in the 80th and 87th Report of PAC (2023-24) 17th Lok Sabha. The status of submission of Action Taken Notes (ATNs) since 2018 in respect of C&AG Paras and the status of submission of Final Action Replies in respect of PAC Paras is as follows:

Year	C&AG Report	Total No. of Paras	Final ATNs Submitted	ATNs Under Process
2018	Report No.4 of 2018	5	5	Nil
2019	No Report generated by C&AG for MEA	-	-	-
2020	Report No.6 of 2020	4	4	Nil
2021	Report No.2 of 2021	5	5	For two C&AG Paras (5.3 and 5.4), O/o Director General of Audit moved the Paras to the category "Laid in Parliament" from "Vetting Comments by Audit" since PAC submitted its 87 th Report and hence Final ATNs were not required
2022	Report No. 24 of 2022	5	5	
2023	Report No. 25 of 2023	01	01	
Total		20	20	NIL

Details and Status of C&AG Paras and PAC Paras:

A. C&AG paras:

C&AG Report No.	Para No.	Subject	Status
2 of 2021	5.1	Incorrect application of rate of service charges led to excess payment	Final ATN submitted on 14.1.2022 by the Ministry
	5.2	Loss of Revenue due to irregular tax exemption by the South Asian University	Final ATN submitted on 26.7.2021 by the Ministry
	5.3	Irregularities in receipt and utilisation of compensation by the HCI London	Final ATN was not required since PAC (2023-24) submitted its 87 Report (17 th Lok Sabha) which was Presented in Lok Sabha and Laid in Rajya Sabha on 7.2.2024
	5.4	Grossly irregular and manipulated award and execution of work relating to the renovation of the basement at India House, London, leading to undue benefits being extended to the contractor by the HCI London	
	5.5	Undue benefit extended to the contractor by Nalanda University, Rajgir	Final ATN submitted on 13.9.2023 by the Ministry.
24 of 2022	2.1	Short collection of fees due to application of incorrect exchange rate in fixing the fees for Overseas Citizenship of India Card scheme	Final ATN submitted on 14.7.2023 by the Ministry
	2.2	Irregularities in setting up of Indian Cultural Centres by Indian Missions at Washington and Paris	Final ATN submitted on 19.6.2024
24 of 2022	2.3	Avoidable payment of cost escalation and interest	Final ATN submitted on 6.11.2023 by the Ministry
	2.4	Adoption of improper tendering process led to cost overrun besides arbitrarily deviating from the identified items of work under the tender	Final ATN submitted on 15.11.2023 by the Ministry
	2.5	Excess fee charged for passport renunciation	Final ATN submitted on 26.5.2023 by the Ministry
25 of 2023	3.1	Incorrect adoption of Rates resulted in extra cost of construction – Nalanda University, Rajgir	Final ATN submitted on 19.06.2024 by the Ministry

Note (i): The Oral Evidence was presented to PAC (2021-22) on Para 5.2 of C&AG Report No. 2 of 2021 on 6/4/2022 by Secretary (East). The PAC (2023-24) presented its 80th Report (17th Lok Sabha) based on C&AG Para 5.2 of C&AG Report No. 2 of 2021.

Note (ii): The Oral Evidence was presented to PAC (2022-23) on Paras 5.3 and 5.4 of C&AG Report No. 2 of 2021 on 10/2/2023 by the Foreign Secretary. The PAC (2023-24) presented its 87th Report (17th Lok Sabha) based on C&AG Paras 5.3 and 5.4 of C&AG Report No. 2 of 2021.

B. PAC Observations/Recommendations during 2023-24:

PAC Report No.	Para No.	Subject	Status
80 th Report (17 th Lok Sabha) on Loss of Revenue due to irregular Tax exemption- South Asian University (SAU)* based on Para 5.2 of C&AG Report No. 2 of 2021.	1	Introductory:	Final Action Taken Replies submitted to Lok Sabha Secretariat (PAC Branch) on 14 th June 2024
	2	Need for Standard operating procedure:	
	3	Fixing Accountability:	
	4	Consultation and Coordination	
	5	Shared Responsibility	
	6	Scrutiny by Income Tax Department	

PAC Report No.	Para No.	Subject	Status
	7	Internal Audit Mechanism	
87 th Report (17 th Lok Sabha) on "Irregularities in receipt and utilisation of compensation" and "Grossly irregular and manipulated award and execution of work relating to the renovation of the basement at India House, London, leading to undue benefits being extended to the Contractor" based on Para 5.3 & 5.4 of C&AG Report No. 2 of 2021.	1	Criminal case/major penalty	Final Action Taken Replies submitted to Lok Sabha Secretariat (PAC Branch) on 9 th August 2024
	2	Mandatory training on GFR 2017 and other relevant Government Rules and regulations	
	3	Revamping and strengthening of the Internal Audit Mechanism	
	4	Measures being taken for monitoring of projects and functioning of Missions	
	5	Comprehensive check in all Missions of India	

C H A P T E R

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Parliament & Coordination Division

The responsibility of the Parliament & Coordination Division broadly consists of parliamentary work, coordination within and outside the Ministry and participation in nationwide campaigns carried out by other Ministries. The Division is further responsible for monitoring as well as reviewing MOUs signed by the Union of India with other countries, admission of certain categories of foreign students in Indian educational institutions and the uploading of Ministry's inputs on various digital portals to facilitate digital monitoring of work.

Parliament Section

The Parliament Section is the Ministry's interface with the Parliament and the nodal point for Parliament-related work of the Ministry. The Section ensured a timely response to the issues raised by Parliament in compliance with the guidelines laid down for Parliamentary work.

During the calendar year 2024, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs held 6 meetings on the following 6 subjects:

- Israel- Palestine Conflict

- Demand for Grants of the Ministry for the year 2024-25 & India-China relations
- Indian Diaspora Overseas including NRIs, PIOs, OCIs and Migrant Workers: All Aspects of their Conditions and Welfare, including the Status of the Emigration Bill'
- Current developments in India's Foreign Policy
- Briefing on the recent G20 Summit in Brazil and its Outcomes
- Future of India-Bangladesh Relationship
- Evaluation of India's Indian Ocean Strategy

During 2024, a total of 32 matters of significance were raised under Special Mention, Rule 377 and Zero Hour in the Parliament, out of which, 24 matters were replied to. As of date, 273 admitted Parliament Questions have been replied to.

During the year, Annual Reports and audited Accounts of the Indian Council of World Affairs, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, the Research and Information System for Developing Countries, and Nalanda University were laid in the Parliament.

Coordination Division

The Ministry, through Missions/Posts abroad, played a key role in the celebration of flagship events of the Government of India abroad such as Har Ghar Tiranga, Rashtriya Ekta Diwas/Week, Constitution Day, Ayurveda Day, Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, International Women's Day, Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, among others.

The Coordination Section effectively managed the Ministry's interaction with other Ministries/Departments of the Government of India, State Governments/Union Territories, autonomous bodies and private institutions. The Section processed political clearances for visits abroad, sports events, conferences, seminars, exhibitions and diplomatic military flights.

Approximately 250 Action Points were monitored and updated monthly on the eSamiksha Portal on Cabinet Decisions, Observations of the Cabinet, Recommendations of Committee of Secretaries, Vision Document of MEA (SGoS-10), and progress made on the implementation of Pragati Projects funded and administered by the Ministry. 23 announcements made by the Prime Minister during his visits

abroad are being regularly updated on the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) References Portal.

A special campaign for timely and effective disposal of pendency in public grievances, references from Members of Parliament (MPs), State Governments, Inter-Ministerial Consultations and Parliamentary assurances etc, conduct of cleanliness campaigns and management of records (files) was carried out. The data was monitored and updated regularly on the Special Campaign for Disposal of Pending Matters (SCDPM) Portal. The Ministry conducted the Special Campaign 4.0 on Swachhata within the offices of the Ministry located in various parts of the world. The Campaign started on 02 October and continued up to 31 October. The focus areas of the campaign included effective disposal of public grievances, references from Members of Parliament, Parliament Assurances, cleanliness drive, disposal of scrap and weeding out of files. During the period, the Ministry conducted 779 cleanliness campaigns. 5,30,000 physical files were weeded out. Space of about 27,482 sq. ft. was freed by removing junk/obsolete items. Further, a total of 640 public grievances were resolved and 49 PMO references and 95 MP References were addressed.

C H A P T E R

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Conference & Summits

Summits/Conference Division provides logistical support to various Divisions of the Ministry in organizing meetings, events, seminars and conferences including international and multilateral involvement of Foreign Ministers/delegates in India and abroad.

Summits Division provided logistical assistance for the 26th ASEAN-INDIA Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) such as venue mapping, transportation, accommodation and catering arrangements. The SOM was held from 02-03 May in New Delhi. The Division also provided logistical assistance for

the International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebrated on 21 June in New Delhi.

Furthermore, around 206 internal meetings and around 91 meetings about other Ministries/Departments were held in the Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, including three meetings of Council of Ministers chaired by the Prime Minister. In addition, the Summits Division also acts as a nodal agency for Sushma Swaraj Bhawan (SSB). A number of important multilateral/bilateral events of MEA and other Ministries/Department were held at SSB during the year.

CHAPTER

33

Rapid Response Cell

Rapid Response Cell (RRC) is the nodal division of the Ministry which undertakes the Government's Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) efforts worldwide. RRC was established with COVID-19 related responsibilities in 2021. RRC has since been executing HADR operations in the aftermath of disasters and extending need-based humanitarian assistance to partner countries across the globe. The RRC's mandate also includes the evacuation of Indian nationals from geographies hit by the crisis. Additionally, RRC is also involved in expanding the Ministry's health diplomacy vertical through various initiatives viz. Quad Health Security Partnership (QHSP), digital health initiatives for Indo-Pacific countries, recognition of Indian Pharmacopoeia by partner countries and opening of Janaushadhi Kendras in partner countries.

Major Developments

During the period from January to December, India undertook complex and rapid operations to cater to the diverse needs of partner countries in the aftermath of disasters. India's HADR footprint now extends well beyond the neighborhood to include Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Oceania. India responded effectively and quickly to the needs of Indian nationals stranded abroad.

Aligning with the well-established reputation of 'First Responder and Credible HADR provider', India undertook three major operations in the year 2024, namely Operation Indravati, Special Humanitarian Airlift Operation in Kuwait and Operation Sadbhav. HADR assistance was also provided to more than twenty countries during the year.

Operation Indravati

The crisis in Haiti escalated in February following gang violence targeting government infrastructure viz. airports, police stations and prisons. It resulted in the declaration of emergency. Since March, most of the airlines suspended air operations from and to Port-Au-Prince.

Keeping in view the safety and security of the Indian community residing in Haiti, India launched Operation Indravati on 21 March to evacuate stranded Indian nationals from Haiti. The Government of India coordinated with the local authorities of Haiti, the Indian community association, the Government of the Dominican Republic, Foreign Diplomatic Missions and air charter service providers in Haiti to successfully execute the evacuation plan. The Government of India also established a 24x7 control room to facilitate the Indian community and their family and friends in India. As part of the evacuation plan, the stranded Indian nationals were first transported from disturbed places in

Haiti to an assembly point in Port-au-Prince. From there, 17 Indian nationals were airlifted by charter helicopters and safely transported to Jimani, Dominican Republic in three batches on 21 March and 4 April.

Special Humanitarian Airlift Operation

India launched a Special Humanitarian Airlift Operation in Kuwait, following a massive fire incident that occurred in a residential building of Al-Mangaf Area in Kuwait on 12 June. The incident led to the deaths of 45 Indian nationals. On the directions of Prime Minister, MoS (KVS) immediately travelled to Kuwait to oversee medical assistance to Indian nationals and to coordinate with the Kuwait Government towards early repatriation of mortal remains. Indian Embassy in Kuwait issued helpline numbers for the family members of the deceased and survivors to get connected with the Embassy for the latest updates. On 13 June, the Government of India sent an IAF C130 plane to bring back the mortal remains of the 45 deceased Indian nationals. On 14 June, the plane landed in Kochi, where 31 mortal remains, belonging to Kerala and adjoining states were handed over. The plane then proceeded to Delhi to handover the mortal remains of the 14 Indian nationals belonging to other states. MoS (KVS) travelled onboard the IAF flight from Kuwait to India.

Operation Sadbhav

Typhoon Yagi, followed by torrential rains, floods and landslides, brought devastation in Southeast Asian countries at the beginning of September. Within a few days of the crisis, India launched Operation Sadbhav on 15 September to convey solidarity with disaster-hit countries and to provide immediate humanitarian assistance for affected populations. RRC division coordinated with the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQIDS), Indian Air Force, Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard, National Disaster Response Force, and Public Sector Undertakings to successfully execute the entire operation. The operation was not only a testimony of India's role as 'First Responder' but aligned with India's long-standing 'Act East' and 'Neighborhood First Policy'. Under Operation Sadbhav, India provided HADR assistance to Lao PDR, Vietnam and Myanmar.

Lao PDR: India provided approx. 10 tons of humanitarian assistance by IAF C17 flight to Lao PDR on 15 September. The aid comprised of gensets, water purifiers, water purification tablets and disinfectants, sleeping bags, blankets, hygiene kits, mosquito nets and repellents etc. India was among the first responders to provide HADR to this region.

Vietnam: India provided approx. 35 tons of humanitarian assistance to Vietnam by IAF C17 flight on 15 September. The aid comprised water purification items, water containers, blankets, kitchen utensils, solar lanterns etc. The supply was extended to the affected communities in northern Vietnam, most impacted by the natural disaster.

Myanmar: The first tranche of approx. 21 tons of relief material was dispatched by the Indian Naval Ship Satpura within hours of the receipt of the request from the Government of Myanmar. INS Satpura carried HADR Pallets with ready-to-eat meals, tents, generator sets, kitchen sets, solar lamps, medical supplies, mosquito nets & repellents, water purification tablets and disinfectants, and other materials. The second tranche of 32 tons of medicines and relief material was sent by IAF IL-76 flight on 17 September, which comprised temporary shelters, hygiene kits, MREs, gensets, general medicines, water purification supplies, bleaching powder, disinfectants etc.

HADR efforts

Nepal: India extended support to Nepal in the aftermath of a strong earthquake that struck Nepal on 03 November 2023. The first tranche of immediate relief was supplied to Nepal on 05 November 2023 and the fifth tranche of HADR assistance comprising tents, blankets, sleeping bags and 20 prefabricated houses was delivered on 04 January. A total of 4.14 tons of medicines and 41 tons of relief material were supplied to Nepal in five tranches.

India also extended support to Nepal during the devastation caused by unprecedented rainfall, floods and landslides in September. Within 12 hours of receiving a request from the Government of Nepal, India supplied approx. 36 tons of relief material. Additionally, India also supplied 10 bailey bridges to Nepal for the restoration of disrupted road connectivity.

Ukraine: Following the outbreak of the conflict in February 2022, India provided HADR assistance to Ukraine in several tranches from March 2022 to January 2024. The first tranche of relief was supplied in March 2022 and the fifth tranche of HADR assistance was delivered in January 2024. The HADR comprised essential and lifesaving medicines, medical equipment and disaster relief materials. In five tranches, India supplied approx. 140 tons of medical aid and disaster relief material to Ukraine.

In August, the Government of Ukraine sought humanitarian assistance of medicines, medical devices and infrastructure equipment from the Government of India. Continuing India's commitment to Ukraine, the Government of India gifted four BHISHM Cubes (Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita & Maitri) and 10 diesel generator sets on the sidelines of the Prime Minister's visit to Ukraine on 23 August. BHISHM Cube is a made-in-India, self-sufficient mobile emergency care unit providing the first line of treatment and trauma care. The cube can provide immediate medical care for up

to 200 cases of diverse nature viz. trauma, bleeding, burns, fractures etc.

Zambia: In the wake of the cholera outbreak in Zambia in January-February, India provided medical aid of approx. 3.5 tons comprising water purification supplies, ORS sachets etc.

Guatemala: On request from the Government of Guatemala, India provided medical aid in the form of anti-psychotic, anti-diabetic and pregnancy-related medicines weighing approx. 1222kgs in March.

Fiji: India supplied essential medicines weighing approx. 7642kgs to Fiji in April to strengthen its Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) vaccination programme.

Kenya: India provided HADR assistance to Kenya following flash floods in April-May. The first tranche of immediate relief was provided by INS Sumedha on 10 May and the second tranche of approx. 40 tons of disaster relief material and medical assistance were carried by an IAF C-17 plane to Kenya on 14 May.

Papua New Guinea: In the aftermath of a landslide that buried hundreds of people in Enga province of Papua New Guinea in May, India provided approx. 19 tons of humanitarian assistance consisting of approx. 13 tons of disaster relief material and approx. 6 tons of medical aid to Papua New Guinea by a chartered flight on 13 June.

El Salvador: The country was impacted by extensive floods and landslides in June. India provided approx. 50 tons of HADR assistance in three tranches by air and sea route. The relief included medicines, medical equipment, transport ventilators, vital sign monitors, wheelchairs, blankets, ready to eat meals, baby and family hygiene products etc.

Cuba: On request from the Government of Cuba to strengthen its deteriorating pharmacy network, India supplied 9 made-in-India Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) weighing approx. 90 tons in July. The Cuban drug manufacturers utilised APIs to manufacture essential antibiotic medicines for the treatment of chronic communicable diseases.

Haiti: Following Civil unrest at the beginning of 2024, Haiti struggled with a humanitarian disaster. India extended medical aid of approx. 9 tons in July-August, comprising blood transfusion essentials, reagents for immunohematology, rapid test and ELISA among others to support the National Transfusion Safety Programme of Haiti.

Saint Vincent and Grenadines: India extended support to Saint Vincent and Grenadines in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl. The first tranche of approx. 10 tons of relief material viz. sleeping mats, tarpaulin, family ridge tents, solar lamps, generators etc. was provided in September. The 2nd tranche comprising gensets, tents, tarpaulins, solar lamps etc. is en route via sea.

Chad: A deadly fire erupted in the largest military ammunition depot in N'Djamena on 18 June causing death of approx. 15 civilians with 100 injured. India extended medical aid consisting of essential life-saving antibiotics and general medicines weighing approx. 2300kg for the people of Chad on 7 September by air route.

Nigeria: India delivered 15 tons of humanitarian assistance to Nigeria to provide support to those affected by the devastating floods in the country. The aid comprised of Meals Ready to Eat (MRE's), sleeping mats, blankets, water purification supplies and other relief items. Further assistance of approx. 35 tons were dispatched via sea route in December.

Jamaica: Following Hurricane Beryl, India dispatched humanitarian assistance in the form of medical equipment, diesel gensets and other utilities to Jamaica in December by sea route.

HADR assistance of health-infrastructure to PIC countries: Following India's commitment to PIC countries at the 3rd FIPIC Summit, the first consignment of 12 Haemo-Dialysis machines with portable RO units departed for Papua New Guinea in October. The consignment of 3 HD machines with portable RO units for the Republic of Marshall Islands departed in November. 1 HD machine with a portable RO unit each to Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Nauru departed in November by sea route. The supply will improve the health care system of PIC countries.

HADR commitment to disturbed regions of West Asia

In 2024, India continued to fulfil its humanitarian aid commitments to disturbed regions of West Asia. Despite facing numerous challenges related to security, airspace restrictions, communication hurdles, customs and immigration issues, restricted land movements, non-availability of logistic partners etc., India coordinated with multiple agencies and successfully delivered humanitarian assistance supplies for the people of conflict-hit regions.

India supplied approx. 1400 kgs of anti-cancer medicines to Syria in August. In October, India supplied essential life-saving and anti-cancer drugs weighing approx. 36 tons for the people of West Bank, Palestine; India coordinated with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to supply approx. 30 tons of humanitarian aid to Gaza in Palestine in October-November. The aid comprised essential medicines, surgical supplies, dental products, general medical items, high-energy biscuits etc.; India supplied approx. 33 tons of medical aid comprising a wide range of pharmaceutical products including cardiovascular medications, NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory



India sent relief material to Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar, after widespread devastation caused by Typhoon Ya as part of Operation Sadbhav, September 2024

drugs), anti-inflammatory agents, antibiotics and anesthetics etc. to Lebanon in October-November this year.

Food-grain assistance

India initiated efforts to strengthen the food security of partner countries. Recent supplies of foodgrains to African countries are a testimony to this effort.

Due to severe droughts caused by the El-Nino phenomenon in the southern part of Africa since the beginning of 2024, most of the southern African countries viz. Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Lesotho etc. declared national emergencies and appealed to international organisations and partner countries to provide humanitarian assistance to address food deficits and acute malnutrition caused by droughts. India delivered 1000 metric tons of rice to Malawi, 1000 metric tons of rice to Zimbabwe, 2500 metric tons of maize to Zambia, 1000 metric tons of rice and 1000 metric tons of maize to Namibia. India has also dispatched 1000 metric tons of rice to Lesotho. The 2nd tranche of 1000MT Sorghum is likely to be dispatched to Lesotho at the beginning of January 2025. Aligning with the 'Act East' and 'Neighborhood First' policy, India supplied 2200 metric tons of rice to Myanmar facing a food shortage caused by the effects of political unrest and Typhoon Yagi.

Health Cooperation

Jan Aushadhi Kendra: On 17 July, EAM inaugurated India's first overseas Jan Aushadhi Kendra in Mauritius in the presence of the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Pravind Kumar Jugnauth. The project reflects strong bilateral ties between the two nations and aims to supply cost-effective, made-in-India medicines to enhance public healthcare and well-being in Mauritius.

During Prime Minister's State Visit to Guyana from 19-21 November, the MoU on Janaushadhi Scheme (PMBJP) was signed between M/s HLL Lifecare Limited and the Ministry of Health of Guyana for the supply of medicines at affordable prices under the PMBJP Program.

Policymakers' visit: The Ministry of External Affairs, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission, organized a first-ever Policymakers' visit from 19-22 August in India. The inaugural event was graced by the Minister of Health and Family Welfare. 29 policymakers and drug regulators from 15 global south countries (Burkina Faso, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guyana, Jamaica, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, Nauru, Nicaragua, Syria, Uganda, Zambia and Sri Lanka) participated in the event. The visit included discussions on the benefits of recognition of Indian Pharmacopoeia, best practices and quality control in the field of health. The visit also included participants' exposure

to the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission in Ghaziabad, JanAushadhi Kendra in Agra, and vaccine and drug manufacturing facilities and research centres at Genome Valley in Hyderabad.

MoUs on recognition of Indian Pharmacopoeia: In 2024, the Government of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Pharmacopeial cooperation with the Governments of Nicaragua, Bhutan, Mozambique, Solomon Island, Sri Lanka, Nauru, Malawi, and Guyana. This brings the total number of countries that recognize Indian Pharmacopoeia to 13.

Quad Cancer Moonshot Initiative: On the sidelines of the Quad Leaders' Summit held in the United States of America, Quad countries launched the Cancer Moonshot Initiative on 21 September. The programme is focused on expanding cervical cancer screening, increasing vaccination against HPV and treating patients. Under the initiative, India committed to providing HPV sampling kits, detection tools and cervical cancer vaccines worth USD 7.5 million to the Indo-Pacific region.

Quad Pandemic Preparedness: During the Quad Leaders' Summit held in September, the Quad reaffirmed its commitment to bolstering health security across the Indo-Pacific region. India will host a workshop on pandemic preparedness and release a white paper outlining emergency public health response, in consultation with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

3rd QUAD HADR Working Group Meeting & Table-Top Exercise: India, along with QUAD Partners i.e. US, Australia and Japan, participated in the 3rd QUAD HADR Working Group Meeting & Table Top Exercise held in Tokyo, Japan from 9-11 December, under Japan's Chair. The Indian delegation was led by the RRC Division along with officials from Tri-services, HQIDS, NDRF, NDMA and the Indian Embassy in Tokyo. The Grouping discussed ways and means for strengthening QUAD disaster relief cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

CHAPTER

34

Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service

The Sushma Swaraj Institute of the Foreign Service (SSIFS) is one of the 25 Central Training Institutes of the Government of India. It was established in 1986 to impart professional training to the newly inducted officers of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) every year. Over the years, its training ambit has vastly expanded to include various training programmes such as the Mid-Career Training Programme for MEA officers, MEA personnel, members of other civil services and foreign diplomats. It also conducts training programmes for officers other than MEA officers posted to our Missions and Posts abroad. The courses for foreign diplomats are a way to build bridges of friendship and academic cooperation with countries around the world, particularly with countries in the Global South. The courses and programmes for foreign diplomats are designed to serve as an introduction to the principles and practices of diplomacy, current and emerging issues in international relations, as well as provide an exposure to India's history, culture and foreign policy.

SSIFS also contributed to finalizing the Annual Capacity Building Plan of MEA as mandated by the Capacity Building Commission. SSIFS has added self-paced online learning courses from the Integrated Government Online Training

(iGOT) platform into its training modules for the Ministry's officers. SSIFS completed its accreditation process with the Capacity Building Commission's "National Standards of Civil Services Training Institutes" (NSCSTI) on 08 May following a two-day "on-site" assessment conducted by the CBC team. The SSIFS process of accreditation commenced in August 2022.

Induction Training Programmes for IFS Officer Trainees

The six-month Induction Training Programme (ITP) of IFS officer-trainees of the 2023 batch along with two diplomats from Bhutan commenced on 06 November 2023 and concluded on 11 May 2024. Pedagogical approaches adopted to train the IFS Officer Trainees included interactive lectures, simulation, role play, fire-side chats, workshops, and case studies. The classroom sessions inter alia covered foreign policy, national security, the 3Ts of Trade, Technology & Tourism, development partnerships and connectivity initiatives. Exposure to the functioning of other government



The Prime Minister interacted with Officer Trainees of the 2023 Batch of the Indian Foreign Service, August 2024

organs was done through a combination of attachments and field visits. The Officer Trainees also made the traditional call-on on the Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji, Hon'ble Vice President, Prime Minister, Speaker of Lok Sabha, Raksha Mantri and EAM.

The ITP concluded with a valedictory ceremony on 11 May, chaired by EAM who awarded the Gold Medal to the Best Officer Trainee and Ambassador Bimal Sanyal Memorial Medal for the Best Research Paper. Silver Medal for Esprit de Corps and Trophies for Best Sportsman, Best Sportswoman and Best Committee were also awarded.

Mid-Career Training Programmes for IFS Officers

The SSIFS conducted MCTP-1 for 25 IFS Officers of the 2012 Batch on 19-23 August. During the training programme, the officers attended the Foreign Policy module at SSIFS and underwent a week-long attachment with their allotted States, which included a visit to an aspirational district. The MCTP- II for 30 IFS Officers of 2008 Batch was conducted on 24 – 28 June. The programme consists of a week of foreign policy module at SSIFS, a week-long management module at IIM (Ahmedabad), a week-long diplomacy module at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP), Singapore,

and a week-long attachment with their respective States. A probation related training programme for 31 officers at the level of Under Secretaries was held from 29 July to 30 August.

Special Courses for Foreign Diplomats

SSIFS conducts Special Courses for diplomats from partner countries and regional groupings. In 2024, SSIFS conducted Special Courses for diplomats from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Gambia, Madagascar, Moldova, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Nepal in a bilateral format. A total of 153 diplomats and officers participated in these Special Courses. A special course for diplomats from Rwanda, Libya and South Sudan was held on 11-20 December with the participation of 40 diplomats. SSIFS conducted the 1st Special Courses for four countries in the Pacific Alliance on 10-19 July with the participation of 12 diplomats from Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. SSIFS conducted the 4th Edition of the Annual Disarmament & International Security Affairs Fellowship in collaboration with the D&ISA Division from 22 January to 09 February with the participation of 24 diplomats from 24 countries from various geographies around the world. The 71st Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) was conducted from



The EAM chaired the valedictory ceremony of the IFS Officer Trainees of the 2023 batch and Bhutanese Diplomats, May 2024

22 April to 03 May with the participation of 34 diplomats from 30 countries. The 2nd Edition of the Global South Young Diplomats Forum (GSYDF) was conducted on 09 – 20 September with the participation of 32 diplomats from 29 countries in the Global South.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, Ministry of External Affairs, Republic of India and the Diplomatic Academy of Mauritania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamic Republic of Mauritania was signed on 16 October. Starting with Peru in 1997, SSIFS has so far signed 97 MoUs with partner countries and three with plurilateral organizations, including IBSA, BRICS and BIMSTEC.

Distinguished Lecture Series

The 2nd Edition of the Distinguished Lecture Series, held by SSIFS at the Sushma Swaraj Bhawan on 23 February, featured a talk by Anwar Mohammed Gargash, Diplomatic Advisor to the President of the UAE on 'Emerging geo-strategic developments in West Asia'. EAM delivered the opening remarks at the event which was attended by an audience of around 300.

Training Programme for Other MEA Officials

Various training courses for Non-Representational Grade (NRG) officials (Section Officer/Private Secretaries and below) were conducted during the year. These were the Induction Training Programmes for Direct Recruit Assistant Section Officers and Promotion-related Training Programmes for Section Officers, Assistant Section Officers, Senior Secretariat Assistants, Principal Private Secretaries, Private Secretaries, Personal Assistants and Stenographers. The Promotion-related trainings were conducted in a hybrid format to facilitate the participation of officials from various Missions and Posts abroad. A total of 1349 officials benefited from the NRG training programmes.

Transparency Audit under RTI Act, 2005

The SSIFS has been mandated to carry out a Transparency Audit of proactive disclosures by public authorities under the RTI Act, 2005 with respect to public authorities under the Ministry. In 2024, SSIFS successfully conducted the audit of 175 public authorities from the Ministry and Indian Missions and Posts abroad which had submitted their self-appraisal on the CIC (Central Information Commission) portal dedicated for the purpose.

CHAPTER

35

Indian Council for Cultural Relations

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) in its endeavour towards strengthening cultural relations and exchanges across the world kept buzzing with activities and made many advances. The Council works with its 38 Indian Cultural Centers abroad as well as 5 Zonal offices, 4 Sub-Zonal offices and 2 Regional offices in India.

Scholarships

Scholarship for foreign nationals is an important tool to encourage them to study and appreciate Indian arts, heritage and culture. This is also a way to create outreach, a feeling of goodwill and promote India's influence across the world. In the academic year 2024-25, ICCR offered 3960 scholarship slots to foreign nationals under its 20 Scholarship Schemes including 1000 scholarships for Afghan nationals to pursue online undergraduate/ postgraduate (UG/PG) courses. ICCR organised "Exit Engagement Evening 2024" for the foreign students who had completed their course through ICCR

scholarships. These were held at (i) Guwahati on 19 June; (ii) Kolkata on 20 June; (iii) Lucknow on 29 June; (iv) Mumbai on 03 July; (v) Pune on 04 July; (vi) Delhi on 12 July; (vii) Ahmedabad on 19 July; and (viii) Bengaluru on 22 August. Various Ministries/Departments participated in the events and encouraged foreign students to promote Ayurveda, Khadi, Indian tourism and economic cooperation worldwide.

Chairs

ICCR is instrumental in setting up Chairs of Indian Studies abroad on various subjects (Political Science, Philosophy, History, Sociology, Economics & Buddhist Studies, Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu and Tamil (Dance & Music) in different foreign universities across the world as per the requests received from the Universities and recommended by Missions. During this period, 10 MoUs have been signed with various universities and 04 scholars have been deployed as ICCR visiting professors at various foreign universities.



MoS (PM) inaugurated the 8th India International Folk Festival at Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi, November 2024

Conference & Seminars

ICCR organised the 10th International Day of Yoga for resident Foreign Heads of Missions at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan on 21 June. The event was graced by the EAM, Members of the diplomatic corps and senior officials. ICCR organised a two-day International Yoga Conference titled “Yoga for Self and Society” in collaboration with S-VYASA and the University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa at Senate Chambers, University of Kwazulu-Natal, Durban on 27-28 June.

Outgoing Cultural Delegations

In its efforts to create international understanding through culture, the ICCR has sponsored 64 cultural troupes from different genres, such as Kathak, Monhiniattam, Bharatanatyam, Manipuri, Odissi, Bollywood, etc., and folk dance and music groups, such as Punjabi, Assamese, Gujarati, and Rajasthan, to give cultural performances in 54 countries during the period.

Incoming Cultural Delegations

ICCR organised cultural performances of (i) ‘Shree Satsang Ramayana Mandali’ – Ramayana cultural troupe from Fiji

in New Delhi, Ayodhya and Ujjain during 09-15 March; (ii) ‘Manipuri Cultural Troupe’ & Jazz performance by ‘Benny & the Jazz Collective’ group in honour of visiting ASEAN-SOM leaders and delegates as a part of the 26th ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting held from 02-03 May; (iii) Sitar Recital by Mehtab Ali Niazi at New Delhi on 11 July during the BIMSTEC Foreign Minister’s retreat hosted by EAM; (iv) International Performing Art Workshop on Ramayana (2nd edition under the ongoing series) in Bengaluru from 29-31 July as part of its yearlong celebration of “Connecting World through Ramayana – 2024” and (v) India International Tribal Festival at Satyajit Ray Auditorium, RTC, Kolkata from 19-20 November.

ICCR organised the ‘8th India International Folk Festival’ at Kamani Auditorium New Delhi on 26-27 November. International cultural troupes from Colombia, Sri Lanka, Slovakia and Iraq participated in the festival. The festival was inaugurated by MoS (PM) on 26 November.

Awards

Awards conferred/awarded to various scholars/ experts in previous years were given to them in 2024.

Mr. Lungtaen Gyatso, President, of the College of Language and Culture Studies, Royal University of Bhutan was conferred with the Bharat Mitra Samman –Indology 2023 in Bhutan on 10 May.

Dr. Ashin Nyanissara, Chancellor, Sitagu International Buddhist Academy, Myanmar was conferred the International Award for Promotion of Buddhism 2023 in Yangon, Myanmar on 31 May.

Ms. Masako Satou, Artist, Kathak Dancer, Choreographer, Japan was conferred the Bharat Mitra Samman-Distinguished Alumni 2022 in Japan on 08 November.

Visitors Programme

The Council hosted the visits under various programmes as under:

Distinguished Visitors Programme (DVP): Five delegates from five countries namely Moldova, Denmark, Guatemala, Sri Lanka and St. Vincent and Grenadines visited India from January to March under the Distinguished Visitors Programme.

Academic Visitors Programme (AVP): Three delegates from three countries namely Kazakhstan, Oman and Zambia visited India in March-November under the Academic Visitors Programme.

Important Visitors Programme (IVP): ICCR hosted the visit of Captain Saleh Bin Said Al Jabri from Oman on 14-21 October under the Important Visitors Programme.

Exhibitions

ICCR organized the 7th "India International Ramayana Mela-2024" at Purana Qila, New Delhi from 18-24 January as part of its yearlong celebration of "Year of Connecting World through Ramayana Tradition- 2024". On the 75th Foundation Day of the ICCR, the then MoS (Culture) inaugurated the exhibition titled Arindam-Indian Chapter on 09 April at Bikaner House.

ICCR organised an exhibition titled "Ramayana Resonance: Celebrating a Shared Heritage," in collaboration with

Swami Vivekananda Cultural Center, Kathmandu and Nepal Academy of Fine Arts at Kathmandu from 23-30 September. Badri Prasad Pandey, Minister of Culture, Tourism, & Civil Aviation, Nepal inaugurated the Exhibition. The exhibition was also exhibited at the National Museum, Yangon, Myanmar from 08-15 November.

Busts & statues

During the period of January to November, ICCR sent nine Busts and Statues of iconic leaders viz Mahatma Gandhi, Hansa Jivraj Mehta, Kasturba Gandhi and Lord Buddha to different countries viz. Japan, Switzerland, Brazil, Kuwait, Italy, Durban and Sri Lanka for installation at prominent places.

Indian Culture Centre

ICCR has 38 Indian Cultural Centres (ICCs) in different parts of the world. Additionally, it also extends support to the Casa de la India in Valladolid, Spain. ICCR deployed 48 Teachers of Indian Culture and 28 India-based Performing Arts teachers in the disciplines of Bharatnatyam, Kathak, Odissi, Tabla, Hindustani & Carnatic Vocal in the Missions / Posts / ICCs. ICCR also encouraged Missions / Posts to hire Local Resources Persons (LRPs) as teachers of Yoga, Indian Dance and Music. A total number of 103 LRPs are presently deployed at various Missions / Posts / ICCs.

A tripartite agreement between ICCR, Routes2Roots (R2R) and Centre for Cultural Resources and Training was signed to conduct online classes and certification in the disciplines of Indian performing arts and music for Indian diaspora and interested students abroad.

Hindi

ICCR has been publishing the Hindi bi-monthly magazine "Gagananchal" for the last 46 years, to promote the Hindi language in the country and abroad. A Book launch ceremony for the special issue of Gagananchal "Videsh Mein Hindi" was organised in the presence of MoS (PM) on 14 October in New Delhi.

CHAPTER

36

Nalanda University

The Government of India enacted the Nalanda University Act, 2010, to revive the ancient seat of learning—Nalanda University—at Rajgir, Bihar. The revival has received strong support from the East Asia Summit (EAS) countries since 2007, with 18 countries, including India as the host nation, signing intergovernmental MoUs to establish the University.

On 19 June, the Hon'ble Prime Minister inaugurated Nalanda University's Net Zero Green Campus, spanning 455 acres of land provided by the Government of Bihar. The campus integrates renewable energy systems, water recycling facilities, and eco-friendly designs to achieve carbon neutrality. The ceremonial planting of the Bodhi Tree during the inauguration symbolized the connection between Nalanda's historical legacy and its modern vision as a "University of the Future."

Nalanda University commenced its academic programmes in 2014. As on date, the University offers postgraduate and doctoral programs across six schools: Historical Studies, Ecology and Environment Studies, Buddhist Studies, Philosophy & Comparative Religions, Languages & Literature/Humanities, Management Studies, and International Relations & Peace Studies. Additionally, four research centers have been established: The Bay of Bengal Studies, Common Archival Resource Centre, Centre for Conflict Resolution & Peace Studies, and Nalanda University Centre, Neemrana, Rajasthan.

During the year, the University introduced two new Master's

programs bringing the total to eight programs. Furthermore, there is one Global Ph.D. program and two Post-Doctoral fellowships. Currently, around 71% of the total of enrolments comprise international students, pursuing various post-graduate and Ph.D. programmes.

The University also offers five diploma programs (one-year duration) and twelve certificate programs (six-month duration). A total of 575 students are enrolled in these programs, including 55 international students. The Certificate of Proficiency courses attracted 330 students in Fall 2023 and 185 in Spring 2024, while diploma programs recorded 60 enrollments.

Scholarships and Research Support: The Ministry of External Affairs facilitated 140 scholarships through ASEAN, BIMSTEC, ICCR, and Bhutan Scholarship programs, with ASEAN and BIMSTEC slots increasing from 50 to 80 and 20 to 50, respectively. Additionally, international endowments such as the Payong Rae Lee Scholarship, Thai Endowment Scholarship, and Tanzania Scholarship contributed to supporting international students.

The University Library introduced the mLibrary mobile application, enabling digital access to books, journals, and databases for over 575 users. The library also received a significant collection of approximately 7,000 items from the late Professor Brij Gopal, enhancing its resources in ecology, hydrobiology, and environmental conservation.



Prime Minister inaugurated the new campus of Nalanda University in Rajgir, Bihar, June 2024.

Global Outreach and Collaborations: Nalanda University strengthened its global academic partnerships by signing agreements with 17 institutions across ASEAN, Europe, and India, including the University of Salamanca (Spain), University of Management and Economics, Battambang (Cambodia), and the Archaeological Survey of India. 11 collaborations were formalized under the ASEAN-India Network of Universities (AINU), supporting joint research, faculty exchanges, and student mobility initiatives.

Academic Engagements and Events: As part of the Rajya Sabha Study Visits Programme (RSSVP), students visited the Rajya Sabha on 21-22 February 2024. The Hon'ble Vice-President and Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, interacted with students, emphasizing the importance of peace, progress, and sustainable

development.

The 6th Edition of the Bodh Gaya Global Dialogues, held on 16-17 March 2024, focused on the theme "Landscape of Enlightenment," highlighting discussions on heritage, education, and sustainability.

The University also hosted high-level visits from international dignitaries. In February 2024, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN, visited Nalanda and acknowledged its significance as a revitalized academic institution. In September 2024, ambassadors from Greece and France explored opportunities for academic collaborations, reinforcing cultural and diplomatic ties.

C H A P T E R

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Archives & Record Management

Archives & Records Management (A & RM) Division is a repository of the Ministry's Archives and Records with 1.89 Lakh files maintained by it. The Division also undertakes the job of appraisal and transfer of files to the National Archives of India (NAI) from time to time.

The Division is in the process of enabling the transfer/migration of digitized data to the latest technology platform to new servers for ease of use and retrieval. 05 Technical Committee meetings were convened for consideration/approval of the Limited Tender Enquiry (LTE) among NICSI-empanelled vendors. It gives us great delight to inform that as of 31 December, 1.89 Lakh have been processed (including TIF to PDF conversion, OCR, and Metadata creation etc.) which translates to about 100 per cent of the work having been accomplished.

A & RM Division forwarded the final draft of RRS 2024 to the National Archives of India (NAI) on 22 August for vetting/approval of the same as required. It will then be issued to all concerned for compliance.

In 2024, a total number of 7,38,003 physical files were weeded out and e-files totalling 45,439 were closed, which includes Missions/Posts/RPOs/PoEs and other subordinate offices of the Ministry, till 31 December.

The Division has identified 1,370 unclassified files that are over 25 years old from amongst the 1.89 Lakh files, so far, and facilitated the officials from the National Archives of India (NAI) who visited the Division on 04 and 05 December 2024 in appraising the above-mentioned files. After appraisal, a total number of 212 files having important historical and archival value are being sent to NAI for permanent preservation and for uploading the same on public domain.

A total number of 2,840 old files have been sent by this division to the concerned HoDs of various divisions of the Ministry for declassification/review in the year 2024, thus far.

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Annexure I

Details of MoUs/Agreements signed with Nepal in 2024:

S. No.	Subject	Date of Signature
1.	Agreement between Government of Nepal and Government of India regarding Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) through Governmental Organizations or Any other organizations.	04 January 2024
2.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Nepal on Long-Term Power Trade	04 January 2024
3.	MoU between The Comptroller and Auditor General of India and Office of the Auditor General of Nepal on cooperation in the field of Public Sector Audit.	02 May 2024
4.	MoU for Cooperation in the Renewal Energy Development between Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) and NTPC Limited	04 January 2024
5.	Agreement by and between Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) and NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) for The Launch Services for Munal Satellite on Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)	04 January 2024

Annexure II

List of Full Powers since January 2024

Sl. No.	Name of the Agreement	Date of Issuance	Name of Country/ Organization
1.	Agreement between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of India and the Ministry of National Defence of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria for Cooperation in the Military Field	01.11.2024	Algeria
2.	The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters	14.06.2024	Belarus
3.	The Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement between the EFTA States and the Republic of India	08.03.2024	EFTA States
4.	The Host Country Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA)	08.10.2024	Global Biofuels Alliance
5.	The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity Agreement relating to a Fair Economy	20.09.2024	IPEF
6.	The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity Agreement relating to a Clean Economy	20.09.2024	IPEF
7.	Agreement on the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity	20.09.2024	IPEF
8.	The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on Co-operation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters	14.06.2024	Lao People's Democratic Republic
9.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Madagascar on Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters	16.02.2024	Madagascar
10.	The Convention Establishing the Square Kilometre Array Observatory	21.08.2024	Multilateral
11.	Agreement between the Republic of Poland and the Republic of India on Social Security	08.11.2024	Poland
12.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of India and the United States of America concerning a Drug Policy	20.09.2024	United States of America
13.	Bilateral Investment Treaty between the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Government of the Republic of India	23.09.2024	Uzbekistan

Annexure III

List of Ratifications since January 2024

Sl. No.	Subject	Country	Date of signing	Date of ratification
1.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Finance, Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India on the Constitution of a Joint Working Group on Financial Technology	Philippines	19.06.2023	03.05.2024
2.	Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark	Denmark	22.02.2024	02.05.2024
3.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Italian Republic on Co-operation in the field of Defence	Italy	09.10.2023	06.06.2024
4.	Social Security Agreement between the Argentine Republic and the Republic of India	Argentina	29.09.2023	24.06.2024
5.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Belarus on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters	Belarus	28.06.2024	11.07.2024
6.	Protocol amending the Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mauritius for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income Capital Gains and for the encouragement of Mutual Trade and Investment	Mauritius	07.03.2024	12.07.2024
7.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Madagascar on Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters	Madagascar	27.06.2024	11.07.2024
8.	Convention Establishing the Square Kilometer Array Observatory (SKAO)	SKAO Member Countries	28.03.2024	02.05.2024
9.	Protocol amending the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Government of the Republic of India regarding Indian grant assistance for implementation of high impact community development projects, signed on October 11, 2021 in Bishkek	Kyrgyz Republic	22.01.2024	06.06.2024
10.	Agreement among the Brazilian Space Agency, the State Space Corporation "Roscosmos", the Indian Space Research Organization, the China National Space Administration and the South African National Space Agency on Cooperation on BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation	BRICS Member Countries	18.08.2021	07.06.2024
11.	International Coffee Agreement (ICA)	ICA Member Countries	10.06.2024	13.08.2024
12.	Bilateral Investment Treaty between the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Government of the Republic of India	Uzbekistan	27.09.2024	11.10.2024

Sl. No.	Subject	Country	Date of signing	Date of ratification
13.	Bilateral Investment Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Arab Emirates	United Arab Emirates	13.02.2024	27.02.2024
14.	Framework Agreement on the establishment of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)	IBCA Member Countries	18.09.2024	30.10.2024
15.	Host Country Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA)	GBA Member Countries	11.10.2024	05.11.2024
16.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel on Facilitation of the Temporary Employment of Indian Workers in Specific Labour Market Sectors in the State of Israel	Israel	03.11.2023	02.01.2024
17.	Migration and Mobility Agreement between the Government of the Italian Republic	Italy	02.11.2023	09.01.2024
18.	Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity Agreement relating to a Clean Economy	IPEF Member Countries	20.09.2024	11.11.2024
19.	Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity Agreement relating to a Fair Economy	IPEF Member Countries	20.09.2024	11.11.2024

Annexure IV

List of Treaties, Agreements, MoUs concluded in 2024

A. List of Treaties, Agreements, MoUs by the Ministries

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
1.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Principality of Andorra on Exemption from Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports	15.03.2024	Andorra	Ministry of External Affairs
2.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in the field of Blue Economy and Maritime Cooperation in the Bay of Bengal and in the Indian Ocean Region.	22.06.2024	Bangladesh	Ministry of Earth Sciences
3.	Cooperation the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Government of the Republic of India and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine.	22.06.2024	Bangladesh	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
4.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Railways, Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Railways, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on Rail Connectivity	22.06.2024	Bangladesh	Ministry of Railways
5.	Memorandum of Understanding between India and Bangladesh on Cooperation in the field of Fisheries.	22.06.2024	Bangladesh	Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
6.	Shared Vision of India Bangladesh Digital Partnership	22.06.2024	Bangladesh	Ministry of External Affairs
7.	Shared Vision of India Bangladesh Green Partnership for A Sustainable future	22.06.2024	Bangladesh	Ministry of External Affairs
8.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Belarus on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters	28.06.2024	Belarus	Ministry of Finance
9.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of republic of India and the Royal Government of Bhutan on general supply of petroleum, oil, lubricants (POL) and related products from India to Bhutan	21.03.2024	Bhutan	Ministry of External Affairs
10.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and the Royal Government of Bhutan regarding the Loan for Gyalsung Infrastructure Project	20.01.2024	Bhutan	Ministry of External Affairs

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
11.	Memorandum of Understanding between The Government of The Republic of India and The Royal Government of Bhutan on Cooperation in Sports and Youth	22.03.2024	Bhutan	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
12.	Joint Plan Of Action On Space Cooperation Between Indian Space Research Organisation And Government Technology Agency	22.03.2024	Bhutan	Indian Space Research Organisation
13.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on Cooperation in the Operation of Telemetry Tracking and Telecommand Station for Satellite and Launch Vehicles and for Cooperation in the field of Space Research Science and Applications	04.09.2024	Brunei Darussalam	Department of Space
14.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Civil Service of the Kingdom of Cambodia and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the field of Human Resource Development in the Civil Service	22.04.2024	Cambodia	Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
15.	Memorandum of Understanding to promote Audiovisual Co-Production	15.10.2024	Colombia	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
16.	Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark	22.02.2024	Denmark	Ministry of External Affairs
17.	Memorandum of Understanding on Maritime Issues between the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Industry, Business and Financial Affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark	17.09.2024	Denmark	Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways
18.	Protocol on Joint Economic and Trade Cooperation (JETCO)	12.03.2024	Dominican Republic	Ministry of Commerce & Industries
19.	Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) between India and EFTA countries comprising Switzerland, Iceland, Norway & Liechtenstein.	10.03.2024	EFTA States (Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, and Liechtenstein)	Ministry of Commerce & Industries
20.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Information Network Security Administration of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the Field of Digital Transformation	30.09.2024	Ethiopia	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
21.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Saint Christopher (Saint Kitts) and Nevis on the establishment of Consultation Mechanism	06.08.2024	Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis	Ministry of External Affairs
22.	Memorandum of Understanding between India and Fiji on Digital Public Infrastructure	12.11.2024	Fiji	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
23.	Memorandum of Understanding On Cooperation in the field of sharing successful Digital Solutions implemented at population scale for digital transformation	03.10.2024	Gambia	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
24.	Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) in Criminal Matters between India and Germany	24.10.2024	Germany	Ministry of Home Affairs
25.	Memorandum of Understanding between Deutsche Bahn AG and Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India for Technological Cooperation in Railways Sector	09.02.2024	Germany	Ministry of Railways
26.	Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of Skill Development and Vocational Education & Training between Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of India and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany	24.10.2024	Germany	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
27.	JDI on the Indo-German Green Urban Mobility Partnership between Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs of the Republic of India and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany	24.10.2024	Germany	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
28.	JDI on continuation of cooperation in the field of advanced training of corporate executives from India between the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of India	24.10.2024	Germany	Ministry of Commerce & Industries
29.	JDI in the field of Employment and Labour between the Ministry of Labour and Employment of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany	24.10.2024	Germany	Ministry of Labour and Employment
30.	Joint Declaration of Intent for Joint Cooperation in Research and Development on Advanced Materials between the Department of Science & Technology (DST) of the Government of the Republic of India and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany	24.10.2024	Germany	Department of Science & Technology

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
31.	Joint Declaration of Intent for Cooperation in Innovation, Technology Transfer and Entrepreneurship between the Department of Science & Technology (DST) of the Government of the Republic of India and Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) (German Academic Exchange Service) of the Federal Republic of Germany	24.10.2024	Germany	Department of Science & Technology
32.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Guatemala on the Conservation of the Tiger (<i>Panthera tigris</i>) and the Jaguar (<i>Panthera onca</i>)	03.05.2024	Guatemala	Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change
33.	Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) between the Government of India and the Government of Guyana for 2024-2027	20.11.2024	Guyana	Ministry of Culture
34.	Memorandum of Understanding between The Government Of India And The Government Of The Cooperative Republic Of Guyana On Bilateral Cooperation In The Field Of Agriculture And Allied Sectors	20.11.2024	Guyana	Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare
35.	Implementation Agreement on Transfer of Title of Integrated Biak Telemetry, Tracking and Command (TTC) Facilities and Implementing Arrangement on Operation, Maintenance and Utilisation of Integrated Biak Telemetry, Tracking and Command (TTC) Facilities for Satellites and Launch Vehicles between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN)	19.03.2024	Indonesia	Indian Space Research Organisation
36.	Letter of Intent between the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas of the Republic of India	11.06.2024	Italy	Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas
37.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Jamaica on Cooperation in Sports	01.10.2024	Jamaica	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
38.	Memorandum of Understanding on the Cultural Exchange Programme Between the Government of the Republic of India and The Government of the Jamaica for the Years 2024-2029	30.09.2024	Jamaica	Ministry of Culture
39.	Memorandum of Understanding for undertaking a Quick Impact Project (QIP) for gifting of CT Scan Machine (Green Project) to Kenya Defence Forces	23.01.2024	Kenya	Ministry of External Affairs
40.	Protocol amending the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Government of the Republic of India regarding Indian grant assistance for implementation of high Impact Community Development	22.01.2024	Kyrgyz Republic	Ministry of External Affairs

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
41.	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of sharing successful digital solutions implemented at population scale for Digital Transformation between India and Lao PDR	27.07.2024	Lao PDR	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
42.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on Co-operation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters	11.10.2024	Lao PDR	Ministry of Finance
43	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Madagascar on Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Customs Matters	27.06.2024	Madagascar	Ministry of Finance
44.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Malawi on Cooperation in Sports	18.10.2024	Malawi	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
45.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Republic of Malawi on Cooperation in the field of Youth Matters	18.10.2024	Malawi	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
46.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Republic of Malawi on Cooperation in the field of Arts and Culture	18.10.2024	Malawi	Ministry of Culture
47.	Programme of Cultural Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Malawi in the fields of Culture, Art and Heritage for the Year 2024-2029	18.10.2024	Malawi	Ministry of Culture
48.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Malaysia and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the Field of Ayurveda and Other Traditional System of Medicine	20.08.2024	Malaysia	Ministry of Ayush
49.	Programme on Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Malaysia in the fields of Culture, Art and Heritage	20.08.2024	Malaysia	Ministry of Culture
50.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Malaysia on Co-operation in the field of Digital Technologies	20.08.2024	Malaysia	Ministry of Electronics and information Technology
51.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and the Government of Malaysia on the Recruitment, Employment and Repatriation of Workers	20.08.2024	Malaysia	Ministry of External Affairs
52.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Malaysia and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the field of Public Administration and Governance Reforms	20.08.2024	Malaysia	Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
53.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Malaysia and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the Field of Tourism	20.08.2024	Malaysia	Ministry of Tourism
54.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Malaysia on Cooperation in the field of Youth and Sports	20.08.2024	Malaysia	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
55.	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Sports and Youth Affairs Between India and Maldives	07.10.2024	Maldives	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports
56.	Currency Swap Agreement Between the Maldives Monetary Authority and Department of Economic Affairs	07.10.2024	Maldives	Ministry of Finance
57.	Visa Waiver Agreements for Visa free entry for Diplomatic/ Official Passport holders between India and Moldova	10.05.2024	Moldova	Ministry of External Affairs
58.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Malta for Authorizing the Dependents of Members of A Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post to Engage in Gainful Employment	24.06.2024	Malta	Ministry of External Affairs
59.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Diplomatic Academy of Mauritania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamic Republic of Mauritania on cooperation in training of diplomats.	16.10.2024	Mauritania	Ministry of External Affairs
60.	Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) between the Government of India and the Government of Islamic Republic of Mauritania for 2024-2029	17.10.2024	Mauritania	Ministry of Culture
61.	Protocol amending the Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Mauritius for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and Capital Gains, and for the encouragement of Mutual Trade investments	07.03.2024	Mauritius	Ministry of Finance
62.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia on Exemption from Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports.	19.02.2024	Micronesia	Ministry of External Affairs
63.	International Coffee Agreement 2022	10.06.2024	Multilateral	Ministry of Commerce & Industries
64.	Memorandum of Understanding on the Construction of Sarsobeikman Building in Yangon	18.03.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
65.	Constructing a one-story building for the Girls Training School in Mandalay Region, Myanmar under Quick Impact Project	14.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
66.	Establishment of Yangon Region's Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for natural disaster management under Quick Impact Project	14.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
67.	Weaving and Vocational sector Development Project under Quick Impact Project	14.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
68.	Dryer and Dryer's house for Agriculture Development and Farmer Welfare under Quick Impact Project	14.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
69.	Implementation of ACARE knowledge repository under Quick Impact Project	14.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
70.	Rural Water Supply using Solar Power in the Drought-Affected Villages of Central Dry Zone of Myanmar under Quick Impact Project	24.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
71.	Provisions for items and equipment for Institute of Development Administration of Myanmar under Quick Impact Project	24.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
72.	Digital Forensic Laboratory Upgrade Project	24.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
73.	Establishment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) laboratory at Yangon Technological University (YTU) under Quick Impact Project	24.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
74.	Investigation into Tar-Free and Dry Type Gasification Process with Slow Pyrolysis Products of Agriculture Waste for Myanmar's Rural Development under Quick Impact Project	24.10.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
75.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Embassy of India, Yangon, the Government of the Republic of India and the Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department, Ministry of Border Affairs, the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for "Construction of 20 feet Bailey Bridge and Four (5x5x26) feet Box Culverts From 3/6 Miles Junction Road of Lahe-Nanyun to Laungkyannaukkone-Taikyan-Lanhtain Junction in Naga Self-Administered Zone" Under Quick Impact Projects	09.01.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs
76.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Embassy of India, Yangon, the Government of the Republic of India and the Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department, Ministry of Border Affairs, the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for "Construction of 60x30x12 feet Steel Structure Multi-Purpose Community Hall Near Tikeyan Village, Lahe township in Naga Self-Administered Zone" Under Quick Impact Projects	09.01.2024	Myanmar	Ministry of External Affairs

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
77.	Visa Waiver Agreements for Visa free entry for Diplomatic/ Official Passport holders between India and Nauru	17.09.2024	Nauru	Ministry of External Affairs
78.	Agreement between Government of Nepal and Government of India regarding Indian grant assistance for implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) through Governmental organisation or any other organisations.	04.01.2024	Nepal	Ministry of External Affairs
79.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Nepal on Long-term Power Trade	04.01.2024	Nepal	Ministry of External Affairs
80.	Customs Co-operative Arrangement between India and New Zealand	01-08-2024	New Zealand	Ministry of Finance
81.	Cooperative Arrangement between the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs of the Government of the Republic of India and the New Zealand Customs Service in Customs Matter.	06.08.2024	New Zealand	Ministry of Finance
82.	Programme of Cultural Cooperation and Exchanges between the Government of India and the Government of Nigeria for 2024-2029	15.11.2024	Nigeria	Ministry of Culture
83.	Memorandum of Understanding on developing micro & small enterprises (MSES) in fruit processing industry in Suriname	05.11.2024	Republic of Suriname	Ministry of External Affairs
84.	Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Environment, forest, and Climate Change of the Republic of India and Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation on the Issues of Climate Change and Low Carbon Development.	08.07.2024	Russia	Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change
85.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Federation of Saint Christopher (Saint Kitts) and Nevis on Cooperation in Sports	05.08.2024	Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis	Department of Sports, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports India
86.	Agreement on Exemption from visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passports	16.04.2024	Saint Lucia	Ministry of External Affairs
87.	Memorandum of Understanding on establishment of a plant for leaf vegetables and root crop processing and packaging facility in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	29.10.2024	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Ministry of External Affairs
88.	Agreement between the Governments of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States on cooperation in the field of environmental protection	04.07.2024	SCO	Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change
89.	Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Law and Justice of India and Ministry of Law of Singapore on Co-operation in the Sphere of Law and Dispute Resolution	14.03.2024	Singapore	Ministry of Law and Justice

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
90.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Digital Development and information of the Republic of Singapore on Cooperation in the field of Digital Technologies	26.08.2024	Singapore	Ministry of Electronics and information Technology
91.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Trade and Industry of the Republic of Singapore on India-Singapore Semiconductor Ecosystem Partnership	26.08.2024	Singapore	Ministry of Electronics and information Technology
92.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Singapore on Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine	29.08.2024	Singapore	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
93.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of India and the Ministry of the Republic of Singapore on Educational Cooperation and Skills Development	29.08.2024	Singapore	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
94.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Trade and Industry of the Republic of Singapore on India-Singapore Semiconductor Ecosystem Partnership	26.08.2024	Singapore	Ministry of Electronics and information Technology
95.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Singapore on Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine	29.08.2024	Singapore	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
96.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of India and the Ministry of the Republic of Singapore on Educational Cooperation and Skills Development	29.08.2024	Singapore	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
97.	Memorandum of Understanding on Economic Cooperation between the South African Development Community and the Government of the Republic of India	02.07.2024	South Africa	Ministry of External Affairs
98.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and the Ministry for Transport and Sustainable Development Mobility of the Kingdom of Spain on Cooperation in the field of Rail Transport	28.10.2024	Spain	Ministry of Railways
99.	Cultural Exchange Programme between The Government of The Republic of India and The Government of The Kingdom of Spain for the years 2024-28	28.10.2024	Spain	Ministry of Culture

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
100.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Spain regarding Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters.	28.10.2024	Spain	Ministry of Finance
101.	Agreement between The Government of The Republic of India and The Kingdom of Spain Regarding Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters.	28.10.2024	Spain	Ministry of Finance
102.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry Railways of the Government of the Republic of India and the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport and Communication of the Swiss Confederation to enhance technical cooperation in Railways	29.10.2024	Switzerland	Ministry of Railways
103.	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy between India and The Netherlands	12.09.2024	The Netherlands	Ministry of New & Renewable Energy
104.	Cultural Exchange Program between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste for the Years 2024-2028	10.08.2024	Timor-Leste	Ministry of Culture
105.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor- Leste on Exemption from Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic and official or Service Passports	10.08.2024	Timor-Leste	Ministry of External Affairs
106.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Togolese Abroad of the Government of Republic of Togo for Consultations.	27.06.2024	Togo	Ministry of External Affairs
107.	Agreement between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Togolese Abroad of the Government of Republic of Togo on Reciprocal Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic, Official and Service Passports.	27.06.2024	Togo	Ministry of External Affairs
108.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ukraine on Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture and Food industry	23.08.2024	Ukraine	Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare
109.	Programme of Cultural Cooperation between the Ministry of Culture of the Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Culture and information Policy of Ukraine for the Years 2024-2028	23.08.2024	Ukraine	Ministry of Culture
110.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Cabinet Ministers of Ukraine Regarding Indian Humanitarian Grant Assistance for Implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects	23.08.2024	Ukraine	Ministry of External Affairs

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
111.	Bilateral Investment Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United Arab Emirates	13.02.2024	United Arab Emirates	Ministry of Finance
112.	Agreement between the Republic of Uruguay and the Government of the Republic of India on the performance of remunerated activities by family members of Diplomatic, Consular, Administrative and Technical Personnel of Diplomatic and Consular Missions	16.09.2024	Uruguay	Ministry of External Affairs
113.	Bilateral investment Treaty between the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Government of the Republic of India	27.09.2024	Uzbekistan	Ministry of Finance
114.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Traditional Medicine Administration, Ministry of Health of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the National Medicinal Plants Board, Ministry of Ayush of the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the field of Medicinal Plants	31.07.2024	Viet Nam	Ministry of Ayush
115.	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for Authorizing the Dependents of Members of a Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post to Engage in Gainful Employment	01.08.2024	Viet Nam	Ministry of External Affairs
116.	Letter of intent between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for the Conservation and Restoration of F Block in My Son, Quang Nam Province, Vietnam	01.08.2024	Viet Nam	Ministry of External Affairs
117.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Justice of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Ministry of Law and Justice of the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the Legal field	31.07.2024	Viet Nam	Ministry of Law and Justice
118.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on Cooperation and Development of the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NHMC) at Lothal, Gujarat	01.08.2024	Viet Nam	Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways
119.	Letter of Intent between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for the Conservation and Restoration of F Block in My Son, Quang Nam Province, Vietnam	01.08.2024	Viet Nam	Ministry of External Affairs

B. List of Treaties, Agreements, MoUs by Government Bodies

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
1.	MoU Between National Innovation Foundation (NIF), India and National Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship of Armenia (NCIE) During The 9 th Edition of India International Science Festival Held From 17-20 January 2024 at New Delhi.	17.01.2024	Armenia	National Innovation Foundation
2.	MoU between the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), MHA, India and The Ministry of Disaster management and Relief, Bangladesh on Cooperation in the Field of Disaster Management, Resilience and Mitigation.	22.06.2024	Bangladesh	National Disaster Management Authority
3.	MoU between CSIR, India and BORI, Bangladesh for Joint Research on Oceanography of the Indian Ocean and Capacity Building.	22.06.2024	Bangladesh	Council of Scientific & Industrial Research
4.	MoU between Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (In-SPACe), India and Ministry of Posts, Telecommunication and Information Technology, Bangladesh for Collaboration on a Joint Small Satellite Project for use by the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunication and Information Technology, Bangladesh	22.06.2024	Bangladesh	Department of Space
5.	Joint Plan of Action on Space Cooperation between Indian Space Research Organisation and Government Technology Agency	22.03.2024	Bhutan	Indian Space Research Organisation
6.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between National Knowledge Network of India (NKN) National Information Centre Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and Government Technology (Govtech) Agency (Druk Research and Education Network) On Peering Arrangement	22.03.2024	Bhutan	National Information Centre
7.	Agreement For Recognition of Official Control Exercised by Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA), Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan by Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India	22.03.2024	Bhutan	Food Safety and Standard Authority of India
8.	Memorandum of Understanding Between Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Ministry of Power, Government of India, New Delhi and Department of Energy, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu on Co-Operation in the Field of Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation Measures	22.03.2024	Bhutan	Bureau of Energy Efficiency
9.	Memorandum of Understanding Between the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of the Republic of India and the Bhutan Food and Drug Authority, Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan on Cooperation Concerning Sharing Reference Standard, Pharmacopoeia, Vigilance and Testing of Medical Products	22.03.2024	Bhutan	Pharmacopoeia Commission of India

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
10.	Memorandum of Understanding Between the Supreme Court of Bhutan and the Supreme Court of India in the Field of Judicial Cooperation	09.10.2024	Bhutan	The Supreme Court of India
11.	MoU between All India Institute of Ayurveda and Sri Vajera Foundation and Associated Institutions.	09.01.2024	Brazil	All India Institute of Ayurveda
12.	MoU Among the Drug Regulatory Authorities of BRICS on "Cooperation in the Field of Regulation of Medical Products for Human Use	01.02.2024	BRICS	Central Drugs Standard Control Organization
13.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization, Ministry Of Health And Family Welfare Government Of The Republic Of India And The Public Health Institute Of Chile On Cooperation In The Field Of Medical Products Regulation	18.10.2024	Chile	Central Drugs Standard Control Organization
14.	MoU Between Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) and the National Meteorological Office of Dominican Republic (ONAMET)	24.04.2024	Dominican Republic	Indian Meteorological Department
15.	MoU Between NSI, Kanpur India and FSC, Lautoka, Fiji for Cooperation in the Fields of Sugarcane Processing and Manpower Development.	19.03.2024	Fiji	NSI
16.	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), India and Helmholtz Centre Potsdam (GFZ) German Research Centre for Geosciences, Germany concerning research cooperation in the field of tsunami early warning.	16.10.2024	Germany	Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services
17.	MoU on Polar and Ocean Research between National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) and Alfred-Wegener Institut Helmholtz Zentrum fuer Polar and Meeresforschung (AWI)	14.10.2024	Germany	National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research
18.	MoU between Max-Planck-Gesellschaft.V. (MPG) and National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR)	21.10.2024	Germany	National Centre for Biological Sciences
19.	MoU For a Dialogue on Security Issues Between the National Security Council Secretariat of the Republic of India and the Office of the National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic	27.02.2024	Hellenic Republic	National Security Council Secretariat of the Republic of India
20.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between ICCR And State Hindu University of I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar on The Establishment of The ICCR Chair of Indian Studies	16.05.2024	Indonesia	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
21.	MOU on establishment of the ICCR Chair of Indian Studies between ICCR & State Hindu University of IGB Sugriwa, Bali	16.05.2024	Indonesia	Indian Council for Cultural Relations

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
22.	MOU for establishing a framework to promote the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions signed between Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Bank Indonesia (BI)	07.03.2024	Indonesia	Reserve Bank of India
23.	Implementation Agreement on Transfer of Title of Integrated Biak Telemetry, Tracking and Command (TTC) Facilities and Implementing Arrangement on Operation, Maintenance and Utilisation of Integrated Biak Telemetry, Tracking and Command (TTC) Facilities for Satellites and Launch Vehicles between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN)	19.03.2024	Indonesia	Indian Space Research Organisation
24.	Memorandum Of Understanding Made And Entered Into By And Between Indian Council For Cultural Relations (ICCR) And University Of Milan On The Establishment Of The ICCR Chair Of Indian Studies	13.09.2024	Italy	Indian Council For Cultural Relations
25.	Agreement Between IREL (India) Limited, CPSU Under The Department Of Atomic Energy (DAE), Govt. Of India And Ust-Kamenogorsk Titanium And Magnesium Plant JSC, (UKTMP JSC) Kazakhstan, To Establish Indo-Kazakh Joint Venture Company (JVC): IREUK Titanium Limited For Production Of Ti Slag In India	05.11.2024	Kazakhstan	IREL (India) Limited
26.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between The National Audit Office Of The Kingdom Of Bahrain And The Comptroller And Auditor General Of India To Enhance Co-Operation And Develop Their Bilateral Relationship And Strengthen Audit Activities In Their Own Countries Based On Friendship, Mutual Interests And Understanding Between Them.	27.08.2024	Kingdom of Bahrain	Comptroller and Auditor General of India
27.	MOU On Cooperation In The Field Of Development And Regulation Of Financial Products, Services And Institutions, Between Capital Markets Authority (CMA) And International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) – GIFT City	23.04.2024	Kuwait	International Financial Services Centres Authority
28.	MoU For Setting Up Of Indian Council For Cultural Relations (ICCR) Chair Of Indian Studies/Hindi Language In Gulf University Of Science And Technology (GUST), Kuwait	12.09.2024	Kuwait	Indian Council For Cultural Relations
29.	MOU On Cooperation Of Broadcasting Between Prasar Bharti And Lao National Television	11.10.2024	Lao PDR	Prasar Bharti
30.	JDI for Collaborative Research and Development in Infectious Disease Genomics between Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR – IGIB) and Leipzig University	21.10.2024	Leipzig University, Germany	Council of Scientific and Industrial Research

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
31.	JDI for the partnership on Mobile Suitcase Lab for Diagnostic purposes between Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (CSIR – IGIB), All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Leipzig University and Industry partners in India	24.10.2024	Leipzig University, Germany	Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
32.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between The Government Of The Republic Of India And The Government Of Republic Of Malawi Pharmacopoeial Cooperation	18.10.2024	Malawi	Pharmacopoeia Commission of India
33.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) And Labuan Financial Services Authority (LFSA) In Relation To Mutual Cooperation	19.05.2024	Malaysia	International Financial Services Centres Authority
34.	Memorandum of Understanding between the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) and Labuan Financial Services Authority (LFSA) in relation to Mutual Cooperation	19.08.2024	Malaysia	International Financial Services Centres Authority
35.	MoU Between Maldives International Arbitration Centre And India International Arbitration Centre	26.07 2024	Maldives	India International Arbitration Centre
36.	MoU Between National Centre For Good Governance Of India And Civil Service Commission Of Maldives On Training & Capacity Building Programme For Maldivian Civil Servants	09.08.2024	Maldives	National Centre for Good Governance
37.	MoU To Introduce India's Unified Payment Interface (UPI) In The Maldives Between Ministry Of Economic Development And NCPI International Payments Limited	09.08.2024	Maldives	NCPI International Payments Limited
38.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Of Maldives And The Central Bureau Of Investigation (CBI) Of India For Bilateral Cooperation On Preventing And Combating Corruption	06.10.2024	Maldives	Central Bureau of Investigation
39.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Of Maldives And The Central Bureau Of Investigation (CBI) Of India For Bilateral Cooperation On Preventing And Combating Corruption	06.10.2024	Maldives	Central Bureau of Investigation
40.	MoU Between The National Judicial Academy Of India (NJA) And The Judicial Service Commission (JSC) Of Maldives On Training And Capacity Building Programs For Maldivian Judicial Officers	07.10.2024	Maldives	National Judicial Academy of India
41.	MoU For Cooperation Between Rashtriya Raksha University And National College Of Policing And Law Enforcement Of Maldives	07.10.2024	Maldives	Rashtriya Raksha University
42.	Agreement Between M/S. Hill Lifecare Limited And Ministry Of Health And Wellness, Mauritius On Supply Of Medicines Under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)	28.02.2024	Mauritius	M/s. HILL Lifecare Limited

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
43	Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU) On Pharmacopoeial Cooperation Between Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC), Ministry Of Health And Family Welfare Of The Government Of The Republic Of India And Government Of The Republic Of Nauru Through The Department Of Health And Medical Services, Government Buildings, Yaren District, Republic Of Nauru.	17.09.2024	Nauru	Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission
44.	Agreement by and between Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) and New Space India Limited (NSIL), a CPSE under Department of Space, Government of India for the Launch Services for Munal satellite on Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)	04.01.2024	Nepal	New Space India Limited
45.	Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in the Renewable Energy Development between Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) and NTPC Limited.	04.01.2024	Nepal	NTPC (National Thermal Power Corporation) Ltd.
46.	Memorandum of Understanding between the Comptroller and Auditor General of the Republic of India and the Office of the Auditor General of Nepal on cooperation in the field of Public Sector Audit	02.05.2024	Nepal	Comptroller and Auditor General of India
47.	Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU) On Pharmacopoeial Cooperation Between Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC), Ministry Of Health And Family Welfare Of The Government Of The Republic Of India And The Ministry Of Health Of The Republic Of Nicaragua, On Cooperation In The Field Of The Regulation Of Medicines	28.02.2024	Nicaragua	Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission
48.	Memorandum Of Understanding For Cooperation In The Fields Of Peaceful Use Of Nuclear Energy Between The Global Centre For Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP), Department Of Atomic Energy, Government Of The Republic Of India And The Peruvian Institute Of Nuclear Energy (IPEN) Of The Republic Of Peru.	15.03.2024	Peru	The Global Centre For Nuclear Energy Partnership
49.	Agreement To Replicate A Retails Payment Platform In Peru Similar To The United Payments Interface (UPI) Between The Central Reserve Bank Of Peru And The NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL).	04.06.2024	Peru	National Payments Corporation of India International Payments Ltd.
50.	Agreement On Cooperation Between The National Audit Office Of The Republic Of Bulgaria And The Office Of The Comptroller And Auditor General Of The Republic Of India	17.04.2024	Republic of Bulgaria	Comptroller and Auditor General
51.	MoU Between National Centre For Polar And Ocean Research, Ministry Of Earth Sciences, Government Of India And The Arctic And Antarctic Research Institute On Cooperation In Research And Logistics In Polar Regions	09.7.2024	Russia	National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
52.	MoU On Cooperation And Collaboration On Broadcasting Between Prasar Bharati, India, And ANO "TV-Novosti" (Russia Today TV Channel), Russia	09.7.2024	Russia	Prasar Bharati
53.	MoU Between Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission, Ministry Of Health And Family Welfare, Government Of The Republic Of India And Federal State Budgetary Institution "Scientific Centre For Expert Evaluation Of Medicinal Products" Of The Ministry Of Health Of The Russian Federation	09.7.2024	Russia	Pharmacopoeia Commission of India
54.	Cooperation Agreement Between The Indian International Arbitration Centre And International Commercial Arbitration Court At The Chamber Of Commerce And Industry Of The Russian Federation	9.7.2024	Russia	India International Arbitration Centre
55.	MoU Between Survey Of India And The Federal Service For State Registration, Cadastre And Cartography, Russian Federation	9.7.2024	Russia	Survey of India
56.	Cooperation Agreement Between Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), Ministry Of Health And Family Welfare, GoI And Federal State Institution "State Institute Of Drugs And Good Practices" (FSI "SID & GP")	9.7.2024	Russia	Central Drugs Standard Control Organization
57.	Program Of India-Russia Cooperation In Trade, Economic And Investment Spheres In The Russian Far East For The Period From 2024 To 2029 As Well As Of Cooperation Principles In The Arctic Zone Of The Russian Federation	09.7.2024	Russia	Niti Ayog
58.	MoU In The Field Of Public Sector Auditing	29.08.2024	Saudi Arabia	Comptroller and Auditor General of India
59.	MoU To Enhance Digital Cooperation	16.10.2024	Saudi Arabia	Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, Ministry of Communications
60.	MoU Between Comptroller And Auditor General Of India And The Office Of The Auditor General Of Seychelles For Cooperation In Public Sector Audit	21.10.2024	Seychelles	Comptroller and Auditor General of India
61.	MoU between the Comptroller and Auditor General Of The republic of India and The Office of The Auditor General of The Republic of Seychelles on cooperation in the field of Public Sector Audit	21.10.2024	Seychelles	Comptroller and Auditor General of India
62.	Joint Action Plan for Phase Negotiations of the authorized Economic Operator Mutual Recognition Arrangement (AEO - MRA)	20.02.2024	Singapore	Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
63.	Renewal Of Memorandum Of Understanding Between Bureau Of Indian Standards (BIS) And Slovak Office Of Standards, Metrology And Testing (UNMS SR) For A Period Of 5 Years (Till July 2025)	22.02.2024	Slovakia	Bureau of Indian Standards
64.	Memorandum on Scientific and Innovation Cooperation between RIS research and Information System for Developing Countries and The Slovenian Science Foundation for exchange of information, experts and supporting joint scientific and innovation projects.	06.02.2024	Slovenia	RIS research and Information System for Developing Countries
65.	Memorandum of Understanding between ICCR and Nova University on the establishment of India Study Centre at Nova University to foster collaboration between both countries in the field of education, Science and Innovation	09.09.2024	Slovenia	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
66.	Memorandum of Understanding between the National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. (NSIC), Republic of India and Ministry Of Industry and New Technologies (Mint), Republic of Tajikistan on Co-operation in the field of Micro and Small Enterprises	28.10.2024	Tajikistan	National Small Industries Corporation Ltd.
67.	MoU between National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur of the Ministry of Ayush, India and Department of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine of the Ministry of Public Health, Thailand on the Establishment of an Academic Collaboration in Ayurveda and Thai Traditional Medicine	27.02.2024	Thailand	National Institute of Ayurveda
68.	Memorandum Of Understanding For Cooperation And Collaboration On Broadcasting Between Prasar Bharti, India And Radio E TELEVISAO DE TIMOR-LESTE, EMPRESA PUBLICA (RTTL E.P.)	10.08.2024	Timor-Leste	Prasar Bharti
69.	Cooperation Protocol between the National Library and Archives of United Arab Emirates and the National Archives of India was signed on 13-02- 2024 for one (1) year with auto- renewal clause for same successive periods.	13.02.2024	UAE	National Archives of India
70.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization, Ministry Of Health And Family Welfare Government Of India And The State Service Of Ukraine On Medicines And Drugs Control On Cooperation In The Field Of Medical Products Regulation	23.08.2024	Ukraine	The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization
71.	MoU between Southern California University of Health Sciences and ITRA	13.01.2024	USA	ITRA
72.	Cultural Property Agreement (CPA) between India (ASI) and USA	26.07.2024	USA	Archaeological Survey of India

Sl. No	Name	Date of Signing	Country/ Organization	Ministry
73.	Memorandum Of Understanding For Cooperation In Customs Capacity Building Between The Central Board Of Indirect Taxes And Customs, The Republic Of India And The General Department Of Viet Nam Customs, The Socialist Republic Of Viet-Nam	31.07.2024	Viet Nam	Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs
74.	Two Dollar Credit Line Agreements Between the Government of The Socialist Republic Of Vietnam Represented By Ministry Of Finance (MoF) And Export-Import Bank Of India (EXIM) Amounting To USD 300 Mn	01.08.2024	Viet Nam	Export-Import Bank of India
75.	Memorandum Of Understanding Between Prasar Bharati, New Delhi, India And The Voice Of Vietnam (VOV), Hanoi, Vietnam For Cooperation On Radio Television	01.08.2024	Viet Nam	Prasar Bharti

Annexure V

Passport Offices (State / UT-wise)

Sl. No.	Passport Office	State / Union Territory
1	PO Ahmedabad	Gujarat
2	PO Amritsar	Punjab
3	PO Bareilly	Uttar Pradesh
4	PO Bengaluru	Karnataka
5	PO Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh
6	PO Bhubaneswar	Odisha
7	PO Chandigarh	Chandigarh
8	PO Chennai	Tamil Nadu
9	PO Cochin	Kerala
10	PO Coimbatore	Tamil Nadu
11	PO Dehradun	Uttarakhand
12	PO Delhi	Delhi
13	PO Ghaziabad	Uttar Pradesh
14	PO Goa	Goa
15	PO Guwahati	Assam
16	PO Hyderabad	Telangana
17	PO Jaipur	Rajasthan
18	PO Jalandhar	Punjab
19	PO Jammu	Jammu and Kashmir
20.	PO Kolkata	West Bengal
21	PO Kozhikode	Kerala
22	PO Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh
23	PO Madurai	Tamil Nadu
24	PO Mumbai	Maharashtra
25	PO Nagpur	Maharashtra
26	PO Patna	Bihar
27	PO Pune	Maharashtra
28	PO Raipur	Chhattisgarh
29	PO Ranchi	Jharkhand
30	PO Shimla	Himachal Pradesh
31	PO Srinagar	Jammu and Kashmir

Sl. No.	Passport Office	State / Union Territory
32	PO Surat	Gujarat
33	PO Tiruchirappalli	Tamil Nadu
34	PO Trivandrum	Kerala
35	PO Vijayawada	Andhra Pradesh
36	PO Visakhapatnam	Andhra Pradesh
37	PO Kota	Rajasthan

Annexure VI

List of Passport Seva Kendras (RPO-wise)

Sl. No.	RPO Name	S. No. of PSKs	Name of Passport Seva Kendra (PSK)
1	RPO Ahmedabad	1	PSK Mithakali Ahmedabad
		2	PSK Rajkot
		3	PSK Vadodara
		4	PSK Vijay Cross Road Ahmedabad
2	RPO Amritsar	5	PSK Amritsar
3	RPO Bareilly	6	PSK Bareilly
4	RPO Bengaluru	7	PSK Bengaluru, Lalbagh
		8	PSK Bengaluru, Sai Arcade
		9	PSK Hubballi-Dharwad
		10	PSK Mangaluru
		11	PSK Kalaburagi
5	RPO Bhopal	12	PSK Bhopal
		13	PSK Indore
6	RPO Bhubaneswar	14	PSK Bhubaneswar
7	RPO Chandigarh	15	PSK Ambala
		16	PSK Chandigarh
		17	PSK Ludhiana
8	RPO Chennai	18	PSK Aminjikarai
		19	PSK Saligramam
		20	PSK Tambaram
		21	PSK Puducherry
9	RPO Cochin	22	PSK Alappuzha
		23	PSK Aluva
		24	PSK Kottayam
		25	PSK Thrissur
		26	PSK Tripunithura, Cochin
10	RPO Coimbatore	27	PSK Coimbatore
11	RPO Dehradun	28	PSK Dehradun
12	RPO Delhi	29	PSK R.K Puram
		30	PSK Gurgaon
		31	PSK Herald House - ITO
		32	PSK Shalimar Place

Sl. No.	RPO Name	S. No. of PSKs	Name of Passport Seva Kendra (PSK)
13	RPO Ghaziabad	33	PSK Ghaziabad
14	RPO Guwahati	34	PSK Guwahati
		35	PSLK Aizawl
		36	PSLK Dimapur
		37	PSLK Imphal
		38	PSLK Itanagar
		39	PSLK Shillong
15	RPO Hyderabad	40	PSK Ameerpet
		41	PSK Begumpet
		42	PSK Nizamabad
		43	PSK Toli Chowki
		44	PSLK Karimnagar
16	RPO Jaipur	45	PSK Jaipur
		46	PSK Jodhpur
		47	PSK Sikar
17	RPO Jalandhar	48	PSK Hoshiarpur
		49	PSK Jalandhar-1
		50	PSK Jalandhar-2
18	RPO Jammu	51	PSK Jammu
19	RPO Kolkata	52	PSK Berhampore
		53	PSK Kolkata
		54	PSLK Agartala
		55	PSLK Gangtok
		56	PSLK Siliguri
20	RPO, Kota	57	PSLK Udaipur
21	RPO Kozhikode	58	PSK Kannur
		59	PSK Kozhikode
		60	PSK Malappuram II
		61	PSK Payyanur, Kannur
		62	PSK Vadakara, Kozhikode
22	RPO Lucknow	63	PSK Gorakhpur
		64	PSK Kanpur
		65	PSK Lucknow
		66	PSK Varanasi

Sl. No.	RPO Name	S. No. of PSKs	Name of Passport Seva Kendra (PSK)
23	RPO Madurai	67	PSK Madurai
		68	PSK Tirunelveli City
		69	PSK Andheri
24	RPO Mumbai	70	PSK Lower Parel
		71	PSK Malad
		72	PSK Nashik
		73	PSK Thane
25	RPO Nagpur	74	PSK Nagpur
26	RPO Panaji	75	PSK Panaji
27	RPO Patna	76	Darbhanga
		77	PSK Patna
28	RPO Pune	78	PSK Pune
		79	PSLK Solapur
29	RPO Raipur	80	PSK Raipur
30	RPO Ranchi	81	PSK Ranchi
31	RPO Shimla	82	PSK Shimla
32	RPO Srinagar	83	PSK Srinagar
33	RPO Surat	84	PSK Surat
34	RPO Tiruchirappalli	85	PSK Thanjavur
		86	PSK Tiruchirappalli
35	RPO Trivandrum	87	PSK Kollam
		88	PSK Neyyattinkara, Trivandrum
		89	PSK Vazhuthacaud, Trivandrum
36	RPO Vijayawada	90	PSK Tirupathi
		91	PSK Vijaywada
37	RPO Visakhapatnam	92	PSK Visakhapatnam
		93	PSLK Bhimavaram

Annexure VII

List of functional Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSK)

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
1	Port Blair	Andaman & Nicobar Island	Kolkata
2	Kadappa	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
3	Kurnool	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
4	Nellore	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
5	Anantpur	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
6	Chittoor	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
7	Machilipatnam (Gudivada)	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
8	Guntur	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
9	Ongole	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
10	Bapatla	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
11	Narasaraopet	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
12	Nandyal	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
13	Rajampet (Kodur)	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
14	Hindupur	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada
15	Rajamundry	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
16	Kakinada	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
17	Srikakulam	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
18	Amalapuram	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
19	Vizianagaram	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
20	Eluru	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam
21	Anakapalle (Yelamanchili)	Andhra Pradesh	Vishakhapatnam
22	Aruanchal East (Khonsa)	Arunachal Pradesh	Guwahati
23	Aruanchal East (Changlang)	Arunachal Pradesh	Guwahati
24	Silchar	Assam	Guwahati
25	Mangaldoi	Assam	Guwahati
26	Dibrugarh	Assam	Guwahati
27	Tezpur	Assam	Guwahati
28	Kokrajhar	Assam	Guwahati

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
29	Dibrugarh (Tinsukia)	Assam	Guwahati
30	Karbi Anglong	Assam	Guwahati
31	Dhubri	Assam	Guwahati
32	Dubri (Goalpara)	Assam	Guwahati
33	Lakhimpur (North Lakhimpur)	Assam	Guwahati
34	Nawgong	Assam	Guwahati
35	Barpeta	Assam	Guwahati
36	Jorhat	Assam	Guwahati
37	Kaliabor (Golaghat)	Assam	Guwahati
38	Karimganj	Assam	Guwahati
39	Muzaffarpur	Bihar	Patna
40	Purnea	Bihar	Patna
41	Bhagalpur	Bihar	Patna
42	Siwan	Bihar	Patna
43	Paschim Champaran (Bettiah)	Bihar	Patna
44	Gaya	Bihar	Patna
45	East Champaran (Motihari)	Bihar	Patna
46	Buxar	Bihar	Patna
47	Madhubani	Bihar	Patna
48	Saran (Chhapra)	Bihar	Patna
49	Samastipur	Bihar	Patna
50	Munger	Bihar	Patna
51	Navada	Bihar	Patna
52	Begusarai	Bihar	Patna
53	Nalanda	Bihar	Patna
54	Hajipur	Bihar	Patna
55	Arrah	Bihar	Patna
56	Jamui	Bihar	Patna
57	Madhepura(Saharsa)	Bihar	Patna
58	Sasaram	Bihar	Patna
59	Sitamarhi	Bihar	Patna
60	Araria(Forbesganj)	Bihar	Patna

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
61	Banka	Bihar	Patna
62	Jahanabad	Bihar	Patna
63	Pataliputra(Maner)	Bihar	Patna
64	Sheohar	Bihar	Patna
65	Ujiarpur(Dalsingh Sarai)	Bihar	Patna
66	Khagaria	Bihar	Patna
67	Katihar	Bihar	Patna
68	Karakat(Dalmia Nagar)	Bihar	Patna
69	Kishanganj	Bihar	Patna
70	Gopalganj	Bihar	Patna
71	Aurangabad	Bihar	Patna
72	Ekma	Bihar	Patna
73	Supaul	Bihar	Patna
74	Surguja	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
75	Rajnandgaon	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
76	Durg	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
77	Bilaspur	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
78	Janjgir-Champa	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
79	Raigarh	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
80	Korba	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
81	Kanker	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
82	Bastar	Chhattisgarh	Raipur
83	Dadar & Nagar Haveli (Silvasa)	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	Mumbai
84	Daman & Diu (Daman)	Daman	Mumbai
85	Yamuna Vihar	Delhi	Delhi
86	Janak Puri	Delhi	Delhi
87	East Delhi (Patparganj)	Delhi	Delhi
88	South Delhi (Nehru Place)	Delhi	Delhi
89	Saket (Mehrauli)	Delhi	Delhi
90	South Goa (Margao)	Goa	Panaji
91	Dahod	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
92	Banaskantha (Palanpur)	Gujarat	Ahmedabad

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
93	Kachchh (Bhuj)	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
94	Jamnagar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
95	Bhavnagar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
96	Anand	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
97	Kheda	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
98	Bharuch	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
99	Junagadh	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
100	Junagadh (Veraval)	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
101	Mehsana	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
102	Porbandar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
103	Amreli	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
104	Surendranagar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
105	Sabarkantha	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
106	Patan	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
107	Gandhinagar	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
108	Chhota Udaipur	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
109	Panchmahal(Godhra)	Gujarat	Ahmedabad
110	Navsari	Gujarat	Surat
111	Valsad	Gujarat	Surat
112	Bardoli	Gujarat	Surat
113	Rajpipla	Gujarat	Surat
114	Karnal	Haryana	Chandigarh
115	Hisar	Haryana	Chandigarh
116	Karnal (Panipat)	Haryana	Chandigarh
117	Ambala (Yamunanagar)	Haryana	Chandigarh
118	Kaithal	Haryana	Chandigarh
119	Bhiwani Mahendragarh	Haryana	Chandigarh
120	Sirsa	Haryana	Chandigarh
121	Faridabad	Haryana	Delhi
122	Bhiwani Mahendragarh (Narnaul)	Haryana	Delhi
123	Rohtak	Haryana	Delhi
124	Sonipat	Haryana	Delhi

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
125	Kangra (Palampur)	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
126	Hamirpur	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
127	Mandi	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
128	Mandi (Kullu)	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
129	Kangra	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
130	Hamirpur (Una)	Himachal Pradesh	Shimla
131	Udhampur	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu
132	Udhampur (Kathua)	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu
133	Jammu (Rajouri)	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu
134	Ladakh (Leh)	Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar
135	Anantnag	Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar
136	Baramulla	Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar
137	Jamshedpur	Jharkhand	Ranchi
138	Godda (Deoghar)	Jharkhand	Ranchi
139	Dhanbad (Bokaro)	Jharkhand	Ranchi
140	Dhanbad	Jharkhand	Ranchi
141	Dumka	Jharkhand	Ranchi
142	Hazaribagh	Jharkhand	Ranchi
143	Palamu (Medininagar)	Jharkhand	Ranchi
144	Giridih	Jharkhand	Ranchi
145	Lohardaga (Gumla)	Jharkhand	Ranchi
146	Kodarma(Jumri Tilaiya)	Jharkhand	Ranchi
147	Chatra(Shimaria)	Jharkhand	Ranchi
148	Khunti	Jharkhand	Ranchi
149	Rajmahal(Sahibganj)	Jharkhand	Ranchi
150	Singhbhum(Chaibasha)	Jharkhand	Ranchi
151	Godda	Jharkhand	Ranchi
152	Mysuru	Karnataka	Bengaluru
153	Belagavi	Karnataka	Bengaluru
154	Davangere	Karnataka	Bengaluru
155	Shivamogga	Karnataka	Bengaluru
156	Bellary	Karnataka	Bengaluru

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
157	Tumakuru	Karnataka	Bengaluru
158	Hassan	Karnataka	Bengaluru
159	Haveri (Gadag)	Karnataka	Bengaluru
160	Vijayapur	Karnataka	Bengaluru
161	Chikmagalur (Udupi)	Karnataka	Bengaluru
162	Bidar	Karnataka	Bengaluru
163	Raichur	Karnataka	Bengaluru
164	Koppal	Karnataka	Bengaluru
165	Kolar(Robertsonpet)	Karnataka	Bengaluru
166	Uttar Kannada(Ankola)	Karnataka	Bengaluru
167	Chitradurga	Karnataka	Bengaluru
168	Chamrajanagar	Karnataka	Bengaluru
169	Chikkodi	Karnataka	Bengaluru
170	Chikballapur	Karnataka	Bengaluru
171	Bangalore Rural (Channapatna)	Karnataka	Bengaluru
172	Bangalore North (Jalahalli)	Karnataka	Bengaluru
173	Mandya (Maddur)	Karnataka	Bengaluru
174	Bagalkot	Karnataka	Bengaluru
175	Mavalikkara (Chengannur)	Kerala	Cochin
176	Idukki (Kattappana)	Kerala	Cochin
177	Palakkad	Kerala	Cochin
178	Nenmara	Kerala	Cochin
179	Kasargod	Kerala	Kozhikode
180	Pathanamthitta	Kerala	Trivandrum
181	Attingal	Kerala	Trivandrum
182	Lakshadweep (Kavaratti)	Lakshadweep	Cochin
183	Vidisha	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
184	Satna	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
185	Jabalpur	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
186	Gwalior	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
187	Dewas	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
188	Balaghat	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
189	Chhindwara	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
190	Damoh	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
191	Ratlam	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
192	Hoshangabad	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
193	Sagar	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
194	Betul	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
195	Dhar	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
196	Khajuraho (Chhatarpur)	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
197	Tikamgarh	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
198	Rewa	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
199	Ujjain	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
200	Seoni	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
201	Guna	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
202	Mandsaur	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
203	shahdol	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
204	Khandwa	Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal
205	Alibaug	Maharashtra	Mumbai
206	Aurangabad	Maharashtra	Mumbai
207	Mumbai NE (Vikroli)	Maharashtra	Mumbai
208	Jalgaon	Maharashtra	Mumbai
209	Ratnagiri Sindhugurh (Rajapur)	Maharashtra	Mumbai
210	Raver(Bhusawal)	Maharashtra	Mumbai
211	Dhule	Maharashtra	Mumbai
212	Mumbai South-Central (Sion)	Maharashtra	Mumbai
213	Santa Cruz	Maharashtra	Mumbai
214	Bhiwandi	Maharashtra	Mumbai
215	Dombivli	Maharashtra	Mumbai
216	Vasai	Maharashtra	Mumbai
217	Nandurbar	Maharashtra	Mumbai
218	Wardha	Maharashtra	Nagpur
219	Chandrapur	Maharashtra	Nagpur
220	Amravati	Maharashtra	Nagpur

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
221	Akola	Maharashtra	Nagpur
222	Buldhana	Maharashtra	Nagpur
223	Yavatmal-Washim (Yavatmal)	Maharashtra	Nagpur
224	Hingoli	Maharashtra	Nagpur
225	Gadchiroli Chimur (Gadchiroli)	Maharashtra	Nagpur
226	Bhandara Gondiya (Bhandara)	Maharashtra	Nagpur
227	Ramtek(Katoal)	Maharashtra	Nagpur
228	Kolhapur	Maharashtra	Pune
229	Maval (Pimpri Chinchwad)	Maharashtra	Pune
230	Sangli	Maharashtra	Pune
231	Jalna	Maharashtra	Pune
232	Beed	Maharashtra	Pune
233	Ahmednagar	Maharashtra	Pune
234	Nanded	Maharashtra	Pune
235	Satara	Maharashtra	Pune
236	Solapur (Pandharpur)	Maharashtra	Pune
237	Baramati	Maharashtra	Pune
238	Latur	Maharashtra	Pune
239	Parbhani	Maharashtra	Pune
240	Shirdi(Srirampur)	Maharashtra	Pune
241	Shirur	Maharashtra	Pune
242	Osmanabad	Maharashtra	Pune
243	Madha	Maharashtra	Pune
244	Hatkanangle (Ichalkaranji)	Maharashtra	Pune
245	Navi Mumbai (Vashi)	Maharastra	Mumbai
246	Outer Manipur(Kakching)	Manipur	Guwahati
247	Tura	Meghalaya	Guwahati
248	Sundergarh (Rourkela)	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
249	Sambalpur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
250	Koraput	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
251	Balasore	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
252	Berhampur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
253	Mayurbhanj (Baripada)	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
254	Kalahandi (Bhawanipatna)	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
255	Aska	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
256	Bhadrak	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
257	Cuttack	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
258	Dhenkanal	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
259	Jajpur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
260	Keonjhar	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
261	Kandhamal (Phulbani)	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
262	Kendrapara	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
263	Bargarh	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
264	Bolangir	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
265	Jagatsinghpur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
266	Puri	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
267	Nabarangpur	Odisha	Bhubaneswar
268	Puducherry (Karaikal)	Puducherry	Tiruchirapalli
269	Ferozpur	Punjab	Amritsar
270	Bathinda	Punjab	Chandigarh
271	Patiala	Punjab	Chandigarh
272	SBS Nagar(Ropar)	Punjab	Chandigarh
273	Fatehgarh Sahib(Basi Pattana)	Punjab	Chandigarh
274	Sangrur(Malerkotla)	Punjab	Chandigarh
275	Faridkot (Moga)	Punjab	Jalandhar
276	Hoshiarpur (Phagwara)	Punjab	Jalandhar
277	Gurdaspur (Pathankot)	Punjab	Jalandhar
278	Kota	Rajasthan	Jaipur
279	Bikaner	Rajasthan	Jaipur
280	Jhunjhunu	Rajasthan	Jaipur
281	Barmer (Jaisalmer)	Rajasthan	Jaipur
282	Jhalawar Baran (Jhalawar)	Rajasthan	Jaipur
283	Nagaur	Rajasthan	Jaipur
284	Pali	Rajasthan	Jaipur

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
285	Churu	Rajasthan	Jaipur
286	Ganganagar (Hanumangarh)	Rajasthan	Jaipur
287	Sriganganagar	Rajasthan	Jaipur
288	Alwar	Rajasthan	Jaipur
289	Chittorgarh	Rajasthan	Jaipur
290	Barmer	Rajasthan	Jaipur
291	Ajmer	Rajasthan	Jaipur
292	Karauli (Dhaulpur)	Rajasthan	Jaipur
293	Banswara	Rajasthan	Jaipur
294	Bharatpur	Rajasthan	Jaipur
295	Jaipur Rural (Kotputli)	Rajasthan	Jaipur
296	Dausa	Rajasthan	Jaipur
297	Tonk-Sawai Madhopur (Sawai Madhopur)	Rajasthan	Jaipur
298	Bhilwara	Rajasthan	Jaipur
299	Rajsamand(Kankroli)	Rajasthan	Jaipur
300	Jalore(Sirohi)	Rajasthan	Jaipur
301	Pratapgarh	Rajasthan	Jaipur
302	Vellore	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
303	Cuddalore	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
304	Viluppuram	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
305	Tiruvannamalai	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
306	Arani	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
307	Arakkonam(Ranipet)	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
308	Cheennai North (Chennai GPO)	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
309	Dharmapuri	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
310	Kallakurichi	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
311	Kancheepuram	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
312	Tiruvallur	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
313	Chidambaram	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
314	Krishnagiri	Tamil Nadu	Chennai
315	Salem	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore
316	Nilgiris (Coonoor)	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
317	Erode	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore
318	Namakkal (Rasipuram)	Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore
319	Virudhunagar	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
320	Kanyakumari (Nagercoil)	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
321	Shivaganga (Devakottai)	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
322	Dindigul(Kodairoad)	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
323	Tenkasi(Rajpalyam)	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
324	Theni(Bodineyaknur)	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
325	Thoothukkudi	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
326	Ramanathapuram	Tamil Nadu	Madurai
327	Perambalur	Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli
328	Mayiladuthurai(Sirkali)	Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli
329	Nagapattinam (Thiruthuraipoondi)	Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli
330	Karur	Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli
331	Mehbubnagar	Telangana	Hyderabad
332	Warangal	Telangana	Hyderabad
333	Khammam	Telangana	Hyderabad
334	Medak (Siddipet)	Telangana	Hyderabad
335	Adilabad	Telangana	Hyderabad
336	Nalgonda	Telangana	Hyderabad
337	Medak	Telangana	Hyderabad
338	Bhongir	Telangana	Hyderabad
339	Mahabubabad	Telangana	Hyderabad
340	Zahirabad(Kamareddy)	Telangana	Hyderabad
341	Peddapalle(Mancherial)	Telangana	Hyderabad
342	Nagarkurnool(Wanaparthi)	Telangana	Hyderabad
343	Malkajgiri (Medchal)	Telangana	Hyderabad
344	Chevela(Vikarabad)	Telangana	Hyderabad
345	Dharamnagar	Tripura	Kolkata
346	Pilibhit	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
347	Moradabad	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
348	Bijnaur	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
349	Rampur	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
350	Badaun	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
351	Amroha	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
352	Shahjahanpur	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
353	Nagina	Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly
354	Meerut	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
355	Agra	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
356	Mathura (Vrindawan)	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
357	Bulandshahr	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
358	Aligarh	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
359	Saharanpur	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
360	Fatehpur Sikri(Achnera)	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
361	Hathras	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
362	Muzaffarnagar	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
363	Gautam Buddha Nagar(Noida)	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
364	Baghpat	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
365	Jhansi	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
366	Ghazipur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
367	Faizabad (Ayodhya)	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
368	Allahabad	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
369	Deoria	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
370	Unnao	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
371	Ballia	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
372	Sultanpur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
373	Pratapgarh	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
374	Azamgarh	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
375	Bahraich	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
376	Sitapur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
377	Gonda	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
378	Shrawasti (Balrampur)	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
379	Goshi (Mau)	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
380	Amethi	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
381	Rae Bareli	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
382	Jaunpur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
383	Mirzapur (Chunar)	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
384	Fatehpur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
385	Banda	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
386	Hamirpur	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
387	Bhadohi	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
388	Domariyaganj (Siddharth Nagar)	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
389	Misrikh	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
390	Ambedkar Nagar	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
391	Maharajganj	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
392	Kheri	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
393	Hardoi	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
394	Farukhabad	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
395	Etawah	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
396	Jalaun	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow
397	Almora	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
398	Naintal (Rudrapur)	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
399	Nainital (Kathgodam)	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
400	Nainital	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
401	Haridwar (Roorkee)	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
402	Garhwal (Srinagar)	Uttarakhand	Dehradun
403	Asansol	West Bengal	Kolkata
404	Raiganj (North Dinajpur)	West Bengal	Kolkata
405	Kolkata Uttar (Beadon Street)	West Bengal	Kolkata
406	Nadia (Krishnanagar)	West Bengal	Kolkata
407	Malda Dakshin (Makdumpur)	West Bengal	Kolkata
408	Bardhaman	West Bengal	Kolkata
409	Barrackpore	West Bengal	Kolkata
410	Hoogly (Chinsurah)	West Bengal	Kolkata
411	Balurghat	West Bengal	Kolkata
412	Medinipur (Kharagpur)	West Bengal	Kolkata

Sl. No.	Locations of POPSK	State/UT	Passport Office
413	Diamond Harbour	West Bengal	Kolkata
414	Birbhum (Rampurhat)	West Bengal	Kolkata
415	Jalpaiguri	West Bengal	Kolkata
416	Coochbehar	West Bengal	Kolkata
417	Alipurduar	West Bengal	Kolkata
418	Arambagh	West Bengal	Kolkata
419	Serampore	West Bengal	Kolkata
420	Jadavpur	West Bengal	Kolkata
421	Dum Dum	West Bengal	Kolkata
422	Bangaon	West Bengal	Kolkata
423	Tamluk	West Bengal	Kolkata
424	Kanthi	West Bengal	Kolkata
425	Howrah	West Bengal	Kolkata
426	Barasat (Ashok Nagar)	West Bengal	Kolkata
427	Ranaghat	West Bengal	Kolkata
428	Darjeeling	West Bengal	Kolkata
429	Bankura	West Bengal	Kolkata
430	Bardhaman Purba(Katwa)	West Bengal	Kolkata
431	Basirhat	West Bengal	Kolkata
432	Bolpur	West Bengal	Kolkata
433	Uluberia(Amta)	West Bengal	Kolkata
434	Bishnupur	West Bengal	Kolkata
435	Jangipur (Raghunathganj)	West Bengal	Kolkata
436	Purulia	West Bengal	Kolkata
437	Jhargram	West Bengal	Kolkata
438	Ghatal	West Bengal	Kolkata
439	Maldaha Uttar(Samsi)	West Bengal	Kolkata
440	Mathurapur(Kakdweep)	West Bengal	Kolkata
441	Jaynagar (Canning Ferri Ghat)	West Bengal	Kolkata
442	Murshidabad(Jiyaganj)	West Bengal	Kolkotta

Annexure VIII

Details of Incoming Visits by Heads of State / Heads of Government / Vice Presidents / Foreign Ministers and Equivalent to India in 2024

Sl. No.	Visit	Date
1.	Dr. José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique Mr. Petr Fiala, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of United Arab Emirates	08-10 Jan 2024 09-12 Jan 2024 09-11 Jan 2024
2.	Transit Visit of Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk, King of Bhutan	Jan 11-12, 2024
3.	Visit of Dennis Francis, President of United Nations General Assembly	Jan 22-26, 2024
4.	State Visit of Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic	Jan 25-26, 2024
5.	Visit of Biman Prasad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Strategic, Planning, National Development and Statistics of the Republic of Fiji	Feb 4-11, 2024
6.	Visit of Federal Councilor Dr. Ignazio Cassis, Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation	Feb 5, 2024
7.	Visit of Dr. Hasan Mahmud MP, Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	Feb 6-9, 2024
8.	Visit of Brigadier (ret'd) Mark Phillips, Prime Minister of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana	Feb 6-11, 2024
9.	Visit of Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, ASEAN Secretary General	Feb 11-15, 2024
10.	State Visit of Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic (Greece) and his spouse	Feb 20-23, 2024
11.	<u>RAISINA Dialogue 2024</u> 1. Mr. Igli Hasani, Minister for Europe & Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania 2. Mr. D. N Dhungyel, Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade of the Royal Government of Bhutan 3. Mr. Elmedin Konakovic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia & Herzegovina 4. Mr. Jan Lipavsky, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Czech Republic 5. Mr. Lars Lokke Rasmussen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Denmark 6. Mr. Margus Tsahkna, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia 7. Elna Valtonen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland 8. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana 9. Giorgos Gerapetritis, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece 10. Mr. Krisjanis Kariņš, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia 11. Dominique Hasler, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Education & Sport of Liechtenstein 12. Mr. Gabrielius Landsbergis, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania 13. Mr. Maneesh Gobin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius 14. Mr. N.P. Saud, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal 15. Ms. Hanke Bruins Slot, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Netherlands 16. Ms. Janaina Tewaney Mencomo, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama 17. Luminita Odobescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania 18. Juraj Blunar, Minister of Foreign & European Affairs of Slovak Republic 19. Tobias Billstrom, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden 20. January Yusuf Makamba, Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation of Tanzania	Feb 21-23, 2024

Sl. No.	Visit	Date
12.	Visit of Mr. Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary	Feb 21, 2024
13.	Visit of a delegation of United Nations Permanent Representatives (PRs)	Feb 25 – March 01, 2024
14.	Visit of Dr. Parnpree Bahiddha-Nukara, Deputy Prime Minister and Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand	Feb 25-28, 2024
15.	Visit of Mr. Bjarni Benediktsson, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iceland	March 10-12, 2024
16.	Visit of Mr. Winston Peters, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand	March 10-13, 2024
17.	Visit of Mr. Sergei Aleinik, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus	March 11-13, 2024
18.	Official Visit of Mr. Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan	March 14-18, 2024
19.	Private Visit of Mr. Tharman Shanmugaratnam, President of Singapore	March 24-30, 2024
20.	Visit of Mr. Dmytro Kuleba, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine	March 28-30, 2024
21.	Visit of Mr. Moosa Zameer, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives	May 08-10, 2024
22.	Ambassador Mr. Md. Golam Sarwar, Secretary General of SAARC	May 11-15, 2024
23.	Working Visit of Dr. Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago	May 15-18, 2024
24.	<u>Swearing-in Ceremony</u> Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, Former President of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Dr. Mohamed Muizzu, President of the Republic of Maldives Mr. Ahmed Afif, Vice President of the Republic of Seychelles Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Mr. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, Prime Minister of Nepal Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan	June 09, 2024
25.	Visit of Resident Head of Missions to Nalanda	June 19, 2024
26.	State Visit of Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Former Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	June 21-22, 2024
27.	Visit of U Than Swe, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar	June 26-27, 2024
28.	<u>BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers' Retreat</u> 1. Mr. Maris Sangiampongsa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand 2. DR. Muhammad Hasan Mahmud, M.P. Foreign Minister Of Bangladesh 3. Lyonpo D. N. Dhungyel, Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Royal Government of Bhutan 4. Mr. Than Swe, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar 5. Hon. Tharaka Balasuriya, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka 6. Ms. Sewa Lamsal, Foreign Secretary of Nepal 7. Amb. Indra Mani Pandey, Secretary General, BIMSTEC	July 12, 2024

Sl. No.	Visit	Date
29	Visit of Mr. Mariano Assanami Sabino, Deputy Prime Minister of Timor-Leste	July 20-27, 2024
30	Visit of Mr. Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan	July 22-24, 2024
31	Visit of Mr. David Lammy MP, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of UK	July 24-25, 2023
32	Visit of Prince Rahim Aga Khan and H.H. Prince Aly Muhammad Aga Khan	July 26-August 03, 2024.
33	State Visit of Pham Minh Chinh, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam	July 31-August 03, 2024
34	Visit of Dr. Denzil Douglas, Minister of Foreign Affairs Saint Kitts & Nevis (SKN)	August 04-09, 2024
35	Visit of Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal	August 18-22, 2024
36	State Visit of Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia	August 19-21, 2024
37	Visit of KAMIKAWA Yoko, Foreign Minister and KIHARA Minoru, Defence Minister of Japan for 2+2 Dialogue	August 19-21, 2024
38	Visit of H.E. Mr. Mauro Vieira, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federative Republic of Brazil	August 25-28, 2024
39	19th CII India Africa Business Conclave: Mohammad B.S Jallow, Vice President of Gambia Constantino Chiwenga and Kembo Mohadi, Vice President of Zimbabwe Jeremiah Kpan Koung, Vice President of Liberia Robert Hungley, Vice President of Mauritius Prosper Bazombanza, Vice President of Burundi Teodoro Nguema Obiang Mangue, Vice President of Equatorial Guinea	August 20-22, 2024
40	Visit of Mr. Alberto van Klaveren, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile	August 27-31, 2024
41	Visit of H.H. Sheikh Khaled Bin Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi	September 08-10, 2024
42	Visit of Dr. Andrew Holness ON, PC, MP, Prime Minister of Jamaica to India	September 30 – October 03, 2024
43	Visit of Ms. Diana Elena Mondino, Foreign Minister, International Trade and Worship of Argentine Republic	October 05-09, 2024
44	State visit of Dr. Mohamed Muizzu, President of the Republic of Maldives and First Lady Mrs. Sajidha Mohamed	October 06-10, 2024
45	Private Visit of Her Majesty The Queen Consort of the United Kingdom	October 11-17, 2024
46	Visit of Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bhutan	October 20-22, 2024
47	Official Visit of Mr. Olaf Scholz, Chancellor, Federal Republic of Germany	October 24-26, 2024
48	Visit of Ms Delcy Rodriguez, Vice President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	October 25-28, 2024

Sl. No.	Visit	Date
49	Visit of Roosevelt Skerit, Prime Minister of Commonwealth of Dominica	October 25-28, 2024
50	Transit visit of His Majesty King Willem- Alexander, Kingdom of Netherlands along with Royal Family Members	October 26, 2024&November 03, 2024
51	Private visit of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty The Queen Consort of the United Kingdom	October 27-30, 2024
52	Visit of Mr. Pedro Sanchez, Prime Minister of Spain accompanied by Spouse	October 28-30, 2024
53	Transit visit of Ms Delcy Rodriguez, Vice President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	October 30-31, 2024
54	Visit of Mr. Maris Sangiampongsa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand	October 31 – November 03, 2024
55	Visit of Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan to India	November 07, 2024
56	Visit of Mr Denis Manturov, First Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of the Russian Federation	November 10-12, 2024
57	Visit of Mr Md. Golam Sarwar, SAARC Secretary General	November 11-13, 2024
58	Visit of His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	November 12-13, 2024
59	Visit of Ambassadors/High Commissioners of ASEAN, BIMSTEC and Pacific Countries to Odisha	November 15-16, 2024
60	Visit of the Hon'ble Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan	November 24-26, 2024
61	Visit of Mr. Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait	December 03-04, 2024
62	Visit of His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan and Her Majesty the Queen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck	December 05-06, 2024
63	Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates	December 11-13, 2024
64	Mr. Paulo Rangel, Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of the Portuguese Republic	December 12-15, 2024
65	Visit of H.E. Anura Kumara Disanayaka, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka	December 15-17, 2024
66	Visit of H.E. Mr. Mihail Popșoi, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova	December 15-17, 2024
67	Visit of Hon'ble Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal	December 19-23, 2024
68	Hon. Dhananjay Ramful, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius	December 28, 2024
69	Visit of His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan	December 28-29, 2024

Annexure IX

Details of Outgoing Visits by President / Vice President / Prime Minister / EAM in 2024

Sl. No.	Country	Dates
President		
1.	Republic of Mauritius	11-13 March 2024
2.	Fiji, New Zealand and Timor-Leste	05-10 August 2024
3.	Algeria, Mauritania and Malawi	13-19 October 2024
Vice President		
1.	Islamic Republic of Iran	22 May 2024
Prime Minister		
1.	UAE and Qatar	13-15 February 2024
2.	Bhutan	22-23 March 2024
3.	Italy for G7 Summit	13-14 June 2024
4.	Russian Federation and the Republic of Austria	08-10 July 2024
5.	Poland and Ukraine	21-23 August 2024
6.	Brunei Darussalam and Singapore	03-05 September 2024
7.	United States of America	21-23 September 2024
8.	Lao PDR	10-11 October 2024
9.	Russia	22-23 October 2024
10.	Nigeria, Brazil and Guyana	16-21 November 2024
11.	Kuwait	21-22 December 2024
EAM		
1.	Nepal	04-05 January 2024
2.	Iran	14-15 January 2024
3.	Uganda and Nigeria	19-23 January 2024
4.	Australia	09-10 February 2024
5.	Republic of Korea and Japan	05-08 March 2024
6.	Singapore, Philippines and Malaysia	23-27 March 2024
7.	Sri Lanka	20 June 2024
8.	UAE	23 June 2024
9.	Qatar	30 June 2024
10.	Kazakhstan	04 July 2024
11.	Mauritius	16-17 July 2024

Sl. No.	Country	Dates
12.	Lao PDR and Japan	25-30 July 2024
13.	Maldives	09-11 August 2024
14.	Kuwait	18 August 2024
15.	Saudi Arabia, Germany and Switzerland	08 to 13 September 2024
16.	Sri Lanka	04 October 2024
17.	Pakistan	15-16 October 2024
18.	Australia and Singapore	03-07 November 2024
19.	United Arab Emirates	14 November 2024
20.	Italy	24-26 November 2024
21.	Qatar and Bahrain	06-09 December 2024
22.	The United States of America	25-29 December 2024

Annexure X

Virtual Summits / Events

Sl. No.	Subject	Date
1.	Launch of UPI services in Sri Lanka and Mauritius	13 – 14 February 2024
2.	Joint e-inauguration of various projects by India - Mauritius	29 February 2024
3.	Virtual Global South Summit	17 August 2024

Annexure XI

Credential Presentation by Foreign Heads of Mission during 01 January to 31 December 2024

Sl. No.	Country	Name of Ambassador / High Commissioner	Date of Credential Presentation
1.	Azerbaijan	H.E. Mr. Elchin Huseynli	05.01.2024
2.	Lesotho	H.E. Ms. Lebohng Valentine Mochaba	05.01.2024
3.	Zambia	H.E. Mr. Peray Patson Chanda	05.01.2024
4.	Sri Lanka	H.E. Ms. Kshenuka Senewiratne	05.01.2024
5.	Greece	H.E. Mrs. Aliko Koutsomitopoulou	05.01.2024
6.	Philippines	H.E. Josel F. Ignacio	27.03.2024
7.	Uzbekistan	H.E. Mr. Sardor Rustambaev	27.03.2024
8.	Belarus	H.E. Mr. Mikhail Kasko	27.03.2024
9.	Kenya	H.E. Mr. Peter Maina Munyiri	27.03.2024
10.	Georgia	H.E. Mr. Vakhtang Jaoshvili	27.03.2024
11.	Ecuador	H.E. Mr. Fernando Bucheli,	31.05.2024
12.	United Kingdom	H.E. Mrs. Lindy Elizabeth Cameron	31.05.2024
13.	Kuwait	H.E. Mr. Meshal Mustafa J. Alshemali	31.05.2024
14.	New Zealand	H.E. Mr. Patrick John Rata	31.05.2024
15.	Republic of Guinea	H.E. Mr. Alassane Conte	31.05.2024
16.	Fiji	H.E. Mr. Jagannath Sami	31.05.2024
17.	China	H.E. Mr. Xu Feihong	31.05.2024
18.	Spain	H.E. Mr. Juan Antonio March Pujol	11.07.2024
19.	Argentina	H.E. Mr. Mariano Agustin Caucino	11.07.2024
20.	Solomon Islands	H.E. Mr. Anthony Makabo	06.09.2024
21.	Nauru	H.E. Mr. Kane Amandus	06.09.2024
22.	Italy	H.E. Mr. Antonio Enrico Bartoli	06.09.2024
23.	Iceland	H.E. Mr. Benedikt Hoskuldsson	06.09.2024
24.	Israel	H.E. Mr. Reuven Azar	06.09.2024
25.	Switzerland	H.E. Mrs. Maya Tissafi	18.11.2024
26.	Jordan	H.E. Mr. Yousef Mustafa Ali Abdel Ghani	18.11.2024
27.	Papua New Guinea	H.E. Mr. Vincent Sumale	18.11.2024
28.	South Africa	H.E. Prof. Anil Sooklal	18.11.2024
29.	Myanmar	H.E. Mr. Zaw Oo	18.11.2024
30.	Egypt	H. E. Mr. Kamel Zayed Galal	18.11.2024
31.	Ethiopia	H. E. Mr. Fesseha Shawel Gebre	25.11.2024

Sl. No.	Country	Name of Ambassador / High Commissioner	Date of Credential Presentation
32.	Japan	H.E. Mr. Keiichi Ono	25.11.2024
33.	Republic of Korea	H.E. Mr. Lee Seong Ho	25.11.2024
34.	Romania	H.E. Mrs. Sena Latif	25.11.2024
35.	Grenada** (At Grenada)	H.E. Mr. Pasupuleti Gita Kishore Kumar, High Commissioner	25.11.2024
36.	South Sudan	H.E. Mr. Lumumba Maklele Nyajok	11.07.2024
37.	Zimbabwe	H.E. Ms. Stella Nkomo	11.07.2024

Annexure XII

Final Departure Status of Foreign Heads of Missions from 01 January to 31 December 2024

Sl. No.	Mission	Name of Head of Mission	Date of Final Departure
1.	The Republic of Nauru	Ms. Marlene Inemwin Moses	19.01.2024
2.	Cuba	Mr. Alejandro Simancas Marin	19.01.2024
3.	Republic of Belarus	Mr. Andrei Rzheussky	25.01.2024
4.	Argentine Republic	Mr. Hugo Javier Gobbi	10.02.2024
5.	Fiji	Mr. Kamlesh Shashi Prakash	14.02.2024
6.	South Sudan	Ms. Victoria Samuel Aru	21.02.2024
7.	Zimbabwe	Dr. G. M. Chilpare	06.03.2024
8.	British High Commission	Mr. Alexander Wykeham Ellis	28.03.2024
9.	New Zealand High Commission	Mr. David Gregory Pine	15.04.2024
10.	Saudi Arabia	Mr. Saleh Eid H. Al-Husseini	25.05.2024
11.	Panama	Mrs. Yasiel Alines Burillo Rivera	14.06.2024
12.	Spain	Mr. Jose Maria Ridao Dominguez	08.06.2024
13.	Italy	Mr. Vincenzo de Luca	20.06.2024
14.	Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	Mr. Mohamed Salam Jameel A. F. El-Kayed	18.07.2024
15.	Iceland	Mr. Gudni Bragason	20.07.2024
16.	State of Israel	Mr. Naor Itzhak Gilon	19.08.2024
17.	Switzerland	Dr. Ralf Heckner	27.08.2024
18.	Japan	Mr. Suzuki Hiroshi	29.09.2024
19.	Arab Republic of Egypt	Mr. Wael Mohamed Awad Hamed	28.09.2024
20.	Myanmar	Mr. Moe Kyaw Aung	04.10.2024
21.	Kingdom of Cambodia	Mr. Koy Kuong	05.10.2024
22.	Maldives	Mr. Ibrahim Shaheeb	15.10.2024
23.	Canada	Mr. Stewart Ross Wheeler	18.10.2024
24.	Canada	Mr. Patrick Hebert	18.10.2024
25.	Romania	Mrs. Daniela Mariana Sezonov Tane	25.10.2024
26.	Ghana	Mr. Kwaku Asomah-Cheremeh	23.10.2024
27.	Palestine	Mr. Adnan M. A. Abualhayjaa	28.10.2024
28.	Korea	Mr. Chang Jae Bok	30.10.2024
29.	Sri Lanka	Ms. Kshenuka Senewiratne	20.12.2024
30.	Bangladesh	Mr. Md. Mustafizur Rahman	28.12.2024

Annexure XIII

Cadre strength at Headquarters and Missions abroad during 2024-25

Sl. No.	Cadre/Post	Posts at Hqrs.	Posts at Missions	Total
1.	Grade I	6	29	35
2.	Grade II	11	51	62
3.	Grade III	52	151	203
4.	Grade IV	61	170	231
5.	Junior Admin. Grade/Senior Scale	116	338	454
6.	(i) Junior Scale	20	25	45
	(ii) Probationers Reserve	76		76
	(iii) Leave Reserve	15		15
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	19		19
	(v) Training Reserve	7		7
	Sub Total I	383	764	1147
	IFS(B)			
7.	(i) Grade I	118	126	244
	(ii) Deputation Reserve	6		6
8.	(i) Integrated Grades II & III	365	277	642
	(ii) Leave Reserve	30		30
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	16		16
	(iv) Training Reserve	25		25
9.	(i) Grade IV	220	626	846
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60		60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	54		54
10.	(i) Grade V/VI	173	84	257
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60		60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	14		14
11.	(i) Grade II of Cypher Cadre	32	76	108
	(ii) Leave Reserve	5		5
12.	(i) Stenographer's Cadre	523	608	1131
	(ii) Leave Reserve	47		47
	(iii) Training Reserve (Hindi)	10		10
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	12		12
13.	Interpreter's Cadre	9	26	35
14.	L&T Cadre	20	3	23
	Sub Total II	1799	1826	3625
	Grand Total (Subtotal I+II)	2182	2590	4772

List of Abbreviations

A

AALCO	Asia Africa Legal Consultative Organization
ABAS	Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS
ACB	Afghan Cricket Board
ACD	Asia Cooperation Development
ACMECS	Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy
ACMP	Agreement on the use of Chattogram and Mongla Ports for Movement of Goods to and from India
ACTREC	Advance Centre for Training, Research and Education in Cancer
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADMM +	ASEAN Defence Minister Meeting Plus
AED	Asia Economic Dialogue
AERB	Atomic Energy Regulatory Board
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AFINDEX	Africa-India Exercise
AFMS	Armed Forces Medical Services
AG	Australia Group
AIAD	Italian Industries Federation for Aerospace, Defence, and Security
AIIA	All India Institute of Ayurveda
AIIMS	All India Institute of Medical Sciences
AIWC	Australia India Water Centre
AKAM	Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
AMEXCID	Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation
AMR	Advanced Modular Reactors
ANAMAR	National Authority for Maritime Affairs, Dominican Republic
ANASTU	Afghan National Agricultural Science and Technical University
ANF	Aids to Navigation Fund
ANRF	Anusandhan National Research Foundation
APA	Asian Parliamentary Assembly
APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
APPU	Asia-Pacific Postal Union
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ADMM-Plus	ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting

ASS	Africa Scholarship Scheme
ASSOCHAM	The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry
AU	African Union
AVP	Academic Visitors Programme

B

BADP	Border Area Development Programme
BARC	Bhabha Atomic Research Centre
BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement	Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement
BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction
BCCI	Board of Control for Cricket in India
BCGSI	Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues
BDAF	Bangladesh Armed Forces
BFDA	Bhutan Food and Drug Authority
BHEL	Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
Bol	Bureau of Immigration
BMWK	German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action
BPDB	Bangladesh Power Development Board
BPWC	BIMSTEC Permanent Working Committee
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
BTWC	Biological & Toxin Weapons Convention

C

CAG	Comptroller and Auditor General of India
CSC	Common Services Centres
CAMM	Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility
CAR	Central African Republic
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBD COP16	Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity
CBIC	Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs
CBPR	Cross-Border Payments and Reporting
CCCB	Command & Control Compatibility Board
CCIT	Convention on Countering of International Terrorism

CCUS	Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage
CD	Cyber Diplomacy
CD	Conference on Disarmament
CDF	Chief of Defence Staff
CDRI	Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure
CDSCO	Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation
CEC	Central Election Commission
CEDT	Centre for Entrepreneurship Training and Development
CEIT	Center of Excellence in IT
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CEPA	Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
CERN	The European Organization for Nuclear Research
CFM	Moçâmedes Railway Company
CGIMA	Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities
CHG	Council of Heads of Government
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CJI	Chief Justice of India
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry
CIM	Minister of Commerce and Industry
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CIRDAP	Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific
CNES	National Centre for Space Studies (French National Space Agency)
CNT	National Transition Council
CoAS	Chief of Army Staff
COFCOR-CARICOM	Council for Foreign and Community Relations- Caribbean Community
COM	Council of Ministers
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CORSIA	Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation
CP	Colombo Process
CPF	Counter Proliferation Financing
CPC	Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference
CSC	Colombo Security Conclave
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies

CSIR	Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
CSIR-NIO	CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography
CSLM	Commerce Secretary Level Meeting
CT	Counter Terrorism
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention

D

DAE	Department of Atomic Energy
DBT	Department of Biotechnology
DCoC-JA	Djibouti Code of Conduct – Jeddah Amendment
DDP	Department of Defence Production
DEA	Department of Economic Affairs
DEWG	Digital Economy Working Group
DGFT	Directorate General of Foreign Trade
DGRIS	Director General for International Relations and Strategy
DIA	Document Issuing Authorities
DICSEP	Dubrovnik International conference on the Sanskrit Epics and Puranas
DIGEMAPS	Directorate General of Medicines, Food and Health Products
DPA	Development Partnership Administration
DPI	Digital Public Infrastructure
DPIIT	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
DPM	Deputy Prime Minister
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRDO	Defence Research and Development Organisation
DTAA	Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty
DV Day	Distinguished Visitors Day
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
DWG	Defence Working Group

E

EAM	External Affairs Minister
EAS	East Asia Summit
EAS FMM	EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting
EAS SOM	EAS Senior Officials' Meeting

EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECA	Export Credit Agency
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ECR	Emigration Check Required
ECTA	Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement
EDB	Economic Development Board
EEC	Eastern Economic Corridor
EEPC	Engineering Export Promotion Council
EFD	Economic and Financial Dialogue
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EG&IT	e-Governance and Information Technology
EMTCT	Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission
EOI	Embassy of India
EP&W	Emigration Policy and Welfare
EPCC	Executive Programme on Cultural Cooperation
EPCES	Export Promotion Council for EOUs and SEZs
EPCH	Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts
EPCP	Electric Propulsion Capability Partnership
ESC	Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council
ESG	Executive Steering Group
ESP	Economic Stimulus Programme
EU	European Union
EV	Electric Vehicle
e-VBAB	e-Vidya Bharti Arogya Bharti
EWG	Employment Working Group

F

FAB	Brazilian Air Force
FASF	French Air and Space Force
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FCBD	Finance and Central Bank Deputies
FCMNO	Constancia Mangue Nsue Okomo Foundation
FCSA	Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement
FE	Foreign Employers
FET	Female Engagement Team

FFFC	Friendly Foreign Countries
FfD4	Financing for Development
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry
FIEO	Federation of Indian Export Organizations
FLS	Final Location Survey
FLS	Foundational Learning Survey
FMCBG	Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors
FMD	Financial Markets Dialogue
FMFD	Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue
FMM	France Media Monde
FOCs	Foreign Office Consultations
FoGG	Friends of the Gulf of Guinea
FPG	Fukuoka Prefectural Government
FSB	Financial Stability Board
FSSAI	Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
FTF	Foreign Terrorists Fighters
FYP	Five Year Plan

G

GASCC	Global Air and Space Chiefs' Conference
GBA	Global Biofuels Alliance
GCNEP	Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration
GCTF	Global Counter Terrorism Forum
GCTS	Global Counter Terrorism Strategy
GGE	Group of Governmental Experts
GGE on LAWS	Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems
GMC	Goa Maritime Conclave
GMCOS	Gandhi Mandela Centre of Specialization
GlobE Network	Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities
GMCP	Greater Male Connectivity Project
GOFVOT	Group of Friends of Victims of Terrorism
GoG	Gulf of Guinea
Gol-UNSCDF	Government of India-United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

GPAI	Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence
GPFI	Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion
GSDP	Green and Sustainable Development
GASCC	Global Air and Space Chiefs' Conference
GSDR	Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable
GSL	Goa Shipyard Ltd
GSS	Global Standardization Symposium

H

HAA	High Altitude Area
HADR	Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
HAL	Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
HCCH	Hague Conference on Private International Law
HCI	High Commission of India
HCoC	Hague Code of Conduct
HCSS	Hague Centre for Strategic Studies
HICDP	High Impact Community Development Project
HJC	High-Joint Commission
HLCG	High Level Core Group
HLDMM	India-EU High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Mobility
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
HLW	High-Level-Week
HRVP	High Representative and Vice President

I

IA	Implementation Agreement
IABC	India-Argentina Business Council
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IAF	Indian Armed Forces
IAFS	India-Africa Forum Summit
IATC	India Africa Trade Council
IBC	International Buddhist Confederation
IBCA	International Big Cat Alliance
IBF	India-Bhutan Foundation
IBSA	India, Brazil, South Africa

ICA	International Cooperative Alliance
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
iCET	Critical and Emerging Technologies
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICMR	Indian Council for Medical Research
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
ICP	Immigration Check Posts
ICPRCP	Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its country of Origin or Restitution in case of illegal appropriation
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICWA	Indian Council of World Affairs
ICWF	Indian Community Welfare Fund
IDY	International Day of Yoga
IEA	International Energy Agency
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IESAA	Indo-European Science and Arts Association
IETO	India Economic Trade Organization
IEW	India Energy Week
IFC-IOR	Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region
IFCPAR	Indo-French Center for Promotion of Advanced Research
IFREMER	French Institute for Ocean Science
IFTM	International and French Travel Market
IGBF	Indo-German Business Forum
IGC	Intergovernmental Consultations
IGN	Intergovernmental Negotiations
IGSTC	Indo-German Science and Technology Centre
IIDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IIFT	Indian Institute of Foreign Trade
IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
IITM	Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILC	International Law Commission
ILO	International Labour Organization

IMD	Indian Meteorological Department
IMEC	India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IMRC	India-Mexico Research Consortium
IMT	India-Myanmar-Thailand
IMT Trilateral Highway	India-Myanmar-Thailand (IMT) Trilateral Highway
IMT-GT	Indonesia–Malaysia–Thailand Growth Triangle
IMWG	Inter-Ministerial Working Group
INAC	International Arts and Crafts
INB	Intergovernmental Negotiating Body
INDUS X	India-US Defence Acceleration Ecosystem
INI-CET	Institute of National Importance Combined Entrance Test
INS	Indian Naval Ship
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IORA	Indian Ocean Rim Association
IPACC	Indo-Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference
IPAMS	Indo-Pacific Management Seminar
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPEF	Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity
IPEN	Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy
IPHEX LATAM	International Exhibition for Pharma And Healthcare Latin America
IPMDA	Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness
IPOI	Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
IRIGC-M&MTC	India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military and Military Technical Cooperation
IRIGC-TEC	India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific & Cultural Cooperation
ISA	International Solar Alliance
ISB	Indian School of Business
ISPS	International Ship and Port Facility Security
ISRO	Indian Space Research Organisation
ITA	India Taipei Association

ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation
ITER	International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor
ITPO	India Trade Promotion Organisation
ITRA	Institute of Agronomic Research
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IUSSTD	India-US Strategic Trade Dialogue
IYM	International Year of Millets

J

JASDF	Japan Air Self-Defence Force
JCEC	Joint Committee on Economic Cooperation
JCIFM	Joint Committee on Inundation and Flood Management
JDCC	Joint Defence Cooperation Committee
JDP	Joint Development Plan
JEC	Japanese Endowed Courses
JETRO	Japan External Trade Relation Organisation
JIM	Japan-India Institutes for Manufacturing
JIMEX	Japan-India Maritime Exercise
JIPMER	Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research
JMC	Joint Ministerial Commission
JNPP	Jaitapur Nuclear Power Project
JPoA	Joint Plan of Action
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
JSDF	Japan Self Defence Force
JSTC	Joint Science and Technology Committee
JSW School of Law	Jigme Singye Wangchuck (JSW) School of Law
JTG	Joint Technology Group
JWG	Joint Working Group
JWG-CT	Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism
JWG-CTTC	Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime

K

KIP	Know India Programme
KMTTP	Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project

L

LAAD	Latin American Defence and Security Exhibition
LAC	Line of Actual Control
L & T	Larsen & Toubro
LCS	Land Customs Stations
LCS	Local Currency Settlement
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LiFE	Lifestyle for Environment
LIGO	Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory
LLDCs	Landlocked Developing Countries
LMA	Labour Mobility Agreements
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
LNG	Liquified Natural Gas
LOC	Line of Credit
LoC	Line of Control
LTAG	Long-Term Aspirational Goals

M

MAHSR	Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail
MAF	Mongolian Armed Forces
MAITRI	Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific
MANAGE	National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management
MAPL	Motihari-Amlekhgunj Petroleum Pipeline Project
MARCOS	Marine Commando Force
MATES	Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-Professionals Scheme
MBC	Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation
MCG	Military Cooperation Group
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MDTI	Ministerial Dialogue on Trade and Investment
Medvac	Medical Evacuation
MFFLI	Merck Foundation First Ladies Initiative
MGC	Mekong Ganga Cooperation
MIDC	Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation
MIFC	Mauritius International Financial Centre
MIFCO	Maldives Industrial Fisheries Company

MIIM	Make in India Mittelstand
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MLAT	Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Treaties
MMP	Migration and Mobility Partnerships
MMPA	Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement
MNDF	Maldives National Defence Force
MNRE	Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOCA	Ministry of Civil Aviation
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MPS	Maldives Police Service
MPI	Migration Policy Institute
MPX	Maritime Partnership Exercise
MRCC	Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre
MSC	Munich Security Conference
MSDTF	Mauritius Sanatan Dharma Temples Federation
MSDE	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
MSC	Military Sealift Command
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MTCR	Missile Technology Control Regime
MVR	Maldivian Rufiyaa

N

NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NASRDA	National Space Research and Development Agency
NASSCOM	National Association of Software and Services Companies
NEA	Nepal Electricity Authority
NCB	Narcotics Control Bureau
NCC	National Cadet Corps
NCGG	National Centre for Good Governance
NCMRWF	National Center for Medium Range Weather Forecast
NCQG	New Collective Quantified Goal
NDC	National Defence College
NDDB	National Dairy Development Board

NDLD	New Delhi G20 Leaders' Declaration
NDV	Nuclear Disarmament Verification
NHPC	National Hydroelectric Power Corporation
NIBC	Nigeria-India Business Council
NIBSS	Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System
NiMET	Nigerian Meteorological Agency
NIMHANS	National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences
NIOT	National Institute of Ocean Technology
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
NOAA	National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Agency
NPCI	National Payments Corporation of India
NRI	Non-Resident Indians
NSA	National Security Advisor
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
NSIL	New Space India Limited
NSF	National Science Foundation
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NVVN	NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Ltd.

O

OCI	Overseas Citizens of India
ODOP	One District, One Product
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEWG	Open Ended Working Group
OFA	One Future Alliance
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
ONR	Office of Naval Research
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OPCW	Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
ORP	Oil Refinery Project
OSOWOG	One Sun, One World, One Grid
OUSD (R&E)	Office of the US Under Secretary of Defence for Research & Engineering
OVL	ONGC Videsh Ltd

P

PAC	Public Accounts Committee
PAMED	Sustainable Livelihoods Improvement Programme
PASSEX	Passing Exercise
PB	Prasar Bharati
PBBY	Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana
PBC	Peacebuilding Commission
PBD	Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas
PBSA	Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards
PKVY	Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojna
PCA	Permanent Court of Arbitration
PCFD	Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats
PCTD	Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora
PDAC	Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada
PDCTO	Principal Deputy Chief Technology Officer
PDNSA	Principal Deputy National Security Advisor
PDOT	Pre-Departure Orientation Training
PGA	President of General Assembly
PGE	Protector General of Emigrants
PGII	Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment
PGIMER	Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research
PHARMEXCIL	Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India
PHDCCI	PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry
PHPA	Punatsangchhu Hydroelectric Project Authority
PIC	Pacific Island Countries
PIO	Persons of Indian Origin
PMBJP	Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana
PMI	Permanent Mission of India
POE	Protector of Emigrants
POPSK	Post Office Passport Seva Kendra
PPPR	Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response
PPR	Preliminary Project Report
PR	Permanent Representative
PRR	Prosecutions, Rehabilitation and Reintegration

PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSK	Passport Seva Kendra
PSLK	Passport Seva Laghu Kendra
PSP	Passport Seva Project
PTA	Project Tied Assistance
PQIS	Phyto Quarantine Inspection Services

Q

QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
QIF	Quad Infrastructure Fellowships
QIP	Quick Impact Project
QFMM	Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting
QUIN	Quad Investors Network

R

RA	Recruiting Agents
RATS	Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure
RCs	Registration Certificate
ReCAAP	Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia
RETAP	Renewable Energy Technology Action Platform
RIAT	Royal International Air Tattoo
RIIDC	Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation
RIKEN	Institute of Physical and Chemical Research
RITES Ltd.	Rail India Technical and Economic Service Limited
ROC	Republic of Congo
RPO	Regional Passport Office
RSDP	Rakhine State Development Programme
RVNL	Rail Vikas Nigam Limited

S

SADC	South African Development Cooperation
SAGAR	Security and Growth for All in the Region
SAMHITA	South Asian Manuscript Histories and Textual Archive
SATTE	South Asia's Travel and Tourism Exchange
SCEP	Strategic Clean Energy Partnership

SCF	Standby Credit Facility
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SCO CHS	SCO Council of Heads of State
SCO RATS	Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SCOMET	Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment and Technologies
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
US SEALs	US Navy Sea, Air, and Land Teams
SELF	Senior Enlisted Leaders Forum
SELM	Space Economy Leaders Meeting
SERB	Science and Engineering Research Board
SFS	Self-Financing Scheme
SGOS	Sectoral Group of Secretaries
SIBS	Sweden-India Business Council
SIDS	Small Island and Developing States
SICA	Central American Integration System
SII	Study in India
SIPCOT	State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu
SIPO	Singapore-India Partnership Office
SJVL	Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam
SLIDA	Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration
SMR	Small Modular Reactors
SOMS	Straits of Malacca and Singapore
SOPECAM	Cameroon Press and Publishing Company
SOSA	Security of Supply Arrangement
SoTF	Summit of the Future
SPDC	Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children
SPEED	Shared Prosperity through Enhanced Engagements in Defence
SPTC	Seychelles Public Transport Corporation
SSA	Social Security Agreements
SSIFS	Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service
SSW	Specified Skilled Workers
STAR-C	Solar Technology Application Resource Centre
STINT	Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education
STP	Sao Tome and Principe

T

TAWG	Thematic Area Working Groups
TCC	Troop Contributing Countries
TDC	Trilateral Development Cooperation
TEC	Technical and Economic Cooperation
TECC	Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre
TEPA	Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement
TIFF	Tashkent International Film Festival
TIFF	Toronto International Film Festival
TIR	Transport International Routier
ToT	Training of Trainers
TPF	Trade Policy Forum
TRISHNA	Thermal Infra-Red Imaging Satellite for High-resolution Natural Resource Assessment
TSI	Technology Security Initiative
TSUL	Tashkent State University of Law
TT&C	Telemetry, Tracking & Command
TTC	Trade and Technology Council

U

UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNAIDS	UN Programme on HIV/AIDS Program
UNAOC	United Nations Alliance of Civilisations
UNCCI	UNCITRAL National Coordination Committee India
UNCCT	United Nations Counter Terrorism Center
UNCITRAL	United Nations Commission on International Trade Law
UNCOPUOS	United Nations Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
UNDC	United Nations Disarmament Commission
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

UNIDROIT	International Institute for the Unification of Private Law
UNOCT	United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNRCCA	United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
UPI	Unified Payments Interface
UPITS	Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show
UPU	Universal Postal Union
US DoD DIU	US Department of Defence, Defence Innovation Unit
USMSC	US Military Sealift Command
USTR	US Trade Representative
UTF	Uthuru Thila Falhu

V

VBSM	Virtual Buyer Seller Meet
VDPA	Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VoGSS	Voice of Global South Summit
VUCL	Vidhyut Utpadan Company Limited

W

WA	Wassenaar Arrangement
WFP	World Food Program
WGIHR	Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations
WHC	World Hindi Conference
WHO	World Health Organization
WMCC	Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WNBR	World Network of Biosphere Reserves
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
WTSA	World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly

X

XPD	External Publicity & Public Diplomacy

Y

YA	Yaoundé Architecture
YEP	Youth Exchange Programme
YPS	Young Professionals Schemes

Development Assistance and HADR



Operation Sadbhav



Friendship Project - Myanmar



Jan Aushadi Kendra - Mauritius



Medical Consignment - Fiji



Disaster Relief - Kenya

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