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Introduction

The main thrust of India's foreign policy has been to establish its rightful place in the emerging world order. Pragmatism and the pursuit of national interest without compromising on basic principles have been the guiding tenets of India's foreign policy. In a rapidly changing world order, foreign policy must be flexible enough to optimally respond to new challenges and opportunities. India's foreign policy cannot be seen in isolation and must be viewed as an integral part of the larger effort of building the nation's capabilities through economic development, strengthening social well-being and protecting India's sovereignty, territorial integrity and security not only in its defence and economic aspects but in the widest sense of the term. It also visualizes international peace, stability and security as being essentially in conjunction with its own national interest.

The year witnessed several bilateral and multilateral exchanges that took place at the highest levels between India and the rest of the world. Given the backdrop of the changing international scenario, India's foreign policy is directed towards the realization of the following objectives:

- To protect India's core national interests and concerns in a rapidly changing international environment by fostering support and understanding in the international community.
- To preserve the autonomy of the decision making process and to play a pioneering role in the establishment of a stable, prosperous and secure global order.
- To strengthen the international campaign against terrorism which is a global threat.
- To give greater focus and priority to economic diplomacy with the objective of promoting foreign trade and investment, ensuring equitable transfer of technology and strengthening India's energy security.
- To work closely with P-5 countries and to build strategic ties with the other major powers and leading developing countries.
- To intensify and strengthen ties with neighbors through mutually beneficial cooperation and by building a climate of confidence and trust along with the acknowledgement of each other's legitimate concerns. The realization of SAARC as a more vibrant regional forum leading to an economic integration of the region is a desired goal.
- To ensure that cross-border terrorism is brought to an end and the entire infrastructure of terrorism operating from Pakistan is dismantled.
- To strengthen cooperation, friendship and trust with countries of India's extended neighborhood based on civilisational and historical ties as well as strong contemporary relevance. India and the countries of this region stand together to promote economic development and durable peace.
- To further the gains from India's Look East Policy and aspire for substantive progress in several areas of common interest to India and ASEAN.
- To constructively engage other members of multilateral institutions and organisations to generate common approaches to contemporary challenges relating to economic well-being and development.
- To leverage trends towards regionalism and sub-regionalism for promoting economic growth and all-round development with active coordination and assistance to organisations like BIMST-EC and the Mekong Ganga Cooperation.
- To continue to work closely with international bodies like the UN, NAM, the Commonwealth and regional groupings like the EU and G-20 for furthering India's interests in the international arena.
- To reform and restructure the UN Security Council and espouse multipolarity in a world order that respects the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention.
- To promote a more equitable equation between the developed and the developing world in the political, economic and technological domains.
- To work towards the goal of global nuclear disarmament within a time bound framework.
- To closely interact with the Indian Diaspora on a continuing basis in order to strengthen their bonds with India and to recognize their pivotal role in India's international relations.

The conduct of India's foreign policy is based on a holistic assessment that encompasses all the above objectives, and also imparts a greater dynamism to its foreign policy. The increasing pace of bilateral and regional engagements at the highest levels are an ample testimony to the pragmatism and pro-active approach it seeks to epitomize. India's foreign policy is aimed at a vision for the future, a vision that seeks to establish India's deserved place in the international arena.



Highlights of the Year

Pro-active Engagement with Neighbours

- The signing of an agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) at the 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad. The historic Summit also saw the signing of the Social Charter and the conclusion of an Additional Protocol to the SAARC Convention on Terrorism. The Islamabad Declaration emphasizes the awakening of South Asia to the benefits of regionalism and coming together with a joint economic and social agenda to effectively help in the economic integration of the seven countries.
- Achieving normalization of relations with Pakistan, with significant CBM's to strengthen the process of a composite dialogue that would eventually lead to the peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues.
- For the first time in India-China relations, signing of a Joint Declaration that confirms the commitment of the two countries to work more closely on issues of common concern. Both the governments have appointed Special Representatives for working out a time bound settlement of the boundary issue.
- Military action initiated by the Royal Bhutanese Government at India's request, to flush out and destroy all the militant camps operating from Bhutanese soil that were engaged in insurgency in our North-East.
- Establishment of an Institutional Dialogue on key issues relating to border management with Bangladesh at the security forces level to prevent illegal immigration at the border.
- Signing of the BIMST-EC Framework Agreement for Free Trade Area. This would be a major step towards greater economic linkages in Asia and a bridge connecting South Asia with South East Asia.

- The 3rd Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Ministerial Meeting emphasized the need to augment India's physical and cultural connectivity with the region. A project for the construction of a 1360 km long Trilateral Highway from Moreh in India via Bagan in Myanmar to Mae Sot in Thailand is being undertaken.

Diversified Global Diplomatic Interests

- India was a special invitee at the G-8 'Enlarged Dialogue' at Evian, France where India emphasized that the Dialogue should serve as a useful forum of communication at the highest level between the developed and the developing world.
- Initiation of a Strategic Dialogue with the US on 'Quartet Issues' with special focus on civilian nuclear activities, high-tech trade involving dual use technologies, civilian space programme and missile defence.
- The first ever State Visit by an Israeli Head of State, Mr. Ariel Sharon that saw the culmination of major agreements between the two countries. Indo-Israeli Defence Cooperation also included the signing of an agreement on the supply of Phalcon airborne early warning systems to India.
- Indian diplomacy's concrete and unique initiative to engage with eight oil and mineral rich Western African countries under an institutionalized mechanism of Techno-Economic Approach for Africa-India (TEAM-9). This saw the unilateral pledging by India of US\$ 500 million for bilateral and regional projects in economic and social sectors.
- The first ever visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Tajikistan that saw the signing of a Joint Declaration of Friendship and Cooperation and an economic package of US\$ 40 million to Tajikistan.

- One of the most active players in reconstruction work in Afghanistan, India has extended an aid package of US\$ 400 million along with the refurbishing of hospitals and providing health care services, as well as a major project involving linking of roads.
- The 2nd India-ASEAN Summit at Bali witnessed a consolidation of relations with Southeast Asia and identification of cooperation in core areas.
- The 4th India-EU Summit at New Delhi identified areas for greater cooperation between India and Europe in several key issues.

Economic Diplomacy

- India's vision to promote South Asia as an integrated economic region saw the culmination of the agreement on SAFTA, and the acceptance of a proposed South Asian Economic Union and a Common Currency by 2015.
- The finalization of the Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation between India and ASEAN that recognises South East Asia as India's natural trading frontier.
- The signing of the New Delhi Plan of Action at the first ever meeting of the Trilateral Commission of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum with a vision to promote South-South cooperation as well as trilateral cooperation, in accordance with the objectives set forth in the Brasilia Declaration.
- The establishment of a Liberalised Trade Regime (LTR) with Sri Lanka under which India has also unilaterally extended a US\$ 100 million line of credit.
- The conclusion of a Framework Agreement for establishing a Free Trade Area with Thailand, and the commencement of discussions for a Free Trade Area with Bangladesh.

International Security and Combating Terrorism

- India's insistence on bringing stability and normalcy in Iraq under the aegis of the United Nations and an emphasis on preserving the territorial integrity of Iraq.
- Signing of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) with ASEAN during the Bali Summit demonstrating India's strong determination to establish peace and security in the South East Asian region.
- Active participation in eleven out of the fifteen ongoing UN Peace Keeping Operations around the world.
- A series of successful extraditions in the last one year and the signing of bilateral extradition treaties with many other countries.
- A pro-active engagement in Central Asia both in terms of defence cooperation and energy security.
- The signing of the Additional Protocol to the SAARC Convention on Terrorism and similar such Conventions in various multilateral fora to curb the threat of terrorism.

Engaging with the Diaspora

- The successful celebration of the second Pravasi Bharatiya Divas with over 2000 delegates from more than 61 countries.
- The granting of dual citizenship to Persons of Indian Origin from 16 countries including the US, UK, Australia, Canada, France, which allow dual citizenship as per their respective laws.
- Educational facilities for the children of Indian workers in the Gulf and South

East Asia by reservation of a third of the 15% supernumerary seats in educational institutes in India. Further, children of NRIs in Gulf would not be required to pay the higher fees normally paid by NRIs.

- The introduction of a Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana to provide insurance to workers in the Gulf.
- The announcement of establishing a Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi.
- The recognition of twelve outstanding eminent people of Indian origin by conferment of the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards to them.

India and the UN

- An active participation in the open meetings of the Security Council on key issues such as the situation in West Asia, Afghanistan, Iraq as well as on thematic issues such as threats to international peace and international security.
- India welcomed the unanimous adoption of Resolution 1511 as a positive step towards the restoration of sovereignty to the Iraqi people, although we noted that the Resolution lacked specificity regarding the timing of the transfer.
- At the 58th Session of the First Committee of UNGA, in recognition of the widely shared concern of the international community about the heightened dangers posed by the risk of terrorists getting access to weapons of mass destruction, India's resolution on "Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction", was adopted unanimously.
- India's election to the Commission on Human Rights for the period 2004-06 was a vindication of its long-standing

and multifaceted contribution to human rights within the UN system.

Modernisation of Administration and Organisation

- The computerization of passport issuance process (including issuance of Machine-printed Machine readable passports) in all Passport Offices throughout the country.
- A proposal to introduce a more secure and tamper proof 'global standards passport' is under implementation.
- The opening up of new missions and posts as a part of our ongoing initiative to increase India's diplomatic presence in every capital of the world. This included the opening of a Consulate General of India (CGI) in Birgunj, Nepal, thereby increasing the number of Indian Missions/Posts abroad to 162.
- The reorganization of some of the Territorial Divisions at the Headquarters for effective implementation of Government's foreign policy priorities and concerns.
- The issuance of External Affairs Minister's Monthly letter to Heads of Missions and Posts, along with a Monthly Web Newsletter of the Ministry, with a common link for all Missions and Posts.
- The first ever Cadre Review of Indian Foreign Service Branch-B(IFS(B)) has been completed since the inception of the Service in 1956. This would provide much needed relief to various IFS(B) cadres from stagnation in their respective grades.
- The Fourth Cadre Review of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) is also in an advanced stage of completion.

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Synopsis

Bhutan and India share extensive and mutually beneficial bilateral relations. There is free movement of people and goods between the two countries, and the Indian Rupee is legal tender in Bhutan. 90% of Bhutan's global trade is with India. India has played a pivotal role in the socio-economic development of Bhutan. Their first two Five Year Plans during 1961-66 and 1966-71 were financed entirely by India. India's contribution to Bhutan's development budget during 1961 to 2002 is close to 30%. Indian assistance to Bhutan's ongoing Ninth Five Year Plan is continuing. India has already created over 400MW of generation capacity in Bhutan that is also catering to the needs of India. The Tala mega project of 1020MW capacity will come on stream in early 2006, and will export power to India. India has signed an agreement with Bhutan in September 2003 to prepare the Detailed Project Report (DPR) of Punatsangchuk Hydroelectric Project with a capacity of 900MW. M/s Water & Power Consultants of India have commenced work on the DPR. Bhutan is making significant strides in the devolution and decentralisation of authority to the grass roots level. On 15 December 2003, Royal Government of Bhutan launched its operations against Indian insurgent groups, which had taken refuge in Bhutan. Thirty camps of the militants were destroyed in this operation.

India and Nepal share extensive bilateral relations. An open border of 1860kms between the two countries facilitates free movement of goods and people. Indian Rupee is a legal tender in Nepal. Over 62% of Nepal's global trade is with India, and nearly half of the Foreign Direct Investment in Nepal originates from India. India is building an optical fibre cable along the Nepalese Terai, which will bring significant improvement in our bilateral communications. The National Hydro Power Corporation of India on a Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis, has taken up the 300MW upper Karnali hydroelectric project. India has also agreed to prepare the Detailed Project Report on the 600 MW Burhi Gandaki for possible

implementation in the future. Nepal has assured India that it will not allow its territory to be used for activities inimical to India's interests. Nepal has been a victim of Maoist insurgency for the last seven years. India has condemned the Maoist violence and continues to extend assistance for the strengthening of the Nepalese security forces. India has noted developments, including announcement of a ceasefire in January 2003, and believes that the conflict should be resolved through a dialogue based on national consensus and should involve all political parties.

India has close ties with its eastern and southern neighbours, Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. All these countries are of strategic importance to India and share cultural and ethnic legacies with us. India has focused on strengthening its relations with these countries through economic cooperation. This includes grant of unilateral tariff concessions to Bangladesh, collaborative projects including implementation of infrastructure development projects in Myanmar, cooperation in health, education and tourism sectors in Maldives, and close economic integration with Sri Lanka.

Interaction with China, which is based on the principles of Panchsheel, mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns and equality, has developed due to a mutual agreement to qualitatively enhance bilateral interaction while simultaneously addressing differences through dialogue and peaceful means. The commitment to build a broad-based and cooperative relationship with China was further emphasised in 2003-04 following the Prime Minister's visit to China from 22-27 June 2003.

Apart from Prime Minister, other high level visits to China included that of the Speaker of Lok Sabha, the Raksha Mantri and External Affairs Minister. Minister for Commerce and Industry also visited China for the inauguration of the 'Made in India' Show organized jointly by the Embassy of India and CII. High-level visits from China included those of the Chairman of the

Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee (CPPCC), Jia Qinglin, and Politburo Member, He Guoqiang. A Dialogue on Policy Planning and annual meetings at the Foreign Minister level were added this year to the framework of structured interaction with China. Interaction with China in diverse sectors, including defence, bilateral trade and economic cooperation progressed during the year.

India continued with its effort to develop a relationship of mutual trust, friendship and cooperation with Pakistan. In keeping with this spirit, in April 2003, once again a hand of friendship was extended to Pakistan. Following this, there were several significant developments, including restoration of relations at the level of High Commissioners, restoration of communication and transport links, and a virtual explosion in people to people contacts between the two countries. At the same time it was made clear to Pakistan that sustainability of the process required an end to cross border terrorism.

In the Joint Press Statement issued on 6 January 2004, President Musharraf reassured Prime Minister Vajpayee that he will not permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner. The two sides agreed to commence the process of the Composite Dialogue. Subsequently, during Joint Secretary and Foreign Secretary level talks in February 2004, the two sides agreed to a schedule of meetings including eight subjects under the Composite Dialogue.

A ceasefire along the International Border, Line of Control, and the Actual Ground Position Line in Jammu and Kashmir, which is being observed since November 25, 2003 has continued to hold. Though there has been some decline in cross border infiltration, Pakistan is yet to take credible steps to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism.

India remains committed to build upon the confidence that has been generated by recent developments in our bilateral relations. However, in order to take forward and

sustain the dialogue process, violence, terrorism and hostility must be prevented.

India-Afghanistan ties continued to expand and strengthen during 2003-04. There were regular bilateral exchanges, including the state visit of President Hamid Karzai in March 2003. The government has made substantial contribution to Afghanistan's reconstruction effort, which includes a wide range of humanitarian, financial and project assistance. India's present commitment adds up to US\$ 400 million, including 1 million tonnes of wheat as Food Assistance. Of the US\$100 million financial assistance, US\$ 85 million has already been operationalised.

India also continued to participate in various international efforts aimed at addressing political and reconstruction issues in Afghanistan. Although the Afghan government faces many challenges, the foremost being a threat to its internal security, developments in Afghanistan since the Bonn Agreement of December 2001 can be assessed as being positive.

Following the visit of President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami to India in January 2003, India and Iran agreed to impart a strategic character to their relationship on the basis of the vision contained in the New Delhi Declaration. Regular high-level exchanges, strategic dialogue and institutional linkages between the two countries have led to enhanced mutual understanding between the two countries. Fields of energy, transit, trade and economy and science and technology are among the focused areas of bilateral cooperation.

The 12th SAARC Summit held at Islamabad from 4-6 January 2004 was a milestone in regional cooperation. Three important Agreements were signed at the Summit: the SAARC Social Charter, the Additional Protocol on Terrorism and the Framework Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA).

India continued to pursue closer relations with South East Asia in line with the 'Look East' policy. Regular exchange of high-level visits and interactions at regional and international fora helped in imparting added

dynamism to India's relations with these countries. Prime Minister visited Thailand from 8-12 October 2003 following his visit to Bali, Indonesia, where he attended the Second India-ASEAN Summit. Prime Minister of Singapore, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and Prime Minister of Laos visited India during the year. The initiatives taken by India at the Second India-ASEAN Summit confirmed its commitment to forge closer links at the regional level. As far as the Pacific region is concerned, following India's admission as a dialogue partner of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), India participated for the first time in the Post Forum Dialogue Meetings with the PIF in Wellington in August 2003.

This year saw progress in bilateral relations between India and Japan, in pursuance of India's continuing efforts to operationalise the "India-Japan Global Partnership in the 21st Century" agreed to between the two Prime Ministers in August 2000. Apart from various high-level visits, including those of the Japanese Foreign Minister and Minister of State for Defence, and India's National Security Advisor and Minister for Disinvestment, Communications & IT, two rounds of Foreign Office Consultations were held as well as the second round of the India-Japan Comprehensive Security Dialogue. The first Indian IT exhibition was held in Japan in June, and various events were organised to mark the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Indo-Japanese Association, which has a long history of promoting exchanges between India and Japan.

On 10 December 2003, India and Republic of Korea (ROK) celebrated the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Bilateral relations also progressed during 2003-04, including the 4th India-ROK Joint Trade Committee Meeting co-chaired by the Indian Minister for Commerce and Industry, the second meeting of the India-ROK Joint Commission at the Foreign Ministers level, and other high-level visits and functional exchanges.

Bilateral relations with Democratic People's

Republic of Korea (DPRK) continued on an even key, including commemorative activities to mark the 30th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and DPRK. Foreign Office Consultations were held and the Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) between the two countries for the period 2003-2006 was renewed.

Various high-level visits, including that of Minister of State for External Affairs to Mongolia, and that of the Mongolian Prime Minister and Defence Minister to India, served to give new impetus to India's relationship with Mongolia in 2003-04.

Prime Minister's visit to Tajikistan in November 2003 was the first such high level visit to independent Tajikistan. In September 2003, Prime Minister visited Turkey, the earlier such visit being in 1988. The President of Kyrgyzstan visited India in November 2003. These visits are witness to India's commitment and engagement in the region. A number of other visits at political, business and cultural levels were exchanged to accelerate the momentum of India's relationship. India is now connected by air links with Turkey, and with each of the Central Asian states. All the Central Asian states also have diplomatic missions in New Delhi now. Trade relations as also people-to-people contacts have shown a steady progress during the period.

The Gulf region constitutes an important area in the geo-strategic matrix of India since it meets sixty percent of India's oil requirements and has a 3.5 million strong Indian Diaspora contributing to our foreign exchange reserve through their remittances. The political dialogue with Gulf Cooperation Council, initiated in September 2003 at Foreign Ministers' level, and the GCC-India Industrial Conference held in Mumbai in February 2004 with the participation of members from all the six GCC countries go a long way in further strengthening India's long standing relations with the region.

India's engagement with the West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region got further

consolidated by several visits exchanged at Summit and other levels. India received President of Djibouti and Prime Minister of Israel. Similarly, the Indian President and Prime Minister paid State Visits to Sudan and Syria respectively. In addition, ministerial delegations were received from Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Israel, Sudan and Palestine. Trade and economic interchanges also continued to grow.

As part of the renewed 'Focus Africa' policy, Ministry took fresh initiatives to strengthen the existing links between India and sub-Saharan African countries. There was special focus on strengthening high-level exchanges between the sub-Saharan African countries and India. Heads of State/Government from a large number of African countries including Zambia, Mauritius, Namibia, Mozambique, Lesotho, South Africa, Senegal and Rwanda paid successful visits to India. Joint Commission Meetings at Ministerial Level were held with countries such as Mozambique, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Seychelles. Meetings at Permanent Secretary level were also held. The Vice President of India paid a State visit to Seychelles. These visits helped get a better understanding of the position of these countries on issues such as India's candidature to the permanent membership of the expanded UN Security Council, cross border terrorism, and Jammu and Kashmir. They also helped to strengthen economic and commercial links with African countries. In order to foster links with the fast emerging regional organizations in Africa, Memoranda of Understanding for Cooperation were signed between India and regional organizations such as Southern African Development Community (SADC), Common Market for East and Southern African and East African Community. As part of its traditional technical and humanitarian assistance to Africa, the Africa Division made arrangements for donation of nearly 100,000 tonnes of food aid to African countries which had been adversely affected by drought. This is the first time ever that such a large quantity of food aid was shipped to African countries in a single calendar year.

In addition, action was initiated to donate anti-HIV/AIDS drugs to African countries severely affected by the scourge of AIDS. This is expected to promote Indian exports of pharmaceuticals to African countries.

India's engagement with the countries in Western Europe continued to be broad-based and intensive. Bilateral political and economic interaction was marked by an unprecedented number of exchanges of visits, demonstrating a mutual desire to consolidate a dynamic, multi-faceted relationship with the European Union and the individual countries in Western Europe. Regular exchange of views on the challenges facing India and the European Union, and dialogue with key strategic partners in Western Europe, against the backdrop of current regional and international developments, led to a better appreciation of India's legitimate concerns and, at the same time, provided an opportunity to re-focus, strengthen and re-vitalize bilateral ties.

India's strategic partnership and our multi-dimensional cooperation with Russia continued to be consolidated during the year 2003-04. Prime Minister's visit to Russia in May and November 2003 gave a fresh impetus to friendly bilateral relations. The system of summit-level meetings has provided us with an annual platform to discuss international and regional issues and to review the state of bilateral relations. These summit meetings are supported by political and official level meetings which cover the entire gamut of our bilateral relationship. India has one of the largest cooperation programmes on S&T with Russia. There is a wide-ranging energy cooperation programme. The contract for the acquisition of the aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov was signed during the visit of the Russian Defence Minister to India in January 2004.

Bilateral ties with Central and Eastern European countries were strengthened in the past year, especially in the spheres of economy, science, technology, culture and defence. The President's visit to Bulgaria in October 2003 reinforced our bilateral ties.

Visits by Heads of State/Heads of Government from Poland, Hungary, Armenia and Romania during the year helped to consolidate our bilateral relations and embark on new areas of functional cooperation.

As committed by their respective leaders since their Summit Meeting of 9 November 2001, India and the United States remained deeply engaged in 2003 to qualitatively transform their bilateral relations in recognition of India's status as an emerging world power and of the many common strategic interests that the two countries share in Asia and beyond. The two countries constructively engaged across a full spectrum of issues: combating international terrorism, peacekeeping, defence, strategic issues, science and technology, health, trade, space, energy and environment. The most visible symbol of this bilateral engagement is the high frequency of bilateral visits at political and official levels, and the existence of Bilateral Dialogue Architecture, now comprising more than 15 institutional dialogues. The Prime Minister met President Bush in New York on 24 September 2003 and briefly at St. Petersburg on 31 May 2003. The Deputy Prime Minister visited the United States in June 2003 when he also met President Bush. Other high-level exchanges included visits by the National Security Adviser to the United States in May 2003 (which included a brief meeting with President Bush) and by US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage in May 2003.

During the year, significant progress in bilateral relations between India and the US occurred in the realm of our bilateral strategic dialogue on the "Quartet Issues" comprising cooperation in civilian space programme, civilian nuclear programme, trade in "dual use" high-technology and missile defence. During their meeting in New York in September 2002, the Prime Minister and President Bush agreed to explore cooperation opportunities in these areas. In this context, the two sides have established a High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG), the first that the United States has

with any country. This Group met in Washington DC in July 2003 and in New Delhi in November 2003. During the HTCG meetings when the two sides agreed to take appropriate regulatory and promotional measures to stimulate India-US high-technology commerce, including trade in dual-use goods and technologies. An important milestone was crossed on 12-13 January 2004, when the leaders of the two countries issued, in their respective capitals, a joint statement that describes the next steps in the India - United States strategic partnership. These steps include an expansion of bilateral cooperation the "Quartet Issues".

An important element emerging in this bilateral engagement with US has been cooperation on combating international terrorism. On 16 October 2003, the United States declared Dawood Ibrahim as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. The designation recognizes Dawood Ibrahim's underworld and terrorist connections, his efforts to destabilise India, his involvement in the 1993 Mumbai bombings and his support to LeT. This subsequently led to the inclusion of his name in the United Nations listing as well.

The United States conveyed its appreciation of India's peace initiative towards Pakistan. While expressing hope for normalization of relations and eventual resumption of the India-Pakistan dialogue, the United States maintains that it is for the two countries to resolve all outstanding issues bilaterally. The United States recognises that cross-border terrorism continues, and has repeatedly stated that it continues to press President Musharraf to end infiltration and take action to dismantle terrorist camps.

India and the United States also continued their discussions on issues of regional and international interest, including the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan. United States expressed its understanding of India's position while reiterating that India remained an important strategic partner for the United States. The two countries also maintained their dialogue on developments

in Asia and beyond, and on multilateral issues of mutual concern.

A process of re-engagement supported by both countries marked relations between India and Canada. Canada identified India, together with China, Mexico and Brazil, as one of four countries offering new opportunities for productive partnerships, as well as one of three countries in Asia, along with China and Japan, for developing close ties. The highlight of the year was the visit of then Canadian Prime Minister, Jean Chrétien, from 24-25 October 2003. A Joint Statement was released on "Partners for the 21st Century" outlining the vision of the Prime Ministers of both countries to strengthen government, commercial and civil society linkages between India and Canada. This was preceded by the visit of the Canadian Foreign Minister Bill Graham on 13 October 2003. Visits from Canada sought to establish an expanded interface in the field of industry, information and emerging technologies and agriculture and to broaden the scope of cooperation to the level of State Governments in India. The traditional Throne Speech by the Governor General of Canada, Mrs. Adrienne Clarkson on 2 February 2004 reiterated greater focus on "Newly Emerging Economic Giants as China, India and Brazil". The Canadian Minister of State for New and Emerging Markets, Mr. Gar Knutson also visited India from 25-30 January 2004 in keeping with this priority area of focus.

India urged the international community to focus its attention on the threat posed by the linkages between weapons of mass destruction and terrorism and re-introduced its resolution, which was first tabled in 2002, on the subject in the UN. The resolution was adopted by consensus, reflecting the widespread concern of the global community. India continued to call for verifiable, non-discriminatory and universal nuclear disarmament. India's stand on issues related to disarmament and international security in various multilateral and regional forums was premised on India's national security interests and the nation's tradition

of close engagement with the international community. Harmonisation of India's national imperatives and security obligations with international concerns on non-proliferation and disarmament also progressed steadily through bilateral, regional and multilateral dialogues on strategic issues.

The First Committee of the UNGA adopted by consensus the Resolution moved by India on the threat posed by the linkage between weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. India assumed the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) from 1 January to 14 February 2003 on the basis of rotation among the 66 members of the CD.

Last year was a particularly difficult one for the UN because of the Iraq issue and the unilateral military action taken by the US. The very role and relevance of the UN came under increased scrutiny. The unprecedented attack on the UN office in Iraq highlighted the need to focus on the threats and challenges facing the international community and the role of the UN in this regard. To address these issues, the UN Secretary General set up a High Level Panel on Global Security, Threats and Reform of the International System, to recommend, inter alia, the changes necessary to ensure effective collective action and to review the functioning of the principal organs of the United Nations.

India continued to play an active role in UN debates on major issues. As a major troop contributor, India continued to participate in UN Peace Keeping Operations. Prime Minister Vajpayee led the India delegation to the 58th session of the UN General Assembly, and inter alia, stressed the necessity for reform and restructuring of the UN. While emphasizing the need for evolving suitable decision-making mechanisms by the UN Security Council to ensure better representation of the collective will of the international community, the Prime Minister strongly supported the UN Secretary General's call for the reform of the institutions and processes of the United Nations and the urgency for such a reform.

India continued to play a significant and constructive role in the UN activities in economic, social and developmental areas. India actively participated in the debates on environment and sustainable development, Convention against Corruption, humanitarian issues and human rights issues. Terrorism, Afghanistan, Middle East Peace Process, conflicts in Africa, were some of the other issues that remained in the forefront.

During the year under review, India continued its active role in advancing the legitimate interests of developing countries in various international organizations and multilateral, regional and sub-regional groupings. India also intensified its interaction with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN); Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand-Economic Cooperation (BIMST-EC), which now also includes Bhutan and Nepal as full members; Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) initiative; Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC); and Community of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

The year was marked by a number of successes in multilateral economic diplomacy, such as, the Framework Agreement for Comprehensive Economic Cooperation signed by the leaders of the ASEAN and India at the Second India-ASEAN Summit in Bali on 8 October 2003. The Framework Agreement envisages the establishment of an India-ASEAN Regional Trade and Investment Area, which includes a Free Trade Area in goods, services and investment. Negotiations on the Free Trade Area in goods have commenced and are to be completed by June 2005. For trade in services and investments, the negotiations on the respective agreements are to commence in 2005 and be concluded by 2007.

During the India-ASEAN Summit meeting in Bali, Prime Minister proposed an India-ASEAN motor car rally, the setting up of vocational / entrepreneurship development centres in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV countries), and developing an India-ASEAN Vision 2020 document.

Similarly, in BIMST-EC, the high point of cooperation was the signing of the Framework Agreement for the BIMST-EC FTA in Phuket on 8 February 2004 by all member countries except Bangladesh, which is also expected to join the Agreement in the near future.

HMT (International) has completed delivery of all the machines, spare parts and supplies to the project site for revival of Nigeria Machine Tool (NMT) in Nigeria (Osogbo) as a G-15 project. Actual installation and on-the-job training programmes will be undertaken as soon as NMT provides local inputs. The project is likely to be completed by December 2004, funded through the grant by India of US\$5 million from India. Another project for setting up a toxicology laboratory at the University of Kingston, Jamaica, is currently under implementation.

Efforts to improve physical connectivity between India and Southeast Asia are also underway. Under the MGC, the establishment of a rail link between New Delhi and Hanoi has been mooted. As a first step, the Rail India Technical & Economic Services (RITES) Ltd. has been assigned to undertake the pre-feasibility study of laying the missing link of about 315 km between Jiribam (India) and Kalay (Myanmar) and upgrading the existing railway section in Myanmar from Kalay to Mandalay. India has also offered to undertake a feasibility study on Dawei Deep Sea Port in Myanmar and the road linkage between the Port and Kanchanaburi in Thailand.

Ministry of External Affairs attaches great importance to economic diplomacy in this age of globalization to protect and promote its economic and commercial interests. It hence works actively with the Indian business and chambers in this context. The Ministry has started organizing a number of events and activities to actively seek foreign investment into India. The Ministry is projecting among global investors, businessmen, leaders, and opinion makers the image of the new India, which is becoming an emerging economic power.

During the year, the Policy Planning and

Research Division continued its interaction with several academic and non-governmental organizations, and provided financial assistance to academic bodies and organizations for holding seminars and undertaking research studies on matters of foreign policy. It prepared the Annual Report of the Ministry; the External Affairs Minister's monthly letter covering the broad spectrum of India's foreign relations to Heads of Missions/Head of Posts; and also the Monthly Summary for the Cabinet. It also handled work related to examination of maps depicting India's external boundaries in coordination with Survey of India, work related to old records management. It also revived the MEA-JNU Joint Annual Seminar and organized a Seminar on 'India and Emerging Asia'. To support research, the Ministry's Library has modern information technology equipment and rich resource materials, with over one hundred thousand books and a large collection of maps, microfilms and official documents.

The External Publicity Division continued its task of projecting India and its viewpoint on major issues of foreign policy concern. The Spokesperson held regular press briefings for Indian and foreign media. The Ministry's new website (meaindia.nic.in), updated daily, was launched. Information showcasing India was disseminated through films, documentaries, publications, books and the Ministry's flagship monthly magazine "India Perspectives". Media arrangements were made for incoming and outgoing visits at the level of President, Vice President, Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister. The Division also organized visits to India for several foreign media personnel and maintained regular interaction with Delhi-based foreign press corps.

The Protocol Division remained fully occupied with numerous incoming and outgoing VVIP visits, conferences, credential ceremonies and other multifarious functions. Activities of Protocol Division contributed to India's enhanced international image and profile. Special efforts were made to streamline protocol norms and standards.

The Ministry continued its efforts to provide user-friendly and efficient services in the 30 passport offices in India, as well as in the consular wings of the Missions and Posts abroad. Total number of services including fresh passports and miscellaneous services rendered by the passport offices in the country during 2003 stood at 3.28 million from 3.01 million in 2002, an increase of 9%. A new passport office was opened at Surat in August 2003, increasing the number of passport offices in the country to thirty.

With a view to decentralize issuance of passports, District passport Cells (DPCs) have been opened in a large number of districts in several states. This scheme, which was introduced in 2002, accounted for almost 10% of the applications, submitted in 2003. The figures are expected to increase in the coming years, as there are plans to open more DPCs. All the thirty-passport offices are fully computerised. The project of scanning of passport application files and their retention in electronic form to facilitate easy storage and retrieval of information is already over in most of the RPOs. Machine writing of Passports is taking place in all Passport offices. Training courses were organised for the officers and staff of Central Passport Organisation. All Missions/Posts continuously endeavoured to meet the consular needs of overseas Indians, resolve their consular problems and ameliorate the conditions of Indian workers in the Gulf countries.

A major initiative undertaken to engage with the Indian Diaspora was the organization of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in New Delhi from 9-11 January 2003. Over 1900 overseas Indians from 61 countries participated in the celebrations. The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was inaugurated by the Prime Minister. In his inaugural address, the Prime Minister announced Government's decision to permit dual citizenship to the Persons of Indian Origin living in certain countries. The 'Pravasi Bharatiya Samman' Awards were conferred for the first time by the Prime Minister on 9 January 2003 on ten prominent persons of the overseas Indian community in recognition of their valuable

contribution in promoting the honour and prestige of India and in fostering the interests of overseas Indians.

The Bill on Dual Citizenship was passed in the Parliament in December 2003. The Second Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held in New Delhi on 9-11 January 2004. Over 1300 delegates from 61 countries participated in the event, and twelve eminent People of Indian Origin (PIOs) were awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman. Prime Minister announced setting up of a Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi and reservation of seats for children of NRIs and PIOs in Educational Institutions.

Smooth and efficient working conditions at the Headquarters and Indian Missions/Posts abroad remained the prime objective of the Ministry. As part of e-governance, several measures including development of a personnel information system, have been taken up. The revised Financial Powers of Government of India's Representatives Abroad was brought out on a CD-ROM for easy referencing. The number of Indian Missions/Posts have increased to 162, consequent upon the decision of the Government to establish a Consulate General of India at Birgunj (Nepal). The first ever Cadre Review of Indian Foreign Service Branch-B(IFS(B)) has been completed since its inception in 1956. This would provide much-needed relief to various IFS(B) cadre from stagnation in their respective grades. The Fourth Cadre Review of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) is also in an advanced stage of completion.

The Coordination Division administers the self-financing scheme for admission of foreign students in selected professional courses in India. This Division is also the nodal point of the Ministry for all work relating to Parliament, and for the clearance of foreign tours of ministers and legislators of the Union and State Government, and Government officials. This Division also handles clearance for holding international conferences and international sports events in India; participation by Indian sports persons in overseas events; as well as diplomatic clearance for all non-scheduled

flights. Observance of Anti-Terrorism Day, Sadbhavana Diwas and Quami Ekta Week/Diwas and the processing of recommendations for the grant of Padma Awards were undertaken.

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) continued in its endeavour to train foreign diplomats, apart from training of IFS Probationers and other Ministry of External Affairs officials. Three Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats, an 'Advanced Course on Asia for Foreign Diplomats' and three separate 'Special Courses' for Diplomats from Afghanistan, Lao PDR and Iraq were conducted. FSI has also initiated an inter/intranet-based virtual campus for a mid-career training programme. FSI has also signed MoUs for cooperation with Foreign Service Institutes of Palestine, Canada and Uzbekistan.

The signing of an Agreement between India and Mauritius on 21 November 2003, during the visit of the Mauritian Prime Minister to India, on the establishment of World Hindi Secretariat at Port Louis, was another milestone in India's endeavour to promote and propagate Hindi. Hindi teachers were appointed in 28 Missions/Posts abroad to teach Hindi to the children of Embassy and other officials. Computers in the Ministry and in Missions abroad have been made bilingual to equip them to issue bilingual documents, such as bilateral treaties, MoUs, Credentials, Speeches of President and Prime Minister. The Annual Report of the Ministry and replies to Parliament Questions were also issued bilingually. The Seventh World Hindi Conference was organised in Paramaribo (Suriname) from 5-9 June 2003 with Ministry's active support.

The Ministry actively fosters gender equality. Equal opportunities are provided to women officers to take up challenging positions and assignments. At present, there are two women officers at Secretary level, six women officers at Additional Secretary level and twenty women officers at Joint Secretary level. There are also sixteen women officers posted abroad as Ambassadors/High Commissioners/Permanent Representatives/Consuls General.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), established in the year 1950, has been functioning as the cultural wing of the Ministry of External Affairs for furthering the objectives and mandate of India's foreign policy. The ICCR's role is significant in view of the importance of "cultural diplomacy" for strengthening the cultural relations among the nations. The ICCR has tried to create awareness about India and its rich cultural heritage among the people of other countries.

The Indian Council of World Affairs (Amendment) Act 2003 was passed on 8 January 2004. In consonance with the objects of the Indian Council of World Affairs Act, ICWA carried on its various activities by organizing special addresses, seminars and meetings on important world affairs.

Amongst the dignitaries who delivered special address at Sapru House during the period of this report included Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran, Mr. Mohsen Aminzadeh; Foreign Minister of Ukraine, Mr. Anatoliy Zlenko; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice of Israel, Mr. Joseph Lapid; President of Republic of South Africa, Mr. Thabo Mbeki; Prime Minister of Republic of Hungary, Mr. Peter Medgyessy; President of Romania, Mr. Ion Iliescu and

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Dr. Dimitrij Rupel. Former Prime Minister of India, Shri I.K. Gujral delivered the 2nd Africa Day Lecture and External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha delivered the 7th Dinesh Singh Memorial Lecture on "12th SAARC Summit and Beyond".

RIS, as an autonomous policy think-tank, conducted policy research on international economic issues and provided analytical support in preparation for major Summit meetings and other important negotiations such as the ASEAN-India Summit, NAM Summit, SAARC Summit, BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting, Cancun Ministerial Conference of WTO as well as for and the bilateral joint study groups on comprehensive economic dialogue with Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and China. It held policy discussions on the relevance and the way forward for an Asian Economic Community, prepared a draft ASEAN-India Vision 2020 document in consultation with its ASEAN counterparts and launched an annual India-China policy dialogue with the Development Research Centre of the China's State Council. It also produced major reports on the world trading system and on South Asian development and cooperation.



1. India's Neighbours

Afghanistan

India-Afghanistan ties continued to expand and strengthen during this period. There were regular bilateral exchanges and the government continued with its support to the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan. India also continued to participate in various international efforts aimed at addressing political and reconstruction issues in Afghanistan.

President Hamid Karzai visited India from 5-8 March 2003. He met President Shri A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Deputy Prime Minister Shri L.K. Advani and External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha. He was conferred an honorary doctorate by Himachal Pradesh University. In his meetings with the Indian leadership, bilateral cooperation and regional issues were discussed. President Karzai pointed out, at the delegation level talks, that India's assistance to Afghanistan has been very significant and that he is grateful for all the help that India has provided to Afghanistan.

Prime Minister announced an additional financial commitment of US\$ 70 million for the construction of Zaranj-Delaram road in Afghanistan. Both sides also signed a Preferential Trade Agreement. The agreement allows import of certain categories of Afghan dry fruits at 50% duty concession and free access to Lapis Lazuli, Ruby, Emeralds, Fig dried, Pistachios, Mulberries dried, Pine nuts toasted, Melon fresh, and Asafoetida. Afghanistan, in return, has allowed duty free access to some of the Indian export items including black tea, pharmaceuticals, sugar, white cement and cement clinkers.

National Security Adviser and Principal Secretary to Prime Minister, Shri Brajesh Mishra visited Kabul on 27 April 2003. During his visit, he called on President Karzai and other Afghan leaders. He also had extensive discussions with his Afghan counterpart Mr. Zalmay Rasool.

As part of continuing political interaction between the two countries, a number of Afghan leaders visited India during the period under review. These included the visit

of Communications Minister Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai from 26-31 March 2003 on the invitation of Union Minister of Communications and IT. Specific projects for reconstruction in the field of IT and communication were discussed. The then Minister for Civil Aviation Mirwais Sadiq visited India from 7-10 May 2003 on the invitation of Union Minister for Civil Aviation. Maintenance support of three Airbus aircrafts, gifted by India to Afghanistan, and training for Ariana Airlines personnel in India were discussed during the visit. Minister Advisor on Tribal Affairs and President Afghan Cricketing Federation, Shehzada Masood visited on 17 June 2003.

India continued with its humanitarian, financial and project assistance for Afghanistan's reconstruction. Focus of India's assistance has been on rebuilding institutional capacity by imparting training in various fields (teachers, diplomats, journalists, judicial officials, women entrepreneurs, government officials and doctors), and providing multi-disciplinary project assistance in areas of public transport (274 buses have been provided), information technology, civil aviation (three Airbus aircraft have been gifted to Ariana Afghan Airlines), education, health, agriculture, media, etc.

India had announced food assistance of 1 million tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan. A part of this assistance is being converted into high protein biscuits for the school-feeding programme in Afghanistan, which is being distributed through World Food Programme. The delivery of the second tranche of high protein biscuits commenced in December 2003.

As a result of this assistance 972,000 Afghan children are receiving a package of 100 grams of biscuits from India every day. India has gifted 300 vehicles to the Afghan National Army. The first lot of 115 vehicles has been delivered.

Out of the total financial assistance of US \$ 100 million, US \$ 31.5 million was operationalised during 2002-03 and about US\$30 million has been operationalised during 2003-04. Some of the important projects operationalised during 2003-04 are as follows:

- The reconstruction of Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health and Habiba School commenced in September 2003.
- Indian Medical Missions were opened in Herat, Sheberghan and Kandahar.
- In-service training was provided to seven Afghan teachers from the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan by Delhi Public School Society from 4 September -15 October 2003.
- 20 Afghan diplomats were trained at the Foreign Service Institute from July-September 2003.
- The Broadcast Consultants India Ltd has commenced work on: setting up of modern offset Printing Machine along with DTP Facility; setting up of a new 100 Kw SW transmitter; and setting up of TV Satellite Uplinking /Downlinking facility.
- 19 Afghan journalists were trained at Indian Institute of Mass Communication from June-August 2003.
- 18 Afghan judges and lawyers were trained at the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi from February -May 2003.
- Nearly 67 tonnes of vegetable seeds have been supplied to the Ministry of Agriculture of Afghanistan.
- 16 officials from the Ministry of Agriculture attended a training course on Operation and Maintenance of Agriculture machinery and equipment at CFMTTI, Budni, Bhopal.
- Computer Training Centres have been set up in Kandahar, Herat and Pul-e-Khumri and Jalalabad.
- Six experts from various Indian banks have been deputed to the DA Afghanistan Bank for a period of one year.

- Construction of a cold storage of 5000 tonnes capacity in Kandahar has been taken up.
- The Government has decided to gift 101 utility vehicles/equipments (water tankers, rear drop tripper, dump trucks, bull dozer and garbage tippers) to the Kabul Municipality. Of these 75 vehicles have been handed over to the Kabul Municipality.
- 24 tube wells for irrigation were dug in Herat province.
- 20 officials from the Ministry of Light Industries & Foodstuff of Afghanistan have commenced training at National Institute of Small Industries Extension Training (NISJET), Hyderabad from 13 October 2003 for a period of eight weeks.
- A training programme and workshop on marketing and enterprise development for twenty women entrepreneurs from Afghanistan organized by consortium of Women Entrepreneurs of India commenced on 17 November 2003.
- Work has commenced on the setting up of a common facility and tool room centre at Industrial Park in Kabul in February 2004.
- Work has commenced on the Engineering, Procurement and Supply of 110/20 kV Substations (3 Nos.), material for 110KV and 20 KV Andhkvoy to Meymaneh (125km) transmission line and the equipment line and the equipment for 4 Nos. 20/0.4kV pole mounted on substations in Faryab Province in January 2004.
- Work has been completed on the feasibility study and fieldwork related with detailed survey and soil investigations for the construction of double circuit transmission line from Pule-Khumri to Kabul and substations at Kabul in Afghanistan.
- Work has commenced on the Emergency Restoration of Basic Telecommunication Network in eleven provincial capitals in Afghanistan in February 2004.

■ Officials from the Geodesy and Cartography Department of Afghanistan are being trained at the Survey Training Institute, Hyderabad.

India has remained actively associated with major international efforts on Afghanistan. India was represented at the following important international meetings:

- A meeting of Afghanistan Development Forum held in Kabul from 13-14 March 2003.
- A meeting of High Level Strategic Forum on Afghanistan held in Brussels on 17 March 2003.
- Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh, participated in the International Conference on Drug Routes held in Paris from 21-22 May 2003.
- The External Affairs Minister attended the High Level Ad hoc Meeting on Afghanistan, which was held on the margins of UN General Assembly on 24 September 2003.

India has also been in regular touch with the international community, including the United States, Russia, Iran and European Union member countries, on the evolving situation in Afghanistan. There is an appreciation and recognition in the international community of India's contribution to reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.

Foreign Secretary led the Indian delegation to the International Conference on Afghanistan in Berlin from 31 March -1 April 2004. The objective of the conference, which was attended by representatives of the Afghan government, the UN and major donors and institutions, was to secure substantial long-term aid commitments. India made a commitment of US\$ 400 million over 2002-2008, which has shown India as a long-term partner in Afghanistan's reconstruction effort.

The developments in Afghanistan since the Bonn Agreement of 5 December 2001 can be assessed positively. As part of this process the Constitutional Loya Jirga was held in

December 2003. Despite this progress, however, the Afghan Government faces many challenges ahead and the foremost being the threat to internal security including from regrouped Taliban. The increasing terrorist attacks by remnants of Taliban and Al Qaeda elements are aimed at undermining the authority of the central government as well as slowing the pace of reconstruction, especially in the provinces of south, southeast and east of Afghanistan. There is growing concern at the external support that the Taliban remnants continue to receive and the threat this poses to stability.

Bangladesh

Ties with Bangladesh were strengthened through efforts by both sides to reactivate institutional mechanisms existing for cooperation in diverse areas of bilateral relations. The Joint Economic Commission (JEC), headed by the respective Foreign Ministers, met after six years in Dhaka from 14-15 July 2003. The meeting provided the opportunity for giving a high level thrust to economic ties while reviewing in a comprehensive manner the entire gamut of economic issues. Discussions were earlier held during the visit of the Bangladesh Minister of Finance, Mr. Saifur Rahman to India from 19-22 May 2003. Foreign Office Consultations were held from 29- 30 March 2003 after a gap of more than three years. The Ministerial Level Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) was also held on 28 -29 September 2003, after a gap of nearly three years.

During the 6th meeting of the JEC, discussions were held on a possible new line of credit that could be denominated in US dollars. This would succeed the existing line of credit of Rs. 200 crores that is nearly fully utilised. Railways is an emerging sector of bilateral cooperation and proposals in the pipeline include the introduction of containerised services by rail and the Sealdah-Joydevpur passenger rail link. Cooperation in new areas such as Science and Technology, IT and Agriculture are also being discussed between the two sides. India has offered assistance to Bangladesh for a project on training of school- teachers in IT



The visiting President of Afganistan Mr. Hamid Karzai is received by the President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam and the Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Ceremonial Reception in New Delhi on March 6, 2003.



Foreign Secretary Shri Shashank calling on the King of Bhutan.

and a project on disaster warning in the Bay of Bengal.

Pursuant to a decision taken at the 6th JEC meeting and in a significant step towards promoting greater people to people contact between the two countries, a bus service was inaugurated between Agartala and Dhaka on 19 September 2003. The Minister of Road Transport and Highways Maj. Gen. B.C. Khanduri, the Bangladesh Minister of Communications Mr. Nazmul Huda and the Chief Minister of Tripura Shri Manik Sarkar jointly inaugurated the bus service in both Agartala and Dhaka.

The Agartala-Dhaka link follows the hugely successful existing bus service between Kolkata and Dhaka. The new bus service is expected to become increasingly popular, particularly after certain problems relating to issue of visas and imposition of travel tax are resolved between the two sides.

Another significant development in bilateral ties was the commencement of negotiations on the signing a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA). These negotiations were conducted between the Commerce Ministries of the two countries from 20-22 October 2003. Both sides reviewed the successful progress of the Indo-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement, which stands as a symbol of successful cooperation in trade liberalisation despite asymmetries in economic size and strength. The terms and conditions of an FTA are expected to be even more liberal given the LDC status of Bangladesh.

A mechanism for structured dialogue on the issue of non-tariff barriers was also created and a first meeting was held between the two Bangladeshi exporters and facilitate Bangladesh's exports to India. In turn complaints raised by Indian exporters would be also officially raised in this forum.

The Joint Rivers Commission meeting provided an opportunity for both the sides to review bilateral cooperation in the water sector. A significant development in recent years has been the expansion of cooperation

in this sector to areas beyond water sharing to include areas such as flood forecasting, arsenic mitigation and disaster warning. The implementation of the working of the Ganges Water Treaty, 1996 was also reviewed. The Bangladesh side also expressed concern over the proposed river inter-linking project in India. However, it was conveyed that the project was only at a conceptual stage.

Institutional dialogue on key issues relating to border management continued through the biannual DG level talks between the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) that were concluded in April 2003. Simultaneous coordinated patrolling was discussed between the two sides in an effort to jointly tackle border crimes. The two forces are also discussing confidence-building measures to improve understanding between the forces such as offer of training in Indian institutions and sports exchanges.

Cultural and educational exchanges continued to grow between the two countries and an increasing number of students from Bangladesh are choosing India to pursue their higher studies.

Bhutan

Bhutan is one of India's closest neighbours with which it shares mutually beneficial relations in a wide range of fields. Indian Rupee is legal tender in Bhutan and India accounts for over 90% of Bhutan's global trade. People and goods move freely across the open border of 700 kms. The special relationship is sustained by the exchange of regular visits including at the highest level between the two countries.

Crown Prince of Bhutan, Dasho Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, visited India at the invitation of the Vice President, from 28 August-1 September 2003. During the visit, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Government of India and the Royal Government of Bhutan for establishing an India-Bhutan Foundation with a joint corpus of funds. The objective of India-Bhutan Foundation is to enhance people to people interactions to further mutual interests.

King Jigme Singye Wangchuck of the Kingdom of Bhutan paid a State visit to India from 14-18 September 2003. During the visit, the President and Vice-President held talks with the King. The Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and Minister of Finance held discussions separately. On the eve of the visit, Government of India conveyed its commitment on a number of projects and programmes under Indian assistance to Bhutan's 9th Five Year Plan – 2002-2007. An MoU for the preparation of a Detailed Project Report on the 900 MW Punatsangchu Hydroelectric Power Project was also signed during the visit. There was an exchange of views on a wide range of issues of mutual interest and concern, including the presence of Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) in Bhutan, and the various measures on the part of the Royal Government of Bhutan to persuade them to leave Bhutan. Both sides agreed to continue working closely with a view to resolving the issue. The two governments reiterated that as close friends and allies they would not allow their territories to be used by anyone for carrying out activities that are harmful to each other's national interests. Some long pending issues relating to the Indo-Bhutan boundary were resolved at a bilateral meeting concluded on 24 February 2004 in Thimphu.

Military Operation in Bhutan by Royal Bhutan Army

The Governments of India and Bhutan had been concerned about the presence of Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs) located in the thickly forested border area of South Eastern Bhutan and had been in close consultation with each other on the issue. Cadres of three Indian IIGs: United Liberation Front in Assam (ULFA), National Democratic Front for Bodoland (NDFB) and the Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) had established about 30 camps in this area from where they would enter India, carry out attacks on the Indian side and retreat beyond the reach of the Indian security forces into these camps in the Bhutanese jungles.

At India's request, the Royal Government of Bhutan decided to tackle the problem and expel the IIGs from Bhutanese territory. When their attempts to peacefully achieve this objective failed, the Royal Bhutan Army launched a military operation of precision attacks on all the 30 camps on 15 December 2003. In about three weeks, the Royal Bhutanese Army was able to destroy all the 30 camps and observation posts of the IIGs and render their communication equipment inoperative.

The Government of India stood firmly behind the Royal Government of Bhutan, providing all logistical support requested by the latter till the completion of the operation.

The military action of the Royal Bhutan Army against the insurgents has not only helped the Indian security forces to tackle the IIGs effectively on the Indian side, (as of now, the KLO has been all but decimated and the ULFA and NDFB severely weakened), but has also immeasurably strengthened the friendly relations between the India and Bhutan.

Government of India and Royal Government of Bhutan have held detailed discussions in March 2004 to address, in a comprehensive manner, mutual security concerns in the wake of the military operations carried out by Royal Government of Bhutan against Indian Insurgents Groups operating from Bhutan.

As part of the close bilateral cooperation, India continues to be the major contributor to Bhutan's five-years' plans, the first of which commenced in 1961. In consultation with the Royal Government of Bhutan, Government of India arrived at a mutually agreed slate of projects and programmes to be financed by India in the 9th Five Year Plan of India (2002-2007) in various mutually beneficial sectors including power, infrastructure, roads and bridges etc. There is increased emphasis in our assistance on the social sector in areas such as Education, Health, Communications, IT etc. in keeping with the larger vision of bilateral relations.

The 1020 MW Tala Hydroelectric Project under GOI assistance to Bhutan is progressing apace and is expected to come on stream in 2005/06. Almost the entire production of power from this plant will be exported to India. Two bilateral meetings have been held in January and March 2004 to arrive at a common principle for fixing the tariff for power to be imported by India from Tala Hydro-Electric Project in Bhutan.

The Cellular Mobile Phone Network in Bhutan was inaugurated on November 11 2003. The project was executed by M/S Telecommunication Consultants India Ltd., Government of India Undertaking, on a turnkey basis through a contract awarded by Bhutan Telecom Unit. Government of India financed part of the cost of the project relating to equipment, installation and training amounting to Rs.11.7 crores.

There is close bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the fields of education and culture. India provides technical expertise and services of specialists to Bhutan in various fields. Government of India's (GOI) scholarships are granted to 50 Bhutanese students every year in Indian Institutions of higher learning. These GOI scholarships are in addition to facilities extended under the ITEC/TCS of Colombo Plan schemes. A large number of Bhutanese students study in Indian schools and colleges on self-financing. Bhutan's Sherubtse College is affiliated to Delhi University. 13 India-based lecturers are working in this college under the TCS of Colombo Plan. The King of Bhutan has endowed a chair for Buddhist studies in the Nagarjuna University in Andhra Pradesh. Cooperation between cultural institutions of both countries, especially museums, is growing. To continue and sustain the momentum Exhibitions titled, "The Living Religious and Cultural Traditions of Bhutan" were organized by Bhutan in New Delhi and Kolkata in 2001. A Festival of India was organised in Bhutan from June to November 2003 with the theme "Eternal Friendship and Cooperation". The Festival was inaugurated in June 2003 by the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna and concluded in November 2003 by Minister of State for Culture.

China

India's interaction with China, which is based on the principles of Panchsheel, mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns and equality, has developed due to the mutual agreement to qualitatively enhance the bilateral relationship at different levels while simultaneously addressing each others differences through direct dialogue and peaceful means in a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable manner.

India's commitment to build a broad-based and cooperative relationship with China was further emphasised in 2003-04. Prime Minister's visit to China from 22-27 June 2003, which took place after a gap of ten years, was a major step forward in the ongoing process of building mutual trust and understanding between India and China. Apart from Prime Minister, both the Speaker and Raksha Mantri visited China this year. President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao accepted invitation to visit India with appreciation. In addition to visits at the highest political levels, a Dialogue on Policy Planning and annual interaction at the Foreign Minister level were added this year. 2003-04 has also shown a steady improvement in bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Visit

Prime Minister's visit gave a new impetus to India's developing and diversifying relations with China. Prime Minister was able to establish a useful rapport with the new leadership in China. The first-ever signed Joint Declaration issued by the two Prime Ministers of India and China not only lays down a roadmap to build a "qualitatively new relationship" and develop a "long-term constructive and cooperative partnership" but also reflects the political will of the two Governments to move towards those objectives. Both India and China agreed that multi-polarity in today's world should be strengthened. Both sides recognised the threat posed by terrorism to them and to global peace

and security and resolutely condemned terrorism in all forms. India is looking forward to greater engagement with China in diverse areas and a further improvement of India-China relations on the basis of the principles of Panchsheel, mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns and equality.

The Prime Minister visited China at the invitation of Mr. Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. His visit took place almost ten years after the last Prime Ministerial visit to China in September 1993. This visit has proved to be a crucial link in the chain of high-level visits forged over the past few years in the ongoing process of building mutual trust and understanding between India and China.

Prime Minister's visit to China imparted a fresh momentum to the ongoing development and diversification of cooperation between India and China. He had the opportunity of personally interacting with the new Chinese leadership, meeting with Premier Wen Jiabao, President Hu Jintao, NPC Chairman Wu Bangguo, Vice President Zeng Qinghong and CMC Chairman Jiang Zemin. He was received with great warmth and courtesy and was clearly given to understand that India's desire to expand the bilateral relationship and build mutual trust and confidence was reciprocated. Another theme emphasised by the Chinese side during Prime Minister's visit was that the current global situation requires India and China to work together.

Both these themes were reflected in the Joint Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between India and China that was signed by both Prime Ministers in Beijing. This is a significant document, which outlines the concepts underpinning the bilateral relationship between India and China and the lines along which this relationship will progress in the future. It further states that progress in bilateral relations between India and China is conducive also to regional stability and prosperity and that cooperation between our two countries will strengthen multipolarity

at the international level. It also signals to Asia and the world that the two countries are committed to working more closely together both in the region and globally.

The Joint Declaration also contains a reiteration of India's position on Tibet. Regarding Tibet, it must be stressed that contrary to some media reports, there is no change in India's position either on Tibet or on the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama or other Tibetan refugees in India, and that nothing new has been agreed to or said. Another important outcome of the visit is the decision to appoint Special Representatives to explore from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship the framework of a boundary settlement. This step was taken at Prime Minister's initiative. The National Security Advisor, Shri Brajesh Mishra was appointed as Prime Minister's Special Representative. China has appointed their senior-most Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo as his counterpart. Mr. Dai was earlier Minister in charge of the International Liaison Department of the Communist Party of China and is currently a member of the Central Committee of the Party. The work of the two Special Representatives will be in addition to the ongoing implementation of the 1993 and 1996 agreements between India and China on the process of clarification of the Line of Actual Control and on the continued maintenance of peace and tranquility in the border areas. Two rounds of cordial, constructive and cooperative discussions between the Special Representatives have taken place so far on 23-24 October 2003 and 12-13 January 2004.

The framework of a structured interaction between India and China was also expanded during Prime Minister's visit with the decision to hold annual meetings at the Foreign Minister level. The nine agreements signed during the visit include an MoU

laying down liberalised procedures for issue of visas to ordinary passport holders; an MoU on cooperation in the field of justice; the first bilateral Executive Programme on Educational Cooperation and Exchange for the period 2003 to 2006, replacing the framework for education-related exchanges, including mutual scholarships, which earlier used to form part of the CEP; the Executive Programme of Cultural Exchanges India and China for the years 2003-2005; the Protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for Exporting Mangoes from India to China; and an MoU for Enhanced Cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy. In addition, three MoUs were signed relating to the field of science & technology, envisaging greater cooperation and collaborative activities in identified areas in basic and applied sciences, and including one MoU relating to the promotion of development and cooperation in ocean science and technology.

In addition to the above, Prime Minister's visit also saw the signing of an MoU on expanding border trade through Nathu La pass on the India China boundary. This adds a third border crossing point to those currently operational, under the 1991 border trade agreement which allowed trade through Lipulekh pass in what is today Uttaranchal, and the 1993 agreement on trade through Shipki La pass in Himachal Pradesh. This MoU has also started the process by which Sikkim will cease to be an issue in India-China relations.

The strengthening of economic and trade relations between India and China was also an important theme of the Prime Minister's visit. Apart from External Affairs Minister, the Prime Minister was accompanied by Commerce and Industry Minister while the Minister for Communication, Information Technology and Disinvestment joined him in Shanghai. Prime Minister delivered keynote addresses at two very large gatherings of Indian and Chinese businessmen at both Beijing and Shanghai, while the Economic Ministers had separate interactive sessions with relevant agencies



Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao (centre) with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (right) during a welcome ceremony in Beijing, China, June 23, 2003.



Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the ASEAN-INDIA Summit on October 8, 2003 in Bali, Indonesia.

and with Chinese businessmen. In addition, a 70-member delegation of senior businessmen from CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM was in attendance, signaling that Indian business and industry is very much aware of the potential of our economic relationship, an awareness, which was clearly reciprocated by the Chinese side.

One decision taken during the visit, which will directly impact on the expansion of India's economic cooperation with China, is the decision to set up a Joint Study Group (JSG) to report, within the next twelve months, on the potential complementarities in expanded trade and economic cooperation between India and China. The JSG will also identify areas of meaningful economic potential and recommend concrete measures to be taken over the next five years by both the governments to facilitate increase in bilateral trade, promote investments and encourage greater cooperation between the business communities of both countries. It was also decided that a joint financial dialogue and cooperation mechanism would be set up to strengthen coordination in this sector. The 7th meeting of the Joint Economic Group between India and China is to be convened at the earliest possible.

In the Joint Declaration, dairy, food processing and health were specifically identified as possible sectors for future cooperation, while both sides agreed that they would continue to work towards the enhancement of direct air/ shipping links and tourism, exchange of hydrological data in flood season on common rivers, and cooperation in agriculture and other sectors.

Due attention was also given to the cultural facet of our bilateral relationship during Prime Minister's visit. Apart from the agreement to establish cultural centres in Delhi and Beijing, Prime Minister inaugurated the Centre for Indian Studies in Beijing University, which aims to promote further India-related studies and research among Chinese scholars. The Prime Minister also announced some important contributions to facilitate the functioning of this Centre, including financial grants,

scholarships, and awards for meritorious students and gifting of books and equipment to receive Indian satellite channels. It was also agreed to jointly celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Panchsheel next year. Prime Minister had the opportunity of visiting the White Horse Temple in Luoyang where the first Buddhist monks came from India to China. Luoyang and the Longmen Grottoes represent the cultural and historical dimension of our bilateral interaction. He also laid the foundation stone of the Embassy's new Chancery project in Beijing.

Apart from his visit to China, the Prime Minister met President Hu Jintao during the 300th anniversary celebrations of St. Petersburg in May. He also met Premier Wen Jiabao on the margins of the ASEAN Summit in Bali in October. Messages have also been exchanged between the Prime Minister and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, including a message sent by the Prime Minister after the success of China's first manned space mission in October, and a message from Premier Wen on the occasion of the first meeting of the Special Representatives.

Raksha Mantri, George Fernandes paid an important visit to China from 20 – 27 April 2003. He met Defence Minister, Cao Gangchuan, Premier Wen Jiabao and CMC Chairman, Jiang Zemin. Besides Beijing, Raksha Mantri visited Xian and Shanghai. Following Raksha Mantri's and Prime Minister's visit, both countries have agreed to intensify, and raise to a new level, bilateral defence exchanges and cooperation. This year, three Chinese delegations, one from the PLA Air Force Command College (July 2003), one from the Nanjing Army Command College (August 2003) and a delegation led by General Wu Quanzu, Deputy Chief of General Staff of the PLA (December 2003) visited India. Three Indian Navy ships paid a goodwill visit to Shanghai from 10-14 November 2003. On 14 November they conducted, for the first time, joint search and rescue exercises with the PLA Navy. GOC 4 Corps, Lt. Gen. Mohinder Singh visited China, including Chengdu and Tibet, from 17 -22 November, 2003, while an Inter Services delegation led

by Air Marshal GCS Rajwar, Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff and Chairman, Joint Training Committee, visited China from 14 - 21 December 2003.

Speaker of the Lok Sabha Shri Manohar Joshi led a 12-member Indian Parliamentary delegation on an official visit to China from 5-10 January 2003. The Speaker met President Jiang Zemin, National People's Congress Chairman Li Peng, and Premier of the State Council Zhu Rongji. He visited Beijing and Shanghai. During the discussions, both sides recognised the contribution of regular high-level exchanges, including Parliamentary exchanges, in developing the relationship and expressed satisfaction with the steady improvement in bilateral relations.

The External Affairs Minister accompanied the Prime Minister on his visit to China in June 2003. He interacted with his Chinese counterpart on the margins of ARF in Phnom Penh on June 19. He also hosted an informal luncheon for the Foreign Ministers of China and Russia on the margins of UNGA in New York on 23 September 2003, in pursuance of the agreement in 2002 to hold such meetings annually.

Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee (CPPCC) Jia Qinglin paid a goodwill visit to India from 23-27 November 2003 at the invitation of Vice President and Chairman of Rajya Sabha. His visit to India was the first leg of a tour of South Asia aimed at familiarizing the new Chinese leadership with the external aspects of China's policies. It was also his first visit to any foreign country since his appointment as the CPPCC Chairman in March 2003. This visit was a part of the process of high level visits between India and China, which has gained momentum with visits by the Speaker in January 2003, Raksha Mantri in April 2003 and the Prime Minister in June 2003. In return, India is also expecting visits of Premier Wen Jiabao, Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and Commerce Minister Lu Fuyuan to India in the coming year. During his stay in Delhi, Chairman Jia also met the Prime Minister, Lok Sabha Speaker, and the External Affairs

Minister. Besides New Delhi, he also visited Agra and Hyderabad.

A five-member delegation led by Mr. Xu Guangchun, Minister of State Administration of Radio, Film and Television of China visited India from 4-8 February 2004, to strengthen exchanges and cooperation in the field of broadcasting and television with India. He Guoqiang, Politburo Member and Head of the Organisation Department of the CPC, visited India from 18 - 21 February 2004 at the invitation of the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs. He also met with Vice President and Deputy Prime Minister as well as with the Party Presidents of the BJP and the CPI(M). Chinese Defence Minister Gen. Cao Gangchuan paid a five-day visit to India as the head of a 17-member delegation. The visit was reciprocal to the visit of Raksha Mantri to China in April last year. General Cao called on Prime Minister, and also met with the three Service Chiefs in addition to his meeting with Raksha Mantri. During the discussions between the two Defence Ministers, it was agreed to increase contacts and interactions between the defence establishments and armed forces of both the countries, and existing defence exchanges were reviewed and assessed positively.

Other structured interactions during the year included the first meeting of the India-China Dialogue on Policy Planning on 30 May 2003 in New Delhi. The Indian delegation, led by Additional Secretary (Policy Planning) and the Chinese delegation, led by the Director General, Policy Planning, of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, exchanged views on international trends and incidents, covering political, economic and security related developments, on major features of Indian and Chinese bilateral foreign policy and the relations of India and China vis-à-vis other powers. The second meeting of the India-China Dialogue on Counter Terrorism was held in Beijing on 13 June 2003. The Indian delegation led by Joint Secretary (East Asia), and the Chinese delegation led by the Acting DG, International Organisations Department of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, exchanged views on the international and regional situation and

possibilities for bilateral cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The 14th meeting of the India-China Expert Group on Clarification and Confirmation of the LAC, which was held in Beijing on 12 March 2004, continued ongoing discussions on the exchange of maps in the Western Sector and on the draft CBMs protocol. The first meeting of the India-China Joint Study Group, set up in pursuance of the decision taken during Prime Minister's visit to China in June 2003, was held in Beijing on 22-23 March 2004. The Indian delegation was led by Dr. Rakesh Mohan, Deputy Governor of RBI and the Chinese delegation by Mr. An Min, Vice Minister, Ministry of Commerce. The focus in the first round of discussions was to reach agreement on the composition and the Terms of Reference of the JSG and on the working modalities. The Indian delegation also called on Mr. Bo Xilai, Minister of Commerce.

This year also saw exchanges between political parties, including delegations from CPI (M), CPI and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha to China. The India-China Eminent Persons Group (EPG) met in Beijing from 18-19 February 2004, and also visited Kunming. In Beijing, the Group had extensive discussions and also had meetings with the Chinese leadership.

Minister of Tourism and Culture, Shri Jagmohan, who visited Beijing in October to participate in the World Tourism Organisation Annual Meeting, announced the decision to open an office of Government of India Tourism Office in Beijing. China-specific tourism promotion began with India Tourism's "Incredible India" campaign, which was aired on select Chinese TV channels, to coincide with the inaugural Air India flight to Shanghai on 11 December 2003.

Trade and economic relations between India and China increased substantially during this period. According to Chinese Customs Statistics, bilateral trade reached the US\$ 7.6 billion mark in 2003, signifying a 53.6% jump over 2002.

Emphasizing the importance of trade and economic cooperation in the India-China relationship, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley accompanied the Prime Minister during his visit to China. He visited China again in October for the inauguration of the 'Made in India' Show in Beijing, which was held, from 16-19 October 2003. This was the first exclusive exhibition of Indian products and services in China, organised by CII in cooperation with the Indian Embassy in Beijing. According to CII, this was also the largest exhibition of Indian industrial goods ever organised overseas by them. A number of other activities, including sectoral seminars, a roundtable on steel and a hugely successful fashion show were also held concurrently. Shri Jagmohan, Minister of Tourism, who was in Beijing at the same time for the 15th General Assembly of the World Tourism Organisation, also made a separate presentation on India's tourism potential. The CII delegation of 45 CEOs was led by President Designate, Shri S.K. Munjal. The 'Made in India' show was a direct follow-up of Prime Minister's visit to China in June 2003.

Prior to the Beijing event, an 'India Week - China' was organised by CII together with India's Consulate General in Shanghai, which included the formal inauguration of CII's presence in China, the inauguration of ICICI Bank's representative office, and seminars on the sectors of tourism, manufacturing and health. In July, following the agreement on phyto-sanitary measures for the import of Indian mangoes signed during Prime Minister's visit, the first India Mango Festival was held in Beijing and Shanghai, when Chinese consumers got the taste of delicious Indian mangoes, which are expected to be available in Chinese markets from 2004. Investments in both countries are increasing and Chinese companies are participating in a number of infrastructure projects in India. Apart from bilateral cooperation, India and China are also looking at the possibility of cooperation in regional and multilateral forums, such as at Cancun, based on identified common interests and overlapping concerns on issues

relating to WTO, energy security, environmental problems and globalisation in general.

The Embassy, in collaboration with a local partner, the Soong Ching Ling Foundation, held a one week long “India Carnival Week” in early October 2003 where Indian art performances, films, food, exhibitions of relics, photographs and books and lectures on India and music and IT were attended by over five thousand visitors. Chinese media enhanced its coverage of India during this period, including very substantial coverage of Prime Minister’s visit to China.

Consular services, including issue of visas to Chinese nationals and others have been rising in tandem with the greater engagement between political leadership of the two countries. Moreover, with the opening up of the Indian tourism sector for Chinese tourists, the number of tourist visas issued is also increasing gradually. The MoU on visa services signed during Prime Minister’s visit was implemented in September 2003. This has eased and facilitated issue of visas, including multiple entry visas to businesspersons, tourists, students and those attending conferences. The SARS epidemic in China adversely affected travel from April to June 2003. Despite this, a total of 12,330 visas were issued by Beijing and Shanghai during the 10-month period from April 2003 to January 2004 as against 10,330 visas issued in the calendar year 2002.

The SARS epidemic in China also delayed the start of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, as a result of which the total number of Yatis who made the pilgrimage was reduced to 316. The Chinese side has agreed to consider Prime Minister’s request, made during his visit in June, for opening of additional routes for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.

Functional exchanges between the two sides include:

Visits from India to China

- A 4-member delegation comprising Gujarat Government officials and representatives of Ministry of

Commerce and Industry and FICCI and led by Shri Hasmukh Haridas Adhia, Additional Principal Secretary, Government of Gujarat visited Shanghai from 17-19 August 2003 to promote Gujarat as a destination for foreign investment as well as to promote the “Vibrant Gujarat” event. The delegation met official of Shanghai Foreign Trade Commission, Shanghai Council for Promotion of International Trade, etc.

- Member of Parliament Shri Suresh Prabhu led an ITPO delegation from 13-17 January 2003.
- A delegation from Indian Electrical and Electronics Manufacturers Association (IEEMA) led by Shri R.N. Mukhija, President visited China from 24-30 August 2003 with an objective of learning more about China, its business practices and its competitiveness in international markets. IEEMA signed an MoU with his counterpart China Electrical Equipment Industries Association (CEEIA) to exchange information, promote business and facilitate participation in exhibitions and trade fairs.
- Shri Ram Niwas Mirdha, former Union Minister and President of the Indian Federation of United Nations Associations visited China from 26 August–01 September 2003 at the invitation of United Nations Association of China. Besides Beijing, he visited Guangzhou and Shanghai.
- Smt. Rathi Vinay Jha, Secretary for Tourism and Culture, visited China from 16-25 October 2003 for the 15th General Assembly of the World Tourism Organisation.
- Smt. Justice Ruma Pal, Judge, Supreme Court of India visited China from 18-24 October 2003 to exchange and interact on issues of legal matters between the Supreme Courts of India and China.
- Shri I.K. Gujral, former Prime Minister, visited China from 2-7 November 2003

to attend the second Boao Forum of Asia Annual Forum. Shri Gujral spoke in one of the plenary sessions on the morning of 3 November 2003. Shri Gujral, in his speech, *inter alia*, referring to the political dimensions of the Asian integration, said that the big three countries of Asia-Japan, China and India should play an active role and also make some sacrifices for the greater good of the region and in the first place, the big three have to clearly forsake aspirations for a hegemonic role, if any.

- Professor V. R. Panchamukhi, Chairman, Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) visited China from 5-8 November 2003 to discuss academic collaboration between ICSSR and Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to hold in-depth and constructive discussions concerning the future academic exchanges.
- Smt. Kumud Bansal, Additional Secretary, Department of Secondary & Higher Education led Educational Consultants India Limited delegation to participate in the ‘International Educational Exhibition’ in Beijing, China from 28-30 November 2003. The aim of the exhibition was to develop the international training and education industries through international communication and cooperation activities.
- An ISRO delegation led by Dr. R.R. Navalgund, Director, NRSA, visited China from 1-4 December 2003 for the first meeting of the joint working group between ISRO and its Chinese counterpart CNSA, resulting in the signing of agreed minutes in which both sides identified areas of future cooperation, especially in the field of remote sensing.
- A delegation from DAE led by Shri V.P. Raja, Joint Secretary, visited China from 11-15 December 2003 for finalizing a commercial shipment of heavy water to China.
- A four member delegation led by Mr.

Gong Zheng, Vice Minister, General Administration of Customs of the PRC, visited India from 25-27 March 2004, to discuss possibilities of cooperation in the customs administration sector including the possibility of signing an MoU on cooperation in customs matters with the Central Board of Excise and Customs of India.

Visits from China to India

- Vice Administrator, China National Space Administration Guo Baozhu visited India from 3-7 January 2003 to attend the 90th session of Indian Science Congress; a delegation led by Chairman of India-China Friendship Group of the National People's Congress Sheng Huaren participated in the International Parliamentary Conference to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Indian Parliament from 22-24 January 2003; and Vice Minister, MOFTEC An Min visited New Delhi from 5-8 February 2003 to attend CII's International Engineering & Technology Fair (IETF). China participated in IETF as a partner country.
- A 6-member Chinese team led by Ms Li Chun Hai, Senior Finance Manager from China National Coal Mining Engineering Equipment Group (CME), Beijing visited Dhanbad from 2-4 April 2003 where they called on Chairman, Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. and held discussions over the proposed Longwall Project at Munidih.
- Mr. Zheng Xinmiao, Vice Minister of Culture, led a five-member delegation to India, from 16-23 April 2003. The delegation visited Mumbai, Aurangabad and New Delhi on a goodwill tour to India. At Mumbai, the delegates participated in the inaugural function of a photographic exhibition "World Heritage in China" organized jointly by the Embassy of China and the India-China Society, Maharashtra. At Aurangabad, the delegates visited places of tourist interest. In Delhi, the delegation called on Secretary, Ministry of Culture and Director, National Museum.
- Mr. Zhang Xing Sheng, Vice Minister of Education, along with three other Chinese officials, visited Mumbai during 10-11 July 2003 to study the educational system in Indian schools and universities. During their stay, the delegation visited Sophia College and University of Mumbai and held discussions on educational systems in Indian municipal schools, colleges and Indian universities.
- An 8-member delegation led by Zhao Xi Zheng, Executive President of State Grid Corporation of China visited Bangalore from 12-13 July 2003 at the invitation of Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd., Bangalore. The External Affairs Minister also visited INFOSYS, Bangalore where they saw video presentation of the company's projects, their achievements and future projects.
- A 19-member Chinese business delegation led by Rao Dingguo, Vice-Chairman, Chinese Council for Promotion of International Trade, Hunan Sub-Council visited Mumbai from 13-14 October 2003 and participated in an interactive meeting on "Business Opportunities between India & Hunan Province, China" which was organized by the Indian Merchants Chamber, Mumbai.
- An 8-member Chinese delegation led by Mr. Fan Fangping, Vice Minister for Justice visited India from 14-20 October 2003 to study the working of prisons, judiciary etc. The delegates visited Central Jail, Tihar. The delegation called on the Attorney General, Chief Justice of Delhi High Court and Union Minister of Law and Secretary (Law).
- A 10-member Chinese delegation from Shandong Province led by Mr. Zhang Gaoli, Secretary of Shandong Provincial Committee of Communist Party visited India from 19-24 October 2003 at the invitation of State Government of Karnataka for mutual cooperation in IT sector. An MoU was signed between Karnataka State Government and the Shandong Province in the filed of IT. In Delhi, he called on Commerce Secretary.
- A nine-member Chinese delegation led by Mr. Yao Zhongmin, Vice Governor, China Development Bank visited India during 26-27 October 2003. He met Secretary, Department of Information Technology.
- Ms. ShouJiahua, Vice Minister for Land & Resources visited during 1-3 November 2003 to attend the 19th World Mining Congress.
- Mr. Zhou Ji, Minister of Education visited India from 7-15 November 2003 to attend a Meeting on 'Education for All'.
- Mr. Li Peiyu, Vice Chairman, Standing Committee of Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress visited from 13-16 November at the invitation of Karnataka State Government.
- Mr. Chen Yuan, Governor, China Development Bank attended the seminar on "A Tale of Two Giants: India's and China's Experience with Reform and Growth" from 14-16 November 2003 in New Delhi organized by IMF and National Council of Applied Economic Research.
- South Asia Research Society (SARS), Kolkata invited eminent scholars from China to participate in an international workshop on "Facilitation of Trade and Transport Cooperation between India and China" during 26-28 November 2003 in Kolkata. A senior delegation from Yunnan Development Research Centre (YDRC), Kunming, China participated in the workshop.
- Professor Li Jingjie, Director, Institute of East European, Russian and Central Asian Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and Member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference visited India from 2-8 December 2003 under Ministry of External Affairs Distinguished Visitor's Programme. Besides Delhi, he visited Agra and Chennai.

- Ambassador Lu Qiutian, President of the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs, led a 4-member delegation to India from 16-22 December 2003 under Ministry of External Affairs Distinguished Visitor's Programme.
- n A nine-member Chinese writers delegation visited Mumbai and Aurangabad on a goodwill tour to India from 1-6 December 2003. In Mumbai, they visited the office of National Sahitya Academy, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Govt. of India, Mumbai and exchanged views and literatures with the Regional Secretary, Sahitya Academy and also with a group of Indian writers.
- A nine-member delegation led by Mr. Dai Shaoquan, Vice Chairman, Chinese Council for Promotion of International Trade of Sichuan Province visited India and held a meeting with FICCI officials and Indian businessmen in New Delhi on 18 December 2003.
- A Chinese delegation led by Dr. Ma Xiaowei, Chinese Vice Minister of Health visited India from 15-18 December 2003. Besides Delhi, he visited Agra and Mumbai. In Delhi, he had a meeting with his Indian counterpart, Secretary (Health).
- Prof. Fan Gang, Director, National Economic Research Institute, China Reform Foundation visited India under Distinguished Visitor's Programme from 24 January- 04 February 2004. He also attended the Global Development Conference on 28-29 January 2004 in New Delhi. Besides New Delhi and Agra, he also visited Mumbai.

Hong Kong

According to HKSAR statistics, India-Hong Kong trade reached US\$5.07 billion in 2003, an increase of 28.9% million over the same period last year. Indian exports reached US\$3.17 billion, an increase of 27.2%. Hong Kong exported US\$ 1.90 billion worth of goods to India, representing an increase of 31.9%. India achieved a positive trade balance of US\$1.27 billion with Hong Kong in 2003.

Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley visited Hong Kong during 23-24 September 2003 to address the CLSA Investors' Forum 2003. The main event at the Forum was his address to over 300 international investors at the Forum. His speech focused on the unique features of Indian development, Government of India's disinvestment programme, WTO talks, etc. He also interacted with media representatives and leading fund management houses in the region. His programme also included interviews with the Business Week and CNN.

An MoU was signed between the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) and the Chinese Manufacturers' Association (CMA), Hong Kong on 27 July 2003 for closer cooperation on economic and trade matters. Major trade delegations that visited Hong Kong during this period included a delegation from Gujarat to promote "Vibrant Gujarat – Global Investors' Summit 2003" and a 45-member textile and garment industry delegation from Tirupur. Companies from India participated in various trade fairs in Hong Kong, including in the Jewellery and Watch Fair, Fashion Week, Asian Gifts and Premium Household Products Fair, Filmart Exhibition and the International Toys and Gifts Show.

Iran

India and Iran have congruent views on a range of regional and international issues. Regular high level exchange of visits between the two sides have led to enhanced understanding and appreciation of each other's concerns. Cooperation in the field of energy security, transit routes in the region, cooperation on Afghanistan and its reconstruction and increasing bilateral trade and commercial relations has imparted a strategic dimension to India-Iran relations.

President Khatami's Visit and The New Delhi Declaration

President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami paid a State Visit to India from 24-28 January 2003. The New Delhi Declaration signed during the State Visit of President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami to India in January

2003, puts forth the vision of strategic partnership between India and Iran for a more stable, secure and prosperous region and for an enhanced regional and global cooperation. His presence as the Chief Guest in the Republic Day parade symbolized the strengthening of India-Iran friendship. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and President Khatami signed the New Delhi Declaration during the visit. The Declaration puts forth the vision of strategic partnership between India and Iran for a more stable, secure and prosperous region and for enhanced regional and global co-operation. It touches all aspects of bilateral co-operation: cooperation in the field of hydrocarbons, science and technology, information technology, education and training, reconstruction of Afghanistan, international terrorism, and other global issues. Following the vision for strategic partnership embodied in the New Delhi Declaration, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the road map to strategic cooperation was also signed which sets a five-year target oriented framework for milestones towards the strategic partnership. Six other documents, viz. Agreement on Science and Technology cooperation, MoUs on cooperation in Hydrocarbons sector, Vocational Training and Urban Water Management, Cultural Exchange Programme 2003-2005 and a Framework Agreement on operationalisation of US\$ 200 million Indian line of credit to be implemented by EXIM Bank through a group of Iranian banks were also signed. Apart from having a meeting with Prime Minister, President Khatami met Indian President and received Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister. President Khatami was accompanied by Defence Minister, Oil Minister and Minister of Science, Research and Technology. President Khatami was conferred Honorary Doctorate by University of Delhi. He also released the English version of his work "Islam, Dialogue and Civil Society" published in India by Jawaharlal Nehru University. President Khatami addressed a CII-FICCI sponsored business meeting. He also visited information technology and other scientific establishments in Hyderabad.

Head of Judiciary of Iran, Ayatollah Seyed Mohammad al-Hashimi Shahroudi visited India from 9-15 March 2004 at the invitation of Chief Justice of India and Union Minister of Law & Justice. He called on President, Prime Minister and Chief Justice of India. Bilateral relations, especially development of relations in the field of judicial cooperation were discussed.

High level political exchanges

The year saw regular high-level political exchanges between the two sides during the year. Shri Manohar Joshi, Speaker, Lok Sabha visited Iran from 3-6 November 2003. An India-Iran Parliamentary Friendship Group consisting of Parliamentarians from both sides was established during the visit further promoting parliamentary cooperation between the two countries. Dr. Justice A.S. Anand, Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission visited Iran from 21-26 June 2003 on the invitation of Mr. Mohammad H. Ziaefar, Secretary General, Islamic Human Rights Commission of Iran. The two sides stressed on the importance of regular exchanges between them in the field of human rights.

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh led the Indian delegation to the trilateral India-Iran- Afghanistan meeting held in Tehran from 4-5 January 2003. India and Iran have stressed on the need for a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan free from external interference. The two countries have also stressed on the need for joint efforts of reconstruction in Afghanistan. In the meeting, the three countries expressed their support to the development of alternative access routes to Afghanistan through the Chahbahar port of Iran via Melak-Zaranj-Delaram road stretch in Afghanistan.

Union Labour Minister Shri Sahib Singh Verma visited Tehran from 8-12 January 2003. A Joint Statement was signed during the visit to explore co-operation in areas of mutual interest including vocational training.

At the level of Foreign Ministers, Foreign Minister Dr Kamal Kharrazi paid a brief visit to India on 24 August 2003. During the visit, he called on the Prime Minister and

External Affairs Minister. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha visited Iran from 13-14 December 2003 to co-chair the 13th session of the India-Iran Joint Commission Meeting. Besides having wide ranging discussions with his Iranian counterpart, Dr Kamal Kharrazi, he also called on President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami and other Iranian leaders. Shri Yashwant Sinha and Foreign Minister Kharrazi also met on the sidelines of the G-15 Summit at Caracas on 27 February 2004. External Affairs Minister also called on President Khatami at Caracas.

From the Iranian side, Labour and Social Affairs Minister, Mr Seyed Safdar Hosseini paid a visit to India from 28-31 August 2003. Minister of Industry and Mines Mr. Ishaq Jahangiri visited India from 1-5 November 2003 to participate in the 19th World Mining Congress on the invitation of Minister of State for Mines Shri Ramesh Bais. During his visit, he also called on Minister of State for Steel Shri B.K. Tripathi. Minister of Agricultural Crusade, Mr Mahmoud Hoggaji visited India from 14-18 December 2003.

India and Iran also agreed to explore opportunities of cooperation in agreed areas, including training and exchange of visits. Commander of Iranian Air Force Brig. Gen. Reza Pardis visited India from 4-10 May 2003. Two Iranian training ships "Lavan" and "Bandar Abbas" made a goodwill visit to Mumbai from 5-10 March 2003. Another Iranian naval ship "Tonb" visited Mumbai from 8-13 March 2004. Indian Naval Ship "Krishna" visited Bandar Abbas from 14-17 October 2003.

Security and Strategic Consultations

Situation in Iraq and Afghanistan was the focus of discussions between the two sides during various bilateral exchanges. Iranian Foreign Minister Dr Kamal Kharrazi and External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha remained in regular touch, including through telephonic discussions over the evolving situation in Iraq. During Dr Kharrazi's visit to India, the

discussions reviewed progress in bilateral cooperation in different areas and situation in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Iranian side also briefed the Indian side on the peaceful approaches of its nuclear programme.

The two sides also held regular security and strategic consultations through the established mechanisms of interaction between their National Security Councils and Strategic Dialogue. National Security Adviser, Shri Brajesh Mishra visited Iran on 25- 26 April 2003 for regular consultations with his Iranian counterpart Mr Hassan Roohani, Secretary, Supreme National Security Council. He also called on President Khatami and Foreign Minister Dr Kharrazi. Mr Roohani visited India from 25-27 February 2004 and met Shri Mishra. He also called on the Prime Minister. India and Iran held the third round of Dialogue at the level of Foreign Secretary/Deputy Foreign Minister, which took place at New Delhi on 21 July 2003.

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Madhvendra Singh visited Iran at the invitation of his counterpart Commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy Rear Admiral Mohtaj from 17-21 January 2003. During his visit, Chief of the Naval Staff visited the First Naval Region at Bandar Abbas. He also called on Defence Minister Ali Shamkhani. Both sides reiterated the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean region and the need for close co-operation to ensure peace and stability in the region. Home Secretary visited Iran from 9-12 February 2003 for Home Secretary/Deputy Interior Minister level talks. Bilateral co-operation in prevention of drug trafficking and counter-terrorism, proposals for conclusion of Extradition Treaty and Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance and other issues of mutual interest were discussed.

Cooperation in the hydrocarbons sector

India's cooperation with Iran in the hydrocarbons sector is important for addressing the energy security needs of

India. Iran's vast energy reserves and India's growing energy needs provide a basis for bilateral cooperation in this sector. India is committed to ensure a cost-effective, long term and secure mode of transfer of Iranian gas to India. The India-Iran Joint Committee on transfer of Iranian gas to India is entrusted with examining all aspects of this issue. The sixth meeting of this Committee was held at New Delhi on 24 November 2003 at New Delhi. The Committee reviewed the progress of feasibility studies being undertaken of transfer of Iranian gas to India.

Following the visit of President Khatami and signing of the MoU on cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector, India and Iran have taken several steps to broad base their cooperation in this field. The two sides have constituted a Joint Working Group (JWG) on cooperation in hydrocarbons sector. The first meeting of the JWG was held in New Delhi from 8-9 May and continued in Tehran on 10-11 May 2003. Shri Ram Naik, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas visited Iran on 12-13 May 2003. As per the discussions held by the JWG, India and Iran agreed to work towards long-term purchase of LNG by India from Iran. It was also agreed that Indian oil companies would participate in oil exploration fields in Iran on competitive basis. Technical discussions between the two sides on these aspects of cooperation are continuing.

India's relief assistance to Iran for earthquake at Bam

On the tragic earthquake at Bam, which took place on 26 December 2003, the President, Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister sent messages of condolences. Prime Minister and President Khatami spoke twice over the telephone on 27 December 2003 and 9 January 2004. President Khatami appreciated India's expression of sympathy and offer for relief assistance. A 64-member Indian Army medical team set up a 75-bed field hospital in Bam complete with equipment and medicines, including facility for surgery mandated to function till the end of March 2004. 10,000 blankets were also despatched to Iran for relief. 600 metric tons of high protein biscuits were sent from India

for distribution for earthquake relief in Iran. Parliament of India, in its February 2004 session expressed its condolences on the tragedy and observed silence in mark of respect to the memory of the victims of the earthquake.

Maldives

India's relations with Maldives continued to be close and friendly with 2003-04 witnessing increased political and economic interactions. Agriculture, environment, marine technology, hotel and tourism sectors were added to cooperation in public health care and education sectors.

Reflecting close bilateral political understanding, President Gayoom sent condolence messages to the President of India on the loss of lives caused in natural calamities as well as those caused due to terrorist bombings in Mumbai in August 2003. The Deputy Prime Minister, Shri L.K. Advani represented India at the inaugural ceremony of assumption of Office by President Gayoom as President of Maldives for a new term on 11 November 2003. President Gayoom assumed the Presidency of Maldives for a record sixth consecutive five-year term. His election had been confirmed in a national referendum on 17 October 2003.

Earlier, Mr. Ibrahim Hussain Zaki, Minister of Planning and National Development of Maldives visited India from 26-27 August 2003 as a Special Envoy of President Gayoom of Maldives, in the context of India's support to Maldives in the UN.

Economic relations were diversified with the visit of Mr. Midhath Hilmy, Minister of Communication, Science and Technology of Maldives with the signing of an MoU on cooperation in the field of Information Technology, specifying cooperation in development of human resources in the IT Sector, IT education and formulation of legal instruments including cyber laws. Cooperation in the area of planning was intensified with the visit of Shri K.C. Pant, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission to Maldives from 14-17 September 2003 that saw the signing of an MoU to strengthen the National Planning capacity of Maldives.

The usual cooperation in imparting training to Maldivian officials in various other areas such as agriculture, human resource development, police duties and defence continued during this period.

India and Maldives held the Joint Coast Guard exercises codenamed "DOSTI-VII" at Male from 23-27 February 2004. The exercises are aimed at strengthening defence cooperation between the two countries and also to promote interaction between Coast Guard Officers of the two countries in areas of search and rescue, pollution control (oil slick etc.) and other related activities.

A team of experts from Department of Space went to Maldives from 7 February 2004 to work on the aerial survey component for project relating to updating the digital charts of the Maldives islands. Government of India is undertaking this project under the assistance programme.

Myanmar

Our policy of engagement with Myanmar was strengthened during the year as high level exchanges intensified. The Vice President of India, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat paid a State visit to Myanmar from 2-5 November 2003 marking the first VVIP visit from India to Myanmar since the then Prime Minister of India Shri Rajiv Gandhi visited Myanmar in 1987. The resumption of visits at the highest level from India reflects the growing friendship and understanding between the two countries. The visit was preceded by earlier visits to Myanmar during the year by Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Commerce & Industry from 13-14 July 2003 and by Shri Arun Shourie, Minister of Communications and IT from 25-30 August 2003. Ties between the two countries have got an added dimension with Myanmar's membership of ASEAN as well as BIMST-EC.

Free and frank exchanges have marked the political dialogue between the two countries. During the visit of the Vice President, the Myanmar side outlined the seven- step roadmap for transition to democracy. India has expressed support for the national



The Vice President Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat called on the Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of Myanmar, Vice Senior General Maung Aye at Yangon on November 2, 2003.

reconciliation process and progress in the transition to democracy in Myanmar. Both the countries have also agreed to intensify efforts to prevent, counter and suppress the activities of terrorist groups and remain committed to ensure peace, stability and tranquillity on the common borders. An agreement was signed between the two governments on visa exemption for Official and Diplomatic Passport Holders.

During the visit of the Minister of Commerce & Industry to Myanmar an MoU on the establishment of a Joint Trade Committee (JTC) between the two countries was signed. During the first meeting of the JTC, it was agreed to set a target of US\$1 billion for bilateral trade by the year 2006. It is also likely that in addition to the border-trade taking place through Moreh (India)-Tamu (Myanmar), a second border trading point at Zowkhathar (India)-Rhi (Myanmar) will soon be opened. In a gesture of goodwill, the Indian Minister of Commerce also announced a gift of 10,000 tons of wheat to the people of Myanmar.

Myanmar Foreign Minister, U Wing Aung visited India from 19-24 January 2003. He called on Vice-President Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Finance, Shri Jaswant Singh and Minister of Disinvestment and Commerce, Shri Arun Shourie. The two foreign Ministers exchanged views and discussed a wide range of matters of mutual interest and signed a protocol, which establishes regular bilateral ministerial consultations. Myanmar Foreign Minister, U Wing Aung visited Hyderabad on 22 January 2003 where he called on Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri N. Chandrababu Naidu and visited hi-tech City and witnessed first-hand success achieved by India in the field of Information Technology. Myanmar Foreign Minister U Wing Aung visited Kolkata on 23 January 2003. He called on Governor Shri Viren J Shah and Chief Minister Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee of West Bengal State and

exchanged views on promotion trade, commerce and tourism.

Cooperation in the field of communications, IT and services was formalised through an MoU on Cooperation in Communications, IT and Services between the Ministry of Communications and IT of India and the Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telegraph of the Government of the Union of Myanmar during the visit of the Indian Minister of Communication and IT to Myanmar. A number of projects where Indian expertise can be extended are being discussed in the areas of E-learning, E-governance, Rural Telecom and for the Establishment of an Optical Fibre Cable Link between Moreh and Tamu.

The Ninth National Level Meeting between the two countries was held in Yangon from 7-10 October 2003. These meetings are chaired by the respective Home Secretaries and discussions covered security related issues, drug trafficking, rationalisation of the free movement regime, joint inspection of boundary pillars, border trade and banking arrangements, problems of Indian prisoners in Myanmar and fishermen, maintenance of the Tamu-Kalemyo-Kale road and review of various cross border projects.

The Foreign Office consultations between the two countries were held from 23-24 October 2003 in New Delhi. The Indian side was led by Shri Kanwal Sibal, the then Foreign Secretary and the Myanmar side was led by U Khin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. During the visit of the Deputy Foreign Minister an agreement on Extension of a Credit Line of US\$25 million by India to the Government of Myanmar was signed between him and Shri D.C. Gupta, Finance Secretary.

India remains committed to provide assistance in developing infrastructure within Myanmar. A number of projects are under consideration/implementation between the two sides including the Kaladan multi-modal Transport Connectivity Project, Trilateral Highway Project, upgradation of Rhi-Tiddim and Rhi-Falam Roads and the Tamanthi Hydel Project. The railway sector

is also an emerging area of cooperation between the two countries.

Cooperation in Human Resource development is another focus area of cooperation between the two countries. During the visit of the Vice President, an MoU was signed between the Ministry of Education of Myanmar and the Ministry of Human Resource Development of India. The MoU is aimed at consolidating and strengthening mutual cooperation in the field of education, which is an emerging area of cooperation between the two countries. The exchanges will focus on joint training and research programmes, conferences and seminars, exchanges of scholars and research materials and collaboration in technology.

Earlier in the year in June, another MoU was signed between the Ministry of External Affairs, Educational Consultants India Ltd. and the Government of Myanmar, which is a tripartite agreement providing for the deputation of teaching personnel from India for short term courses at Universities in Myanmar.

The Foreign Minister of Myanmar, U Win Aung, visited India on 10 July 2003 as Special Envoy of the Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) of Myanmar. The Myanmar Minister of Education, U Than Aung and the Myanmar Minister of Commerce, Brig. Gen. Pyi Sone visited India to attend conferences/fairs in July and September, respectively. A meeting was held between senior officials of the two countries on outstanding bilateral consular and financial issues in Yangon from 29 September-1 October 2003. The issues discussed related to repatriation of Myanmar fishermen, Indian citizens in Myanmar prisons, persons of Indian origin living in Myanmar and pension cases pertaining to Indian nationals who had retired from Government service in Myanmar.

Cooperation and exchanges in the defence sector continued through the mechanism of the biannual border liaison meetings. The highlight in this sector was the visit of Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee & Chief of Naval Staff of India Admiral Madhvendra Singh to Myanmar from 4-7

September 2003 and the visit of the Myanmar C-in-C Air Force Maj. Gen. Myat Hein to India from 31 August -5 September 2003.

The Embassy of India, Yangon, in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), organised an exhibition "Made in India Show" from 19-22 February 2004. In addition to the display of goods and services by Indian companies, the show also included a Food Festival and seminars on 'Across Borders: India-Myanmar Trade and Economic Cooperation' and 'ICT Linkages: Connecting India and Myanmar'.

Nepal

India and Nepal enjoy close relations reflecting the historical, geographical, cultural and linguistic links between our two countries and an open border stretching over 1860 kms across which people and goods move freely. Indian Rupee is a legal tender in Nepal. Over 60% of Nepal's global trade is India-centric and nearly half of the Foreign Direct Investment in the country originates from India. Inevitably, events in one country influence the other in many ways and India naturally attaches high priority to strengthening the ongoing bilateral co-operation with Nepal for the mutual benefit of our peoples.

In keeping with India's close relationship, several high-level interactions took place between the two countries during the year, which provided opportunities to review the bilateral relations and contributed to the consolidation of bilateral relations. Nepalese Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa paid a working visit to India in his capacity as the Head of Government of the outgoing SAARC Chairman country, Nepal. Minister for Communication and Information Technology, Shri Arun Shourie visited Nepal from 10-11 September 2003 to inaugurate WLL telephone service, a Joint Venture between Mahanagar Telecommunications Nigam Ltd, Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd, Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd and Nepal Ventures Private Ltd (NVPL). Nepalese Minister for Information and Communication, and Health Mr. Kamal

Thapa had occasion to meet with Indian leaders in New Delhi during the South East Asian Regional Conference of WHO from 7-9 September 2003 and again in November 2003 at the SAARC Health Ministers' Conference. Foreign Secretary visited Nepal during 9-11 July to participate in SAARC Standing Committee Meeting. At the working level, there were regular interactions between the officials of Ministries of External Affairs, Home Affairs, Commerce, Water Resources, Finance etc. with a view to review the various aspects of our bilateral cooperation.

The India-Nepal Inter-Governmental Committee Meeting on Trade, Transit and Cooperation to Control Unauthorised Trade, at the level of Commerce Secretaries, was held in Kathmandu from 29-31 January 2004. A comprehensive review of various trade and transit issues was undertaken in the meeting.

Home Secretary-level talks between India and Nepal were held in Kathmandu from 2-3 February 2004. These talks were preceded by the Fifth Meeting of the India-Nepal Joint Working Group on Border Management. A comprehensive review of issues relating to security cooperation between India and Nepal was undertaken in the meetings.

Foreign Secretary Shri Shashank visited Nepal from 22-25 February 2004. During the visit, he called on King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa and Dr. Bhekh Bahadur Thapa, Ambassador at Large, and held extensive bilateral discussions with the Nepalese Foreign Secretary. He also had interaction with a cross-section of the Nepalese polity.

Substantial progress was achieved on a number of bilateral issues. Discussions were initiated on the 300 MW Upper Karnali Hydro-electric project to be taken up by India on Build Own Operate Transfer (BOOT) basis and for preparation of a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for 600 MW Budhi Gandaki Hydro-electric project in Nepal. The two Governments have agreed to set up a Joint Project Office for the Sapt

Kosi Multipurpose Project to carry out field investigations to update data for the preparation of a DPR for the project. A Master Plan on Flood Forecasting and Warning System has been completed and would be taken up for implementation. Rail Services Agreement to operationalize the Inland Container Depot at Birgunj in Nepal was initialed. Progress has been made towards conclusion of Motor Vehicles Agreement, Extradition Treaty, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty and Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement between the two countries. A Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues has been set up with a view to strengthen the ongoing security related cooperation.

Maoist Insurgency in Nepal

The security situation in Nepal continues to be a cause of concern. The year 2003 began on a positive note when a ceasefire was announced between Maoists and Government of Nepal on 29 January. Subsequently, three rounds of talks were held between the Government and the Maoists on 27 April, 9 May, and 17 August 2003 respectively. The talks ultimately broke down because of disagreement on the issue of elections to the Constituent Assembly and Maoists withdrew from the ceasefire on 27 August 2003. Since then, Maoist violence has continued unabated and is now threatening areas in the Terai. Meanwhile, political parties continue to agitate against the "regressive" measures since 4 October 2002 and have refused to join the Government.

India's consistent position remains that a national consensus needs to be evolved based on the principles of multiparty democracy and constitutional monarchy to effectively address the challenges posed by the Maoist insurgency. Only a representative government, with the participation of all parliamentary parties, working in close cooperation with the monarchy, could help in evolving a sustainable solution to the conflict. India has strongly condemned

the recourse to violence by Maoists and continues to support all efforts of Government of Nepal to restore normalcy and order in the country.

Indian Para military forces have been deployed at sensitive areas of the India - Nepal border to keep a close vigil along the border to prevent miscreants from misusing the open border between the two countries.

Government of India provides a generous aid package to Nepal with an average annual budget of Rs.60 crores to Rs.75 crores. A number of projects in areas relating to infrastructure, health, water resources, rural and community development, education, etc. are currently underway. During the year, work on a major aid-project involving laying of optical fibre cable network along the East-West Highway was commenced which would greatly improve telecommunication facility within Nepal and between India and Nepal. Another project has been formulated on the development of border infrastructure, which will facilitate Nepal's trade and transit and improve the security along the border.

Cultural linkages between India and Nepal are supplemented by over 100 scholarships to Nepalese students offered annually. Another 50-60 distance education scholarships are provided to Nepalese students at the Indira Gandhi National Open University. Training programmes are offered to employees of Government of Nepal in various institutions under Indian Technical and Economic Training Programme (ITEC) and under the Colombo Plan. 50 scholarships are awarded to meritorious Nepalese students for undergraduate courses in Nepal. During the year, a new scheme, the Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship Scheme, was introduced under which 500 scholarships would be awarded to meritorious Nepalese students every year for class XI-XII in Nepal.

Pakistan

India has always desired peaceful, friendly and cooperative relations with Pakistan as envisaged in the Simla Agreement. All the policy initiatives taken by India, including,

over the past few years, the Composite Dialogue in 1998, Prime Minister's visit to Lahore in 1999, and the invitation extended to President General Pervez Musharraf for summit level talks at Agra in July 2001, were underpinned by this objective.

Government have been making continued efforts to build upon the possibilities that exist and to catalyze the desire of people on both sides to have peaceful and friendly relations. At the same time, mindful of the fact that careful preparation is necessary so that there is a meaningful engagement at the higher levels, government have, since April last year, adopted a step-by-step approach to normalize relations with Pakistan.

Prime Minister's Initiative: 18 April 2003

In keeping with this spirit, Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, at a public rally in Srinagar on 18 April 2003, had once again extended the hand of friendship to Pakistan. Following this gesture, he received a telephone call from Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali of Pakistan on 28 April 2003. The two Prime Ministers discussed ways of moving bilateral relations forward. In this context, Prime Minister Vajpayee suggested the importance of economic cooperation, cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts, as progress on these issues could help create a climate conducive to addressing more difficult issues. During the call, the importance of early resumption of civil aviation and implementation of decisions on trade and economic cooperation taken at the SAARC Kathmandu Summit was also emphasised

Prime Minister Vajpayee had, in his suo-moto statement in Parliament on 2 May 2003, stated, "*we are committed to the improvement of relations with Pakistan, and are willing to grasp every opportunity for doing so. However, we have repeatedly expressed the need to create a conducive atmosphere for a sustained dialogue, which necessarily requires an end to cross border terrorism and the dismantling of its infrastructure*".

Several significant subsequent steps included-

- restoration of relations at the level of High Commissioners;
- resumption of the Delhi-Lahore bus service;
- high level exchanges at the level of Parliamentarians, businessmen, media, artists, writers, judges, peace activists, sporting contacts, and others;
- free medical treatment to 20 Pakistani children;
- release of prisoners and fishermen on both sides;
- increase in the strength of the respective High Commissions.

These generated a positive resonance amongst the people in the two countries.

Indian proposals to Pakistan: 22 October 2003

On 22 October 2003, India announced further steps to promote people to people contact between the two countries. The proposals included-

- resumption of civil aviation links to be followed by resumption of the rail link;
- resumption of bilateral sporting encounters including cricket;
- permission to senior citizens (65 years and above) to cross at Wagah on foot;
- holding of visa camps in different cities to benefit the people;
- increasing the capacity of the Delhi-Lahore-Delhi bus service by running more buses;
- the establishment of links between the Coast Guards authorities of the two countries;
- the non-arrest by either side of fishermen of the other country within a certain band on the sea;
- provision of free medical treatment to a second lot of 20 Pakistani children;
- resumption of passenger shipping services between Mumbai and Karachi;



The Nepalese Prime Minister Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa calls on the President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam in New Delhi on November 25, 2003.

- commencement of a bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad;
- starting a bus or rail link between Munabao in Rajasthan (India) and Khokrapar in Sind (Pakistan) ; and
- further increase in size of the respective High Commissions.

Pakistan's initial response on 29 October 2003 was inadequate. While welcoming some of the proposals, like allowing senior citizens to cross Wagah on foot, establishing links between Indian Coast Guards and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency, and resumption of bilateral sporting contacts, they opted to politicise the humanitarian gestures and attached impractical, extraneous and delaying conditions to others.

However, on 23 November 2003, the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali responded positively to the communication links proposed by India on 22nd October. He, inter alia, stated that Pakistan was ready to open discussions on Indian proposals regarding opening Khokrapar - Munabao route, ferry service between Karachi and Mumbai, establishing bus link between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar and communication links between the two coast guards. India welcomed the Pakistani response and proposed immediate technical level talks for early implementation of these proposals.

Ceasefire along the International Border, LOC and AGPL in J&K

Prime Minister of Pakistan, on 23 November 2003, also announced that Pakistan armed forces along the LOC had been issued instructions to *ceasefire* along the LOC with effect from Eid-al-Fitr. India welcomed the Pakistani decision, but also made it clear that in order to establish a full ceasefire on a durable basis, there must be an end to infiltration from across the Line of Control (LOC). To take this process (of ceasefire) further, India also proposed a ceasefire along the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) in Siachen. The matter was discussed during the conversation between the Director General Military Operations of the two

countries on 25 November 2003, and it was agreed to observe a ceasefire on the International Border, LOC and AGPL with effect from the midnight of November 25, 2003.

Restoration of Communication links

After the resumption of the Delhi-Lahore Bus service, steps were initiated to restore civil aviation and rails links between the two countries. Consequently, during the second round of Civil Aviation talks, held in New Delhi on 1 December 2003, India and Pakistan agreed to resume simultaneous point-to-point services and over-flights with effect from 1 January 2004 on a reciprocal basis. Further, during technical level discussions between the railway authorities of the two countries held on 18-19 December 2003 in New Delhi, it was decided to resume Samjahuta Express and freight train services with effect from 15 January 2004.

Prime Minister's visit to Islamabad: 4-6 January 2004

The above process was taken significantly forward through Prime Minister's visit to Islamabad (January 4-6, 2004) for the SAARC Summit. On the sidelines of the Summit, Prime Minister Vajpayee had meetings with Pakistan Prime Minister Jamali and President Musharraf. Besides, External Affairs Minister and Foreign Secretary also made courtesy calls on their counterparts. These meetings had a positive impact.

A Joint Press Statement was also issued after Prime Minister Vajpayee's meeting with President Musharraf. Both leaders welcomed the recent steps towards normalisation of relations between the two countries and expressed the hope that the positive trends set by the CBMs would be consolidated. Prime Minister Vajpayee said that in order to take forward and sustain the dialogue process, violence, hostility and terrorism must be prevented. President Musharraf reassured Prime Minister Vajpayee that he would not permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner. To carry the

process of normalisation forward, the two leaders agreed to commence the process of the Composite Dialogue in February 2004.

Joint Secretary and Foreign Secretary level meetings: 16-18 February 2004

Subsequently, the Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India met in Islamabad on February 18, 2004. They reviewed and endorsed the agreement worked out at the Joint Secretary/ Director General level meetings on 16-17 February 2004 on the modalities and timeframe for discussions on all subjects on the agenda of the Composite Dialogue.

The following schedule of meetings was agreed to in the Joint Press Statement issued after the Foreign Secretaries level meeting in Islamabad on 18 February 2004:-

- Foreign Secretaries would meet in May/ June 2004 for talks on Peace and Security including CBMs; and Jammu and Kashmir. Talks on Siachen; Wullar Barrage/ Tulbul Navigation Project; Sir Creek; Terrorism and Drug Trafficking; Economic and Commercial Cooperation; and Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in Various Fields would be held at the already agreed levels, in July 2004.
- The following technical level meetings would be held earlier-Meeting between Director General Pakistan Rangers and Inspector General Border Security Force in March / April 2004; Expert level talks on Nuclear CBMs in the latter half of May 2004; Committee on Drug Trafficking and Smuggling in June 2004.
- The External Affairs Minister of India and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan would meet in August 2004 to review overall progress. This would be preceded by a one-day meeting of the Foreign Secretaries.

The existing links between the Directors General Military Operations of Pakistan and India were also reviewed during the meeting and it was agreed to consider further strengthening these contacts.



The Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee addressing the SAARC Summit at Islamabad



The Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee meets the President of Pakistan Mr. Pervez Musharraf on the sidelines of 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad on January 5, 2004.

Release of Fishermen on both sides

During the year 2003, India released 93 Pakistani fishermen with 8 boats and Pakistan released 623 Indian fishermen with 97 boats. Consular access to 268 Indian fishermen, who were detained by the Pakistani authorities was secured on 15-17 March 2004. Government, through diplomatic channels, are continuously taking up the matter of their early release and repatriation with the Pakistani Government.

Visits of pilgrims

In pursuance of Prime Minister's initiative, visits of pilgrims to religious shrines regulated by the Bilateral Protocol of 1974, which were interrupted in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament, were resumed. Accordingly, 100 pilgrims visited Pakistan on the occasion of Baisakhi (in April 2003), 200 pilgrims went on the occasion of the Martyrdom day of Guru Arjan Dev (June 2003), 200 pilgrims visited for the Barsi of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (June 2003), 500 pilgrims went on the occasion of the Birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev (November 2003), and a group of about 170 pilgrims visited Kataraj in Pakistan on the occasion of Maha Shivratri (February 2004). It was also decided to send a jatha of 3000 pilgrims in April 2004 for Baisakhi celebrations.

Other developments

A technical level meeting for starting a bus service between Munabao (Rajasthan) and Khokhrapar (Sindh) was held in Islamabad on 9-10 March 2004. India proposed to Pakistan that the bus service could be started with effect from 1 August 2004. However, Pakistan side said that they required more time to make an assessment of the infrastructure required on their side in order to operationalise bus service. A Joint Press Statement was issued on 10 March 2004 in which the two sides affirmed their commitment to commence the bus service between Khokhrapar and Munabao, and agreed to meet again to continue discussions. The technical level meeting on the commencement of Srinagar- Muzaffarabad bus service was postponed after mutual consultations.

Meanwhile, as agreed to during FS level talks in February 2004, a meeting between Inspector General Border Security Force and Director General Pakistan Rangers took place on 24 -27 March 2004. Inter alia, issues relating to drug trafficking and smuggling of contrabands, illegal crossings, maintenance and repair of boundary pillars, etc were discussed.

The tour of the Indian cricket team to Pakistan, after a gap of about 15 years, in March 2004 marked the resumption of bilateral sporting encounters in this field. The visit of the Indian team generated much enthusiasm among the people of the two countries.

Status of cross border terrorism

A ceasefire along the International Border, Line of Control, and the Actual Ground Position Line in Jammu and Kashmir, which is being observed since November 25, 2003 has continued to hold. Though there has been some decline in cross border infiltration, Pakistan is yet to take credible steps to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism.

Government favour the resolution of all differences with Pakistan through bilateral dialogue in accordance with the Simla Agreement. Government would continue to carry forward the present process in India-Pakistan relations. However, the sustainability of the process necessarily requires Pakistan to fulfill its assurances to not permit any territory under its control to be used to support terrorism in any manner.

Sri Lanka

India-Sri Lanka relations consolidated further in 2003-2004. Apart from the large number of high-level political exchanges, there was much progress on the economic front with bilateral trade crossing the US\$ 1 billion mark. Following the signing of a Ceasefire Agreement with the LTTE in February 2002, Sri Lanka, facilitator Norway and Japan have been keeping India regularly briefed on developments in the peace process.

Sri Lankan Peace Process

The end of years of ethnic violence in Sri Lanka with the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement between the Sri Lankan Government (SLG) and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) enabled a reinvigorating of India-Sri Lanka bilateral relations, especially on the economic front. Progress in the Sri Lankan peace process was far from smooth. Despite six rounds of talks the LTTE showed no inclination to decommission its arms. Thereafter, it suspended participation in the peace talks and announced that it would not participate in the Tokyo Donors Conference in June 2003 citing its exclusion from the Aid-to-Sri Lanka Seminar in Washington in April and its dissatisfaction with the slow progress, on the ground, in the administration of aid in the North and East. The LTTE also rejected the first two proposals offered by the SLG for Interim Administrative structure in the North-East. In July 2003, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister offered a third set of revised proposals for an Interim Administration for the North and the East consisting of a three-tier mechanism, the Provisional Administrative Council that would be made up of members nominated by the SLG, including nominees of People's Alliance which includes Sri Lankan President's party (Sri Lanka Freedom Party - SLFP), the Sri Lankan Muslim Congress and the LTTE, with a large degree of devolution of powers to regional administration except in areas of police, security, land and revenue.

At the Tokyo Donors' Conference where US\$ 4.5 billion was pledged over three years for the reconstruction of the Sri Lankan economy, India was represented at the level of Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India in Tokyo and made no pledge since India has a large bilateral assistance programme. LTTE's absence was strongly criticised by all. The Tokyo Declaration called for a simultaneous decommissioning of its arms with the shrinking of High Security Zones manned by the Sri Lankan Army and linked disbursement of aid to progress in peace talks.

The LTTE made "counterproposals" to the SLG's proposals on 31 October 2003. The

counterproposals were of a secessionist nature with LTTE arrogating to the Interim self-Governing Authority (ISGA) for the North and the East, many of the attributes of sovereignty by keeping key subjects such as the signing of international treaties, external trade, resolution of disputes, control of maritime boundaries, under its control. There was no role for institutions of the SLG. Within the ISGA, the LTTE arranged for absolute majority and absolute power for governance. It proposed a separate Financial Commission, and full control of finances by the ISGA.

The counterproposals put pressure on the already delicate relationship between the President and Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. The President had all along expressed concern at the continuing consolidation of the LTTE on the ground, arms-smuggling and child recruitment and the manner in which the negotiations were being conducted by the SLG. She was especially concerned that the security threats to Sri Lanka were not being addressed sufficiently. Based on a judgement of the Sri Lankan Supreme Court, that the plenary powers relating to the defence of Sri Lanka including the powers to make regulations under Army, Navy and Air Force Act were reposed in the President, she took over the portfolios of Defence, Interior and Mass Communications from the SLG citing reasons of danger to national security due to "ineffective steps taken by the Sri Lankan Administration". She assured the nation that the Ceasefire Agreement with the LTTE would not be disrupted and expressed her willingness to hold discussions with the LTTE for a balanced solution within the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister was in USA on an official visit at that time. The Sri Lankan President prorogued Parliament until 19 November 2003 when it reconvened to enable the Government to present its budget proposals.

Norway temporarily suspended its facilitation activities citing the domestic political developments in Sri Lanka. The President and the Prime Minister have met several times since, and appointed a Committee of Officials to work out

consensual approach for smooth governance and negotiations with the LTTE.

India expressed surprise at the sudden political developments of 4 November 2003 in Sri Lanka and stated that the situation should not provoke a crisis impacting on the political stability and ongoing peace process.

President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga dissolved the Sri Lankan Parliament with effect from mid-night Saturday, 7 February 2004. The 13th Parliamentary election in Sri Lanka will be held on 2 April 2004. The President indicated that she would seek a four-point popular mandate for (a) continuation of peace negotiations with the LTTE (b) abolition of Executive Presidency (c) revision of the electoral system and (d) introduction of market-oriented economic development and guarantee of social justice.

Her decision to hold elections came after unsuccessful negotiations for power-sharing between the President and the Prime Minister on key issues such as (i) dealing with the Ceasefire Agreement between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE (ii) dealing with peace process negotiations and (iii) good governance, electoral reforms etc.

Government of India's Position

Government of India has been consulted by the senior political leadership of Sri Lanka throughout. Government of India supports the actions of the Government of Sri Lanka for a peaceful resolution of the ethnic conflict within the territorial integrity and unity of the country in a manner satisfactory to the aspirations of members of Sri Lankan society. It believes that for a solution to be enduring it must emerge purely through an internal political process. It has reiterated its commitment to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka and to the restoration of a lasting peace through a peaceful negotiated settlement that meets the just aspirations of all elements of Sri Lankan society. India would welcome resolution of the

current impasse in the peace process and an early resumption of negotiations.

In the Joint Statement issued during the Sri Lankan Prime Minister's visit to India in October 2003, it was stated that not only will it maintain an abiding interest in the security of Sri Lanka it would welcome a resolution of the current impasse in the peace process and an early resumption of negotiations. Any interim arrangement should be an integral part of the final settlement and should be in the framework of the unity and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. An important development during the visit was India's agreeing to Sri Lankan Prime Minister's proposal for a defence cooperation agreement.

High Level Visits

President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga made a working visit from 7-10 April 2003 to deliver the first Madhao Rao Scindia Memorial Lecture organised by the Hindustan Times Group. In her bilateral discussions with the Indian political leadership, she shared her assessment of the peace process.

Her visit was followed by that of Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister for Enterprise Development, Industrial Policy & Investment Promotion and Constitutional Affairs on 13 June 2003 who came directly from the Tokyo Donors' Conference. He called on the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and National Security Adviser and External Affairs Minister and met the Foreign Secretary. To better understand the system of federalism in India, Prof. Peiris also met Additional Secretary, Department of Ladakh Affairs and Principal Secretary, Darjeeling Hill Council.

The Norwegian facilitator Erik Solheim visited India on 10 January 2003. Representative of the Government of Japan for Sri Lanka Yasushi Akashi visited India in January 2003 and briefed on Japan's role in the Peace Process and economic reconstruction of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, Prime Minister

of Sri Lanka delivered the Millennium Lecture 2003 of M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation at Chennai on 23 August 2003. The main theme of his lecture “Making Our People Rich” was the benefits of closer economic integration amongst the South Asian economies.

The Prime Minister made a working visit from 19-22 October 2003 to continue his efforts to seek India’s and the international community’s support for his Government’s action in the peace process. During this visit, far-reaching decisions were taken on further cooperation in defence and economic fields.

Defence Cooperation

India’s defence cooperation with Sri Lanka consists of training its military personnel and supply of equipment. A composite defence team visited Sri Lanka from 1-5 September 2003 to assess Sri Lankan requirements. This is expected to intensify once negotiations on the Defence Cooperation Agreement are concluded.

In May 2003, in response to Sri Lanka’s request for assistance to its flood affected areas, the assistance and despatch of relief material by Indian Defence Forces was much appreciated in Sri Lanka for the promptness with which it arrived and the efficiency with which it was delivered.

Economic Cooperation

Further liberalisation of the India-Sri Lanka FTA and identifying new areas of economic cooperation took bilateral trade in 2002 to an unprecedented US\$ 1 billion mark. This figure is expected to exceed in 2003 as well. The success of the India-Sri Lanka FTA prompted the two countries to consider negotiations for a CEPA that would facilitate the integration of the two economies. A Joint Study Group (JSG) was constituted to examine a CEPA. It completed its deliberations in September 2003 and submitted its recommendation to the two Prime Ministers who directed that negotiations should commence early.

Mr. Rohitha Bogollagama, Sri Lankan Minister of Industries visited from 20-27 April 2003 to encourage Indian investment in Sri Lanka. Shri Ram Naik, Minister of

Petroleum and Natural Gas visited Sri Lanka from 28-29 May 2003 and inaugurated the first Indian Oil Corporation petrol pump in Colombo. He also visited Trincomalee and laid the foundation stone for the modernisation of the oil tank farm at China Bay. The Minister announced that Indian Oil Corporation would invest over US\$ 100 million in Sri Lanka and would take over 250 petrol outlets besides modernising the tank farms. The Minister had a meeting with the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and offered India’s assistance for exploration of natural gas in Sri Lankan territorial waters. During Sri Lankan Prime Minister’s visit in October 2003, it was agreed that Oil & Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) would be the Indian organisation participating in the joint exploration.

A “Made-in-India” show, organised by CII in association with High Commission of India and Ceylon Chamber of Commerce was held in Colombo from 27-31 May 2003 showcasing India’s prowess in information technology, light engineering goods and consumer items.

To increase physical connectivity between India and Sri Lanka, the resumption of ferry services between Tuticorin and Colombo was considered but deferred following concerns expressed by the Tamil Nadu Government. The Sri Lankan Prime Minister later proposed a ferry service from Kochi to Colombo, which is under examination. The India-Sri Lanka Foreign Office Consultations led by Foreign Secretaries were held from 23-25 July 2003 in New Delhi. The Joint Commission Meeting (JCM), fishermen’s problems, grant of Sri Lankan citizenship to stateless persons, delineation of continental shelf between the two countries, civil aviation, cooperation in the petroleum sector and other economic issues were discussed.

The 5th India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission Meeting was held at Colombo on 14-15 October 2003. The External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, led the Indian delegation. During the visit, a Cultural Exchange Programme for 2003-06 was signed. Appreciating the work of the

India-Sri Lanka Foundation towards fostering relations through culture and education, both sides agreed to contribute Rs.1 crore each to alleviate difficulties of the Foundation to fund its project due to reduced income from its Corpus fund. An agreement to release the second tranche of US\$ 30 million out of the Government of India’s US\$ 100 million line of credit was also signed during the visit. US\$ 45 million has already been utilised by Sri Lanka on purchase of various goods from India.

The SLG appreciates the help and assistance given by India the area of healthcare, setting up of hospitals, education, supply of relief material etc. India contributed Rs.20 million for relief and rehabilitation assistance for the South of Sri Lanka ravaged by floods in May 2003. India gifted a CT scanner and a bus to Jaffna Teaching Hospital and the University of Jaffna respectively. India has also offered to contribute US\$ 7.5 million for the establishment of the state-of-art Cancer Centre in Colombo and a well-equipped hospital in the North of Sri Lanka.

Prime Minister of Sri Lanka accompanied by Mr. Tyronne Fernando, Sri Lankan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Milinda Moragoda, Minister of Economic Reforms and Science & Technology visited from 19-21 October 2003. Apart from its political content, the visit was notable for the achievements in the economic sector. The Joint Study Group (JSG) submitted its recommendations to the two Prime Ministers who directed the two sides to commence negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement to be completed by April 2004. The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the increased civil aviation links between India and Sri Lanka and agreed to do away with the existing requirement of commercial agreements between the designated airlines of the two countries. It was also decided to encourage private domestic scheduled airlines of India to extend their operations to Sri Lanka.

On fishermen’s problems, the two Governments agreed that in view of the humanitarian aspect of fishermen straying into each other’s waters in search of a



Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee with President Chandrika Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka.



The Prime Minister of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia called on the Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee on the sidelines of 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad on January 5, 2004.

livelihood, the matter should be dealt with in a practical and compassionate way. India reiterated its proposal for licensed fishing by Indian fishermen in Sri Lanka's North-Eastern waters. The two Governments agreed to enhance surveillance to minimise incursions, institutionalise assistance for salvage operations of released vessels (the two Navies already have an arrangement), pay attention to ecological and conservation aspects of the problem.

Mr. Mahinda Samarasinghe, Sri Lankan Minister of Employment and Labour and the Government Whip visited Delhi from 28-30 October 2003 to participate in the Asian Summit on Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment. During his visit, he called on Minister of Labour and discussed issues of possible cooperation in the labour and employment sector between the two countries. Mr. Rauff Hakeem, Minister of Ports, Shipping, Eastern Rehabilitation and Muslim Religious Affairs of Sri Lanka visited India from 28 November-5 December 2003. He led a nine-member delegation including Members of Parliament belonging to Sri Lanka Muslim Congress. During the visit Mr. Hakeem called on the External Affairs Minister, Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha and Attorney General of India.

The Sri Lankan Commander of the Army Staff visited India from 8-13 December 2003. It was significant against the background of submission of LTTE's separatist counterproposals, the taking over of the defence portfolio by the President of Sri Lanka and our commitment to increase defence cooperation with Sri Lanka and negotiate a Defence Cooperation Agreement. During the visit he called on Raksha Mantri and held discussions with the three Service Chiefs.

Sri Lankan Defence Secretary Mr. Cyril Herath accompanied by the Sri Lankan Army Commander Lt. Gen. L.P. Ballagalle and a legal expert came on an official visit to India from 14-16 January 2004 on invitation of our Defence Secretary for negotiations on entering into a Defence Cooperation Agreement.

Mr. Milinda Moragoda, Minister of

Economic Reform, Science and Technology visited India from 23-26 January 2004. During the visit Mr. Moragoda called on the Minister of External Affairs to brief on the latest developments on the domestic political situation in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar, Senior Advisor to the Sri Lankan President and former Foreign Minister visited India in December 2003 at the invitation of the Hindustan Times Group for its Leadership Initiative Conference. He again visited New Delhi from 24-30 January 2004 to attend the Sixth Asian Security Conference organised by Institute of Defense Studies and Analyses. During the visit Mr. Kadirgamar called on the External Affairs Minister, Minister of Defence and National Security Advisor to brief them on the latest developments on the domestic political situation in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Rohitha Bogollagama, Minister of Industries visited India in January 2004 to sign an MoU on bilateral cooperation in the area of small-scale industries between India and Sri Lanka. The MoU was signed on 27 January 2004. Dr. C.P. Thakur, Minister of Small Scale Industries signed the MoU from the Indian side.

Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Special Representative of the Government of Japan on Sri Lanka visited India from 25-29 January 2004. During the visit, he called on the National Security Advisor and the Foreign Secretary to brief them on the latest developments in Sri Lanka. The crucial negotiations between India and Sri Lanka for a Comprehensive Partnership Agreement are also supposed to take place soon.

SAARC

Emergency Meeting of SAARC Health Ministers on SARS Epidemic was held on 29 April 2003 in Male. The one-day Meeting decided to strengthen cooperation among Member States on taking measures to prevent and control the spread of SARS in the region as well as to adopt comprehensive preventive measures such as screening it at entry points, transfer of possible SARS patients to quarantine or isolation facilities, and to ensure effective contact tracing. They

further decided to take such measures on the basis of human safety and not that of convenience or economic benefits.

The twenty-first meeting of SAARC Audio Visual Exchange Committee was held in Thimphu on 21-22 January 2003. The second meeting of Heads of National Television/Radio Organisations was held in Islamabad on 28 & 29 January 2003.

4th Special Session of the SAARC Standing Committee and the Meeting of the Preparatory Committee to the Special Session were held during 8-10 July 2003 in Kathmandu. Besides other decisions, the Committee reached a consensus on the dates for holding of the Twelfth Summit of the Association in January 2004 in Pakistan. The developments in the work of the Association since the last Meeting in August 2002 were also discussed. The Committee also reviewed the current status of economic cooperation, social development, poverty alleviation and other areas of common interest in the region.

First tier Meeting of the Secretaries to the Governments in the Ministries/Departments concerned with Poverty Eradication & Social Development took place on 21-23 July 2003 in Colombo. The Meeting discussed the present functioning and efficacy of the SAARC Three-tier Mechanism on Poverty Alleviation as also on measures to improve it. It also deliberated on the report of the Third Meeting of the SAARC Finance and Planning Ministers held in Islamabad in April 2002 including the Plan of Action adopted by the Ministers for formulating a strategy towards achieving the same.

Meeting of Senior Officials assisted by Legal Experts was held on Colombo from 27-29 August 2003. The Meeting was held as a follow-up of the decision on the eleventh Summit to strengthen the SAARC Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, which came into force in 1987. The meeting agreed on a majority of the provisions of the draft text of an Additional Protocol to the Convention proposed by Sri Lanka.

An Expert Group Meeting on Establishment of SAARC Information Centre was also

held. In pursuance of the decision of the Heads of SAARC National TV and Radio Organisations taken at Islamabad on 28-29 January 2003, the Expert Group met in Islamabad on 8-9 September 2003 to discuss various aspects such as location, structure, administrative and financial matters and work programme of the proposed Information Centre.

Informal Meetings of the SAARC Council of Ministers were held in New York on 25 September 2003 on the sidelines of UN General Assembly. The SAARC Council of Ministers, comprising Foreign Ministers of the Member Countries held informal discussions on various issues, including the outcome of the Fourth Special Session of the Standing Committee, progress made in the area of poverty alleviation, preparations for the Twelfth SAARC Summit to be held in Islamabad in January 2004. In addition, SAARC- ASEAN dialogues were also on the Agenda for the Council of Ministers.

The Fifth Meeting of the Committee of Experts (CoE) on drafting a comprehensive treaty regime for a South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) was held from 14-17 October 2003 in Kathmandu. A broad agreement was reached on many of the provisions of the draft framework treaty. The 5th round of negotiations on SAPTA between India and Pakistan was also held on the sidelines of SAFTA negotiations. Another meeting of the Committee of Experts took place on 30 November-1 December 2003.

The Third Meeting of the SAARC Information Ministers was held in New Delhi from 11-12 November 2003 and was attended by the concerned Ministers from SAARC countries except Maldives and Sri Lanka, which were represented by high-level delegations. The ministers discussed various issues related to cooperation in the field of information and media and also the draft common position prepared by the SAARC Secretariat for submission to the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS).

The First SAARC Health Ministers' Conference was hosted by India from 13-15 November 2003. The Health Ministers from SAARC countries, except Bangladesh and Maldives, attended the Conference. The governments of Bangladesh and Maldives were represented by high-level delegations. The Agenda of the Conference included traditional systems of medicines, issues relating to emerging and re-emerging diseases and disease surveillance (SARS/HIV/AIDS/TB), population stabilization, child health and immunization, etc.

A Meeting of Technical Committee on Communication and Transport was held on from 1-3 December 2003 in Islamabad to review the past activities and to discuss the future plans related to Telecommunications and Post Services. The Second Meeting of the SAARC Technical Committee on Energy took place from 7-8 December 2003 in Dhaka to review the progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the First Meeting of the Technical Committee and future plans.

SAARC Summit and other related meetings in Islamabad:

The SAARC Summit was held in Islamabad on 4-6 January 2004. The summit related meetings of the Preparatory Committee was held from 29-30 December 2003; Standing Committee from 31 December 2003 – 1 January 2004 and Council of Ministers from 2– 3 January 2004. This was a landmark summit. Three important Agreements were signed at the Summit:

- The SAARC Social Charter,
- The Additional Protocol on Terrorism and
- The Framework Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA).

The sincere implementation of the decisions of the Summit would bring about a

qualitative change in the lives of all South Asians.

A one-day emergency meeting of SAARC Senior officers on bird flu was held on 16 February 2004 in New Delhi. The meeting recommended enforcement of temporary ban on poultry products, poultry medicines and poultry feed from the affected countries and called for setting up two national focal points for livestock and human health in each country for the implementation of decisions taken in the meeting.

The meeting of Committee of Experts on SAFTA took place from 26-27 February 2004 in Kathmandu in order to resolve the contentious issues like sensitive list, rules of origins, technical assistance to the LDC's, and Mechanism for Compensation of Revenue Loss for the Least Developed Contracting States.

The Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Expert Group (IGEG) to consider Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment; Establishment of a SAARC Arbitration Council; and Multilateral Tax Treaty with a limited scope with regard to Avoidance of Double Taxation was hosted by India in New Delhi from 22-23 March 2004. Representatives from all member countries attended the meeting.

The Meeting discussed a draft agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment and the establishment of SAARC Arbitration Council. It agreed on a time bound program for formalization of a broad based Multilateral Tax Treaty to avoid competitive distortions, ensure certainty of tax obligations and avoidance of Double Taxation in the region. It was also agreed that the Member Countries may initiate bilateral Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement negotiations immediately wherever such agreements do not exist already.

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2. South East Asia and the Pacific

India continued to pursue closer relations with South East Asia in keeping with its Look East Policy, building on its tremendous historical and cultural linkages with the region. India also articulated the expansion of its Look East Policy to Phase II, beyond South East Asia to the Pacific region. Regular exchange of high level visits and interactions at regional and multilateral fora have contributed to a higher degree of comfort and familiarity among the leaders, which in turn helped in imparting fresh dynamism in India's relations with these countries.

Second India-ASEAN Summit

The high point in India's contacts with the region was the visit of Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Bali, Indonesia to attend the second India-ASEAN Summit from 6-8 October 2003, followed by a bilateral visit to Thailand from 8-12 October 2003. From the other end, Prime Minister of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Mr. Nong Duc Manh and Prime Minister of Laos, Mr. Bounhang Vorachit visited India during the year. A number of ministerial visits that took place during this period also helped in further consolidation of our relations with the region.

At the regional level, the bold initiatives taken by the Prime Minister at the second India-ASEAN Summit in Bali in October 2003 sent a strong message about India's seriousness and commitment to forge closer links with the region. At the Summit, a Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation between India and ASEAN was signed, an India-ASEAN Joint Declaration of Cooperation to Combat Terrorism adopted, and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) acceded to. All the leaders welcomed the Prime Minister's offer of 'Open Skies' under which the designated airlines of ASEAN countries could operate daily flights to the four metros in India and unlimited flights to 18 tourist destinations in India.

following India's admission as a Dialogue Partner of the Pacific Island Forum (PIF), India participated for the first time in Post Forum Dialogue meetings with the PIF, at Secretary level, in Wellington in August 2003. India reiterated its intention to assist in the development of the Pacific Island economies through economic and technical cooperation.

Australia

India-Australia relations continued to develop and diversify, helped by high level visits exchanged during the period. External Affairs Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha visited Australia between 27- 30 August 2003 for the 3rd India-Australia Ministerial Framework Dialogue. Both Ministers undertook a review of bilateral and regional issues, covering political, defence, economic, trade and strategic areas and agreed to set up an expert group to prepare a road map for promoting trade and investment. An MoU on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism and MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Telecommunications were signed during the visit.

Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Shri Ram Naik visited Australia from 26 -27 June 2003 in connection with promoting Australian investment in the hydrocarbon sector in India. Shri Ramesh Bais, Minister of State for Mines, visited Australia from 9-19 September 2003. The Minister was accompanied by a delegation of senior officials from Ministry of Mines, Geological Survey of India and the National Bureau of Mines. The visit was intended to expand cooperation in the field of mining and exploration between two countries.

The Third Meeting of the India-Australia Joint Working Group on Energy and Minerals was held in Canberra on 29-30 January 2003. Secretary, Department of Mines Dr. A.K. Kundra led the Indian delegation.

Cooperation in the field of defence continued to be active during the period. A National Defence College team from India visited Australia from 26-31 May 2003. An

Australian naval ship HMS Adelaide visited Chennai and carried out joint naval exercise. Both countries exchanged officers for training courses. The 3rd Round of India-Australia Strategic Dialogue, meetings of the two associated Joint Working Groups on Counter-terrorism & Immigration and Defence, and the annual Senior Officials' level Meeting were held in New Delhi from 3-4 March 2004. Discussions were held on wide ranging issues pertaining to security-related matters and bilateral issues.

Bilateral trade continued to grow during the period, reaching US\$1492.90 million from April to August 2003 compared to US\$1006.36 million during the corresponding period in 2002 and US\$1836.13 for the entire 2002-03. The State Governments of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia included India as one of their focal areas to promote trade and economic cooperation by holding special events and dispatching trade missions to India. Another important development was the approval granted to State Bank of India by Australia to upgrade its representative office in Sydney to a branch.

In the field of education, Dr. Brendan Nelson, Australian Minister for Education, Science and Training visited India on 23-24 October 2003 during which an Educational Exchange Programme between India and Australia was signed.

Brunei

Bilateral relations with Brunei Darussalam continued to be cordial and friendly. Important areas of interactions were Oil and Natural Gas, Science and Technology, Sports and Culture.

Indian Oil Corporation and the Brunei Shell Petroleum concluded a contract for supply of 250,000 Metric Tons of Seria Light Crude oil by Brunei to India during July to December 2003. This contract was renewed in January 2004 for supply of 500,000 Metric Tons of the oil.

Dato Abdullah, Permanent Secretary in Brunei Ministry of Communications led a delegation to Bangalore to see Indian IT facilities from 2-4 March 2003.

Subsequently, a few Indian IT companies were awarded contracts for software jobs in banking, telecom, etc. sectors.

Cambodia

During the year 2003-04, exchange of visits and continued interaction imparted further momentum to strengthening and diversifying the bilateral relations between India and Cambodia. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha visited Cambodia from 17-20 June 2003 to participate in the 10th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Post Ministerial Consultations (PMC) and 3rd Mekong Ganga Co-operation (MGC) meetings. On the sidelines of the regional meetings, he called on Mr. Sar Kheng, Deputy Prime Minister and Co-Interior Minister of Cambodia and formally handed over the consignment of indelible ink gifted by Government of India for use in the July 2003 General Elections in Cambodia. He also had bilateral meetings with Mr. Hor Namhong, Foreign Minister of Cambodia, and Mr. Sok An, Senior Minister and Minister-in-Charge of the Council of Ministers to take stock of bilateral cooperation. External Affairs Minister also had occasions to meet Her Royal Highness Princess Norodom Boppha Devi, Cambodian Minister of Culture & Fine Arts with whom he discussed the holding of a Fusion of Cultures festival in Siem Reap.

Princess Norodom Boppha Devi, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, led a three-member delegation to India to participate in the New Delhi Conference on "Dialogue Among Civilizations: Quest for New Perspectives" organised by the Ministry of Human Resource Development from 9-10 July 2003. During the visit, the Cambodian Minister held bilateral discussions with the Minister of Culture & Tourism, Shri Jagmohan.

India and Cambodia signed the 'Bilateral Market Access Agreement' in Geneva on 21 July 2003, required for Cambodia's accession to WTO. Shri Arun Jaitley, Commerce & Industry Minister, visited Cambodia from 2-3 September 2003 to participate in the 2nd ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM)-India

Consultations. During the visit, he held bilateral discussions with Mr. Sok An, Senior Minister and Minister in-charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers on 3 September 2003.

Two Indian Naval Ships, INS Rana and INS Kirch paid a goodwill visit to Sihanoukville from 21-25 October 2003. The two Captains of the Naval Ships called on the Co-Ministers of National Defence of Cambodia, the Governor of Sihanoukville, the Base Commander of Ream Naval Base, and other senior officials of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces. On departure on 25 October 2003 the Indian Naval Ships carried out a Passage Exercise (Passex) with the Cambodian Naval Ships.

A nine member high level delegation from Cambodia led by Princess Norodom Buppha Devi, Minister for Culture and Fine Arts visited India from 17-19 February 2004 in connection with the International Conclave on Buddhism and Spiritual Tourism organised by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture in New Delhi. The delegation also comprised Mr. Chea Savoeun, Minister for Cults and Religions, Governors of three provinces including the famous Siem Reap, two Secretaries of State and the Supreme Patriarchs of both the Buddhist Sects of Cambodia.

A two-member Parliamentary Delegation led by Secretary of the Commission on Legislation, National Assembly of Cambodia Klok Buddhi visited India from 22-27 January 2003 to attend the International Parliamentary Conference in New Delhi marking the Golden Jubilee of the Parliament of India.

Fiji

India continued with its policy of measured engagement with Fiji even while keeping a close watch on the outstanding issue of formation of a multi-party Government in accordance with the power-sharing provisions of the Fiji's Constitution. The Supreme Court of Fiji in its ruling of 18th July, 2003 upheld former Prime Minister

Mahendra Chaudhry's contention for his Fiji Labour Party to be a part of the Cabinet. The matter, however, was referred back to the Supreme Court for clarification as to the proportion of Cabinet positions entitled to the Fiji Labour Party.

Former Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry and Minister of Multi Ethnic Affairs George Shiu Raj visited India in January 2003 for the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. They called on Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs separately and briefed them on their perspectives regarding current political situation in Fiji.

In pursuance of Government of India's decision to re-open the Indian Cultural Centres in Fiji, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations is working out the logistics for the re-establishment of the Centres in Suva and Lautoka. In the meantime, ICCR provided assistance to Fiji in putting together the Indo-Fijian component of the cultural performance at the opening of the South Pacific Games, a major regional sporting event that was held in Suva in July 2003.

Fiji Government established its resident High Commission in India, which has become operational under a Charge d' affairs from January 2004.

Mr. George Shiu Raj, Minister for Multi-Ethnic Affairs of Fiji, visited India from 4-20 January 2004 to participate in the Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas (9-11 January).

With a view to assisting Fiji restructure and revitalize its sugar industry which forms the core of its economy, a Sugar Technology Mission visited Fiji from 26th January to 4th February 2004. The team studied the four sugar mills in Fiji, interacted with cane farmers, and also had intensive interaction with other stake holders. The team's Report and recommendations for restructuring the industry has received widespread support from the Fiji government as well as the opposition Fiji Labour Party of Mahendra Chaudhry.

Indonesia

With Indonesia, the largest country in Southeast Asia and a maritime neighbour, our relations continued to broaden and intensify during the year. The tradition of annual summit-level interaction established in 2000 was maintained, with the third summit-level meeting between Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and President Megawati Soekarnoputri in as many years taking place in Bali on 8 October, 2003 in the margins of the Second ASEAN-India Summit.

A delegation led by Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives of Indonesia, Soetardjo Soerjogoeitno, visited India during 21-26 January 2003 to attend the International Parliamentary Conference in New Delhi marking the Golden Jubilee of the Indian Parliament.

India unequivocally condemned a terrorist attack in Jakarta on 5 August, 2003 and in the context of a separatist insurgency in Aceh, reaffirmed its full support for the territorial integrity of Indonesia.

The First Meeting of the India-Indonesia Joint Commission, co-chaired by Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs and his Indonesian counterpart, Mr. N. Hassan Wirajuda, was held in Yogyakarta on 1-2 September, 2003. The meeting adopted several important decisions to further enhance bilateral relations covering economic and commercial, technical, S&T and defence and security cooperation.

The 2nd bilateral Joint Consultative Forum Meeting was held in New Delhi on 1 December, 2003 co-chaired by Shri R.M. Abhyankar, Secretary(ANA) on the Indian side and Mr. Makarim Wibisono, Director General for Asia, Pacific and African Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from the Indonesian side. Bilateral relations were comprehensively reviewed at the meeting and views exchanged on significant regional and international issues.

An Indonesian Parliamentary Delegation, led by Mr. Muhaimin Iskandar, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives,

paid a bilateral visit at the invitation of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, during 15-19 December 2003. During the visit, the delegation called on the Vice-President, Speaker of Lok Sabha, and Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha and witnessed the proceedings of the Lok Sabha.

Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, former President of Indonesia, visited India from 29 January-2 February 2004 to attend the Global Convention on Peace and Non-Violence at the invitation of Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, New Delhi.

Further progress was made during the year in intensifying bilateral defence cooperation. Indonesian Air Chief, Chappy Hakim visited India from 4-7 February 2003 to attend the 'Aero India' Show at Bangalore. Lt. Gen Shantonu Chaudhry, Vice Chief of Indian Army, visited Indonesia from 4-7 March 2004. Several Indonesian armed forces (TNI) officers attended military training programmes in India. The Second and Third Coordinated Joint Naval Patrolling Exercises between the Indian and Indonesian Navies were held in the Andaman Sea/Malacca Straits from 11 March to 8 April, 2003, and from 5 March-3 April 2004 respectively. Exchanges of goodwill visits by Naval ships was also intensified during the year.

Bilateral trade between India and Indonesia recorded impressive growth during 2003 and was poised to touch the US\$ 2.5 billion mark. Indonesia has emerged as a leading supplier of crude palm oil to India, as well as an important market for India's agricultural commodities. In order to promote North Sumatra and India, the Deputy Governor of the Province of North Sumatra Lundu Panjaitan led a 125-member strong business delegation to India from 17-24 January 2003 to attend the Pune Expo 2003 and the Pharma World Expo 2003 in Mumbai.

Lao PDR

The historical and traditional ties between the two countries have been put on a contemporary footing with the landmark visit of our Prime Minister to Laos in

November 2002 and return visit by Lao Prime Minister in June 2003. With Lao PDR becoming Country Coordinator for India in ASEAN since July 2003 for three years and assuming Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2004, the regional dimension in our bilateral relations has assumed significance.

The Prime Minister of Lao PDR, Mr. Bounnhang Vorachit, accompanied by a high level delegation, paid a State Visit to India from 15-22 June 2003. During his visit, Mr. Vorachit called on the President, had a meeting with the Prime Minister and participated in the delegation level talks on 16 June 2004.

He also received External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, Agriculture Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Smt. Sonia Gandhi. Mr. Vorachit also attended a Business Luncheon Meeting jointly organised by FICCI and CII in New Delhi on 16 June 2003. An Agreement on Cooperation in Science & Technology was also signed during the visit. Mr. Vorachit and his delegation also visited major commercial, economic, technological and cultural centers in Agra, Hyderabad and Mumbai.

The visit of the Lao Prime Minister was preceded by the visit of the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Laos, Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad from 4-8 May 2003. During his visit, he called on the Prime Minister and had meetings with the External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha and the Finance Minister, Shri Jaswant Singh. Discussions covered bilateral relations, preparations for the visit of the Lao Prime Minister in June 2003, and exchange of views on international and regional issues, especially with regard to ASEAN-India cooperation during the period of three years starting July 2003 in which Laos would be the Country Coordinator for India.

An 8-member Lao Parliamentary Delegation led by Mr. Samane Vignaketh, President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR, paid an official visit to India from 21-25 July 2003. During the visit, the President, Vice-President, and the Speaker of the Lok Sabha

received the Delegation. The Delegation also had a meeting with the Standing Committee on External Affairs and called on External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha.

The Minister of National Defence of Lao PDR Doung Chay Phichit paid an official visit to India from 23-26 January 2003. A Parliamentary delegation led by Vice-President of National Assembly of Lao PDR Pany Yathotou visited India from 21-26 January 2003 to attend the International Parliamentary Conference on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of the Indian Parliament.

To support the efforts of the Government of Lao PDR in its flood recovery action, the Government of India gifted a consignment of medicines and essential drugs during the year. These were handed over to Mr. Somphanh Phengkhamy, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, and Chairman of the National Disaster Management Committee, on the 28 November 2003.

An 18 member Lao delegation led by Mr. Somphong Mongkhonvilay, Minister in Lao Prime Minister's Office, visited India for the International Conclave on Buddhism and Spiritual Tourism in New Delhi from 16-19 February 2004. Dr. Phra Maha Vichit Singhraj, President of the Lao Buddhist Fellowship Organization, accompanied by eight other senior monks, also formed part of the delegation. Mr. Somphong in his speech in New Delhi said that Bodhi Gaya is the birthplace of Buddhism.

Malaysia

The dynamics of India and Malaysia relations continued to register positive growth and consolidation during the period. Several Ministerial visits were exchanged during the period under report.

Malaysian Minister of Works, S. Samy Vellu visited India three times during 2003. First one was from 5-18 January 2003 in connection with Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, where he was also awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award by the Prime Minister for his outstanding contribution as a person of Indian origin in Malaysia. He was accompanied by a delegation from

Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) of Malaysia. The delegation visited Jharkhand, where two MOUs were finalised between Government of Malaysia and the State Government in the field of infrastructure, especially relating to the development of the new capital of the State. The delegation also visited Kochi in the State of Kerala and had discussions with the State Government. Second visit was during 11-12 May 2003 as a Special Envoy of Prime Minister Mahathir to discuss civil aviation matters. During the visit, he called on the Prime Minister and handed over a letter from Prime Minister Mahathir. He also called on External Affairs Minister. His third visit was in September 2003 leading a large delegation of Malaysian businessmen to the Second India-ASEAN Business Summit jointly organized by the Ministry and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

Malaysian Minister of Transport Dato Seri Dr. Ling Liong Sik visited New Delhi on 22-23 January 2003 in connection with civil aviation talks.

President of Malaysian Senate Tan Sri Michael Chen Wing Sum and Deputy President of the Senate Datuk Gapar Bin Gurrohu represented Malaysia at the International Parliamentary Conference to mark the Golden Jubilee of Indian Parliament held in New Delhi from 22-26 January 2003.

Malaysian Minister of Primary Industries Dr. Lim Keng Yaik visited New Delhi from 17-20 February 2003 in the context of palm oil exports from Malaysia. Dr. Lim met Minister of Finance, Minister of Food Supplies & Consumer Affairs and Minister of Commerce, Government of India.

A major India Trade Promotion event – Incredible India 2003 – was organized by the High Commission of India in Kuala Lumpur in association with India Trade Promotion Organisation, Cloth Manufacturers Association of India, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Confederation of Indian Industry. The event was kicked off with the India Film Festival 2003 (IFF 2003)

at Genting Highlands on 30 November 2003, jointly inaugurated by Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Information and Broadcasting, Dato' Paduka Abdul Kadir bin Haji Sheikh Fadzir, Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism, Malaysia and Smt. Veena Sikri, High Commissioner.

A number of ICCR sponsored cultural programmes by puppet group of Rawan Chhaya Natya Sansad, Odissi dance group led by Mrs. Sharmila Mukherjee, Rajasthani Folk dance group led by Ms. Geeta Sapera and Kathak dance group led by Mangla Bhatt were organized.

Minister for Shipping, Shri Shatrughan Sinha, visited Malaysia in connection with International Maritime Exhibition (INMEX 2004) held at Kuala Lumpur on 24-26 February 2004 and delivered an address at the inaugural function of the exhibition.

India participated in the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition 2003 (LIMA 2003) with Indian naval ships INS Delhi and INS Koro in October 2003. Indian Naval Ships INS Rana and INS Kirch visited Port Klang on goodwill visit from 28 October to 01 November 2003.

Trade between India and Malaysia, which is our second largest trading partner in South East Asia, further improved during the period under report, recording a total of US\$3083.46 million.

New Zealand

The relations between India and New Zealand continued to be characterized by regular interactions. Minister of Textiles, Shri Kashiram Rana led a 5-member delegation to New Zealand from 19-24 May 2003. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology, Bhadohi and Wool Research Organization of New Zealand (WRONZ) was signed on May 22.

Secretary (ANA) attended Pacific Islands Forum Meetings held in Auckland on 18-19 August 2003. He also delivered a key-note speech on "India's Foreign Policy and the

Pacific Region” at a Round Table organized by the Asia 2000 Foundation on 19 August.

Mr. Jim Sutton, Minister for Trade Negotiations led a delegation of government officials and businessmen to India from 2-8 February 2004.

Sir Edmund Hillary visited Delhi between 19-21 May 2003 at the invitation of the Government of India to mark the 50th anniversary of conquest of Mt. Everest. Prime Minister presented both Hillary and Tenzing’s son, Jamling Tenzing Norgay with a scroll of honour to mark the 50th anniversary of the historic ascent. A road adjacent to the New Zealand High Commission in New Delhi was named after Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay.

A 5-member Panchvadyam group led by Pt Vikas Maharaj from Varanasi and Mr. Abhay Gad Kari, a Rangoli maker, visited New Zealand under sponsorship of ICCR in October 2003 for performances at various places and institutions in New Zealand during Diwali Festival organized by Asia 2000 Foundation of New Zealand. The Diwali Festival in Auckland was opened by Prime Minister Helen Clark on 12th October and in Wellington by Governor General Dame Silvia Cartwright on October 18. An ICCR-sponsored exhibition of Indian dolls of dance and dresses was held in Hutt Art Society from September 22 to October 5, 2003 and at Pataka Museum from October 10 to November 25, 2003. Ms Sharmila Mukherji, an Odissi dancer sponsored by ICCR also visited New Zealand in August.

Papua New Guinea (PNG)

Since the establishment of the resident Mission in Port Moresby in 1996, India’s relations with Papua New Guinea have been steadily growing. PNG continued to support India’s candidatures to various International Organizations during the year.

India offered 10 slots under ITEC, 10 slots under SFTC and 6 slots under Colombo Plan to Papua New Guinea. The courses utilized related to the fields of journalism, software, auditing, human resource development, teachers training, small-scale

industries, bio-medical technology and banking management.

Pacific Island Forum

India was accepted as dialogue partner of the Pacific Island Forum (PIF), an organization of 16 independent and self-governing countries of the South Pacific, at the body’s annual Summit in 2002.

Following the above, India attended the first Post Forum Dialogue Meeting with the PIF in Auckland (New Zealand) during August 18 – 19, 2003. The delegation was led by Shri R.M. Abhyankar, Secretary (ANA). Areas identified for cooperation in the near future included sending of two ITEC experts to Pacific Island countries for conducting feasibility study on technical and developmental cooperation; enhancing the number of training fellowships under ITEC to these countries (separately 15 training fellowships were offered to the Forum Secretariat for the Smaller Islands States such as Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Marshall Islands and Tuvalu); support in private sector development in Small Scale Industries, Agro-based Industries, Technology Transfer, Handicrafts, Film and Entertainment, IT, Pharmaceuticals and Tourism; and support to provide expertise in accession to WTO. The institutionalization of an annual dialogue with the PIF is a major achievement for regional engagement and cooperation.

Bilaterally, India maintained friendly and cooperative relations with all Island countries of the South Pacific through diplomatic contacts and at multi-lateral fora. India also extended training facilities and other assistance to these countries under its ITEC Programme.

The Philippines

Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the Philippines President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo had a bilateral meeting on 7 October 2003 on the sidelines of 2nd ASEAN-India Summit at Bali. The two leaders discussed matters of mutual concern including the plague of terrorism and the

ways and means to promote trade and economic cooperation, particularly in the fields of pharmaceuticals, information and communication technology.

Ms. Delia D. Albert, Under Secretary for International Economic relations attended the Conference on “Dialogue among Civilisations-Quest for New Perspectives” held from 9-10 July 2003 in New Delhi. The Chief of Army Staff, General N. C. Vij visited the Philippines on a goodwill visit from 28 September–1 October 2003. A three member Indian Parliamentary delegation led by Shri Vijay Kumar Khandelwal attended the Fourth General Assembly of Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace (AAPP) held at Manila from 30 August- 4 September 2003. India participated as a non-member country in the Assembly for the first time, since the inception of the organisation.

The Philippines Under Secretary for Agriculture along with a delegation took part in the Second ASEAN-India Business Summit on 4-5 September 2003. A 15-member business delegation from Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Philippine-India Joint Business Council visited India from 9-16 November 2003 to see the IITF in Delhi and visited industrial and IT centers in Bombay and Hyderabad. The delegation had fruitful meetings with CII and FICCI in Delhi.

Foreign Office Consultations at Secretary level between the two countries were held in Manila from 11-12 March 2004 followed by the First Security Dialogue.

Singapore

India–Singapore relations continued to expand and strengthen during the period of the report. President of Singapore S.R. Nathan, accompanied by a State visit from 3-11 January 2003. President Nathan met President Shri A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Minister of External Affairs Shri Yashwant Sinha. He also visited Bangalore, Hyderabad and Chennai.

Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong paid a state

visit to India during 7 - 9 April 2003. This was his fourth visit to India since he became Prime Minister in 1990. He was accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Law, Prof. S. Jayakumar; Minister of Trade and Industry Mr. George Yeo; Minister of State for Health and Environment, Dr. Balaji Sadasivan; and a large delegation of eminent businesspersons from Singapore. During the visit, the Report by the India-Singapore Joint Study Group on the feasibility of concluding a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between the two countries, was submitted. A Joint Declaration of Intent to initiate the negotiations on the CECA and an MOU on Third Country Cooperation, providing for India-Singapore collaboration in extending technical assistance to the new ASEAN - Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam in the framework of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), were signed during the visit. Since the signing of Declaration of Intent on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement in April, eight rounds of discussions led by the Commerce Secretaries of the two countries have been held alternately in New Delhi and Singapore. Prime Minister Goh also addressed a gathering of Indian business leaders organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).

Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Shri L.K. Advani, accompanied by senior officials, visited Singapore on an invitation from Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore from 2-5 February 2003. Shri Advani called on the President and Prime Minister of Singapore, met his counterpart Deputy PM Loong, and Home Minister Wang Kan Sang. He also had a meeting with Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Shri Yashwant Sinha, External Affairs Minister, paid an official visit to Singapore on 26 August 2003. He delivered a public lecture titled "Asia : A Period of Change" under the auspices of Singapore's Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies.

Raksha Mantri Shri George Fernandes participated at Second Asian Security Conference "Shangri La Dialogue" held at Singapore on 30 May -1 June 2003. At the conference, he delivered a speech on "The Changing Strategic Environment: Impact on Security Policy and Military Doctrine".

Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, visited India from 10-18 January 2004, and had extensive discussions with Deputy Prime Minister Shri L.K. Advani. Mr. Loong also called on the Prime Minister and had meetings with Minister of External Affairs Shri Yashwant Sinha and Finance Minister Shri Jaswant Singh. Apart from Delhi, he also visited Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai to explore investment opportunities and have a look at the technological developments.

Shri I. D. Swami, Minister of State for Home Affairs visited Singapore on 26 - 28 July 2003. Dr. Sahib Singh Verma, Labour Minister paid an official visit to Singapore during 11 - 14 September 2003. The Chief of Army Staff, Gen NC Vij, visited Singapore from 1 - 3 October 2003. Shri N. K. Singh, Member, Planning Commission of India and Dr. S. Narayan participated at the World Economic Forum meeting held at Singapore during 12 - 14 October 2003. Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Madhvendra Singh attended the International Maritime Defence Exhibition held during 10 - 14 November 2003 at Singapore.

Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister of State for Trade and Industry, visited India to attend the Second India-ASEAN Business Summit from 4 - 6 September 2003. Minister for National Development Mah Bow Tan visited India 7 - 13 September 2003. Defence Minister RADM (NS) Teo Chee Hean visited India from 12 - 15 October 2003. During the visit, India-Singapore Defence Co-operation Agreement was signed. He gave a talk on "Emerging Security Trends" at the Institute of Defence and Strategic Analysis. Dr. Balaji Sadasivan, Minister of State for Health and Transport, visited India during January 5-13, 2004 to participate in the International Conference on Buddhism and spiritual Tourism held in New Delhi and the dedication ceremony of the Maha Bodhi

Temple. He also visited Goa and Mumbai as part of his visit.

India-Singapore Foreign Office Consultations were held on 21 September 2003 at New Delhi. The first Meeting of the India-Singapore Joint Working Group on Intelligence Cooperation on Combating Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime was held in New Delhi on 9th December 2003. Mr. Tan Chin Tiong, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended the Fifth ASEAN- India Senior Officials Meeting held in New Delhi on 20 May.

Singapore retained its position as India's largest trading partner in South East Asia.

The Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal S. Krishnaswami and the Chief of Integrated Staff Committee Admiral Raman Puri visited Singapore in connection with the Asian Aerospace 2004 from 24-29 February. The Air Chief called on the Defence Minister RADM (NS) Teo Chee Hean and the Chief of Singapore Air Force, Maj. Gen. Lim Kim Choon and the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), Lt. Gen. Ng Yat Chung. India participated in a major way at the air show with an excellent display by the Indian Air Force's Suryakiran Aerobatics team and the Sarang helicopter team. The displays were the highlight of the event and received extensive media coverage. The products on display at the India Pavilion, which included companies, HAL, DRDO, Brahmos, BEL, TCS, ISRO and KELTRON, attracted a large crowd and a number of parties showed interest.

Four ships INS Rajput and INS Rana (14 - 16 August) and INS Brahmaputra and INS Kirch (10-14 November) visited Singapore.

Thailand

There has been excellent progress in India-Thailand relations with exchange of high level visits, increasing economic and commercial links, and interaction between the two countries in ASEAN, BIMSTEC, Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) and the recently launched Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) and Asian Bond Fund (ABF).

Prime Minister's visit and Agreement for Bilateral FTA

Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee accompanied by, External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley, National Security Adviser, Shri Brajesh Mishra, and other high ranking officials apart from leading representatives of Indian business and industry visited Thailand from 8-12 October 2003 on return from Bali where he participated in the India-ASEAN Summit Talks. The Prime Minister called on King Bhumibol Adulyadej and met Thai Prime Minister Mr. Thaksin Shinawatra, two Deputy Prime Ministers, Foreign Minister and Commerce Minister of Thailand, followed by delegation level talks. Prime Minister addressed a Joint Session of the Thai National Assembly a well-participated meeting of Indian and Thai Apex Chambers.

The following five bilateral Agreements were signed during the visit:

- Framework Agreement for Establishing a Free Trade Area (2003)
- Agreement for Exemption of Visas for holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports (2003)
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Agricultural Science, Technology and Economy (2003)
- Agreement on Tourism Cooperation (2003)
- Programme of Cooperation in Biotechnology (2003)

Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, Shri Lal Krishna Advani paid an official visit to Thailand from 30 January-2 February 2003 at the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand Wissanu Krea-Ngam. During his visit, the Deputy Prime Minister called on Prime Minister of Thailand and had delegation level talks with Deputy Prime Minister Wissanu. Thai Interior Minister and Justice Minister also called on Deputy

Prime Minister. During the meetings, various bilateral issues including security cooperation between the two countries were discussed.

Minister of IT, Communications and Disinvestments, Shri Arun Shourie, led the Indian delegation to the 2nd Ministerial Meeting of Asia Cooperation Dialogue held at Chiang Mai, Thailand from 21-22 June 2003. Dr Surapong Suebwonglee, Minister of Information and Communication Technology accompanied by Permanent Secretary Khunying Thiphawadee Macksawan and an eight member delegation visited Bangalore and Hyderabad from 21-24 January 2003 on a fact finding mission relating to IT.

A 100- member NDC delegation from Thailand visited India from 5-8 June 2003. The delegations have had briefings in Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Home, and FICCI, and visited the Parliament and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi. A Thai delegation led by Ms. Uraiwan Thienthong Minister of Culture visited India to take part in the Conference on “ Dialogue among Civilisations- Quest for New Perspectives” held in New Delhi from 9-10 July 2003. The Conference was organized by Human Resource Development Ministry.

The Supreme Commander of Royal Thai Armed Forces General Surayud Chulanont paid an official visit to India from 16-18 July 2003 and met the Raksha Mantri. India offers every year scholarships under ITEC to Thai defence officers for short courses at National Defence College and Defence Services Staff College in India. The 11th Session of the India-Thailand Joint Trade Committee (JTC) and the 5th Meeting of the India-Thailand Joint Business Council (JBC) to review the bilateral trade and to discuss trade issues including, bilateral payment arrangement, rice pool arrangement, joint study on feasibility of India-Thailand Free Trade Area, took place in Bangkok from 26-27 September 2003.

The fourth meeting of the India-Thailand Joint Commission for bilateral cooperation was held in New Delhi from 13-14 February

2003. The meeting was co-chaired by Minister of External Affairs of India and Foreign Minister of Thailand. Being held after 6 years, the JCM reviewed in depth bilateral relations between the two countries in diverse fields.

The first meeting of the Joint Working Group on Security was held from 20-21 May 2003 in Bangkok focused on the cooperation on security issues in seven primary areas namely, intelligence exchange, military cooperation, narcotics, terrorism and arms smuggling, money laundering, illegal migratory flows and international economic and cyber crimes. The second meeting of the JWG took place in New Delhi in December 2003.

The first meeting of the Joint Working Group on Space Cooperation was held at Bangalore from 7-11 July 2003. As a follow up of the Agreement on Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes signed during Thai Prime Minister's visit to India in February 2002, a revised proposal incorporating additional requirements projected by Thai side valued at US\$55 million was discussed. Following Thai Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Korn Dabbarnsi's visit to India in August 2003, two rounds of negotiations [from 6-7 August 2003 and 3-5 September 2003], between Air India and Thai Airways resulted in the conclusion of broad terms of the commercial agreement. The first meeting of the Joint IT Task Force was held in February 2003 at New Delhi to discuss IT education and training and cross certification of IT professionals and business products and to set up of a Software Development and Training Center to be financed by the Thai Government.

The Second Plenary Meeting of the India-Thailand Joint Working Group on Security Cooperation was convened in New Delhi from 15-16 December 2003. Secretary (ANA) led the Indian delegation and General Winai Phattiyakul, Secretary-General of the National Security Council of Thailand, headed the Thai delegation. Both sides briefed each other on the prevailing security environment in South and South East Asia

and issues of intelligence exchange, military cooperation, narcotics, terrorism, money laundering, illegal migration, cyber and economic crimes, etc. Both sides agreed to expedite internal processing to allow for signing of the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters on the sidelines of forthcoming BIMST-EC Summit Meeting in Phuket in February 2004 and further agreed to take steps to finalize and conclude Bilateral Extradition Treaty, the Agreement on Transfer of Convicted Offenders and the MoU on Military Intelligence Cooperation. The Treaty on Mutual Assistance on Criminal Matters was signed during the BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting held in Phuket, Thailand in February 2004.

Princess Chulabhorn Mahidol of Thailand accompanied by a 39-member delegation visited India from 24-31 January 2004 to attend the International Conference on Biodiversity and Natural Products, organized by Delhi University in collaboration with Ministry of Human Resource Development. She presented a paper on the subject during the Conference. Princess Chulabhorn received on behalf of the King of Thailand, a gift of 40 saplings of Sal Tree from Jharkhand to be planted at a prominent location in Budhamanathan Park on the outskirts of Bangkok.

Timor-L'este

Bilateral relations have been developing steadily. Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation José Ramos-Horta paid an official visit to India from 23-28 January 2003. He was accompanied by a four-member delegation including the Vice-Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry and the Vice-Minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports. Mr. Ramos-Horta called on the Prime Minister and had a meeting with Minister

of External Affairs. A Joint Communiqué establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries at Ambassadorial level was signed by Minister of External Affairs and the Timor-L'este's Foreign Minister on 24 January 2003.

Ambassador H.K. Singh presented his credentials to President Xanana Gusmao of Timor-L'este on 18 April, 2003 as the first Indian Ambassador to this newly independent nation.

In his statement to the 58th Session of the UNGA on 29 September, 2003, PM Mari Alkatiri of Timor-L'este extended his country's support to India's permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council.

India offered assistance to Timor L'este in the area of human resource development and a number of Timorese nominees attended ITEC training programmes in India for the first time during the year.

Vietnam

The high point of India-Vietnam relation was the visit to India by a high level delegation led by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Mr. Nong Duc Manh from 29 April –2 May 2003. The visit has elevated the bilateral relationship to a higher and strategic level. The General Secretary was accompanied by a high level delegation. He called on the President and had a meeting with the Prime Minister and participated in the delegation level talks on 1 May 2003. He also received the External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Smt. Sonia Gandhi. During the visit, the two countries signed a Joint Declaration on the Framework of Comprehensive Cooperation. The Prime Minister

announced recycling of the credit repaid by Vietnam up to US\$ 20 million and softening of the repayment terms of the ongoing credit lines on par with concessional terms extended to other countries in the region.

A 5-member Indian delegation led by Special Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Shri S.K Sharma visited Hanoi from 14-18 January 2003 for bilateral discussions. A Parliamentary delegation led by Vice President of the National Assembly of Vietnam Nguyen Van Yev visited India from 20-27 January 2003 to attend the International Parliamentary Conference in New Delhi on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of the Indian Parliament. A two-member delegation led by Deputy Chief of General Staff, Vietnam People's Army Lt Gen Le Hai Anh visited Bangalore to attend the fourth International Aero Space Exposition-AERO INDIA 2003 from 5-8 February 2003.

An Indian Coast Guard Ship "CGS Sangram" with paid a goodwill visit to Ho Chi Minh City Port from 29 September-1 October 2003. Senior officials and dignitaries in Ho Chi Minh City, the Consul General and the Defence Attaché attended the welcome and send off ceremonies for the ship.

During the year, two other important bilateral meetings took place. The 1st Foreign Office Consultation was held in Hanoi from 14-15 October 2003, which was co-chaired by Secretary (ANA) on the Indian side. The second was the first Security Dialogue between the Ministries of Defence of the two countries which was held in New Delhi in November 2003.

A nine-member Manipuri Dance Troupe visited Vietnam from 26 January-15 February 2003. The highlight of their visit was their performance on 27 January in the prestigious Hanoi Opera House on the occasion of India's Republic Day.



3. East Asia

Japan

India remains committed to friendly, cooperative and mutually beneficial relations with Japan with whom it shares cultural links and values of human freedom, commitment to peace, stability and economic development of Asia and the world. The year 2003-04 was a relatively active year in bilateral relations between the two countries, in pursuance of India's continuing efforts to concretise the "India-Japan Global Partnership in the 21st Century" agreed between the two Prime Ministers in August 2000.

The year 2003 marked the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Indo-Japanese Association, which has a long history of promoting exchanges between India and Japan. Prime Minister issued a message to the Indo-Japan Association on this occasion. During the anniversary year, Indian Embassy in Tokyo has actively endeavoured to project India's rich cultural heritage in Japan, to strengthen cultural links and to promote greater mutual understanding. As a part of the celebrations, several events of Indian performing arts and exhibitions have been organized.

As part of the celebrations, the Indian Embassy in Tokyo organized and supported several performances of Indian classical dances, exhibitions and other events of Indian performing arts. These included the "100th Anniversary Travelling Photographic Exhibition" of Rukmani Devi Arundale, dance performances and workshops of Saraikella Chhau Dance Troupe and performances of an 8-member Kalaripyattu Martial Art Group sponsored by ICCR. As part of the 100th anniversary celebrations, Indian fairs and festivals were organized in several cities all over Japan, which included cultural performances, Indian tea promotion events, Indian food festivals and tourism promotion.

In all the events, many distinguished Japanese from all walks of life, including members of the Japanese Imperial Family and top political leaders, which included former Prime Minister, Speaker of Japanese Lower House, and the Chief Cabinet

Secretary and many Cabinet Ministers were present to mark the significant anniversary. The President of India, on the occasion of Republic Day 2004, awarded the Padma Bhushan to the former Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Yoshiro Mori.

High level visits from India to Japan:

- Shri Brajesh Mishra, National Security Advisor visited Japan from 16-18 April 2003 on the invitation of the Japanese Foreign Minister. Besides discussions with the Foreign Minister, he held talks with Minister of Defence, Chief Cabinet Secretary and the Governor of Tokyo. He also had satisfactory and detailed interaction with influential members of the strategic and policy planning establishment in Japan including President India-Japan Parliamentary Friendship League Dr. Taro Nakayama, Chairman of the Policy Planning Cell of the LDP Mr. Taro Aso, and Japanese representative on Sri Lanka Peace Process Mr. Yasushi Akashi.
- Shri Arun Shourie, Minister for Disinvestment, Communications & IT visited Japan from 23 – 25 June 2003 to launch the first ever Indian IT exhibition in Japan organized with the help of CII and Japan External Trade Organisation. 21 Indian IT companies participated in the exhibition which concluded on 27 June 2003. During his visit, Minister Shourie also had meetings with his Japanese counterpart.
- The 10th round of India-Japan Foreign Office Consultations were held on 30 October 2003 in Tokyo. Then Foreign Secretary Shri Kanwal Sibal held consultations with Deputy Foreign Minister Hitoshi Tanaka and called on the Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda. He also met the Vice Ministers for Defence and Foreign Affairs. He addressed a gathering of Japanese intellectuals, academicians and opinion makers at the International House of Japan. Foreign Secretary also called on the Governor of Kyoto during his visit to Osaka.
- Mr. Mitoji Yabunaka, Director General

of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan visited India on 27 January 2004 for the second round of India-Japan Comprehensive Security Dialogue. He was accompanied by a seven member delegation from Japan.

- The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Ichiro Fujisaki visited New Delhi on 13 February 2004 leading the Japanese delegation for the 15th round of Trade Talks. The Special Secretary Shri S.N. Menon in the Department of Commerce led the Indian delegation for the Trade Talks. These talks took place after a gap of five years. Both sides exchanged views on the entire range of bilateral economic aspects including ways and means to promote trade and investment relations, trade issues, cooperation at multilateral fora including WTO.
- After the first round of talks between the two Finance Ministries at Secretary level took place in August 2001, the second round of talks were held in New Delhi on 17 February 2004. Vice Minister for International Cooperation in the Ministry of Finance of Japan, Mr. Zembei Mizoguchi, led the Japanese delegation. Finance Secretary Shri D.C. Gupta led the Indian delegation. The topics covered in the meeting included the macro economic situation and macro economic policies of India and Japan, intra-regional and inter-regional cooperation and bilateral economic cooperation with particular focus on Japanese ODA to India.

High level visits from Japan to India:

- Japanese Minister of State for Defence Mr. Shigeru Ishiba visited India on 4 May 2003 on the invitation of Raksha Mantri. Both sides reviewed the status of bilateral defence relations and exchanged views on various issues including security and defence policies of both the countries and the regional security environment.
- Mr. Takahiko Horimura, Japanese

Ambassador in charge of International Counter Terrorism Co-operation visited New Delhi from 7-8 July 2003 for discussions on co-operation in the field of counter-terrorism. He is also Japan's Ambassador in charge of Aid to Afghanistan. He was accompanied by a three-member delegation from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He held delegation level talks with his counterparts in the Ministry of External Affairs.

Functional Exchanges

Visits from India to Japan:

- Shri K.C. Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests to attend the 11th Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific entitled "Eco Asia 2003" in June 2003.
- The Chairman of GAIL India Ltd., Shri Proshanto Banerjee from 1-5 June 2003 in connection with a Road Show mounted by GAIL to solicit business in Japan.
- Brig. Girish Kumar, Deputy Surveyor General of India visited Japan in July 2003 to attend the 10th International Steering committee for Global Mapping and the 16th UN Regions Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific and the 9th Permanent Committee Meeting on GIS Infrastructure for Asia and the Pacific at Okinawa.
- Shri Vinay Kohli, Secretary, Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers in August 2003 in connection with Japanese participation in India CHEM 2004.
- Shri P. Paleri, the Deputy Director General of the Indian Coast Guard led a delegation to attend a meeting of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia in September 2003.
- The fourth India-Japan Coast Guard Exercises were held in Japan from 16-20 September 2003. An Indian Coast Guard ship visited Japan to participate in the Exercises. Director General of Indian Coast Guard Vice Admiral

Suresh Mehta visited Japan to witness the exercises.

- The Speakers of the Assemblies of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Goa and Orissa visited Tokyo for study tours in Japan in October 2003.
- Rear Admiral K.M. Sushil visited Japan to participate in the Tokyo Defence Forum in October 2003.
- Shri K.K. Jaswal, Secretary (IT) from 27-28 November 2003 to attend a Seminar on Information Technology.
- Shri N.K. Singh, Member, Planning Commission visited Tokyo on December 2003 to attend a symposium on "India: An Emerging Global Power – Strategy for India-Japan Co-operation in the Coming Age" organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. India will be the theme country of the Sapporo Snow Festival in Hokkaido and a snow sculpture of the Taj Mahal will be erected in the city. The Embassy of India in Tokyo in co-operation with ICCR, Air India and the Tourist Office of the Government of India in Tokyo is organising a major tourist promotion event on this occasion.

Visits from Japan to India

- Mr. Tadakatsu Sano, Vice Minister for International Affairs in the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry in August 2003 for consultations on bilateral and multilateral economic issues.
- Mr. Kazumori Tanaka, Parliamentary Secretary for Finance in August 2003.
- Mr. Mineichi Iwanaga, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications in August 2003.
- The President of the National Institute of Defence Studies Mr. Kyoji Yanagisawa visited India in September 2003.
- Vice Admiral Fumio Ota, Director of the Japanese Defence Intelligence Headquarters in October 2003 and held discussions on bilateral defence intelligence issues with the Director General of the Defence Intelligence

Agency and the Heads of the Intelligence Services of the Three Services.

- Mr. Ichiro Fujisaki, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs from 9-12 November 2003 to attend the UNESCO Third High Level Group Meeting on Education for All. He also called on the Foreign Secretary, Commerce Secretary, Finance Secretary and Secretary (DIPP).

Republic Of Korea (ROK)

During 2003-04, interaction between the Republic of India and the Republic of Korea gained further momentum. Special significance was attached to the year, which marked the 30th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

On the sidelines of Bali ASEAN Summit, Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had a bilateral meeting with President Roh Moo-hyun of the Republic of Korea on 6 October 2003. ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dr. Yoon Young-kwan visited India from 21-23 December 2003, during which the second meeting of the India-ROK Joint Commission was held.

On 10 December 2003, both countries celebrated the 30th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations. Felicitation messages were exchanged between Presidents, Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of India and ROK on the anniversary day. The External Affairs Minister was the Chief Guest at a special commemorative reception hosted by the ROK Ambassador in New Delhi. ROK Foreign Minister was the Chief Guest at the commemorative reception hosted by Indian Ambassador in Seoul. Special commemorative stamps were also issued on the occasion. To mark this occasion, the Indian side is also planning to organize:

- a Festival of India in Seoul
- an exhibition of Indian Bronzes in ROK
- an IT workshop an India specific Trade Fair in Seoul

The 4th India-ROK Joint Trade Committee Meeting took place in Seoul on the 13

October 2003 after a gap of three years. The meeting was co-chaired by Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Commerce & Industry from the Indian side and by Mr. Hwang Doo-yun, Trade Minister from the Korean side. On 14 October 2003, Shri Arun Jaitley inaugurated the “Destination India” event jointly organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) and the Korean Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI). An MoU for “Promotion of Investment” was signed on 14 October between Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley and Minister of Commerce, and Energy & Industry Mr. Yoon Jin-shik of ROK. Shri R.R.Shah, Secretary, DIPP chaired the first Meeting of the India-ROK Investment Promotion Committee, from the Indian side and by Mr. Kim Chil-doo, Vice Minister of Commerce, Industry & Energy from the Korean side. Both sides agreed to cooperate in the mining sector by setting up of a steel mill and a captive power plant in addition to encouraging cross-investments in sectors such as telecommunications, chemicals, information technology and textiles.

Minister of Shipping, Shri Shatrughan Sinha visited ROK on an invitation from the ROK Minister of Commerce, Industry and Energy from 17-20 August 2003. Minister for Road Transport & Highways, and Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation, Maj. Gen. B.C.Khanduri, AVSM (Retd.) visited ROK on an invitation from the ROK Minister of Construction and Transport from 27-29 August 2003. Speaker, Lok Sabha Shri Manohar Joshi, accompanied by a parliamentary delegation, attended a banquet hosted by Speaker of the Korean National Assembly during his transit halt at Seoul on 4-5 January 2003 en route to Beijing. ROK Chief Justice Jong Young Choi visited India on an invitation from the Chief Justice of India, Justice V.N. Khare, from 2-5 November 2003. He called on the President and the Speaker of Lok Sabha. ROK Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Mr. Kim Young Jin ROK Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Mr. Kim Young Jin visited India from 29-31 May 2003. ROK

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dr. Yoon Young-kwan visited India from 21-23 December 2003 during which he co-chaired the second meeting of the India-ROK Joint Commission with External Affairs Minister. Dr. Yoon Young-kwan also called on Prime Minister, at which time Prime Minister welcomed an early visit by President Roh Moo-hyun of the ROK to India.

In the Joint Commission, views were exchanged on India and ROK strengthening their relations by adopting a long-term cooperative partnership. It was noted with satisfaction that the two countries were currently celebrating the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with a series of activities. Other subjects discussed included enhancement of high level political exchanges, trade and investment matters, defence exchanges, cooperation against terrorism, exchanges in Science and Technology, Information Technology and communications, cultural matters and cooperation in multilateral organisations. Both sides expressed satisfaction that over the past three decades of diplomatic relations, the two-way trade volume between the two countries had made a significant increase from US\$12 million in 1973 to US\$2.6 billion in 2002-03. Investment inflows were also picking up. They agreed to work towards to achieve a two-way trade target of US\$10 billion within the next five years. The two sides agreed to take necessary steps to upgrade their trade and investment linkages.

India and ROK also agreed in the Joint Commission to establish a Dialogue on Security and Foreign Policy Issues, and to promote bilateral exchanges and interaction in the defence field. They were also in agreement on the need to step up cooperation in matters pertaining to safety and security of international maritime traffic. The ROK conveyed its continued support for an early finalization of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the United Nations. Both sides reiterated their commitment to continue their relentless fight against terrorism. They stated that terrorism

could not be justified wherever, whenever and for whatever reason and condemned terrorism in any form. The two sides exchanged views on the situation on the Korean Peninsula and reaffirmed their commitment to a peaceful solution of the nuclear issue through dialogue.

Functional Exchanges

Visits from India to ROK:

- A four member Indian defence delegation led by Shri Gautam Mukhopadhyaya, Joint Secretary (PIC), Ministry of Defence, visited ROK in October 2003 at the invitation of the Korean side. Three Indian naval ships from Eastern Command viz. INS Ranjit, INS Kullish and INS Jyoti arrived at Pusan on 4 November 2003 on a five-day goodwill visit to ROK. Rear Admiral R.P.Suthan, VSM, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet, was on-board INS Ranjit. Vice Admiral O.P.Bansal, PVSM, AVSM, VSM, FOC-in-C Eastern Naval Command, also visited ROK in connection with the ships' visit. During his visit, Vice Admiral Bansal called on ROK Navy Chief Admiral Moon.
- Confederation of Indian Industry and Federation of Korean Industries organized India-Korea Economic Summit in New Delhi on 10 December 2003 to coincide with the 30th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Visits from ROK to India:

- Mr. Chung Sang-ki, Director General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of ROK visited India from 9-12 September 2003 for the India-ROK Foreign Office Consultations.
- An 8-member delegation led by the Assistant Minister for Information Planning, Ministry of Information and Communication visited India from 12-13 January 2004 to participate in the Asia IT Ministers' 2nd Summit in Hyderabad.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

India and DPRK continued to enjoy cordial relations. Diplomatic relations between the two countries had been formally established on 10 December 1973, making 2003 the 30th anniversary of this event. Several events were organised by both sides to mark the occasion, including exchange of messages between the Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers, holding of receptions by the Foreign Ministers, publishing of special articles on India by prominent local newspapers of DPRK, etc. In continuation of these celebrations, India will sponsor a cultural group to participate in the Pyongyang Spring Festival in April 2004, and will also participate in the Pyongyang International Film Festival in September 2004. Foreign Office Consultations were held in December 2003 in New Delhi during which the entire gamut of bilateral relations was reviewed. Vice Foreign Minister Mr. Kim Yong Il led the DPRK delegation for these consultations while Secretary (ANA) led the Indian delegation. A new Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) between the two countries for the period 2003-2006 was signed in New Delhi on 18 September 2003. The new CEP is expected to promote people-to-people interaction between the two countries. Five DPRK candidates underwent training in a 12-week computer software programme under the ITEC Programme for the year 2003-2004. A 2-member Parliamentary delegation led by Vice Chairman of Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK Jang Chol visited India to participate in the International Parliamentary Conference from 22-26 January 2003 to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Parliament of India.

Mongolia

Traditionally warm and friendly relations between India and Mongolia registered a significant improvement during the period under review. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna paid a bilateral visit to Mongolia from 9-10 September 2003. He called on the President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and the Minister for

Education, Culture and Science and Technology. He held delegation level talks with the Deputy Foreign Minister. He also represented Government of India at the 5th Conference on New and Restored Democracies in Ulaanbaatar. He also visited the institutions that have been set up in Mongolia on assistance from the Government of India.

Prime Minister of Mongolia Mr. Nambariin Enkhbayar, accompanied by his spouse, paid a State visit to India from 14-20 January 2004. He was accompanied by a high-level official delegation including the Ministers of Education, Science and Culture, Infrastructure, and Food and Agriculture. Prime Minister Enkhbayar held talks with Prime Minister Vajpayee and called on President Shri A.P.J Abdul Kalam and Vice President Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat and also had separate meetings with Leader of Opposition, Lok Sabha, External Affairs Minister, Raksha Mantri and Minister for Communications and Information Technology. He also visited Varanasi, Sarnath, Bodh Gaya, Calcutta and Hyderabad. The Banaras Hindu University conferred D. Litt. (Honouris Causa) on him, while in Bodhgaya, he laid the foundation stone for a Mongolian monastery to be built on land gifted by the Government of India.

During the visit, agreements in the field of animal health and dairy, space science, technology and applications, and biotechnology were signed. Both sides also formalized the ratification of the Extradition Treaty and the Treaty on Legal Assistance in Civil and Commercial Matters. Various Government of India initiatives including providing a US\$ 10 million export credit line on soft terms, setting up a pilot solar energy project, increasing training slots under ICCR and ITEC schemes, and enhancing assistance in the IT sector including assisting in setting up computer centres in the Mongolian provinces, were announced during the visit. Consensus was also reached on further developing defence cooperation within the framework of the Agreement on Cooperation in Defence Matters; holding regular consultations at the functional level between the two National Security Councils; activating the Joint Committee on Co-

India-Mongolian Joint School was formally opened in Ulaanbaatar in the first week of September 2003. Five Indian teachers have been deputed to this School under an agreement signed between the two Governments. This is the third such Indian institution in Mongolia after the Rajiv Gandhi Vocational Training Centre and Atal Bihari Vajpayee Centre for Excellence in Information and Communication Technology. Bilateral relations in the area of Defence also registered new warmth. The Defence Minister of Mongolia visited India on 11 November 2003 to discuss the possibility of intensifying cooperation in the area of Defence. On the cultural side, a new Cultural Exchange Programme for 2003-2005 was signed in September 2003.

operation and setting up functional Sub-Committees; holding expert-level discussions to identify specific projects in five focus areas (human resource development and IT, agriculture and livestock, mineral resources, hydro-carbon resources and infrastructure); organising an exclusive India Trade Exhibition in Ulaanbaatar in 2004 to promote development of bilateral commercial relations; and collaborating in digitisation of precious Mongolian Buddhist manuscripts to preserve this heritage.

The two Prime Ministers also agreed that the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in December 2005 would be observed in a befitting manner. Mongolia announced its support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Both sides strongly condemned the menace of international terrorism and its devastating effect on democratic societies, development and on human civilization itself and affirmed that there could be no justification of terrorism: political, philosophical, ideological, religious, racial, or any other. They expressed their full support for UNSC Resolution 1373 and strongly condemned States that aid, abet, and support cross-border and international terrorism or provide safe haven to terrorists.

4. Central Asia

India's relationship with Central Asia, Turkey and Azerbaijan received a further boost during this period. High-level visits were exchanged on a regular basis with the countries of Central Asia and with Turkey. These were complemented by industrial and consumer goods exhibitions, besides visits of trade delegations. India's economic relations are therefore showing a continuing positive trend.

Cultural relations and media exchanges have further broadened the scope of India's relations with the region. A highlight was the holding of the third India - Central Asia Regional Conference in Tashkent in November 2003. Prime Minister's visits to Turkey (16-19 September 2003) and Tajikistan (13-14 November 2003) provided a major all round impetus to our relations. The visit of the President of Kyrgyzstan to attend the 'Education for All' Summit in India in November 2003 was an opportunity at the highest level to review the bilateral relations and to set further goals.

India has also broadened the scope and strengthened the content of its aid programme to the Central Asian countries.

Azerbaijan

The goodwill in bilateral relationship was given the boost of frequent exchanges in diverse spheres. Cultural, sports and economic linkages were maintained through visits. A Federation of Indian Export Organisations' sponsored buyer-seller meet in Azerbaijan received an enthusiastic response. It was also a confirmation of the increasing trend in India's exports. These have increased from US\$ 14.344 million in 2002-03 to US\$ 18.301 million in April-October 2003.

Kazakhstan

Relations with Kazakhstan continued to be warm and friendly during the year including an exchange of visits at a high political level. Minister of External Affairs Shri Yashwant Sinha visited Kazakhstan from 31 January to 1 February 2003. Shri Yashwant Sinha met Kazakh Minister for Energy and

Mineral resources Dr Vladimir Shkolnik.

Following the resignation of Kazakh Prime Minister, Mr. Imangali Tasmagambetov on 11 June 2003, Kazakh President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev appointed Mr. Daniel Akhmetov as the new Kazakh Prime Minister on 13 June 2003.

The Representative Office of India was opened in Astana on 22 October 2003.

The unveiling ceremony of Mahatma Gandhi's Statue was held in Almaty on 11 October 2003. The statue, gifted by the ICCR, has been installed in a park located along a prominent street in Almaty.

Raksha Mantri Shri George Fernandes visited Kazakhstan on 7-8 November 2003. He met the Prime Minister, Defence Minister, Minister of Industry & Trade and representatives of Defence Industries of Kazakhstan. The leadership discussed issues related to bilateral defence cooperation as also other issues of mutual interest such as economic assistance, global and regional security matters and threats of international terrorism.

A Confederation of Indian Industries' (CII) business delegation, representing the construction industry, visited Kazakhstan from 31 August-4 September 2003 to explore areas of cooperation in the construction sector in Kazakhstan. A 20-member multi-product Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) delegation visited Kazakhstan on 11-13 January 2004 under the "CIS Focus Programme". Two Parliamentary delegations from Kazakhstan visited in January 2003 in connection with the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Indian Parliament.

The training courses under ITEC programme are popular and highly appreciated in Kazakhstan. Apart from the English learning programme (CIEFL, Hyderabad), training courses related to information technology and management are becoming popular.

Kyrgyzstan

Relations with Kyrgyzstan continued to be

warm and friendly during the period. The first ever visit by an Indian Raksha Mantri to the Kyrgyz Republic and the visit of President Askar Akaev to India maintained the momentum of political exchanges in the Indo-Kyrgyz bilateral ties.

At the invitation of his Kyrgyz counterpart, General Esen Topoev, Raksha Mantri Shri George Farnandes visited Kyrgyzstan on 6 November 2003. He called on President of Kyrgyz Republic and Prime Minister Nikolai Tanaev. He also held delegation level talks with his Kyrgyz counterpart.

During his visit to India, to participate in the UNESCO-sponsored "Education for All" Summit held in New Delhi on 10-11 November 2003, President Akaev met President Shri A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and the Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. This presented an opportunity to review bilateral relations and to discuss the regional situation. He extended an invitation to the President to visit Kyrgyzstan.

The third session of Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on 4-6 November 2003. Sadriddin Djienbekov, Minister for Foreign Trade and Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic and Shri S.B. Mookherjee, Minister of State for Commerce, led their respective delegations. The Kyrgyz Minister was also received by Minister for Communication and Information Technology, Shri Arun Shourie, Minister for Small Scale Industries, Dr. C.P. Thakur, and Minister of State for Food Processing Industries, Shri N.T. Shanmugham.

External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha visited Kyrgyzstan from 30-31 January 2003 and met Kyrgyz President, Prime Minister, Defence Minister and Foreign Minister. Two Parliamentary delegations from Kyrgyzstan visited India in January 2003 in connection with the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Indian Parliament. Speaker of Legislative Assembly of Kyrgyz Parliament Erkebaev and Speaker of Assembly of Peoples Representatives of Kyrgyz Parliament Altay Bourbayev led these respectively.

First Ever Visit by the Prime Minister

During the visit, Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Rahmanov signed a Joint Declaration of Friendship and Cooperation. Agreements on Visa Free regime for Diplomatic Passport Holders, Tourism, Extradition, Cooperation in the Field of Information Technology and Establishment of an IT Centre in Dushanbe were also signed. The Instruments of Ratification for Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement and Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters were exchanged as well. Prime Minister announced an economic package totaling US\$ 40 million for Tajikistan including a fresh line of credit of US\$ 5 million and grants worth US\$ 15 million.

Around 50 Indian companies participated in the exhibition - 'Enterprise India-2003'- organized by CII in Bishkek in July 2003, which focused on Indian consumer goods.

A nine-member contemporary Indian dance group "Padatik" visited Kyrgyzstan in June 2003 for cultural performances. A photo-exhibition on 'Life and Times of Mahatma Gandhi' was organized in Bishkek for one week from 2 October 2003.

A FIEO delegation visited Bishkek on 14-15 January 2004, when a series of Buyer-Seller Meetings were held in Bishkek.

Tajikistan

Indo-Tajik bilateral relations continued to deepen during the period under review. The highlight of this period was Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to Tajikistan on 13-14 November 2003 at the invitation of the Tajik President Mr. Emomali Rahmanov. This was the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister after Tajikistan gained independence in 1991.

He also unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi at a prominent location in Dushanbe and announced the gift of 10 commuter buses to the city of Dushanbe.

The Prime Minister along with President Rahmanov inaugurated CII's 'Made in India' Exhibition in Dushanbe. The products on display (tractors, two wheeler scooters, audio-video and medical diagnostic equipments and other consumer goods) were gifted to Tajik Government at the conclusion of the Exhibition.

An agreement between the Ministry of External Affairs and HMT was signed on 27 May 2003 for the establishment of a Fruit Processing Plant in Dushanbe under Government of India's aid programme. A two-member delegation from Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) visited Dushanbe on 6-9 June 2003 in order to conduct a feasibility study for setting up of an Information Technology Centre in Dushanbe.

External Affairs Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha visited Tajikistan from 28-30 January 2003. He called on Tajik President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister. Shri Yashwant Sinha gifted a satellite dish antenna, colour television, VCR and computer to Tajik University (Hindi department) and inaugurated Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre in Embassy of India, Dushanbe.

A delegation comprising of Secretary (ANA) and Joint Secretary (CA) visited Tajikistan on 24-26 August 2003. The delegation met Tajik President, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister.

A two-member team from Narcotics Control Bureau visited Tajikistan from 27-31 October 2003 and organized a three-day seminar on controlling drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors for the Tajik Drug Control Agency. A two-member Indian delegation participated in the Dushanbe International Fresh Water Forum from 29 August-1 September 2003.

Two Hindi scholars from Tajikistan participated in the 7th World Hindi Conference in Suriname from 5 to 9 June 2003. One of the scholars was also felicitated at the conference. On 15 May 2003, a seminar on Amir Khusro and his influence

on Central Asia was organized by the Embassy in Dushanbe. Two experts from India participated in the seminar.

Tajik Minister of Culture Mr. Karomatullo Olimov visited New Delhi to participate in the International Conference on Dialogue Amongst Civilizations from 9-10 July 2003. Tajik Parliamentary delegation led by Chairman of the Majlisi Milli of Oli Makhmadsaid Ubaidulloev visited India from 20-26 January 2003 in connection with the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Indian Parliament.

At the invitation of Minister of Communications and IT Shri Arun Shourie, the First Deputy Minister of Telecommunications of Tajikistan Mr. Sherali Najmuddinov, led a two member delegation to participate in the 2nd Asian IT Ministers' Summit in Hyderabad on 12-13 January 2004.

Tajikistan opened its Embassy in India in October 2003.

Turkey

Bilateral relations between India and Turkey have strengthened significantly during the year, the highlight being the Prime Minister's visit after a gap of 15 years. Economic relations saw a further deepening with bilateral trade continuing on the upward trend. Additional institutional arrangements and agreements were finalized. The resumption of direct air link is also likely to have a beneficial long-term impact on trade, tourism and cultural relations.

Secretary (ANA) visited Turkey in April 2003 for Foreign Office Consultations. Joint Secretary (CA) visited Ankara in June 2003 to hold consultations on Central Asia. These meetings, held immediately after the war in Iraq, helped bring about closer political understanding between India and Turkey.

An 'India Business Day' was organised in the Aegean Free Trade Zone on 11th April 2003. A delegation of Association of Turkish Travel Agents (TURSAB) visited India in

April and the return visit of Indian Tour Operators took place in October 2003. Turkey participated as 'partner country' in India International Trade Fair in New Delhi in November 2003.

The External Affairs Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha visited Ankara on 4-5 August 2003 and met Foreign Minister Mr. Abdullah Gul besides calling on President Mr. Ahmet Necdet Sezer and Prime Minister Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Prime Minister's visit to Turkey (16-19 September 2003) was a major event in India-Turkey relations. The visit was marked by mutual warmth and a desire to add further all-round substance to the relationship. The visit attracted sustained and positive interest in the print and visual media. Agreements on Cooperation in the field of Science and Technology and on Extradition; A Protocol of intent of cooperation in the field of Information Technology and computer software; and a protocol for setting up of a Joint Working Group on combating terrorism were signed during the visit. The agreement on Cooperation in the field of Tourism, that was signed in 1995, became operational with the exchange of Instrument of Ratification.

A central thoroughfare in Ankara was named after Rabindranath Tagore and the poet's bust at the entrance of the road was unveiled by the Prime Minister. He also addressed intellectuals and decision makers at the Centre for Strategic Research, a prestigious think tank in Ankara on current trends in India-Turkey relations.

In Istanbul, Prime Minister met President Ahmet Necdet Sezer. He also met and addressed a gathering of the Indian community in Turkey. While he was in Istanbul, the inaugural flight of the THY/AI between Istanbul and New Delhi took off on 18 September 2003.

CII organized a 'Made in India' Exhibition in Istanbul during Prime Minister's visit.

Prime Minister attended the Exhibition and addressed a business conference hosted by the Turkish Foreign Economic Relations Board.

India's exports during 2002 were US\$564 million, which was an increase of 59% over the exports of 2001. These have increased further to US\$584 million during the first 10 months of 2003. Prime Minister announced, during the visit, a target of US\$ 1 billion for bilateral trade by 2005.

The tourist and business traffic from Turkey to India has picked up markedly after the resumption of direct Turkish Airlines flights between Istanbul and New Delhi.

Turkmenistan

India's relations with Turkmenistan continue to be friendly. Exchanges at the cultural and business level took place regularly. A number of steps were taken to promote awareness about India in Turkmenistan.

An 18 member Turkmen Dance and Music Group visited India at the invitation of ICCR and gave performances in Delhi, Chandigarh, Dehradun and Mussorie.

Uzbekistan

Indo-Uzbek relations were marked by traditional warmth during the year. A number of new and important initiatives in different fields were undertaken.

The first session of Indo-Uzbek Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism was held in Tashkent on 21-22 April 2003. As a result of the meeting, a Protocol was signed between the two countries.

The Deputy Defence Minister of Uzbekistan for International Relations led a four-member delegation to India from 29 April to 2 May 2003. The visit resulted in signing of a Protocol for cooperation in the Area of Defence for 2003.

The External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha visited Uzbekistan on 6-8 November 2003. During the visit, he had meetings with the President, Prime Minister,

Foreign Minister and Defence Minister of Uzbekistan. An MoU was signed by him and his Uzbek counterpart on mutual cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute of India and the Uzbek University of World Economy and Diplomacy.

Uzbek Foreign Minister Abdulaziz H Kamilov visited India from 3-4 February 2003. He called on President, Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and Raksha Mantri. An agreement between the two countries for setting up a Joint Working Group on International Terrorism was signed during the visit. Minister of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education S S Gulyamov visited India from 7-10 January 2003. He met Minister of Human Resource Development, Science and Technology and Department of Ocean Development Dr Murli Manohar Joshi. Erkin Vahidov visited India from 20-26 January 2003 in connection with the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Indian Parliament.

The Third India-Central Asia Regional Conference was organized at Tashkent from 6-8 November 2003, jointly by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi and the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies of Uzbekistan. External Affairs Minister and the Uzbek Foreign Minister jointly inaugurated the conference, which was attended by delegates from 28 countries.

A CII Infrastructure Mission visited Tashkent from 4-8 September 2003. A number of areas of cooperation were identified.

A two-member delegation from Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) visited Tashkent on 9-12 June 2003 in order to conduct a feasibility study for setting up of an Information Technology Centre in Tashkent.

India continues to render assistance to Uzbekistan under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme. 100 slots were allotted for Uzbekistan out of which 90 slots have been utilised till November 2003.

Under the Indo-Uzbek Cultural Exchange

Programme, two exhibitions were organized in Tashkent – (a) An Exhibition of Indian musical instruments and (b) An Exhibition of Madhubani Paintings. Two Indian musical groups visited Tashkent and presented concerts. In return, two cultural Groups from Uzbekistan visited India.

Special efforts were made for promotion of Hindi in Uzbekistan. A large number of Hindi books and a computer set were presented to the Department of South Asian Languages of the Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies in April 2003. Hindi books were also presented to other institutes of Uzbekistan. Two Hindi scholars from Uzbekistan were sponsored as official delegates to the VIIth World Hindi Conference held in Paramaribo (Suriname) from 5-9 June 2003.

A Work Plan for 2004 under the MoU for cooperation in the field of Agriculture Research and Education was signed on 17 December 2003 in Tashkent by Ambassador of India and Dr. Shermat Nurmatov, Deputy Minister and Director, Uzbek Scientific Production Centre for Agriculture.

A five-member Women Parliamentary Delegation consisting of Chairpersons of Oliy Majlis committees on Women Welfare, Social & Employment Issues and Education visited India from 19 January-3 February 2004.

A two-member delegation from the Communication and Information Agency of Uzbekistan participated in the 2nd Asian IT Ministers' Summit held in Hyderabad on 12-13 January 2004.

A 20-member business delegation representing 16 Indian companies and Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) visited Uzbekistan on 19-22 January 2004 under the 'Focus-CIS' programme of the Government of India. A Buyer-Seller Meeting (BSM) was organised during the visit. A Memorandum of Understanding between FIEO and the Chamber of Commodity Producers and Entrepreneurs of Uzbekistan was signed on 20 January 2004.



5. The Gulf, West Asia and North Africa

Iraq

Given India's long-standing political, cultural and economic ties, India is interested in the peace and prosperity of the Gulf region and has, therefore, been monitoring the developments in Iraq very closely. India's policies concerning developments in Iraq are based on its principles and national interest. Government of India's position has been based on the unanimous Resolution adopted by both Houses of Parliament on 8 April 2003. The Resolution deplored the military action and stated that this action, with a view to changing the government in Iraq was unacceptable. The action also lacked the specific sanction of the UN Security Council. The Resolution called for immediate secession of hostilities in Iraq and quick withdrawal of Coalition forces. It also called upon the UN to protect the sovereignty of Iraq and to ensure the reconstruction of Iraq under UN auspices. India welcomed the signing of Iraq's interim constitution on March 8 initiating the process of handing over sovereignty to the Iraqi people and hoped that the scheduled dates of transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi people will be adhered to.

India has consistently emphasized the need for an early restoration of sovereignty to the Iraqi people and reaffirmed the right of Iraqi people to freely determine their political future and control their natural resources. It has stressed the crucial role of the UN in the process of political and economic reconstruction of Iraq. It had reiterated these concerns to the 58th session of the UN General Assembly on 25 September.

While UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1483 of 22 May 2003 recognized the status of the occupying powers and provided a legal basis and international mandate for administering Iraq on an interim basis, the subsequent UNSC Resolution 1511 of 16 October 2003 recognized the Governing Council and its Ministers as the principal bodies of the Iraqi Interim Administration, embodying the sovereignty of the State of Iraq during the transitional period until an internationally

recognized, representative government is established and assumes the responsibilities of the Authority. Since then India has noted the intention of the Coalition Authorities to handover sovereignty to a Transitional National Assembly by 30 June 2004 and that the Iraqi Governing Council is working on a roadmap for this purpose.

The arrest of Saddam Hussein by the Coalition Authorities has been noted. Various views have been expressed as to where and how his trial should take place. The judicial process will have to address issues such as rights of Iraqi nationals, the obligations of occupying powers under the Geneva Convention, the need for transparency and fairness of the judicial process, etc. India believes that it is essentially a question for the Iraqis to decide, but in conformity with well-known international norms and principles. India has taken note of the statements that the Geneva Conventions will be respected and it hopes for early improvement of the security situation in Iraq. India is strongly committed to assist the people of Iraq in their humanitarian and reconstruction efforts. In response to UN Secretary General's Flash Appeal, early this year, India had committed US\$20 million for assistance to the Iraqi people. As the Donors Conference held in Madrid from 23-24 October 2003, India has committed an additional amount of US\$10 million through Trust Funds being coordinated by the United Nation and International Monetary Fund respectively for reconstruction needs of Iraq. Government of India is working on proposals for assistance including medical assistance to a hospital in Najaf, provision of computers, assistance in the constitution development process and human resource development and training of Iraqi personnel, including diplomats.

As part of the continuous efforts to assist people of Iraq in humanitarian and reconstruction efforts, India provided training to 15 Iraqi diplomats for a period of 6 weeks in February-March at the Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi. An Archaeological Team from Iraq visited India

in February and met senior officials in the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Culture, on cooperation in retrieving the artifacts stolen from Iraqi museums.

Secretary, Asia and North Africa (ANA), Shri R.M. Abhyankar led a delegation to the Iraq Donors Conference in Abu Dhabi on 28-29 February 2004 that was hosted by the UAE as follow up on the Madrid Conference. India is one of the 13-member Donor Committee that came formally into existence at the conference. The conference discussed the mechanism to spend the pledged funds in the reconstruction of Iraq through the two trust funds to be administered by the World Bank and UN respectively. India has pledged a total of US \$ 10 million to the two Trust Funds. This is in addition to US \$ 20 million being spent on relief in Iraq bilaterally. The next conference of Donors Committee will take place in Doha in May 2004.

An amount of US\$ 1.2 million has been provided to World Food Programme (WFP) for procuring and distributing Infant Formula milk i.e. dried whole milk powder to the Iraqi people. India has also transferred US\$2.5 million to the Iraq Trust Fund. An 8-week training programme for 15 Iraqi diplomats, organized by FSI in February-March 2004, concluded this month. A six weeks programme on communication and information technology has been organized by NIIT from 5 April-14 May under the ITEC programme. There are 20 Iraqi participants out of which 9 are female participants.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) sent their business delegation to Iraq, which was successful in reviving and renegotiating some of the contracts that have been signed under Oil for Food Programme with the concerned Ministries in Iraq. Secretary (ANA) also visited Iraq and the neighbouring countries from 23-26 June 2003 and held wide-ranging discussions with important leaders of Iraq as well as the Governments of the neighbouring countries. Indo-Iraq Business Council of FICCI organized a conference 'Focus Iraq' on 7 October 2003 in New Delhi. Other important developments,

which took place in the countries of Gulf region, are as follows:

Bahrain

At the invitation of Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Mr. Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, Prime Minister of Kingdom of Bahrain paid a State Visit to India from 11-14 January 2004. The following agreements were signed during the visit:

- MoU on Cooperation between Ministries of Foreign Affairs
- Agreement on Juridical and Judicial Cooperation in Civil and Commercial Matters
- Extradition Treaty
- Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters
- Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Bilateral Investment

The Prime Minister of Bahrain called on the President and the Vice-President. Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Home Affairs and the External Affairs Minister of India called on the Prime Minister of Bahrain. Later, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) conferred an Honorary Doctorate on the Bahrain Prime Minister on 21 February 2004, which was received by Dr. Mohammed Abdul Ghaffar, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Prime Minister.

Mr. Abdul Nabi Abdullah Al-Sho'ala, Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister of Bahrain, visited New Delhi to participate in the Conference on "Dialogue amongst Civilisations" which was held from 9-10 July 2003 in New Delhi. During his visit he also called on the Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna. The Bahraini Minister handed over a letter from the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain addressed to the Indian Prime Minister.

Kuwait

Secretary (ANA) visited Kuwait from 12-13 May 2003 and held meetings with Kuwaiti

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly, Permanent Under Secretary in the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry and Director General of Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development. Discussions focused on situation in Iraq, Indo-Kuwaiti Economic interest etc. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna visited Kuwait from 23-25 June 2003. During the visit, he met First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister and Speaker of the National Assembly of Kuwait. During these meetings bilateral relations, regional and international issues of mutual interest were discussed.

Special Kuwait Cell

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

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

Between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004, Special Kuwait Cell received an amount of US\$ 26,040,950.24 in individual claims categories from UNCC and disbursed an amount of US\$ 18,764,732.67 to 3068 claimants. The money received in the previous year but remained undisbursed for

various reasons continued to be distributed during this period. In all an amount of US \$ 1,34,25,886.51 was disbursed during the period 1 April 2003 to 30 November 2003. The break up is given below:

Category	No. of Claims	Amount (US \$)
A	1230	2299000.00
C	370	2085618.27
D	71	9041268.24
Total	1671	13425886.51

In category 'E', an amount of US \$ 7,30,756 was received for corporate claims out of which US\$ 2,17,023 has been disbursed to the concerned companies till 30 November 2003. Disbursement of balance amount of US \$5,13,733 is being processed. In category 'F' (Govt. claim), the Ministry of External Affairs was paid US\$ 1,00,00,000.

Between April 2003 and January 2004 the Special Kuwait Cell in the Ministry of External Affairs received an amount of US\$ 2.1429 million in individual claims category from the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), Geneva, and disbursed an amount of US\$ 1.5535 million. In the corporate claims category an amount of US \$ 7,30,756 was received and an amount of US \$ 6,91,230 was disbursed during this period. In the Government claim category an amount of US \$ 10 million was also received.

Oman

The second meeting of the India-Oman Strategic Consultative Group was held in Delhi on 17 October 2003. The Omani delegation was led by Mr. Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hameed Al bu Saidi, Under Secretary in the Omani Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Indian delegation was led by Secretary (ANA). The 4th meeting of the India-Oman Joint Commission was held in Muscat from 20-22 October 2003. Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Shri S.B. Mookherjee, led the Indian delegation. Their Minister for Commerce & Industry,

Mr. Maqbool Ali Sultan, led the Omani side. Minister for Chemical & Fertilizers, Shri S.S. Dhindsa visited Oman in 2003 for the unveiling of the foundation stone of an Indo-Omani Joint Fertilizer Project and handed over a letter from Prime Minister to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos.

Qatar

Deputy Prime Minister Shri Lal Krishna Advani visited Doha, Qatar from 20-22 January 2003. During the visit he called on Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Bin Jabor Al-Thani and discussed matters of mutual interest particularly security-related issues.

Saudi Arabia

Dr. Saleh E. Al-Husseini, Saudi Deputy Minister of Industrial Affairs visited India from 25-30 April 2003 leading a 28-Member delegation including 14 officials and 14 businessmen. He held useful discussions for increasing bilateral cooperation in the banking sector. The Saudi delegation also visited Mumbai and Bangalore and new areas of cooperation were identified. The Saudi Minister showed great interest in Indian IT Companies. Dr. Ibrahim bin Abdul Aziz Al-Shiddi, Saudi Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education (Cultural Affairs and External Relations) visited New Delhi to participate in the International Conference on Dialogue among Civilizations – Quest for New Perspectives, held in New Delhi from 9-10 July 2003.

The Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna, visited the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 21-23 September 2003 and signed the Haj 2004 Agreement on 22 September 2003 in Jeddah with the Saudi Haj Minister, Mr. Iyad Bin Amin Madani. Under the Agreement, 115,000 Indian pilgrims will go to Saudi Arabia for Haj in 2004. During his stay, Shri Khanna also presided over the exchange of Agreement between the National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. and the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry to

promote Small and Medium Enterprises. A high level Saudi Business delegation led by Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Jeraisy, Chairman of the Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce, visited India from 12-17 October 2003 to promote friendly ties and strengthen bilateral business relations with India. CII and FIEO organized business conferences for the visiting delegation in Mumbai and New Delhi respectively. The delegation also visited Hyderabad and held fruitful interaction with the business leaders.

UAE

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, COAS of United Arab Emirates visited India at the invitation of External Affairs Minister from 30 June-1 July 2003. During the visit he called on Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and Defence Minister. Delegation level talks were also held between the two sides. An agreement on Defence Cooperation was signed during the visit.

President of India paid a successful State visit to UAE from 18-20 October 2003. He was accompanied by Minister for Disinvestments, Communications and Information Technology. He held extensive discussions with UAE leadership on cooperation in the fields of knowledge based technologies including biotechnology, use of solar power for desalination, establishment of a Cyber University, possibility of UAE's investment in India, and joint ventures in the fields of petrochemicals, chemicals, pharmaceutical sectors.

Yemen

Secretary (ANA) along with Joint Secretary, Gulf Division visited Sana'a and Aden from 24-26 May 2003 for foreign office consultations with Yemen.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General Mr. Abdulrahman bin Hamad Al-Attiyah paid an official visit to New Delhi from 15-16 February 2004, for

consultations with the External Affairs Minister, Shri. Yashwant Sinha, as part of India – GCC political dialogue initiated at the Ministerial level in New York on 26 September 2003 on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. The dialogue, which will now be an annual feature, marks a new beginning in GCC-India relations by providing an institutional mechanism for a structured political interaction. During his stay in New Delhi, the Secretary General of GCC had wide ranging discussions with External Affairs Minister, and called on Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha. A Joint Press Communiqué issued at the end of the visit to New Delhi acknowledged the traditionally close and historical ties between the countries of GCC and India, and described the institutional mechanism for political dialogue at the Ministerial level as a “new era” in GCC-India Cooperation. The Secretary General voiced GCC's appreciation for the Indian community in the Gulf countries for their constructive role and positive contribution.

GCC-India relations were further strengthened and broadened when the first ever GCC-India Industrial Conference was held on 17-18 February 2004, in Mumbai. The event was jointly organized by Ministry of External Affairs and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Ministry of Commerce under the theme “Opportunity and Challenges in the 21st Century” focusing on 4 select priority areas – i) trade ii) investments iii) industrial cooperation including small and medium enterprises and iv) transfer of technology including information technology. This mega event symbolized the political will to promote constructive economic engagements between the two sides. The conference was co-chaired from the Indian side by Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Commerce and Industry and from the GCC side by Mr. Abdullah bin Abdul Rahman Al Taweel, Minister of Trade and Industry of Kuwait and was attended by Mr. Abdul Rahman bin Hamad Al Attiyah, GCC Secretary General, Mr. Mohammad Khalfan bin Kharbash, Minister of State for Finance & Industry,

UAE, Mr. Ali Saleh Al Saleh, Minister of Commerce, Bahrain, Mr. Hashim bin Abdullah Al Yamani, Minister of Commerce & Industry, Saudi Arabia, Mr. Maqbool bin Ali bin Sultan, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Oman and Mr. Abdullah Hamad Al Attiyah, Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy & Industry, Qatar. On the margins of the conference, all the ministers attending the conference agreed to explore the possibilities of Free Trade Area between India and GCC. The conference concluded with "Mumbai Declaration" which recognized the age-old Indo-Arab trade relationship and the future potential for industrial cooperation between GCC and India. The conference also endorsed the proposed GCC-India Framework Agreement for Economic Cooperation, which provides overall commitment for increased broad based economic cooperation and a pathway towards GCC-India Free Trade Area. The visit of GCC's Secretary General and the first India-GCC Industrial Conference will go a long way in strengthening and cementing the good relations between the two regions and opening new vistas of economic cooperation.

Haj 2003-04

Haj pilgrimage was concluded satisfactorily in March 2004 when more than seventy thousand pilgrims performed Haj through Central Haj Committee. The last flight came on 6th March and a total of 252 flights operated during this time.

West Asia & North Africa

Our engagement with the West Asia and North Africa (WANA) Region was further consolidated by the exchange of a number of visits at Summit and other levels. The President of Djibouti and Prime Minister of Israel visited India and similarly, our President and Prime Minister paid State Visits to Sudan and Syria respectively. In addition, ministerial delegations were received from Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, Israel and Palestine. Economic and trade interchanges also continued to grow and

several cultural exchanges took place. Several Agreements and MoUs were signed with the countries in the WANA Region. India offered concessional lines of credit to various countries in the region and these were utilized effectively. Humanitarian assistance was given to Djibouti, Sudan, Palestine and Algeria during the year.

Country-wise details are given below:

Algeria

The 8th session of the Indo-Algerian Joint Commission took place in Delhi from 8-10 October 2003. The Algerian delegation was led by Minister of Transport Mr. Abdelmalek Sellal. Issues relating to trade, finance, energy, mining, fertilizers, small and medium scale enterprises, railways and shipping, culture and information, and consular matters were also discussed. An MoU on cooperation in the field of Small and Medium Enterprises, the Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) and an Agreement between the news agencies of the two countries, viz. PTI and APS, were signed. The third Joint Business Council meeting between the two countries' business organisations also took place simultaneously.

An Indian Sufiana-Kathak Troupe visited Algeria from 24-26 August 2003 under the CEP. The group gave three performances, including one at the Algerian Annual Festival at Timgad. India announced humanitarian aid amounting to US\$1 million for the earthquake victims in Algeria. Medicines and construction material are being sent to Algeria.

Djibouti

India's relations with Djibouti acquired a new momentum with the historic visit of President Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh from 18-23 May 2003. The Djibouti delegation included four Ministers (Foreign Affairs, Defence, Transportation and Education) and a 30-Member business delegation.

Documents such as the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA), Civil Aviation Agreement, Executive Programme of Cultural

Educational and Scientific Cooperation, and an MOU for setting up of Joint Business Council between FICCI and the Djibouti Chamber of Commerce were signed. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee announced a grant-in-aid for disaster relief of up to US\$ 1 million comprising of wheat/ rice and medicines, and an increase of ITEC fellowships from 2 to 25, five of which would be reserved for IT training. An ITEC funded delegation of EdCil visited Djibouti for identifying the needs of the Djibouti education sector in June 2003. An IRCON team also visited Djibouti in May to assess business opportunities. The EXIM Bank Line of Credit Agreement for US \$ 10 million, announced during the visit, was signed and disbursed during January 2004.

A 7-member Djibouti Defence delegation led by General Fathi Ahmed Houssein, Commander of Armed Forces visited India in October 2003.

A bust of Mahatma Gandhi, provided by ICCR, was installed at the head of one of the main streets in Djibouti on 30 January 2004. The Foreign Minister of Djibouti unveiled the bust and named the street after Mahatma Gandhi. External Affairs Minister's message was read out by the Indian Ambassador on the occasion.

Egypt

A high level inter-Ministerial delegation led by Dr. Hamdy Al Syed, Chairman of the Health Committee of for People's Assembly (Parliament) visited India in August 2003 to examine and report on the banned meat exports to Egypt. They visited meat exports' facilities throughout the country.

A Ministerial delegation led by Dr. Hassan Ali Khedr, Minister of Supply and Internal Trade and including Mr. Fayza Abou El-Naga, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs visited New Delhi in October 2003. Talks were held with the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and other concerned Ministries and agencies with a view to conclude an inter-governmental agreement to enable supply of Indian wheat to Egypt and import of various Egyptian commodities by India,

through a buyback arrangement. Mr. Khedr handed over a letter from Egyptian President Mr. Mubarak to Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee during a call on him.

Foreign Office Consultations were held from 10-11 May 2003 in Cairo. Secretary (ANA) led the Indian delegation.

A delegation from the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Trade, led by First Under Secretary Mr. El-Said Kassem visited India in April, for the 3rd round of discussions on a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) and the Joint Working Group on Bilateral Trade. A 2-member delegation from Ministry of Finance visited Cairo in September to hold discussion on updating and revising the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement.

Secretary, Small Scale Industries, Shri S.K. Tuteja visited Cairo in October with 4-member delegation to review the implementation of the Joint Action Plan concluded between the Egyptian Social Fund for Development and the Indian Ministry of Small Scale Industries.

The Third Round of Talks on the Preferential Tariff Agreement (PTA) with Egypt, under the auspices of the Indo-Egyptian Joint Committee on Trade, was held from 8-10 December 2003 in Cairo. The composite team comprising of the Commerce, Agriculture and External Affairs Ministries held discussions with the Egyptians on PTA and other trade matters. Discussions are likely to continue before the conclusion of the Preferential Tariff Agreement.

Indo-Egyptian trade and economic interchanges continued to expand. Similarly, India continued to be one of the major investors in Egypt with investments of about US\$350 million. In September, the Aditya Birla group decided to set up a plant for manufacturing acrylic fibre near Alexandria. They also decided to expand for capacity in their flagship company, Alexandria Carbon Black. This would entail an increase of Indian FDI in Egypt by US\$110 million within the next few years. More Indian investments are in the pipeline.

Arab League

India-Arab League talks were held in Cairo on 10 May 2003 within the framework of an MoU between India and the Arab League for regular institutional dialogue. The leader of the Indian delegation, Secretary (ANA) also met Mr. Amr Mossa, Secretary General of the Arab League.

Israel

Prime Minister Mr. Ariel Sharon paid the first-ever State visit by an Israeli Prime Minister to India from 8-10 September 2003. He was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Justice Mr. Yosef Lapid, Minister for Education, Culture & Sport Ms. Limor Livnat and Minister of Agriculture & Rural Development Mr. Yisrael Katz and a large group of Israeli businessmen. Mr. Sharon called on President Shri A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and held extensive talks on bilateral, regional and international issues with Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Deputy Prime Minister & Home Minister Shri L.K. Advani, External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, Finance Minister Shri Jaswant Singh, Defence Minister Shri George Fernandes and Leader of the Opposition Smt. Sonia Gandhi. Mr. Sharon addressed a joint meeting of CII and FICCI. Agreements relating to Environment Protection, Health and Medicine, Combating Drugs Trafficking and Abuse, Visa Waiver for Diplomatic and Official Passports and Exchange Programme on Education and Culture were signed during the visit. It was also agreed to set up a Joint Committee on Agriculture and to explore the possibility of setting up a second Agriculture demonstration farm in India.

Five months after Mr. Sharon's visit to India, Foreign Minister Mr. Silvan Shalom paid an official visit to India from 9-11 February 2004. He called on President, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister and held plenary meeting with Minister of External Affairs, Shri Yashwant Sinha. Issues of bilateral and regional interest were discussed during the meetings. Mr. Shalom also announced the reopening of the Israeli Consulate in

Mumbai. During his Mumbai visit, he addressed the Indian business community and interacted with the Jewish community living there.

Science and Technology Minister, Eliezer Sandberg visited India from 22-25 December. He signed an MoU on 25 December 2003 in Bangalore on carrying of an Israeli payload (telescope) on an Indian launch vehicle. A Joint Statement for increased cooperation in Science and Technology was issued during his visit. Similarly Major Gen Amos Yaron, Defence Secretary led a 12 member Israeli delegation for the Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation on 22-24 December 2003. He was accompanied by Maj. Gen. Amos Gilad, Head of the Politico-Military Bureau and other senior Defence officials. A Defence Production team, led by Defence Production Secretary Smt. Usha Pillai comprising the Ordnance Factories Board Chief and other Public Sector Undertakings representatives visited Israel from 28 December- 2 Jan 2004 for exploring cooperation possibilities for upgrading our Ordnance Factories, etc. The third meeting of the Indo-Israeli Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism took place in Tel Aviv on 24-25 March 2004. Secretary (ANA) led the Indian delegation, which included experts on counter terrorism from various GOI agencies. The delegation also visited border areas to study checking of infiltration and border management.

The India-Israel Joint Commission meeting was held in Tel Aviv on 14-15 January 2004. Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley headed the Indian delegation. On that occasion, a "Destination India" event was also organized.

His Lordship Mr. Aron Barak, Chief Justice of Israel visited India from 16-21 February 2004 at the invitation of the Chief Justice of India. He called on President and had plenary talks with the Chief Justice of India. He also delivered a lecture at the Indian Law Institute.

Deputy Commerce Minister, Mr. Michael Ratzon visited India in connection with the International Cooperation Alliance Convention in Mumbai from 5-6 February

2004. Israeli Foreign Minister's Special Envoy Mr. David Ivry visited India on 7-10 July 2003 and called on Deputy Prime Minister & Home Minister, Shri L.K. Advani, External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha and Principal Secretary to Prime Minister and National Security Advisor, Shri Brajesh Mishra.

Indo-Israeli Defence Cooperation included the signing of an India-Israel-Russia agreement on the supply of Phalcon airborne early warning systems to India.

Prospects of cooperation in peaceful uses of space were identified during the visit of ISRO Chairman Dr. Kasturirangan to Israel in August 2003. Deputy Minister of Defence Mr. Boim Zeev visited India from 3-5 February 2004 to attend "DEFEXPO". He called on Shri I.D. Swami, Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs. Israel had a large pavilion at the DEFEXPO. Similarly the third meeting of the Indo-Israeli Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism took place in Tel Aviv on 24-25 March 2004. Secretary(ANA) led the Indian delegation, which included experts on counter terrorism from various Government of India agencies.

The high growth rate in India-Israel bilateral trade was sustained during 2003-04. Two-way trade between India and Israel increased by 28.4% during 2003 and reached US \$ 1.6 billion.

Jordan

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna, and Secretary(ANA), Shri R.M. Abhyankar visited Jordan from 21-23 June 2003 to attend the Extraordinary Session of the World Economic Forum Meeting in Amman. Similarly interaction at the trade, industry level continued with a visit to Jordan by a 25-member FICCI delegation and a subsequent CII delegation in June 2003. The Secretary General of Jordanian Ministry of Agriculture Prof. Awasi Taimeh visited India in connection with meat imports from India.

Lebanon

Relations with Lebanon continue to be cordial and friendly. Deputy Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. J.B.S. Yadava, visited Beirut from 10-13 September 2003. A 600-member Indian Battalion of the 8 Sikh Regiment continues to maintain peace in its area of operations.

Dr. S.A. Rehman, Professor of Arabic language and Culture at the Jawaharlal Nehru University participated in the workshop organized by the Arab Cultural Academy on "Arab Language and Culture outside the Arab Countries".

Libya

Secretary (ANA) visited Libya from 20-22 March 2004 and held talks with Foreign Minister Mr. Abderrahman Mohd. Shalgam, Energy and Trade Minister Dr. Fatehi Omar Ben-Shatwan, and a number of senior government officials in Oil, Energy and Foreign Affairs Ministries. Various areas of cooperation were identified during the visit. He also called on Mr. Suleiman Sassi Al-Shahoumi, Chairman of Foreign Relations Committee of the Libyan Parliament and Mr. Salem Ben Amer, Special Envoy of Col. Gaddafi for South Asia.

Indo-Libyan economic relations registered progress with BHEL and ONGC Videsh Ltd. bagging fresh contracts. BHEL secured a contract for the US\$ 215 million Western Mountain Gas Turbine Power Project in Libya. This was followed by ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) securing an oil and gas exploration contract worth US\$ 30 million in Libya in collaboration with the Turkish Petroleum Oil Co.(TPOC) in August 2003. Drilling has already commenced. Secretary (ANA) visited Libya from March 20-22, 2004 and held talks with Foreign Minister Mr. Abderrahman Mohd. Shalgam, Energy and Trade Minister Dr. Fatehi Omar Ben-Shatwan, and a number of senior government officials in Oil, Energy and Foreign Affairs Ministries. Various areas of cooperation specially in Oil and Power sectors were identified during the visit. Similarly, discussions on pending trade disputes also took place. He also called on

Mr. Suleiman Sassi Al-Shahoumi, Chairman of Foreign Relations Committee of the Libyan Parliament and Mr. Salem Ben Amer, Special Envoy of Col. Gaddafi for South Asia.

In the cultural field, a 12-member Bhangra Group visited Libya from 1-11 April 2003 in connection with Tripoli International Trade Fair.

Morocco

Minister of Textiles, Shri Syed Shahnawaz Hussain visited Morocco from 23-24 June 2003 to inaugurate the Textile Festival in Casablanca. King Mohammed VI paid a private visit to India in October. He visited Mumbai, Udaipur and Delhi.

The Second Indo-Moroccan Foreign Office Consultations took place on 8-9 January 2004 in New Delhi. Mr. Mohamed Rachad Bouhlal, Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Morocco led the Moroccan delegation while the Indian delegation was led by Secretary (ANA). Bilateral and regional issues were discussed during the Consultations. An MoU for interaction between the two Foreign Service Institutes was signed during the visit. The Moroccan delegation also visited Agra.

Palestine

Foreign Minister Nabil Shaah visited India from 29 August-1 September 2003 and handed over to Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee a letter from President Yasser Arafat. A grant of Rs. 2 crore was announced by the Prime Minister, which was utilized for supply of Tata vehicles and medicines to the government of Palestine.

India continued to extend political, material and technical assistance to Palestine. As a responsible member of the international community, India has been gravely concerned by the serious deterioration of the security situation in West Asia and has repeatedly called for de-escalation. India remains deeply disturbed by this turn of events, which has brought in its wake, great suffering on the two peoples, has adversely affected regional stability and is a matter of

widespread global concern. Support to the Palestinian cause remains an unaltered aspect of India's foreign policy.

India believes that there is no military solution to this problem. Both sides must cease all acts of violence. There must be immediate, parallel and accelerated movement towards tangible political progress and a defined series of steps leading to permanent peace involving recognition, normalisation and security between the two sides. India welcomed the unveiling of the Quartet Road Map in April 2003 and the cease-fire 'Hudna' declared by the Palestinians. India also stands by the basic principles that the choice of leadership of the Palestinian people is their sole prerogative.

Sudan

President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, paid a State Visit to Sudan from 20-22 October 2003. He held talks with the President Mr. Omar Hassan Ahmed Al Bashir and addressed the Sudanese Parliament. He also interacted with academicians and students at the University of Khartoum and held a meeting with the Sudanese alumni of Indian universities. During the visit of the President to Sudan from 20-22 October 2003, the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA), the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA), and the MOU on Cooperation in the field of Information Technology were signed.

Following the historic state visit to Sudan by the President in October 2003 there was an upward momentum in bilateral interaction. Several Ministers, in different fields, paid separate visits to India during December 2003. Mr Al Jaz, Energy and Mining Minister visited India from 5-9 December 2003. Similarly, Minister of National Defence Lt Gen. Bakri Hassan Salih, accompanied by Defence Secretary, DGs for Training and Military Industry and other senior officials visited India from 12-15 December 2003. He held talks with the

Defence Minister and visited Pune and Bangalore. He called on the President and handed over a letter from Sudanese President General Bashir. An NDC seat was offered to Sudan for the 2004 course. Towards the end of the month, Transportation Minister Mohd Elsamani Elwasila, accompanied by State Minister of Finance Dr Hassan Ahmed Taha, visited India from 22-29 December 2003. The visits indicated appreciation of our sensitivity and interest in Sudan. Sudanese Minister of State for Defence Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Ali led a five-member delegation to the DEFEXPO INDIA 2004 from 3-6 February 2004.

The Agreement on the EXIM Bank Line of Credit of US\$ 50 million, announced during the President's visit, was signed on 15 January 2004.

Syria

Minister of External Affairs, Shri Yashwant Sinha paid a three-day official visit to Syria from 31 July–2 August 2003 and met President Mr. Bashar al-Assad. He held delegation level meetings with Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister Mr. Farouk al-Shara'. President Dr. Assad appreciated India's stand on Iraq. During the meeting with Prime Minister Mr. Mero, both sides agreed to strengthen and expand cooperation in the economic, commercial, trade, investment, banking, information technology fields and expressed interest in the reactivation of existing agreements and expansion of cooperation in new areas of mutual interest.

Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee paid a 3-day historic State visit from 14-16 November 2003 to Syria, which was the first visit of an Indian Prime Minister after a gap of 15 years. He was accompanied by External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwat Sinha and a large delegation. Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee met President Dr. Bashar Al-Assad and held talks with Prime Minister Eng. Mohammad Naji Al-Otri and other Cabinet Ministers. They expressed satisfaction at the steady and comprehensive growth in bilateral relations.

Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee inaugurated the Syrian National Biotechnology Centre, established with Indian assistance at the Damascus Agricultural University and announced a grant of US\$ 1 million to assist the Centre. It was decided that a Joint Hydrocarbon Committee, having three representatives from each side, would be set up. Both sides supported strong cooperation for combating international terrorism and to revitalise the Non Aligned Movement. India called for the establishment of a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East. Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee announced a Credit Line of US\$ 25 million.

During the visit, the Executive Programme for Culture Cooperation, Education, Biotechnology, Science & Technology, and MoUs on Agriculture, Information Technology, Technical cooperation, Small & Medium Enterprises Cooperation, as also a Cooperation Agreement between Sahitya Akademy and Arab Writers Union were signed.

Tunisia

An Indian textiles exhibition was organized in Tunisia in June, which was attended by Textiles Minister, Shri Syed Shahnawaz Hussain. Tunisian Industry Minister, Moncef ben Abdallah visited India in April and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Madame Saida Chtioui visited India for bilateral consultations in October. Minister of State for Information Technology and Internet Mr. Montassar Ouaili visited India from 8-14 February 2004. He also visited Bangalore and Hyderabad. An MoU on Cooperation in Communications and IT was signed during the visit.

A new \$ 10 million credit provision has been made by EXIM Bank of India to promote investments. Tunisians have invested in the Godavari Fertilisers & Chemicals Limited. Bilateral trade between India and Tunisia is now touching US\$ 200 million.

6. Africa (South of Sahara)

Angola

After the cessation of long civil war in Angola in April 2002, a lot of interest has been generated in India for enhancing commercial and economic relations with Angola. A number of businessmen from India visited Angola to assess various reconstruction and development in Angola as well as for enhancing Indian exports to Angola.

A two-member Rail India Technical Economic Services (RITES) Limited team visited Angola to assess the Angola Railway Rehabilitation Project in three provinces of Angola. The report prepared by RITES has since been forwarded to the Angolan Government for their consideration. A Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) team also visited Angola to assess the telecom projects there. Export Import Bank of India, Mumbai has extended a credit line of US \$5 million to Angola for financing exports from India to Angola. State Bank of India (SBI), Johannesburg has formally proposed to the Central Bank of Angola to open a Representative Office of SBI in Luanda.

Angola's Minister of Planning, Ms. Ana Dias Lourenco in her capacity as Chairman of the Council of Ministers of SADC, visited India in July 2003 and held talks with External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha. INS Trishul, an Indian warship, visited Luanda in August 2003. The visit by the Indian warship to Angola, the first of its kind, generated a lot of interest in Angola.

Botswana

External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, was the first Indian Minister of External Affairs to visit Botswana. His visit in April 2003 cemented the already close ties between India and Botswana and set in pace number of steps for further collaboration in various fields. Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Vikram Verma and Members of Parliament Shri Pramod Mahajan, Shri Mahendra Prasad, as well senior civilian and military officers visited Botswana during the year. Chief of Army Staff, Gen. N.C. Vij visited Botswana in

February 2004. Dignitaries from Botswana who visited India include the First Lady Mrs. Barbara Mogae, Sir Ketumile Masire, former President, Assistant Minister of Education, Mr. G.D. Lefhoko, and Commander of Botswana Defence Force, Lt. Gen. L.M. Fisher.

Namibia

The bilateral relations between Namibia and India continued to be warm and friendly and marked by the traditional sense of closeness and understanding. The major developments during the year are:

Minister of Regional and Local Government and Housing, Dr. Nickey Iyambo, accompanied by an engineer from the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Mrs. Aily Ndinelego Helao, and Chief Executive Officer of the Namibia Housing Enterprise (a public sector understanding), Mr. Kavekatora, visited India from 1-8 August 2002. A 4-member delegation led by the acting Vice Chancellor of the University of Namibia visited India to develop academic links between the University of Namibia and institutions of higher learning in India.

Donation of 5000 metric tonnes of rice as well as anti-retroviral drugs worth US \$ 100,000 were formally handed over to Namibian authorities in the first week of March 2004.

Zambia

The President of Zambia, Mr. Levy Patrick Mwanawasa paid a state visit to India from 20-25 April 2003. During his visit, Mr. Mwanawasa held discussions with President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and Ministers for Human Resource Development and Agriculture. There was close similarity of views on all international, regional and bilateral issues discussed between the two countries. The Zambian President supported India's candidature for the permanent membership of the expanded UN Security Council. He affirmed that terrorism could not be justified in any form for any cause or any reason. The Zambian

side stated that the state of Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of India and Indo-Pak differences should be resolved through bilateral dialogue on the basis of Simla Agreement of 1972 and Lahore Declaration of 1999.

India agreed to write off the inter-governmental credit outstanding against Zambia and give a fresh credit line of US\$ 10 million for purchase of machinery and equipment, a grant of Rs.25 million for provision of agricultural machinery, a donation of 10,000 tonnes of rice and medicines worth US\$ 1 lakh, and increase in ITEC. The two countries signed an Agreement on Co-operation in Trade and an MoU on Co-operation in Agriculture. It was agreed that Indian expertise would be made available to Zambia for development of its agriculture, irrigation and agro-industries sector slots from existing 30 to 50. It was also agreed that India would assist Zambia in setting up a vocational training school.

Led by India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), 15 Indian organisations participated in the 77th Lusaka Agricultural and Commercial Show held in August 2003. These included National Small Industries Corporation, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, and a number of small and medium companies in the fields of food processing, extraction of edible oils, machine tools, packaging and other fields. The Zambian President visited the Indian Pavilion. The participation of Indian companies evoked several enquiries for purchase of Indian technology and equipment from Zambian businessmen.

An Indian public sector undertaking, M/s Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) secured a second contract worth US\$ 6 million for supply, erection and commissioning of ten transformers for Kafue Gorge Power Station in Zambia. Another Indian Company, M/s Cipla Pharmaceuticals Limited secured a contract for supply of Anti-HIV/AIDS medicines worth US\$ 3 million to the Zambian government. Deputy Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Gen. J.B.S Yadav visited Zambia from 3-6 February 2004 on a goodwill visit.

Dr. Kenneth K. Kaunda, the First President of Zambia was on a private visit to Mumbai and Hyderabad to discuss setting up of HIV/AIDS manufacturing facilities in Africa with Indian Pharmaceutical companies from 10-14 March 2004.

Mozambique

President Alberto Joaquim Chissano paid a State Visit to India during 10-15 May 2003. During the visit President Chissano met and held discussions with the President, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister among others. The Mozambican delegation included the Ministers of Agriculture, Industry & Trade, Higher Education, Science & Technology and Health. At the bilateral discussions held during the visit, it was agreed to write off government to government debts owed by Mozambique to India, while co-operation under Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Plan (SCAAP) and GCSS would be further extended along with other projects/assistance in Small and Medium Enterprises, with focus on coconut and coir processing, health and education. An MoU in the field of Agriculture and a bilateral inter-governmental Science & Technology Agreement were signed during the visit. The Prime Minister of India also announced a grant amounting to US\$ 200,000.00 per year for the next five years to be used towards the implementation of specific projects to be jointly identified by both sides. In addition to this grant, Mozambique will also receive a concessional credit line of US\$ 20 million from the US\$ 200 million Special Africa Fund announced by the Government of India. During his six-day stay in the country, President Chissano also visited the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, the National Institute for Rural Development, the e-Seva Centre and Hi-tech City in Andhra Pradesh, coir and cashew processing centres in Kerala and the Tata Showroom in Mumbai.

On 30 June 2003 Indian High Commissioner formally handed over medicines valued at US\$ 100,000 donated

by Government of India for the African Union Summit to the Deputy Minister of Health Aida Libombo. Secretary (EAA) visited Maputo during 5-10 July 2003 for the African Union Summit. During the visit he met the Foreign Minister, the Minister for Higher Education, Science & Technology, the Vice Minister for Finance, the General Secretary of the ruling Frelimo party as well as the Director of the Mozambican Centre for Investment Promotion (CPI) with whom fruitful discussions on bilateral matters were held. Secretary also held discussions with Executive Secretaries of various regional organisations like COMESA, NEPAD, IGAD, ECOWAS, SADC, etc.

INS Ranjit and INS Suvarna of the Indian Navy visited Mozambique from 23 June–16 July 2003 to provide maritime security cover for the African Union Summit. Apart from successfully providing maritime security cover during the Summit, the two ships provided onboard training and familiarisation with operations onboard ships for Mozambican Naval officers and sailors. Medical team from the ships also organised free medical camps at various places, which benefited approximately 650 patients.

The Minister of Labour, Shri Sahib Singh Verma accompanied by a high-powered delegation visited Mozambique during 22-24 August 2003 at the invitation of the Mozambican Minister of Labour. During the visit, the two Ministers held talks on bilateral co-operation in the field of labour and signed an MoU in this respect.

Health Minister of Mozambique visited India in February 2004. An MoU regarding cooperation in the field of health and medicine between the two countries was signed during the visit. The Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy visited India from 11-14 December 2003.

Swaziland

Two candidates from Swaziland have been selected to undergo training in India under the SCAAP programme. While one is expected to leave for India in November 2003, the other will leave in January 2004.

South Africa

The year saw an extraordinary consolidation of ties between India and South Africa. The highlight of the year was the high-profile state visit of President Thabo Mbeki to India from 15-19 October 2003. The President was accompanied by 11 Cabinet Ministers and a 70-member strong business delegation. The unprecedented size and composition of the accompanying ministerial delegation reflected the importance of the visit and the wide scope of cooperation between India and South Africa. During his visit, President Mbeki met the President and the Prime Minister and senior Cabinet Ministers. The two Heads of State signed a Joint Declaration. Five other documents were signed in their presence: an Extradition Treaty, a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters, Agreements on Cooperation in the field of Hydrocarbons and in the field of Power/Electricity, and the Cultural Exchange Programme for 2004-2006. The Presidential delegation also visited Hyderabad for an exposure to India's strengths in the field of biotechnology and information technology. He concluded his visit in Mumbai where the Presidential delegation had an extensive business interaction.

External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, visited Pretoria from 3-4 July 2003 for the fifth meeting of the bilateral Joint Commission. Discussions covered the entire gamut of relations encompassing cooperation in political and defense matters; trade, economic relations and technical cooperation; science & technology; culture & education; and minerals and energy. The Joint Commission witnessed the signing of an agreement between the EXIM Bank of India and South Africa's Absa Bank for a 10-million dollar credit line to facilitate the export of capital goods and equipment between the two countries. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha also addressed the Conference of Heads of Missions in Southern Africa in Pretoria on 3 July 2003.



The Visiting President of the Republic of South Africa Mr. T. M. Mbeki and Mrs. Zanele Mbeki being received by the President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam and Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee at a Ceremonial Reception in New Delhi on October 16, 2003.



Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the NAM's Business Forum on South South Cooperation at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on February 23, 2003

Close and active cooperation in multilateral fora notably at the Cancun meeting of the World Trading Organization in October 2003 reflected the exemplary state of bilateral relations, which had gained a trans-continental dimension with the launching of the India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum in Brasilia on 6 June 2003. The IBSA initiative itself is being pursued enthusiastically by the partner governments, with a trilateral Joint Commission to be hosted by India in early March, and a number of inter-Ministerial meetings in different sectors planned in the period before this meeting. The initiative has also elicited intense international attention, as a grouping of three large and influential emerging economies in three continents, all vibrant democracies, who perhaps are heard much more credibly by the developed world when they speak with one voice.

The scope was further enhanced with the regional context added by India's closer and institutionalised engagement with the African Union and the SADC, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), coordinated by its Secretariat in South Africa. Government of India announced a US\$ 200 million for engagement with NEPAD projects, in a combination of concessional loans and credits, including a grant element for training, provision of consultants and feasibility studies. Talks have also been held at the senior official level with the NEPAD Secretariat in South Africa and followed up during the visit of the NEPAD Chairman to India in November.

Foreign Ministers of South Africa and Brazil visited Delhi on 4-5 March 2004 for the 2nd meeting of the Trilateral Ministerial Commission of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum. The Ministers agreed on a Plan of Action for trilateral cooperation in the fields of Transportation (Civil Aviation and Shipping), Tourism, Trade & Investment,

Infrastructure, Job creation and small, medium and micro-enterprises, Science & Technology, Information Society, E-Governance, Capacity Building, Local Content Development, E-Health, Information Society, Health, Energy, Defence and Education.

South African Communication Minister, Ms. Ivy Matsepe-Cassaburry visited India from 21-27 April 2003. She called on her Indian counterpart and discussed the possibility of an MoU on Information and Communications Technology. Dr. B.S.Ngubane South African Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology participated in the 'Dialogue among Civilizations' organised in New Delhi from 9-10 July 2003. Minister in the Presidency, Mr. Essop Pahad, who is responsible for planning, visited India to attend the CII Partnership Summit on 5-6 January 2004. During the visit, he met the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission in which the Brazilian Ambassador also participated in discussions on cooperation in the field of planning under the aegis of the IBSA. Possibilities of bilateral Cooperation were also discussed.

Dr. (Mrs.) Tshabala-Msimang, Minister of Health of South Africa visited India from 3-6 March 2004 and discussed matters relating to cooperation between India and South Africa in the field of health & medicine with Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of Health & Family Welfare. Mr. M.G.P. Lekota, Minister of Defence of South Africa visited India from 3-6 March 2004 and discussed matters on cooperation in the field of defence with Shri George Fernandes, Defence Minister. South African Deputy Minister for Science & Technology visited India from 8-10 March 2004 to attend conference on "Women in Science".

A high level Government-cum-Business Delegation from India led by Minister of State for Commercial & Commerce and industry, Shri S.B. Mookherjee, visited Cape Town from 11-17 June 2003. He attended the conference of Commercial Representatives from southern sub-Saharan Africa. Apex industry organizations of India like CAPEXIL, CHEMEXCIL, EEP, SEPC

participated in the conference and also held fruitful bilateral meetings.

Apart from contacts at Cabinet Minister level, there were frequent visits in both directions of delegations led by political leadership at the level of Indian states/and South African provinces. The key area of defence cooperation gained strength from high level visits from India. The 10th round of Defence Committee meeting was held in New Delhi on 2-5 December 2003. Soon thereafter, the Defence Minister of South Africa, Mr. M. Lekota, paid a bilateral visit to India and signed an agreement on defence cooperation. Raksha Mantri, George Fernandes visited South Africa for the meeting of the IBSA Defence Ministers from 31 January 2004-2 February 2004. The Vice Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Air Staff visited South Africa from 3-8 July and 17-23 August 2003 respectively. A 15-member delegation from the National Defence College also visited South Africa from 23-31 May 2003. The Indian Naval Ship "Trishul" on her maiden voyage from St. Petersburg to India called at the Port of Durban from 8-11 September 2003. The visit generated enormous interest and there was extensive media coverage of the successful visit of the state-of-the-art ship. Chief of Army Staff, General N.C. Vij visited South Africa on the invitation of Chief of South African Army from 18-22 February 2004.

An India-South Africa Awareness seminar was held in collaboration with the Department of Trade & Industry of South Africa at Johannesburg on March 10, 2004 and attracted impressive participation and audience. An entitled 'Enterprise India 2004' was organized by CII in Cape Town from 16-25 March 2004 with the participation of about 60 Indian companies.

Chief Justice of India, Shri V.N. Khare visited South Africa to attend the inauguration of new building of Constitutional Court (17-18 March 2004). Director General (Agriculture) and Director General (Tourism & Environment), Government of South Africa visited India in March 2004.

Bilateral business interaction was both intensive and extensive. Dr. Alister Ruiters, Director General of the Department of Trade and Industry headed the delegation from South African side for the third Meeting of India South Africa Commercial Alliance, held in New Delhi from 25-26 August 2003. A large number of business-related delegations visited South Africa. Highlights included the "Enterprise India 2003" exhibition held at the International Convention Centre in Durban in association with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) from 20-26 August 2003, which showcased a wide range of Indian products from over 60 companies from India. Many business delegations visited South Africa, including large delegations coordinated by Ministry of Power to study the implementation of pre-paid metering system and two others from the Tamil Nadu Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and from the Federation of Indian Export Organization.

Significant progress was made towards enhancing connectivity between India and South Africa. A bilateral agreement on Merchant Shipping was finalized in principle during the visit of an Indian delegation from the Ministry of Shipping from 27-29 September 2003. Bilateral air services were reviewed during the visit of a delegation led by Secretary (Civil Aviation) from 10-11 October 2003, resulting in to an agreement for increasing both the frequency and points of call.

The Nelson Mandela Chair at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Centre was revived with the selection of Prof. Robert C. Shell from the University of Western Cape for the first academic term in 2003. Incumbents for the next two terms have also been selected. The Mission and its posts and office (in Cape Town) organised a number of cultural activities throughout the year. The functions celebrated to mark the festivals of Diwali and Holi attracted large participation of dignitaries, media and Indian community.

Lesotho

As for Lesotho, unprecedented strides were

made in strengthening bilateral co-operation. The visit of Prime Minister Stateisili to India from 31 July –7 August 2003 gave a strong fillip to bilateral co-operation. During the visit, Government of India offered US\$ 50,000 worth of medicines (anti-retroviral drugs) and 5,000 tons each of wheat flour and rice to Lesotho. The Indian side also announced a credit line of US\$ 5 million for Lesotho. Both sides agreed to cooperate actively in science & technology, agriculture, health, trade and investment, law & order, and military. It was decided to set up a Joint Commission between the two countries to monitor this process.

In a very positive development, the Government of Lesotho opened a resident mission in New Delhi.

A Memorandum of Understanding between National Small Industries Corporation, India and Basotho Enterprises Development Corporation (BEDCO), Lesotho concerning mutual cooperation for the development of small industries in Lesotho was signed on 22 January 2004. An Agreement establishing a Joint Lesotho-India Intergovernmental Commission for Economic, Cultural, Scientific and Technical Cooperation has been finalised and is expected to be signed before 31 March 2004.

Co-operation in cultural field remarkably intensified with visits of two ICCR sponsored troupes. A delegation from the National Defence College, led by Maj. Gen. A.J.B. Jaini, visited Lesotho on Study Tour from 28-29 May 2003. The Indian Army Training team continued its good work. Its tenure was extended by 2 years on the request of the Government of Lesotho.

Government of India has donated US\$ 50,000 worth of anti-retroviral drugs to Lesotho, which have already reached and are expected to be formally handed over to Government of Lesotho before 31 March 2004.

Zimbabwe

India donated 50,000 tonnes of rice to Zimbabwe and the gesture was much appreciated by the Government of

Zimbabwe. A G-15 project in SME sector worth US\$5 million pledged by India to Zimbabwe began to take shape towards end of 2003.

President Mugabe met India's Prime Minister on the sidelines of UNGA on 26 September 2003. Bilateral issues and India's support for Zimbabwe in the Commonwealth figured in the talks.

The Zimbabwe Minister for Small & Medium Enterprises participated in the "Hyderabad Youth and Employment Summit" (YAES) Regional Forum from 14-18 December 2003.

Ethiopia

Out of 10,000 MT of wheat pledged by the Government of India to mitigate the sufferings of the drought-stricken of Ethiopia, 9,739.36 MT of wheat has been delivered to the Ethiopian authorities.

In June 2003, Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd. (TCIL), New Delhi has been awarded two contracts in Ethiopia, US \$ 7.2 Million for construction of Outside Plan Network on turnkey basis and US \$ 655, 105 for supply of VSAT Antenna System.

Madagascar

Recently brought under the purview of the 'Focus Africa' programme, Madagascar assumed added importance during the year as new commercial and economic opportunities arose with the removal of customs tariffs on a variety of items, including capital goods and increased investment in infrastructure.

The Minister for Secondary & Basic Education, H.E. Mr. Dieudonne Michel Razafindrandriatsimihary, visited New Delhi at the invitation of Human Resource Development Minister, Shri Murli Manohar Joshi to attend the Conference on 'Dialogue among Civilisations' held from 8-12 July 2003.

Tanzania

External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha paid an official visit to Tanzania from

25-28 April 2003, when he, along with Tanzania's Foreign Minister Mr. Jakaya M. Kikwete, co-chaired the Sixth Bilateral Joint Commission Meeting.

Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Shri S.B. Mookherjee visited Tanzania from 27 June–2 July 2003 for the first meeting of the bilateral Joint Trade Committee, which he co-chaired with Tanzania's Minister for Industry and Trade Dr. Juma A. Ngasongwa.

Zanzibar

The President of Zanzibar, Mr. Amani Abeid Karume paid an official visit to India from 7-12 March 2004. Matters relating to Indian assistance in a number of areas including health (development of managerial skills in health institutions and training of medical staff), provision of science and technology subject teachers, laboratory equipment and relevant textbooks, provision of computers and other accessories, collaboration with Zanzibar State University, etc. were discussed during the visit.

During the visit it was announced that India would provide 50 computers and other accessories to Zanzibar, deputation of teachers in science and technology under ITEC and laboratory equipment and relevant textbooks up to an amount of US\$ 100,000. Provision of hospital equipment worth US\$ 100,000 was also announced under the ITEC Programme.

External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, during his official visit to Tanzania paid one day visit to Zanzibar on 27 April 2003 and extended invitation to Mr. Amani Abeid Karume, President, Zanzibar to visit India which was accepted. The dates for the visit are being finalized. Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Shri S.B. Mookherjee, visited Zanzibar from 28-29 June 2003. During the visit, he met President of Zanzibar, Mr. Amani Abeid Karume.

Uganda

Uganda's Minister of Education & Sports, Dr. Edward Khiddu Makubuya, visited India in early July to participate in the UNESCO-

sponsored "Dialogue among Civilizations – Quest for New Perspectives". Uganda's Minister of State for Finance (in charge of Privatization Unit), Prof. Peter Kasenene, visited National Dairy Development Board, Anand in August 2003.

Rwanda

Rwanda's Minister of Commerce & Industry led a strong business delegation to India in April 2003.

Seychelles

Vice-President Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat paid an official visit from 8-12 September 2003 to Seychelles leading a delegation comprising the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh and other senior government officials. During the visit, he held talks with Seychelles Vice President James Michel. The Indian delegation also met the Minister for Foreign Affairs Jeremie Bonnelame, Minister for Health, Patrick Pillay and Minister for Environment, Ronnie Jumeau. There the Vice President addressed a special session of the National Assembly. He also paid a visit to the Seychelles Defence Academy. Three MoUs were signed in the areas of Defence, Healthcare and Science and Technology. The Indo-Seychelles Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2003-05 was also signed. A Joint Statement was issued at the conclusion of the visit. The Vice-President announced US \$ 1 million grant for assistance over a period of 5 years for setting up mutually agreed projects in the sectors of agro-industry, small and medium industry, information technology and pharmaceuticals and an additional grant of US \$ 50,000 for supply of HIV-AIDS medicines.

The Speaker of the National Assembly Francis MacGregor participated in the International Parliamentary Conference from 22-26 January 2004 in New Delhi to mark the Golden Jubilee of India's Parliament.

Mauritius

The newly appointed Prime Minister Paul

Raymond Berenger paid an official visit to India, his first visit abroad after taking over as the Head of Government, from 19-24 November 2003. The following MoUs/Agreements were signed during that visit: -

- Extradition Treaty.
- Agreement for Cooperation in the Power Sector.
- Agreement for Cooperation in the Hydrocarbon Sector.
- Agreement for purchase of a Dornier aircraft by Mauritius from HAL.
- Cultural Exchange Programme.

The official visit of External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha to Mauritius from 1-3 July 2003 took place after a hiatus of seven years. External Affairs Minister held discussions with the then Prime Minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, the then Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Paul Berenger, Foreign Minister, Mr. Anil Kumarsingh Gayan, President and Vice President. Delegation level talks included discussions on a number of issues and review of the progress of 'Joint Declaration' signed during Sir Anerood Jugnauth's visit to India in January 2003. A 'Joint Statement' was signed at the conclusion of the visit along with the following three MoUs/Agreements:

- Agreement on Foreign Office Consultations Mechanism.
- MoU in the field of social defence.
- MoU on training of SMEs.

The then, Prime Minister of Mauritius Anerood Jugnauth visited India from 5-11 January 2003. The visit was mainly for the purpose of delivering a Special address at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations. Both sides issued a joint statement after the conclusion of the visit. A major outcome of the visit was the announcement by the Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to support the initiative taken by Mauritius to set up a Bioinformatics Institute in collaboration with India.

Motee Ramdass, the Minister of Arts and Culture made an official visit to India from 4-9 September 2003. Sangeet Fowdar, the

Minister for Training, Skills Development, Employment and Productivity, also visited India from 21-24 September 2003. India has also extended assistance towards construction of an international convention center in Mauritius. Of the estimated cost of US\$ 12 million, half would be in the form of grant while the other half would be drawn from the existing line of credit of USD 100 million. The project is designed and being built by Indian company Larsen & Toubro.

Shri Praveen Jugnauth, Deputy Prime Minister of Mauritius visited India during 8-10 January 2004 for the 2nd Pravasi Bhartiya Divas celebrations. Discussions on enhancing the already close and friendly relationship were held.

Shri Jaya Krishan Cuttaree, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade & Regional Cooperation of the Government of Mauritius visited India during 6-10 January 2004 to co-chair the India-Mauritius Joint Commission Meeting. Deliberations were held on political issues, India's cooperation with SADC and COMESA, cooperation in the field of terrorism, science and technology including IT, oceanography and non-conventional energy resources, Environment, Culture, Civil Aviation, ITEC Training, Consular matters including facilitation of visa to Indian Businessmen, new projects in Mauritius, important issues pertaining to Indian companies including PSUs in Mauritius, review of Bilateral Trade and agreement, cooperation in Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal matters including anti-narcotics, cooperation in defence including purchase of offshore patrol vessel and helicopter by Mauritius and naval surveillance of exclusive economic zone of that country and conclusion of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement.

Agreement was reached by both sides to increase bilateral trade and two way flow of investments, adoption of a liberal visa regime and non-restrictive labour policy, enhancement of interaction through the Joint Business Council to expand trade and commercial and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) at the earliest.

Mr. Naveen Ram Ghulam, Leader of the Opposition of Mauritius visited India during 8-16 February 2004 at the invitation of ICCR.

Kenya

The main highlight in bilateral relations was the holding of the inaugural session of the India-Kenya Intergovernmental Joint Commission for Political, Economic, Cultural, Scientific and Technical Cooperation held from 21-22 July 2003. It was co-chaired by Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh along with the Kenyan Foreign Minister, Mr. Kalonzo Musyoka.

Eritrea

Eritrean Foreign Minister Mr. Ali Said Abdella led a nine-member delegation (which included Cabinet Ministers for Education and Agriculture) to India from 7-12 May 2003.

Democratic Republic of Congo

An Indian contingent consisting of approximately 340 personnel from Air Force and Army led by Group Captain K.S. Gill has been deployed for a UN Peace Keeping Operation in Eastern Congo. The contingent is expected to stay for about one year.

Benin

Secretary (EAA), Ministry of External Affairs visited Benin in August 2003 for the first-ever bilateral consultations. Benin Foreign Minister expressed their desire for establishing Benin Embassy in Delhi by 2004-2005 in view of increased bilateral political, economic, commercial and technical assistance between the two countries.

Cameroon

Cameroon, which is an elected Member of the UN Security Council, received Secretary (EAA), Ministry of External Affairs in August 2003 for the first ever-bilateral

consultations. Because of the successful talks held covering a wide range of bilateral cooperation, these discussions were termed as Joint Commission talks by the Cameroon Foreign Minister. Cameroon's enthusiasm for increased cooperation with India was expressed by their Foreign Minister in their decision to establish a resident Cameroon Embassy in Delhi and expecting India to reciprocate by establishing a resident Mission in Yaounde.

Cote D' Ivoire

Despite the dusk-to-dawn curfew following the attempted coup of 19 September 2002, which continued in Cote d' Ivoire until 8 May 2003, the Indian Embassy continued to function. This was while 49 out of 50 other Embassies evacuated their staff. With the lifting of the curfew on 8 May 2003, Secretary (EAA) made an official visit to Cote d' Ivoire from 15-17 May 2003. The Minister for Petroleum offered India a choice of eight offshore lots for equity participation in petroleum exploration. The Government of India has gifted 5,000 MT of sugar and 5,000 MT of rice to the people of Cote d' Ivoire recovering from the civil war. India also agreed to send two IT experts, one to handle the computerization of the Presidency and the second to assist in setting up of IT Software Park in Grand Bassam. For the first time, the Minister of AIDS and Minister of Health of Cote d' Ivoire visited India to inspect the facilities of Indian pharmaceutical companies with a view to placing order for generic medicines from India. He also participated in the Second India-Africa Health Summit held in Mumbai. A high level Ivorian delegation visited India to participate in Small-Scale Engineering Exhibition organised by the Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) from 25-27 November 2003.

The Gambia

Permanent Secretary, Department of State for Education, Mr. Y. Sireh Jallow, represented The Gambia at the Conference on "Dialogue among Civilizations – Quest for New Perspectives" held in New Delhi from 9-10 July 2003. The cultural troupe

sponsored by ICCR and led by Ms. Penaz Masani staged one performance on 13 September 2003 in Banjul. This High Commission in association with the local Indian Community organized the event. In order to consolidate relations between the two countries, India has appointed an Honorary Consul in The Gambia. The Gambia has been regularly availing of the ITEC scholarships. During the period April-October 2003, eight Gambians availed of the ITEC scholarships.

Ghana

Indo-Ghana bilateral relations showed an upward, positive trend. Ghana and India have been generally supportive of each other in world fora. Both countries have joined the coalition against international terrorism and have condemned terrorism wholeheartedly in all its forms. Both countries have signed the protocol on Foreign Office Consultations (FOC). In August 2003, Secretary (EAA) visited Ghana and met the Foreign Minister, Mr. Nana Akufo-Addo and Vice President, Mr. Alhaji Aliu Mahama. He announced that Government of India would support the development projects in Ghana with US\$ 42 million EXIM Bank Line of Credit (LOC) and that Indian government would also if requested provide experts to assist in execution of projects. India has continued to give training assistance to Ghana under the ITEC for human resource development of Ghana. During the year, 20 trainees from various departments in Ghana have been sent to India to receive training in various fields. Also, five long-term scholarships have been awarded to Ghanaian students to pursue higher education in India. The India-Ghana Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence for IT training has been established in Accra, the capital, with Indian assistance. Building and equipment are in place and the Centre has held some training courses.

Bilateral trade between India and Ghana has increased significantly over the years. India's exports to Ghana increased by 60% US\$ 109.3 million in the year 2003 as compared to the last year. In order to facilitate bilateral trade, EXIM Bank of India has extended

US\$ 15 million Line of Credit to Ghana in October 2003. In April 2003, Ghana's Minister for Food and Agriculture visited India to acquaint himself with advancements in irrigation and fertilizer applications. The Government of Ghana has placed an order for Tractors from India. The Precious Minerals Marketing Company Ltd., Ghana is collaborating with Gujarat Gold Centre for establishing a medium size gold refinery in Ghana.

Secretary (EAA) during his visit to Ghana in August 2003 held detailed discussions with Dr. Ibn Chambas, Executive Secretary of ECOWAS. It was then agreed that in principle India and ECOWAS should have a structured relationship for mutual cooperation. India opened dialogue with Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Centre in Accra and expressed interest in cooperating with it.

Guinea Bissau

A *coup d'état* took place in Guinea Bissau on 14 September 2003. President Kumba Yala was overthrown and General Verissimo Correia Seabra took control of the country. On 23 September 2003, the military authorities announced the appointment of Mr. Henrique Rosa and Mr. Artur Sanha respectively to the posts of President and Prime Minister respectively. A new transition Government has also been constituted.

During the financial year 2002-03, India's imports from Guinea Bissau were valued at US\$47.39 million and the exports to Guinea Bissau touched \$5.19 million. The main item of Indian imports was raw cashew nuts. The main items of our exports were pharmaceuticals and textiles. Guinea Bissau has started making use of the scholarships under the ITEC programme. During April-October 2003, Guinea Bissau Foreign Ministry personnel availed of one ITEC scholarship.

Guinea

Guinea was a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in May 2003 when Secretary (EAA) visited Guinea from 18-19 May 2003. Official level talks were held

between the Guinean Government and the Indian delegation. India proposed the setting up of a Joint Commission with Guinea. The Government of Guinea submitted a draft Joint Commission document, which is under examination by the Indian authorities. Guinea has sought an increase in the number of ITEC scholarships for the Guinean nationals particularly in the field of computerisation, agriculture and defence training.

Liberia

The civil war in Liberia deteriorated with LURD (Liberians United for Reconciliation & Democracy) and MODEL (Movement for Democracy in Liberia) attacking the Liberian capital Monrovia and overrunning it. Government of India helped a group of 54 Indians to be evacuated by ship from Monrovia to Abidjan. They were received by the Embassy in Cote d'Ivoire and arrangements made for them to proceed to their different destinations. Simultaneously, three plane loads of Indian evacuees were moved from Monrovia to the neighbouring capitals of Freetown, Lome, and Cotonou. A peace agreement was signed on 14 August. Peace is still tenuous in Liberia.

Mauritania

Indian Ambassador in September 2003, had an audience with Mr. Maouya Sidi Ould Ahmed Taya, President of Mauritania besides calling on Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs and other senior officials. An Indian company, M/s CSL has been awarded a contract for tripling the capacity of the only cement plant in Mauritania. During the financial year 2002-03, our exports to Mauritania were valued at US\$20.51 million, mainly textiles while imports from Mauritania were negligible.

Nigeria

Nigeria is India's largest trading partner in the whole of African continent. During the year, the excellent political, economic and commercial relations with Nigeria were further consolidated by convening of the Joint Commission's (JCM) Fourth Session in



The visiting President of Zambia Mr. Levy P. Mwanawasa paying homage at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat in Delhi on April 21, 2003.



The President of the Republic of Senegal Mr. Abdoulaye Wade and Mrs. Viviane Wade paying tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at his Samadhi at Rajghat in Delhi on October 13, 2003.

New Delhi on 30 October 2003. This was co-chaired by the External Affairs Minister of India and the Nigerian Minister for Foreign Affairs. Both the Ministers exchanged views on bilateral as well as international affairs and the JCM laid the ground for further increased cooperation and developments in commerce, science & technology, defence and technical cooperation.

The top leadership of India and Nigeria met regularly during the NAM summit in Kuala Lumpur and during the UN General Assembly in New York. India also attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM 2003) in Abuja. During the visit Prime Minister inaugurated the new Chancery building project of the High Commission of India.

Senegal

President Abdoulaye Wade visited India during 12-15 October 2003. He was accompanied by Senior Ministers. He called on the President, and had meeting with the Prime Minister followed by delegation level talks. The Vice-President, the Minister for Agriculture and the Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers called on President Wade and discussed issues of common interest. During the visit the Government of India announced the offer of US\$15 million concessional line of credit for small-scale industries and agricultural equipment. India also offered grant for conducting feasibility study and for preparing a detailed project report for the 882 kilometers Dakar-Tambacounda-Ziguinchor railway line in Senegal.

Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Digvijay Singh visited Senegal from 16-20 September 2003 and participated at the inauguration of Indo-Senegalese joint venture SENBUS Industries for assembly of Tata buses. Besides calling on Senegalese President on 20 September 2003, he met Mr. Mamadou Seck, Minister for Infrastructure, Equipment & Transport. He visited Entrepreneur & Technical Development Centre (ETDC) established by India under G-15 rubric at Dakar accompanied by Mr.

George Tending, Senegalese Minister for Professional Education and Training.

Mr. Shashank, the then, Secretary (EAA) visited Dakar from 19-21 May 2003 on Foreign Office consultations. He called on the Prime Minister, Mr Idrissa Seck, Senior Minister for Industry and Handicrafts, Mr. Landing Savane, Minister for Commerce & Small Scale Enterprises, M^{me} Aicha Agne Pouye and Minister for Professional Education, Mr. Georges Tending. The Indian naval warship INS Trishul called at the Dakar port during its maiden voyage from St. Petersburg to Mumbai from 10-14 August 2003. This was the first such visit by any Indian naval warship to Senegal. The Senegalese Ministry of Defence and, in particular Senegalese Navy helped in providing necessary logistical support and organizing the necessary meetings. A number of Senegalese dignitaries paid visit to the Indian warship. There was good media coverage of the warship's call.

Group General Manager, NRDC, Dr. D.K. Bhardwaj, was invited by the Government of Senegal on a one-month consultancy visit during May-June 2003 regarding cooperation in the agriculture sector. Subsequently, President Wade set up a National Task Force for cooperation with India in the agriculture sector. In August 2003, a member of the NTF on agriculture visited India for ten days. This was followed by the visit to India of a three-member Senegalese delegation for procuring maize processing equipment at Bangalore, Mysore and Hyderabad.

Tata Motors won a US\$19 million World Bank tender for supply of public transport buses to Senegal as part of the scheme to revamp the local transport system. Furthermore, on 17 September 2003, the Indo-Senegalese joint venture SENBUS Industries established for assembly of Tata buses was inaugurated at Thiès near Dakar. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh represented Government of India at the ceremony to which Senegal had also invited the Presidents of Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Mauritania and Sudan as well as the Prime Minister of Togo and the

Minister for Private Sector & Investments of Mali.

The Thapar Group has invested around US\$600,000 as part of the US\$4 million investment into the largest textile-spinning mill in West Africa, INDOSEN, to produce fabric and terry towels for export under AGOA. The Indian company has 60% equity in the project.

In August 2003, Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Ltd. (IFFCO) invested an additional US\$10 million in *Industries Chimiques du Senegal (ICS)*. India's equity share has thus gone up to nearly 30% of the total equity of ICS. ICS is involved in mining and processing of phosphates and India buys back the entire output of phosphoric acid. India imported US\$140.2 million worth of phosphoric acid during the fiscal year 2002-03 and expects to import US\$155 million during the next fiscal year 2003-04.

An Indian cultural troupe sponsored by ICCR and led by Ms. Penaz Masani visited Senegal from 10-12 September 2003 within the framework of bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme. The troupe had performances in Dakar on 11-12 September 2003. The performances were well attended with reviews in the press.

The Director General of the largest circulation daily, *Le Soleil* (The Sun) visited India during 6-13 October 2003 at External Publicity Division's invitation in advance of the State visit of the Senegalese President to India.

SADC

India-SADC Forum was formally launched following approval of India's proposal by SADC Ministerial Meeting in Luanda. SADC delegation comprising Chairperson of SADC Ministerial Council and Executive Secretary of SADC visited India in July 2003 and held detailed and fruitful discussions with External Affairs Minister. SADC nations continued to extend support to India on various issues, and India offered to cooperate with SADC on large number of fields. SADC is conducting such dialogue

level interaction only with USA, European Union and India.

TEAM-9 Initiative

To give a boost to India's relations with West Africa, a new group was formed called TEAM-9. This concept of TEAM-9 (Techno-Economic Approach for Africa India Movement) is a partnership between India and West Africa (the countries being Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Senegal). While this is a new approach, it symbolizes, at heart, the essence of South-South cooperation in today's world. India has invited the eight West African countries for becoming member of TEAM-9, which aims at transfer of technology to The West African countries with which India had a little commercial and economic impact. The First Ministerial Meeting of TEAM-9 country was held in New Delhi on 1 March 2004 at Vigyan Bhawan.

It was decided that The TEAM-9 cooperation mechanism will operate at Government, institutional and private sector levels, sharing various types of expertise, intellectual and physical resources as well as economic opportunities for promoting welfare, growth and prosperity of the people. It would thus involve providing opportunities for education and training in crucial sectors. It would enable transfer of critical technologies. It would imply undertaking specific projects in individual TEAM-9 countries, which would have region-wide beneficial impact in the sectors critical for employment and growth such as agriculture,

small scale industries and rural development, pharmaceuticals and health care, information technology and telecommunications, transport, energy etc. The cooperation would derive synergy based on the diverse capacities, capabilities of the member countries.

An MoU was signed and the following decisions were taken:

- Identification, implementation of priority projects and corporate schemes in different sectors.
- Setting up a Business Council for facilitating identification, entrepreneurship and implementation of specific projects.
- The Government of India would provide concessional credit facilities of US\$ 500 million for financial assistance for the various projects and schemes identified for implementation under this regional cooperation mechanism. The credit line will be administered through EXIM Bank of India. The Government of India also offered access to training resources in India and facilitate deputation of Indian scientists, technologists and other experts.

All participants also agreed upon a decision-making structure to formulate policies of cooperation, to review progress as well as for overall monitoring and coordination.



7. Europe

Central and Eastern Europe

India has traditionally enjoyed warm, friendly and close relations, marked by mutual goodwill, with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Apart from fostering Parliamentary and cultural delegations, conscious efforts were made to encourage political level exchanges during the past year. Specifically, India's excellent and time-tested relations with Russia were further bolstered with the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow in November 2003.

The continued efforts to further develop, diversify and strengthen India's traditionally warm, friendly and close relations with countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) acquired greater significance with the signing of Accession Treaties by eight countries of the region for joining the European Union in May 2004, a few others aspiring to join by 2007 and still others in the next 10-12 years. The focus of the effort was to gradually put the relationships with these countries on a pedestal form where it would be easier for India to work with them for mutual benefit in the changed geopolitical context.

The general approach continued to focus on generating thrust for overall development of bilateral relations through sustained interaction at high level and between political leadership of India with CEE countries. In the period under review, President of India visited Bulgaria apart from the two visits of the Prime Minister to the Russian Federation, and incoming visits by the President of Armenia, Prime Minister of Hungary and Deputy Prime Ministers of Latvia and Serbia & Montenegro, besides Foreign Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia and Ukraine. Representatives of Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Russia visited India to attend the Inter-Parliamentary Conference held from 22-27 January 2003 marking the Golden Jubilee of the Indian Parliament. There have been high level bilateral exchanges with 13 CEE countries in areas including science and technology, IT, defence, culture and

education. These made it possible to maintain the continuity and the momentum in these ties and to reinvigorate them. There were Parliamentary exchanges with Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Russia and Ukraine. Regular Foreign Office Consultations were also given due attention. Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) with Albania was signed during the visit of then Secretary (EAA) Shri Shashank to Tirana on 4 - 5 February 2003 when the first round of the FOC was also held.

Special efforts were devoted to qualitatively enhance bilateral trade and investment with CEE countries. Joint Commissions, Joint Committees and Joint Business Councils were reinvigorated. FICCI and CII were encouraged to organise a number of events in India and Missions in CEE countries. This period also saw significant investment activity by Non Resident Indians (NRIs) in the CEE countries. For example, large steel mills in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Poland and Romania were taken over by NRIs. A large business delegation accompanying the Prime Minister on his recent visit to Russia in November 2003 had useful interaction with their Russian counterparts.

An important dimension of India's relations with CEE countries is the increased interaction and cooperation in combating international terrorism. Agreements and treaties on this subject and related areas were signed with some more CEE countries. Interaction between national security agencies (for example, with Poland) was nurtured.

Armenia

The high point of Indo-Armenian relations was the State visit by the President of Armenia Mr. Robert Kocharian to India from 29 October - 1 November 2003 at the invitation of the President of India. He was accompanied by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Trade & Economic Development, Agriculture and Education & Science. He held fruitful discussions with the President, the Vice President and the Prime Minister. Armenia reiterated its support to India's candidature to the UN Security Council.

The Prime Minister announced a grant of US\$ 5 million to Armenia, which will be used for joint Indo-Armenian projects. Three agreements were signed during the visit:

- Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement,
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Information Technology Services
- Agreement on Visa Exemption for Diplomatic Passport Holders

In addition, an MoU was signed between the Centre of Policy Research, Delhi and the Institute of Oriental Studies of Yerevan for academic cooperation and collaboration. The two sides issued a Joint Declaration at the conclusion of the visit. President Kocharian also visited Chandigarh where he inaugurated the Centre for Caucasian Studies at the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID), the first of its kind in Asia and it intends to focus on intellectual, business interaction between India and the Transcaucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) region for building linkages in socio-economic development, cultural cooperation and security perspectives. FICCI and CII jointly organized a large business meeting, which enabled Indian businessmen to have a detailed briefing on Armenia and prospects of business in that country.

Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Digvijay Singh visited Armenia from 14 - 16 July 2003. The visit was historic as this was the first Ministerial (and the highest level) visit from India to Armenia after the latter's independence. During his short visit, the Minister of State for External Affairs had meetings with the President, Foreign Minister, Ministers of Science and Education, Trade and Economic Development, Transport and Communication of Armenia and Deputy Chairman of the National Assembly.

The third round of Foreign Office Consultations and the Inter-Governmental Commission Meeting were held in New

Delhi from 21-24 May 2003. The Armenian delegation was led by Mr. Tatoul Margarian, Deputy Foreign Minister. The Indian side was led by Shri Shashank, currently Foreign Secretary. The Armenian delegation called on Shri Thirunavukkarasari, Minister of State for Communications & IT, Shri Vidyasagar Rao, Minister of State for Commerce & Industry. During this visit, Cultural Exchange Programme for 2003-2006; Bilateral Investment Promotion & Protection Agreement and MoU between FICCI and the Union of Armenian Manufacturers were signed.

Belarus

The second round of Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on 29 July 2003. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Shashank, then as Secretary (EAA) and the Belarusian delegation was led by Mr. V. P. Pugachev, the First Deputy Foreign Minister of Belarus. Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Vikram Verma visited Belarus from 23-26 June 2003. The Days of Belarusian Science and Technology were held at New Delhi in February 2003.

Bosnia & Herzegovina

Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina Dr. Mladen Ivanic visited India at the invitation of the Minister of External Affairs Shri Yashwant Sinha from 6-8 May 2003. This was the first visit of a Foreign Minister from Bosnia and Herzegovina and also the first ever Ministerial visit between the two countries. During his visit, the Foreign Minister called on the President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and the Prime Minister Shri A.B. Vajpayee and had meetings with the Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Arun Jaitley and the Minister of Tourism and Culture Shri Jagmohan besides holding detailed discussions with the External Affairs Minister. The Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina met representatives of Indian industry and trading fraternity in meetings at ASSOCHAM and CII.

The first Joint Committee Meeting with Bosnia was held in Sarajevo on 5-6 February 2004. Bosnia and Herzegovina evinced

interest in sharing Indian experience in high technology, including IT and telecommunications, and offered to host Indian business delegations for exploring such possibilities. It also invited Indian investment in spheres such as textiles. Both countries agreed to cooperate in the fight against organised crime and international terrorism. In this context, they agreed for early conclusion of relevant agreements, including an Extradition Treaty. Bosnia and Herzegovina came out in favour of resolution of the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, as also other outstanding issues, between India and Pakistan through discussions in a bilateral framework.

On the sidelines of the Joint Committee Meeting, the First session of the Indo-Bosnia and Herzegovina Joint Business Committee was held in Sarajevo from 5-6 February 2004.

Bulgaria

President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam paid a state visit to Bulgaria from 22-24 October 2003. He was accompanied by Shri Arun Shourie, Minister of Disinvestment, communications and IT. Members of Parliament, Shri Suresh Prabhu and Smt. Sarala Maheshwari were also part of the delegation. Two agreements including the Extradition Treaty and the Agreement on Youth Affairs and Sports were signed. An MoU on cooperation between the Bulgarian Association of Information Technology and the Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council of India was also signed. A Joint Statement was issued during the visit, which, inter alia, reiterated the Bulgarian support for India's candidature for the permanent seat of the UNSC, condemned the growth of terrorism and supported the early adoption and implementation of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. During the visit both sides discussed and it was agreed that Science and Technology, IT, Agriculture and Youth Affairs and Sports would be the core areas for cooperation between Bulgaria and India, which would be further developed in future.

On the invitation of Deputy Chairperson of the Bulgarian National Assembly Mrs. Kameliya Kassabova, a 26-member Parliamentary Delegation led by Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Health & Family Welfare, paid a four-day (5-8 June) visit to Bulgaria.

On the invitation of Minister of Human Resource Development (HRD) Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, the Bulgarian Minister of Education and Science Mr. Vladimir Atanasov, accompanied by his wife, visited India to participate in the "International Conference on Dialogue Among Civilizations - Quest for New Perspectives" held in New Delhi (July 9-10).

A Task Force Team led by Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Shri Arun Shourie visited Sofia during 8 - 14 February 2004. The joint Task Force deliberated on further cooperation in the fields of IT, Agriculture, Science and Technology, Power and Sports.

The 2nd Meeting of the Indo-Bulgarian Joint Science & Technology Committee was held between 20-23 October 2003 in Sofia. Shri A. K. Kalra, Adviser, Ministry of Science & Technology led the Indian delegation. A team of six specialists from the Institute of Electronics of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia visited India from 16-27 November 2003 under the bilateral scientific and technological Agreement between the Department of Science & Technology and the Ministry of Education & Science of Bulgaria.

Croatia

Shri Digvijay Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Croatia from 14-16 September 2003. Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Darko Bekic visited India to participate in the Conference on "Dialogue Among Civilizations" held from 9-10 July 2003 at New Delhi. The sixth round of Foreign Office Consultations was held in Zagreb [6-7 November 2003]. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Shashank, currently Foreign Secretary.

Shri Shatrughan Sinha, Minister of Shipping, visited Croatia from 20-24 August 2003. In September-October 2003, the two countries had exchanged visits by their respective Ministers of State for Tourism. The 7th session of the Indo-Croat Joint Business Committee was held in Zagreb from 3-4 February 2004.

Czech Republic

Raksha Mantri Shri George Fernandes visited the Czech Republic from 19-22 October 2003. During the visit, the Agreement on Defence Cooperation was signed.

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh visited the Czech Republic from 22-25 September 2003. During the visit, he had meetings with the Foreign Minister, Mr Cyril Svoboda, Deputy Defence Minister, Mr Jan Vana, Deputy Finance Minister, Mr. Bohuslav Sobotka, Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Petr Kolar, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Martin Pecina, and Chairman of the Foreign Relations, Defence and Security Committee of the Senate, Mr Josef Jarab.

A Czech Parliamentary delegation led by Senator Josef Jarab visited India from 15-21 November 2003. Former President Vaclav Havel visited India on 5 January 2004 to receive the Gandhi Peace Prize, 2003.

Estonia

Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Digvijay Singh visited Estonia from 20-22 November 2003. This visit to Estonia took place almost after 8 years. He called on President Arnold Ruutel, Prime Minister Juhan Parts and held detailed discussions with Foreign Minister Kristina Ojuland. Indian drafts of agreements like BIPA, DTAA and Visa free regime for diplomatic/official passports holders were handed over to the Estonian authorities and it was decided to expedite all the pending agreements between the two countries.

Georgia

Smt. Malati S. Sinha, Secretary (Indian

Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy), accompanied by a two-member delegation visited Georgia in June-July 2003.

Hungary

Prime Minister of Hungary Mr. Peter Medgyessy, accompanied by Mrs. Medgyessy, paid a State visit to India from 2-8 November 2003. This was the first visit to India by a Prime Minister of Hungary in 29 years. Besides holding extensive talks with the Prime Minister, the Hungarian Prime Minister called on President and met Speaker, Lok Sabha, Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha. The Indo-Hungarian Joint Business Council Meet was held during the visit. The Hungarian delegation interacted extensively with the representatives of FICCI, CII, FIEO and the Bombay Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Mr. Medgyessy met Governors of Karnataka and Maharashtra.

Seven bilateral documents namely Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement, Agreement on Defence Cooperation, Agreement on Exemption of Visa Requirement for Diplomatic and Official Passport Holders (Hungarian Prime Minister also presented an aide-memoire which will make it easier for Indians to obtain business visas), MoU on Cooperation in Information Technology and Services, Cultural Exchange Programme and Educational Exchange Programme were signed. In addition, EXIM Banks of the two countries signed an Agreement of Cooperation and two other documents extending a Line of Credit of US\$ 10 million for exports from each other country. These agreements provide necessary framework for enhancing cooperation in the concerned areas.

During the visit, the two sides identified the areas of power (including participation in the modernisation of power plants), agriculture and defence industry for cooperation between the two countries. A Joint Statement was issued during the visit. It mentions the reputation of India and its growing political

and economic role, and states that Hungary regards India as a natural contender for United Nations Security Council permanent membership. Both sides condemned all forms of terrorism, which threatens international peace and security. They reiterated that terrorism cannot be justified on any grounds, whether political, ethnic, religious, or any other. All states must refrain from providing any form of support active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts. In the context of Indo-Pakistan relations, Hungary reiterated that the outstanding issues between the parties should be amicably resolved bilaterally in the spirit of the Simla Agreement and Lahore Declaration."

Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister for Commerce and Industry led an official and business delegation and co-chaired the 11th Indo-Hungarian Joint Commission Meeting in Budapest on 1 October 2003. Shri Digvijay Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs paid an official visit to Budapest during which he chaired the 2nd Heads of Mission (HOM)'s Conference of Central and East European countries held in Budapest on June 18-19 July 2003. Shri Shashank, as Secretary (EAA) led the Indian side to the Foreign Office Consultations at Budapest held on 15 July 2003.

An Indo-Hungarian workshop on "Surface Chemistry and Catalysis on Nano-Particles" was held in Budapest from 21-23 May 2003.

Latvia

Deputy Prime Minister of Latvia Mr. Ainars Slesers, accompanied by his wife Mrs. Inese Slesere (a Member of the Latvian Parliament) and a large business delegation visited India from 24-29 November 2003. Besides Delhi, the delegation visited Agra and Mumbai. Deputy Prime Minister Slesers is also the coordinator of all trade and economic policies of Latvia. He held detailed discussions with the External Affairs Minister and these discussions focused on mainly economic and commercial relations. The delegation visited the IITF 2003 and held discussions with the CMD, ITPO. The

first India-Latvia Joint Business Council was organized by FICCI on 27 November 2003 coinciding with the Deputy Prime Minister visit. This was attended by a large number of Indian businessmen. In Mumbai, Deputy Prime Minister Slesers visited the Mumbai Port Trust facilities. Senior officials of Riga, Ventspils and Liepaja Free Ports in Latvia accompanied the Deputy Prime Minister.

Lithuania

Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Vinod Khanna met with Lithuanian State Secretary Mr. Evaldas Ignatavicius on 10 September 2003 on the sidelines of the International Conference of New or Restored Democracies held in Mongolia from 8-12 September 2003.

The first round of Indo-Lithuanian Foreign Office Consultations was held in New Delhi on 8 March 2004. The Lithuanian side was headed by Mr. Evaldas Ignatavicius, Under Secretary, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania and the Indian side was led by Shri J.C. Sharma, Secretary (PCD). During the consultations, the two sides had a comprehensive review of bilateral relations and exchanged views on issues of regional and international importance.

Macedonia

The Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Macedonia Mr. Fuad Hasanovic visited India from 10-12 February 2004. A Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations was signed and the first round of consultations were held on 11 February 2004. Foreign Secretary Shri Shashank signed the Protocol and co-chaired the consultations. Mr. Hasanovic also called on Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Digvijay Singh.

Moldova

Joint Secretary (CEE) in the Ministry of External Affairs led the Indian side to Foreign Office Consultations with Moldova held in Chisinau on 27-28 January 2003.

Poland

At the invitation of the Indian Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of Poland Mr. Leszek Miller paid a State Visit to India from 15-18 February 2003. The visit was the first by a Polish Prime Minister to India since 1985. Prime Minister Miller was accompanied by his wife Mrs. Alexandra Miller, a high-level delegation, leading representatives of the Polish business and mass media. Apart from official meetings, the Polish side attended a meeting of leading Indian and Polish business representatives organised jointly by the CII and FICCI in New Delhi. The Prime Minister and his delegation also visited Agra and Bangalore. Prime Minister Miller stated that Poland saw India as a country in the frontline of the war against terrorism and had unequivocally condemned the unprecedented attack on the Indian Parliament. Poland felt that no distinction could be made between good and bad terrorism. Expressing his interest in establishing bilateral cooperation with the states of India, he mentioned that Poland would like to restart LOT operations on Warsaw-Delhi sector. Agreement on Cooperation in Combating Organised Crime and International Terrorism, Agreement on Cooperation in Defence and an Extradition Treaty were signed. An MoU between CII and the Polish Chamber of Defence Manufacturers was also signed.

Marshal of the Polish Senate Mr. Longin Pastusiak and the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Poland-South Central Asia Parliamentary Group visited India and participated in the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Indian Parliament from 21-26 January 2003. Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Boguslaw Zaleski visited India to participate in the Conference on "Dialogue Among Civilizations" held in New Delhi on 9-10 July 2003.

The National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) and the Polish National Security Bureau (NSB) held two rounds of

consultations one each in New Delhi (April 2003) and Warsaw (October 2003) to discuss matters pertaining to security.

Vice Minister of Economy Jacek Piechota visited India from 31 October – 5 November 2003.

The Deputy Defence Minister of Poland Mr. Janusz Zemke visited India from 2-6 February 2004 to participate in the Defexpo-2004.

Romania

President of Romania, Mr. Ion Iliescu visited India during 28 January – 01 February 2004. He visited Mumbai, Bangalore, Delhi and Agra. President Iliescu met the President, Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister. During the visit, Agreements on Plant Protection and Phytosanitary Quarantine Field and Visa Free Regime for diplomatic passport holders were signed. Memoranda between Doordarshan, All India Radio and their Romanian counterparts were also signed. A Joint Statement issued at end of the official visit on 31 January 2004 confirmed Romania's support to India's candidature to the enlarged UNSC.

The 16th Session of the Indian-Romanian Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on 20 October 2003. The Romanian side was led by their Minister of Economy and Trade, Mr. Dan Ioan Popescu and the Indian side by Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Commerce and Industry. A session of the India-Romanian Joint Business Council was held concurrently with the Joint Commission Meeting in New Delhi on 20 October 2003.

A high level Indian Parliamentary Delegation, led by Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister for Health and Parliamentary Affairs, visited Romania from June 2003 and called on the Prime Minister, leaders of the two Houses, Ministers for Parliamentary Relations and Foreign Affairs of Romania. Romanian Prince Radu of Hohenzollern-

Veringen visited India from 16-22 November 2003 and called on Speaker of Lok Sabha Shri Manohar Joshi, Chief Minister of Delhi Smt. Shiela Dixit and Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Digvijay Singh.

Shri J.C.Sharma, Secretary (PCD), led the Indian side to the Foreign Office Consultations at Bucharest held on 19 December 2003.

Russia

India's strategic partnership with Russia continued to be consolidated during the year 2003-04. There was sustained intense interaction in all spheres of Indo-Russian multi-dimensional cooperation. At the highest level, this has been epitomized by the continuity in contacts between Prime Minister Shri A.B. Vajpayee and President of the Russian Federation Mr. Vladimir Putin who met thrice during this year. During his visit to St. Petersburg at the special invitation of President Putin to attend the city's Tercentenary Celebrations on 29 May -1 June 2003, Prime Minister had a bilateral meeting with President Putin. The two leaders later met in New York on the margins of the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2003.

The Prime Minister paid a visit to Moscow from 11-13 November 2003 for holding the regular annual summit. Commitment of both countries to strengthen cooperation for effectively dealing with new global challenges and threats, such as those emanating from international terrorism and related phenomena and from developmental efforts and objectives, is reiterated in the Declaration on Global Challenges and Threats to World Stability and Security signed by Prime Minister and the Russian President on 12 November.

Other bilateral documents signed during the visit of Prime Minister to Russia are:

- Agreement between the Government of the State of Andhra Pradesh of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tatarstan of the Russian Federation on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation.
- Agreement on Scientific Cooperation and Scientific Exchange between the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS).
- Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Russian Aviation and Space Agency (Rosavikosmos) on Cooperation in Exploration and Use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes.
- Protocol on Scientific Cooperation between the Department of science and Technology of the Government of the Republic of India and the Russian Academy of Sciences.
- Protocol between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on Joint Publication of Bilateral Archive (Diplomatic) Documents.
- Report on the Implementation of Steps Enunciated in the Joint Declaration on Strengthening and Enhancing Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation signed during the Visit of President of the Russian Federation Mr. Vladimir Putin to India in December 2002.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) of India Ltd. and Vneshtorgbank (VTB).

Beside these documents, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Science and Technology of the Government of the Republic of India and the Russian Academy of Science for Establishment of

Indo-Russian Centre for Gas Hydrates Studies and another Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of science and Technology of the Government of the Republic of India and the Russian Academy of Science Establishment of Indo-Russian Centre for Earthquake Research were also signed at the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The focus of visit of Prime Minister to Russia in November 2003 was to provide an impetus to the trade and investment between India and Russia. With this in view, a high power and representative business delegation comprising more than ninety of India's top industrialists and businesspersons accompanied Prime Minister. He addressed a large and representative gathering of Indian and Russian business in Moscow on 13 November. This event provided a necessary high-level thrust to the round-the-year efforts such as revival of Joint Business Council, encouraging more frequent business exchanges, establishing necessary banking and financial infrastructure to facilitate bilateral trade and investment, etc. in this context, both sides started discussions on expeditious issuance of business visas.

Speaker of Lok Sabha Shri Manohar Joshi led a composite multi-party Indian Parliamentary delegation to the Russian Federation from 15-19 September 2003, at the joint invitation of the Chairman of the Federation Council (Upper House) and the Speaker of the State Duma (Lower House) of the Federal Assembly (Parliament) of Russia. He addressed the Duma and together with his counterpart, presided over the second Session of the Indo-Russian Parliamentary Commission and jointly inaugurated Days of Indian Culture in the Duma.

Minister of External Affairs co-chaired in Moscow the 9th Session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC) along with his then counterpart Mr. Ilya Klebanov on 14-15 May 2003. Meetings of some of

the Working Groups of the IRIGC were also held at the same time. The Commission reviewed the progress of bilateral relations in these spheres and suggested additional measures for further strengthening trade and investment cooperation. External Affairs Minister also called on the Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Mr. Alexei Kudrin and met Foreign Minister Mr. Igor Ivanov, who later visited India on 15-16 June 2003.

The visit of the Defence Minister of the Russian Federation Sergei Ivanov to India took place from 19-21 January 2004.

Other important exchanges at Ministerial level included the visit of Minister of Shipping Shri Shatrughan Sinha to St. Petersburg for attending the 3rd Euro-Asian International Transport Conference in September 2003.

India and Russia held the first Joint Naval Exercises in the Arabian Sea in May-June 2003.

Days of Russian Culture were held in New Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata from 1-8 November 2003. Prime Minister and President Putin sent their messages for successful organisation of the event.

Serbia and Montenegro

Foreign Minister of Serbia and Montenegro Dr. Goran Svilanovic visited India at the invitation of External Affairs Minister from 20-22 October 2003. The visit of Dr. Goran Svilanovic to India took place after a gap of 10 years at the level Foreign Minister and it was also the first visit after renaming of Former Republic of Yugoslavia as Serbia and Montenegro in February 2003. During his visit, Dr. Svilanovic called on the Prime Minister and met Minister of Commerce and Industry besides holding detailed discussions with External Affairs Minister. He was accompanied by a business delegation and held meetings with Indian business representatives. A Joint Business Council was set up by the Chambers of

Commerce and Industry of the two sides.

The third round of Foreign Office Consultations was held in Belgrade from 29 January - 2 February 2003 during which Agreements on Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection and Civil Aviation were signed.

Slovenia

Foreign Minister of Slovenia Dr. Dimitrij Rupel, accompanied by a seven member official delegation, visited India from 14-18 February 2004. Besides delegation level talks with the External Affairs Minister, meetings were arranged with the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Commerce & Industry (MOCI). Dr. Rupel also met the business representatives at FICCI and delivered a lecture on "The New European Mosaic: The Role of Small Nations in Europe" at ICWA. Dr. Rupel urged India to make use of the facilities offered by the Port of Koper. An Air Services Agreement was signed during the visit.

Ukraine

The positive momentum generated by the state visit of President Leonid Kuchma to India in October 2002 continued during the year 2003. Raksha Mantri Shri George Fernandes visited Ukraine from 17-19 October 2003, the first such visit in eleven years. The then Foreign Minister of Ukraine Mr. Anatoly Zlenko visited India on 12-13 August 2003. Agreements on Cooperation in Tourism and on Mutual Protection of Classified Information were signed during the visit. An Ukrainian Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker Volodymyr Litvin visited India from 1-5 December 2003, at the invitation of Hon'ble Vice-President and the Chairman of Rajya Sabha and the Speaker of Lok Sabha. Foreign Office Consultations (April 2003) and the meeting of the Joint Commission (July 2003) were held. A business delegation led by the Confederation of Indian Industry visited Ukraine in September 2003.

West Europe

India's engagement with the countries in Western Europe continued to be broad-based and intensive. Bilateral political and economic interaction was marked by a number of exchanges of visits, demonstrating a mutual desire to consolidate a dynamic, multi-faceted relationship with the European Union and the individual countries in Western Europe. Regular exchange of views on the challenges facing India and the European Union, and dialogue with key strategic partners in Western Europe, against the backdrop of current regional and international developments, led to a better appreciation of India's legitimate concerns and, at the same time, provided an opportunity to re-focus, strengthen and revitalize bilateral ties. The institutionalized dialogue with the EU continued at the highest levels, including the India-EU Summit held in Delhi on 29 November 2003.

Economic considerations continued to underpin our strong ties with countries in Western Europe. The successful conclusion of the Fourth India-EU Business Summit in New Delhi, in addition to a number of other initiatives and activities undertaken during the year, helped showcase the special areas of India's strength in its interaction with key economic partners, including co-operation and partnership in niche areas of technology. The Civil Society Dialogue with the major European countries, represented by the different Eminent Persons Group, contributed to strengthening the multi-faceted relationship.

The new guidelines for acceptance for Official Development Assistance (ODA) had implications for Western Europe, which included some of the largest erstwhile contributors of ODA. Under these guidelines, government-to-government aid would be accepted only from the UK, Germany and the European Commission, in this region. Funding of ongoing

programmes and projects from other countries would, however, continue until their completion.

India-EU trade during 2002-2003 grew by a healthy rate in both directions, despite the limited GDP growth recorded by most EU countries during this period. The trend has continued for the first six-months of 2003-2004. Switzerland was the sole exception, with bilateral trade declining during this period by about 17%.

United Kingdom

India's excellent bilateral relations with the United Kingdom (UK) witnessed a steady intensification and consolidation over the last year, with several high-level exchanges and continued interaction at the institutional level. India and the UK share an assessment that the bilateral relationship is a key foreign policy priority. UK Prime Minister Tony Blair has described India as a strategic partner. In a December 2003 Government White Paper titled "UK International Priorities: A Strategy for the FCO", the UK identified India as one of four key countries (the other three being Russia, China and Japan) with which the UK wishes to build a stronger strategic partnership. The paper described India as an important democratic power in Asia, with increasing potential to exert global political and economic influence and with particular strength in leading growth sectors.

The UK has issued statements unequivocally condemning terrorist attacks in India. A Joint UK-US statement on 27 March 2003 condemned "all terrorism wherever it occurs and whatever its purported justification". It also said that "the Line of Control should be strictly respected and Pakistan should fulfill its commitments to stop infiltration across it. UK has continued to publicly reiterate its support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

Regular bilateral consultations over the year helped advance cooperation in diverse areas. Prime Minister met UK Prime Minister Tony Blair in St. Petersburg (Russia) in May 2003 and in Abuja (Nigeria) during the Commonwealth Summit in December 2003 and discussed bilateral and international issues of mutual interest. The Prince of Wales visited India in November 2003 on the invitation of Vice-President.

The bilateral relationship benefited from a series of Ministerial visits from the UK in early 2004. Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Mr. Jack Straw visited India from 5-8 February 2004. Mr. Straw held wide-ranging discussions on bilateral relations and international issues of mutual interest with External Affairs Minister. At a joint Press Conference, Mr. Straw pointed out that the substantial intensification of bilateral relations over the past few years had raised India-UK ties to their 'best ever'. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha and Mr. Straw agreed that the necessary steps would be taken to implement the vision of both Prime Ministers to move the strategic partnership between India and the UK to a higher level. Cooperation in high-tech areas and trade and investment were identified as being of central importance in this endeavour. Mr. Straw also met Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Commerce and Industry and also visited Bangalore. In the context of the ongoing debate in the UK on the issue of outsourcing, Mr. Straw underlined that the UK saw the process as mutually beneficial and that it was not in favour of protectionist measures.

UK Home Secretary Mr. David Blunkett visited India from 29 January–2 February 2004. Mr. Blunkett met Deputy Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and National Security Advisor during the visit. An MoU on Return of Immigration Offenders was signed during the visit, underlining the shared intention of both countries to tackle illegal immigration. In pursuance of the decision by both Prime Ministers at their meeting in Abuja to take the bilateral relationship to a newer and

higher level, the Foreign Policy Advisor to the UK Prime Minister Sir Nigel Sheinwald visited India in January 2004 for wide-ranging talks with National Security Advisor.

Other Ministerial visits from the UK included those of Minister of State for Trade and Investment and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Mike O'Brien, Minister of State for Energy, e-Commerce and Postal Services Mr. Stephen Timms, Minister of State for Environment Mr. Elliot Morley and Minister of State for Defence Procurement Lord Bach of Lutterworth.

A ten member all-women Labour Friends of India delegation led by Ms. Dary Taylor and 8-member delegation of the Liberal Friends of India led by Mr. Malcolm Bruce visited India in February and March 2004 respectively. The UK Parliamentary delegations had extensive interactions with the state government officials of Delhi, J&K, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. They also had wide-ranging interaction with the representatives of trade and industry including visits to important business centers. The delegations were extremely appreciative of the dynamism of the Indian economy. These visits have helped to deepen our engagement with the UK Members of Parliament.

Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, Shri L.K. Advani visited UK in June 2003 and met Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. John Prescott, Foreign Secretary, Mr. Jack Straw and Home Secretary, Mr. David Blunkett. External Affairs Minister visited UK in May 2003. He also met his UK counterpart on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2003. Other Ministerial visits included those of Union Minister of Commerce and Industry and Law and Justice, Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister for Human Resource Development, Shri Murli Manohar Joshi, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare and Parliamentary Affairs, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Shri Ram Naik, Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Vikram Verma, Minister of



The visiting Prime Minister of France Mr. Jean-Pierre Raffarin calls on the President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam in New Delhi on February 7, 2003



The Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee meeting with British Prime Minister Tony Blair on the sidelines of the XIII CHOGM at Abuja, Nigeria on 6 December 2003

State for Information and Broadcasting (Independent-Charge), Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, and Minister of State for Civil Aviation (Independent-Charge), Rajiv Pratap Rudy.

Parliamentary linkages received a boost with the launch up of a cross-party Indo-British Parliamentary Forum (IBPF) in New Delhi in April 2003. An IBPF delegation visited the UK in May 2003. A ten-member delegation of the Conservative Parliamentary Friends of India visited India in September – October 2003. A delegation of the Intelligence and Security Committee of UK Parliament led by its Chairperson, Ms. Ann Taylor, visited India in November 2003.

Institutional interaction continued in different areas. Foreign Office Consultations were held in the UK in May 2003. The fourth meeting of the India-UK Joint Working Group on International Terrorism and Drug Trafficking in New Delhi in October 2003 helped to consolidate cooperation in counter-terrorism. The fifth and sixth rounds of the India-UK dialogue on Non Proliferation and Disarmament took place in Delhi in October 2003 and March 2004. The bilateral Defence Consultative Group and its various sub-groups met in London in June 2003.

Civil society dialogue deepened during this period. The India-UK Round Table met in Broadway, Worcestershire in May 2003 and in Kolkatta in January 2004 and provided valuable inputs to further strengthen the bilateral relationship, especially in the areas of trade, educational exchanges and information technology. The Round Table also served as a forum for exchange of views on global issues like WTO and climate change.

Economic and commercial relations remained buoyant. The UK is India's largest trading partner in Europe, with annual bilateral trade in goods and services of around £5 billion. Despite a downturn in the UK's global trade in goods last year, Indo-UK trade in goods increased by 20%

as compared to the previous year. Latest figures for January-September 2003 show that total trade in goods has increased by about 21% (£3.22 billion) as compared to the previous year (£2.65b). A number of high-level visits helped promote trade and investment.

The UK continues to be an important source of FDI in India, with sectors of interest being oil and gas, ports, financial services and information technology. India has also emerged as a significant investor in the UK. In 2002, India became the eighth largest investor in the UK in terms of number of projects, and the second largest from Asia. India remained the single largest recipient of bilateral development assistance from the UK, with £200 million earmarked for 2003-04.

Germany

Indo-German relations received a fillip with the successful visit of Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Germany in May 2003, following German President Johannes Rau's state visit to India in March. Germany has referred to India as a "partner of choice" and has identified its relationship with India as a foreign policy priority. During his visit, Prime Minister met President Johannes Rau, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer and also addressed German Parliamentarians in Berlin. Prime Minister also visited Munich. The visit strengthened the ongoing political dialogue with Germany and imparted fresh momentum in areas of ongoing economic cooperation. Both sides agreed that there were opportunities for investment particularly in India's infrastructure and unexplored synergy in new knowledge-based areas such as information technology and biotechnology. The two sides also discussed possible cooperation in renewable sources of energy, especially in wind energy technology. Chancellor Schroeder accepted Prime Minister's invitation to visit India in 2004 in line with the agreement to institutionalize annual meetings at Head of Government level between the two countries.

Other bilateral interactions included visits by then Minister of State for Non-Conventional Energy Sources, Shri M. Kannappan in May 2003, Minister for Communication, IT & Disinvestment, Shri Arun Shourie (10th Annual Meet of the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce in Bonn) from 2-5 June 2003. A parliamentary delegation was led by Chairperson of the Indo-German Parliamentary Friendship Group, Shri Suresh Prabhu to Germany in September 2003. The Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad visited Berlin in November 2003. Annual Indo-German negotiations on Development Cooperation were held in New Delhi in January 2004.

Minister-President of the Free State of Bavaria, Germany, Dr. Edmund Stoiber, accompanied by a high level business, official and media delegation visited India from 16-20 February 2004. The visit was at External Affairs Minister's invitation. Dr. Stoiber called on Prime Minister and reiterated Bavaria's desire for stronger economic and commercial relations with India, especially in high-tech areas such as IT & space. Dr. Stoiber also visited Bangalore and Mumbai.

Scheduled meetings of the various bilateral dialogue mechanisms were held. The 5th meeting of the Joint Science & Technology Committee was held in Berlin on 22-23 September 2003. The third round of the India-Germany Military Staff Talks was held in New Delhi on 27-29 October 2003. The 12th meeting of the annual Indo-German Consultative Group was held in Goa from 20-23 November 2003.

India was the focus country at the Asia Pacific Weeks (APW) held in Berlin from 15-28 September 2003. The APW was set up in 1997 as a biennial forum to promote dialogue between Europe and Asia. Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha, Dr. Najma Heptullah jointly inaugurated the APW. Minister for Communication, IT & Disinvestment headed an Indian business delegation to the various business events.

Germany is one of India's largest trading partners, with bilateral trade at approximately US\$ 5 billion. Bilateral trade declined marginally by 1.67% in the first six months of 2003. Business delegations from both countries participated in the other country's trade fairs. There is an increasing trend of Indian investments in Germany, while German FDI in India has declined.

Exchanges continued in the field of education, Science & Technology and culture. In the year 2003 more than 800 Indian post-graduate students and about 300 researchers at PhD/Post Doctoral level joined courses in Germany. There are presently over 3000 Indian students in Germany. S&T exchanges remained strong, with nearly 400 Indian scientists visiting Germany and 150 German scientists visiting India under exchange programmes in various areas. Major new S&T initiatives included India's participation at the International Accelerator facility for beams of Ions and antiprotons, cooperation in machine translation technology and setting up of an Indo-German Centre for Polymer Processing & Technology. 2003 also marked the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the German-India Society.

Ireland

India and Ireland maintained the traditionally warm and friendly relations during the period. The economic relations showed a steady growth. The Irish side expressed sympathy and support for India's fight against terrorism. In May 2003, a 13-member delegation from the National Defence College, New Delhi, visited Ireland. The fourth round of Foreign Office Consultations was held in Dublin on 21st January 2004 at the Foreign Secretary level. Mr. Dermot Gallagher, Secretary General of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs led the Irish delegation. Both sides reviewed bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual concern.

Portugal

The event of significance during this period was the meeting between the Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the Portuguese Prime Minister Mr. Durao Barroso at New York on September 23, 2003 on the margins of the 58th UN General Assembly. Both the Prime Ministers agreed to strengthen economic cooperation by setting up a joint commission. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Shri Manohar Joshi, led a 12-member Parliamentary Delegation from 25-28 May 2003. The delegation called on Prime Minister Durao Barroso on 28 May 2003 and interacted with Portuguese Parliamentarians led by Ms. Teresa Gouveia, who was later appointed the Foreign Minister of Portugal.

Cyprus

Relations between India and Cyprus have been traditionally very close and friendly. Cyprus formally signed the EU Accession Treaty in April 2003 to become a full member of the European Union in May 2004. Being a close friend of India, Cyprus can be considered an important interlocutor within the EU. Bilateral economic relations are vibrant, with several Indian companies actually bidding for contacts in Cyprus.

Greece

The traditional warmth and goodwill characterized the political relations between India and Greece during this period. During the Greek Presidency of the EU in the first half of 2003, Greece exhibited a keen desire to see the India-EU relationship strengthened on a constructive basis. Greece showed sensitivity to our concerns on cross border terrorism. The Indo-Greek Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2003-06, was signed in New Delhi on 9 September 2003.

Switzerland

Indo-Swiss relations were active during the period, with regular high-level contacts. Trade between India and Switzerland grew negatively in 2002-2003 by about 17%, but

the trend appears to have clearly reversed in 2003-2004, as is evident from the figures available for the first six months.

The Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, during his visit to Switzerland from 1-3 June 2003 for the G-8 'Enlarged Dialogue', briefly met the Swiss President Mr. Pascal Couchepin. The visit provided a useful opportunity to exchange views on issues of international and regional concern, including developments in India's neighbourhood.

The Swiss President Mr. Pascal Couchepin led a large official and business delegation on a state visit to India from 6-12 November 2003 and visited Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, New Delhi and Mumbai. He was accompanied by the State Secretary for Science and Research, Mr. Charles Kleiber. The visit primarily focused on promotion of the bilateral relationship and increasing co-operation in the areas of science and technology. It also demonstrated Switzerland's interest in continuing consultations with India at the highest political level. President Couchepin underlined the complementarities between India and Switzerland in the field of Science and Technology and emphasised the significance of increased scientific cooperation. A letter of intent for co-operation in science and technology was signed between 8 leading Indian Institutes of Science and Technology and Swiss Technology Institutes. In Hyderabad, he inaugurated the Tata Consultancy Services building designed by the well-known Swiss architect Mario Botta. Two agreements – one on cooperation in Disaster Management, and the other on Co-operation in Science and Technology, were signed.

The Minister for Road Transport & Highways visited Switzerland from 2-5 October 2003. The visit focused mainly on sharing Swiss perspective on matters relating to road infrastructure and its management.

The Indian delegation led by Shri Arun Shouri, Minister for Disinvestments, Communications and Information

Technology participated in the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland.

Holy See

The delegation led by Minister of State for Law & Justice, Shri P. C. Thomas visited Holy See to participate in the beatification ceremony of Mother Teresa on the 19 October 2003. Four Indian cardinals, one Cardinal-designate, numerous Archbishops and other senior Indian churchmen had been specially invited. While other aspects of Mother Teresa's work were also covered, the Indian aspect of her work was specifically highlighted. The presence of the Indian participants was noticeable and certain parts of the ceremony included Indian style songs and service in Bengali and Tamil.

Austria

The Deputy Speaker of the Austrian National Council, Dr. Heinz Fischer, visited India from 8-11 October 2003 and met the Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Raksha Mantri, Minister for Heavy Industries, Minister for Railways, Minister of State for Steel and Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. The second round of Foreign Office Consultations, at Secretary level, led by the Foreign Secretary, Shri Shashank and Dr. Walter Siegl, Political Director in the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs were held on 28 July 2003 in New Delhi. There was an in-depth review of bilateral relations, including political, economic, consular and cultural relations, and an exchange of views on important regional and multilateral issues. The ninth session of the Indo-Austrian Joint Economic Commission (JEC), which was held in Delhi from 17-18 November 2003, discussed ways to further co-operation in sectors of steel, railways, agriculture, environment, IT & telecommunications, science & technology and civil aviation and reviewed the progress of bilateral working groups on tourism and energy.

Denmark

The Fourth Round of Foreign Office

Consultations, at Secretary level, led by the Foreign Secretary, Shri Shashank and State Secretary in the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Carsten Staur, was held on 29 August 2003 in Copenhagen. The discussions covered the whole gamut of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual concern. Secretary (EAA) also met Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Friis Arne Petersen. The Minister for Shipping, Shri Shatrughan Sinha, during his visit to Denmark from 7-8 October 2003, co-inaugurated the first India-Denmark Shipping Conference in Copenhagen along with the Danish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economic and Business Affairs, Mr. Bendt Bendtsen.

Finland

Minister of State for Steel, Shri B.K. Tripathi, visited Helsinki from 7-8 June 2003. He met Ms. Paula Lehtomaki, Finnish Minister of Foreign Trade & Development Cooperation. Wide-ranging discussions were held on issues relating to import and export of steel and possibilities of increasing bilateral trade. The Minister also visited Rautaruukki Steel Raahe Works. The Indian delegation also met President & CEO of Outokumpu Company.

The Fifth Round of Foreign Office Consultations, at Secretary level, led by the Foreign Secretary and Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs in the Finnish Foreign Office, Ambassador Jaakko Laajava, were held on 16 June 2003 in New Delhi. There was an in-depth review of bilateral relations including exchange of high-level visits, discussion on trade and investment issues and identification of future areas for co-operation. There was also an exchange of views on important regional and multilateral issues. The Second Meeting of the Indo-Finnish Joint Working Group on Environment was held in Helsinki from 1-5 September 2003. Deputy Inspector General, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Smt. Rekha Pai, led the Indian delegation. Both sides had wide ranging discussions on environment related issues, waste management and pollution control.

A delegation of Parliamentarians led by Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri Manohar Joshi visited Finland from 19-21 September 2003. He met Speaker of the Finnish Parliament, Mr. Paavo Lipponen (former Finnish Prime Minister).

Italy

India's relations with Italy received a fresh impetus with Italy assuming the rotating Presidency of the European Union during the second half of 2003. The 4th India-EU Summit was held under the Italian Presidency of the EU.

Italian Minister of State for Productive Activities, Mr. Stefano Stefani visited India from 6-8 May 2003. He called on the then Minister for Agriculture, Shri Ajit Singh in Delhi. The Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, visited Italy from 2-5 September 2003 at the invitation of Italian Minister for Culture Mr. Giuliano Urbani to be special guest at the Venice Film festival. A letter of intent for an Audiovisual Co-Production Agreement was signed during the visit. Italian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Margherita Boniver visited India from 27-29 November 2003 for the Fourth India-EU Summit. An Agreement for Cooperation in the field of Science & Technology between India and Italy was signed on 28 November 2003.

Norway

The Minister for Shipping visited Oslo from 20-23 October 2003 at invitation of Norwegian Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Ansgar Gabrielsen. Besides bilateral discussions at the official level, he also met representatives from the Norwegian Shipping Association, Norwegian Trade Council and Det Norske Veritas, the Norwegian Classification Association, which regulates classification of ships.

The Norwegian State Secretary, Mr. Vidar Helgesen visited India on 15 March 2004 and met the Foreign Secretary, Shri Shashank. Bilateral issues discussed included the importance of expediting the setting up of the Indo-Norwegian Joint Commission.

Mr. Helgesen, during the discussions commended the important and inalienable role of India in fostering the peace process in Sri Lanka.

A 13-member delegation from the Norwegian Advisory Council on Disarmament and Security (NACDAS) led by Mr. Eikaas Jens, Deputy Director General, Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, visited India During 20-24 March 2004. This visit contributed to a greater mutual understanding of India's security and geo-economic environment.

The third round of Foreign Office Consultations, at Secretary level, led by the Foreign Secretary, Shri Shashank and Mr. Jorg Willy Bronebakk, Deputy Secretary General, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs were held on 26 August 2003 in Oslo. There was an in depth review of bilateral relations including exchange of high level visits, discussion on trade and investment issues and identification of future areas for cooperation. There was also an exchange of views on important regional and multilateral issues. Secretary (EAA) called on State Secretary Mr. Vidar Helgesen and Secretary General Bjarne Lindstrom in Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also met Mr. Haakon Blankenborg, Member of Parliament and member of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of Storting (Parliament).

Sweden

The Swedish Minister for Industry and Trade, Mr. Leif Pagrotsky, accompanied by a high-level official and business delegation visited India from 1-4 April 2003 for the Indo-Swedish Joint Commission meeting. He met the External Affairs Minister, Commerce and Industry Minister and Minister for Communications & IT. He also inaugurated "Swedish Days" in Bangalore and participated in Seminars on IT and Biotechnology.

A delegation led by the Minister for Water Resources (MOWR), Shri Arjun Charan Sethi, visited Sweden from 10-16 August

2003 to participate in the 13th Stockholm Water Symposium and Water Week. He met the Swedish Minister of Environment, Ms. Lena Sommestad and Norwegian Minister of Environment Mr. Borge Brende.

Indo-Swedish Bilateral relations received fresh impetus by the working visit of Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Göran Persson to India from 9-11 January 2004, after a gap of 17 years. The Swedish Prime Minister had delegation level talks with the Prime Minister. The discussions focussed on bilateral relationship, regional and multilateral issues. External Affairs minister separately called on Swedish Prime Minister. Swedish Prime Minister inaugurated a new Ericsson facility in Gurgaon on 10 January 2004.

Belgium

Relations between India and the Kingdom of Belgium remained upbeat during the year in political, economic as well as in cultural fields. Several bilateral visits took place during this period, further cementing relations in a number of specific areas.

The Minister for Forests and Environment, Shri T.R. Baalu, visited Belgium from 8-10 April 2003, at the invitation of the then Belgian Minister for Environment. The Minister of IT and Tourism of Karnataka, Shri D.B. Inamdar, visited Belgium to take part in a seminar on information technology and invite Belgium companies to participate in *Bangalore IT 2003*. Belgium is India's seventh largest trading partner in the world, and the third largest in the EU. The total bilateral trade in 2002 stood at € 5.8 billion, marking an increase of 24.53% over the previous year. Like in earlier years, gems and jewelry continued to dominate bilateral trade, accounting for 82% of total trade. The Indian community in Antwerp continues to underpin India's special position in trade in this category.

Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and India continued to have warm political, economic and cultural relations. The Minister of Economy and Transport of Luxembourg, Mr. Henri Grethen, visited India from 17-21 February 2003 accompanied by an economic delegation. The Minister for Power Shri Anant G. Geete visited Luxembourg from 12-14 November 2003 to hold discussions on cooperation in the field of infrastructure. In 2002, the total bilateral trade was US\$ 16.9 million, with the balance of trade being in favour of Luxembourg. About 34 proposals for joint ventures between India and Luxembourg have been approved since 1991.

Netherlands

India-Netherlands relations continued to be cordial and friendly during the course of the year. The bilateral foreign office consultations were held successfully on 27 October 2003 in New Delhi. Discussions related to a review of the state of bilateral relations, apart from an exchange of views on key regional, international and multilateral issues of mutual interest. Trade and investment cooperation showed satisfactory growth despite a stagnant scenario in the Dutch economy and the EU in general. The Netherlands remained among the top seven partners of India both in trade and in investment. India continued to record a modest positive balance of trade with the Netherlands. Dutch companies in India, concentrated in the banking, electronics, infrastructure and petroleum sectors, continued to perform well during the year, bolstering the image of India as a favourable investment destination.

Spain

Indo-Spanish relations continued to move forward satisfactorily like in previous years. High-level contacts between the two sides during the year included the meeting between the External Affairs Minister, Shri. Yashwant Sinha and the Spanish Foreign

Minister Ms. Ana Palacio Vallelersundi, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, in New York on 25 September 2003. An Indian Parliamentary delegation led by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha interacted with prominent members of the Spanish Parliament from 28 -30 May 2003. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna, visited Madrid on 23-24 October 2003 to participate in the Donor's Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq. India made a commitment of US\$ 10 million at the Conference, taking its total commitment for this purpose to US\$ 30 million. The Secretary of State for International Cooperation & Ibero-America in the Spanish Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. Miguel Angel Cortés, visited India from 23 -25 December 2003, and held separate discussions with Deputy Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, Smt. Najma Heptullah, and with the Foreign Secretary Shri Shashank, on bilateral political, economic and cultural cooperation, and on regional and international issues of mutual interest, apart from the ongoing efforts to establish the 'Casa de la India' at Valladolid. Mr. Miguel Angel Cortes, Spanish Secretary of State for International Cooperation and Ibero-America, visited India from 22-27 December 2003. He met the Foreign Secretary Shri. Shashank and the Deputy Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, Smt. Najma Heptullah. Discussions related to enhancing Indo-Spanish bilateral cooperation, especially in the areas of trade, culture, counter-terrorism and on WTO matters.

Indo-Spanish trade, growing at a steady rate, is likely to cross the US\$ 1.5 billion mark in 2003, up from US\$1.2 billion in 2002, making Spain one of India's 10 largest trading partners. The flow of tourists from Spain to India also grew at an impressive rate of about 40% in 2003, compared to the figures of the previous year.

France

Indo-French bilateral relations continued to deepen and strengthen during the year, nourished by a steady exchange of high-level visits. France reiterated its support for India's

candidature for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, when President Chirac spoke at a press conference in New York on 23 September 2003. It also expressed appreciation for the initiatives taken by India to improve and progressively normalise relations with Pakistan.

Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, attended the G-8 "Enlarged Dialogue" organised by the French Presidency of the G-8 on 1 June 2003, in conjunction with the G-8 Summit at Evian to bring together the G-8 leaders with a consultative group of leaders from developing countries for the first time. During the Dialogue, the Prime Minister touched upon developmental, environmental and multilateral trade issues of interest to India.

Indo-French interaction in the field of Defence continued to be active, with the French Defence Minister, Ms. Michelle Alliot-Marie, visiting India on 27-28 April 2003, and the Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Madhavendra Singh visiting France from 19-24 October 2003. The 6th meeting of the *Indo-French High-level Committee on Defence* was held in New Delhi from 19-21 November 2003.

The 10th Round of the *Indo-French Strategic Dialogue* was held in Paris on 7 July 2003 and the 11th Round of the Indo-French Strategic Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 19 January 2004. Shri Brajesh Mishra, National Security Adviser, led the Indian delegation, and Mr. Maurice Gourdault-Montagne, Diplomatic Adviser to President Chirac, led the French delegation on both the occasions. During the 10th Round, the National Security Advisor met the French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin and called on President Jacques Chirac. The 5th Meeting of the Indo-French Joint Working Group on International Terrorism was held in Paris on 19 September 2003. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh, led the Indian delegation which participated in the "Conference on Drug Routes" organised by the French Foreign Ministry on 21-22 May 2003.

The French Foreign Minister Dominique de

Villepin visited India on 13 February 2004. He called on the Prime Minister and also met the External Affairs Minister. Discussions related to bilateral issues, regional and international issues of mutual concerns and cooperation in international fora.

The slowdown in the French economy and the consequent fall in France's global imports resulted in a marginal decline in Indo-French bilateral trade in the first eight months of 2003. Approvals accorded for French investment in India amounted to Rs. 295.42 million during the first half of 2003. The 12th Session of the Indo-French Joint Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation was held in November 2003 in Paris, to discuss the recommendations by the Joint Working Groups established in different fields, regarding the means to enhance bilateral trade and investment relations, including in the area of finance and market access. An MoU was signed on Co-operation in the Fields of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural Development, Forestry and Food Industries. Minister for Commerce and Industry and his French counterpart led their respective delegations. An 'Invest India' Seminar was organised to coincide with the Joint Committee Meeting. Other visits from India to France included that of the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways. The year also witnessed increased participation of Indian companies in trade fairs held in France.

The 9th Meeting of the *Indo-French Committee on Science and Technology* was held in Paris on 6-7 November 2003. Two Indian satellites, INSAT-3A and INSAT-3E satellites were successfully launched by the *Ariane* launcher from Kourou (French Guyana) in April 2003 and September 2003.

The civil society dialogue between the two sides also continued. The 9th Session of the Indo-French Forum was held in Paris on 13-14 October 2003. The Forum members called on President Chirac and Prime Minister Raffarin. Prime Minister Raffarin presented the *Indo-French Forum Medal* to Shri. Narayanamurthy, Chairman of Infosys

Technologies Limited. A high-level seminar, titled '*India – the Power Centre in Asia*', was organised by the French Centre for External Commerce (CFCE) at the French Senate, on 13 November 2003.

In the area of Cultural relations, the highlight was the signing of the Bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) for the period 2004-2006, following the 14th Meeting of the Indo-French Joint Commission on Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science held on 6-7 November 2003 in Paris. Two Indo-French postal stamps were jointly released at a function organised in the premises of our Mission in Paris on 28 November 2003. The Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, led the Indian delegation to Cannes for the Film Festival from 17-20 May 2003. He met the French Culture Minister, Mr. Jean-Jacques Aillagon and several other important personalities related to cinema.

The French overseas territories of Martinique and Guadeloupe are celebrating this year the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first Indians to these Islands in the Caribbean. To mark the occasion, the Government of India presented a bust of Mahatma Gandhi to Martinique and a statue depicting Gandhiji's Dandi March, to Guadeloupe. A six-member delegation from the Government of Pondicherry, led by the Minister for Agriculture, Shri A. Namassivayam, visited Guadeloupe from 16-23 January 2004, to participate in the official inauguration of the year-long commemorative events.

The Indian Naval Ship INS *Tarangini* called on the French Polynesian ports of Nuku Hiva from 21-24 December 2003 and Papeete from 29 December 2003 - 2 January 2004.

European Union

The Fourth India-EU Summit, symbolizing the annual institutionalised political dialogue between India and the EU, was held on 29 November 2003 under the Italian Presidency of the European Union. The Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, was assisted by

the External Affairs Minister, Shri. Yashwant Sinha, while the EU delegation included the President of the European Commission Mr. Romano Prodi, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Mr. Javier Solana, EC External Relations Commissioner Mr. Chris Patten and the Italian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Ms. Margherita Boniver. The Summit, seen as a timely one on the verge of EU enlargement in May 2004, had an agenda that spanned the entire spectrum of India-EU relations, including global issues such as the fight against international terrorism, the role of multilateralism, regional developments of mutual concern, and a review of cooperation between the two sides on economic and trade matters. The Summit provided a useful opportunity to take stock of the progress made under the Agenda for Action, including the political dialogue at the Ministerial level, the economic dialogue as represented by the Joint Commission, cooperation in combating terrorism as represented by the India-EU Joint Working Group on Terrorism and civil society dialogue as represented by India-EU Round Table. A Joint Press Statement, along with an Agenda for Action, was adopted by the Summit, in addition to the conclusion of an India-EU Customs Cooperation Agreement and a Financing Agreement for the EU-India Trade and Investment Development Programme (TIDP). The Joint Press Statement expressed the desire of both sides to negotiate an agreement to cooperate in the *Galileo* satellite navigation project.

As in the case of three previous Summits in Lisbon, Delhi and Copenhagen respectively, it was preceded by a Business Summit on 28 November 2003, jointly organized by CII and FICCI, DIPP (Ministry of Commerce and Industry), as well as the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Confindustria*) and the Union of Industrial and Employees Confederation of Europe (UNICE). In the Business Summit, parallel sectoral sessions were held in the areas of tourism, manufacturing, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, agri-food and Information Technology, with speakers representing

government and industry from both sides. A special plenary session was held on 29 November, where the keynote address was delivered by the EC President Mr. Romano Prodi and a special address was delivered by the Indian Prime Minister.

The first *India-EU Brainstorming Session* was held in New Delhi on 24 October 2003, as a curtain raiser to the Summit. Such a session, in the nature of an informal, "free-wheeling" exchange of ideas was being held for the first time between the EU and any of its strategic partners. The discussions resulted in a number of pertinent recommendations.

The External Affairs Minister visited Brussels from 28-29 October 2003, and met the CSFP High Representative, Javier Solana and the External Relations Commissioner, Chris Patten. He held extensive talks with them on a range of bilateral, regional and international issues of concern, including preparations for the India-EU Summit at New Delhi in November 2003.

The 4th and the 5th Meetings of the India-EU Joint Working Group on Terrorism were held in Brussels on 15 April 2003 and 6 October 2003 respectively. Discussions were held related to current trends and developments in international terrorism and associated trans-national crimes, ongoing efforts by the two sides in the fight against terrorism, developments in the UN and other international fora vis-à-vis the war on terror, the menace of narco-terrorism, and means of enhancing cooperation between India and the EU in combating global terrorism.

On the invitation of European Commissioner for Information Society, Mr. Erkki Liikenen, the Minister for Communications and Information Technology, Shri. Arun Shouri visited Brussels from 21-23 May 2003, to exchange views on reform initiatives and possibilities for bilateral cooperation in the telecom sector. On the margins of his visit, the 2nd Meeting of the India-EC Joint Working Group on Information and Communications Technology was held, to discuss regulatory, legislative and developmental issues.

Then Minister for Environment and Forests, Shri T.R. Baalu, visited Brussels from 9-10 April 2003 and delivered a keynote address at the *UNFCCC Workshop on Enabling Environment for Technology Transfer*, organized at Ghent University under the auspices of the UNFCCC.

The 13th Meeting of the India-EC Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on 22 October 2003, to deliberate on the ongoing and emerging areas of cooperation in the areas of trade, economic cooperation and development cooperation, in the run up to the India-EU Summit. The Joint Commission also discussed measures to facilitate greater partnership between Indian and EU industry, in order to promote trade and investment, apart from reviewing the situation following the Cancun Ministerial Meeting of the WTO.

The Joint Working Group on Consular Affairs, which met in New Delhi on 20 June 2003 under the Greek Presidency and under Irish Presidency on 21st February 2004 has shown our mutual desire to remove impediments in the furtherance of business and people-to-people contacts, by way of greater transparency and predictability in procedures.

The Sixth Meeting of the India-EU Round Table was held from 16-17 December 2003 in Rome. Both sides discussed barriers to trade and investment flows between the two sides, the co-financing and establishment of an India-EU Civil Society Internet Forum, and reviewed the implementation of recommendations made at earlier meetings of the Round Table.

The India-EU Troika Ministerial Meeting was held in New Delhi on 16 February 2004. The EU side was represented by the Irish Foreign Minister Brian Cowen and the Dutch Foreign Minister Bernard Bot, and the EC External Affairs Commissioner Chris Patten. The delegation held meetings with the External Affairs Minister, Shri. Yashwant Sinha. Discussions related to current regional and international developments, apart from means to enhance bilateral cooperation. Irish Foreign Minister took

opportunity of his visit to India to make a bilateral call on National Security Advisor on 16 February 2004.

The EU continues to be India's single largest trading partner with a share of over 24% of India's exports and about 25% of its imports. The total bilateral trade during 2002-2003 was US\$ 23.86 billion, out of which India exported US\$11.35 billion worth of goods to the EU and imported goods worth US\$12.51 billion from the EU. Total bilateral trade grew by 17.71% compared to the figures for 2001-2002

The EU also continues to be an important source of FDI for India, with the 15 member states taken together being the largest source of investments. Cumulative FDI approvals for the EU, for the period 1991-2003, have been approximately US\$16.26 billion, at about 21% of total approvals accorded¹ so far. The most important countries in the EU-15 for FDI are UK, Germany, and Netherlands, followed by France, Italy and Belgium. Out of these approved figures for FDI, only about US\$5.33 billion have actually flown in, the realisation rate working out to 32%.

EU development cooperation assistance to India has generally been focused in the areas of environment, public health and education. As a second phase of its programme on education, the EC has made a commitment of US\$200 million for the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan* (SSA) Programme, envisaged for the development of primary education covering 42 districts. The EC has drafted a new development cooperation strategy for its relations with India, articulated in its *Country Strategy Paper for India 2002-2006*, under which it has committed € 225 million for this period. Unlike in earlier years, the sectoral approach has now been replaced with a 'state-partnership' approach. Chattisgarh and Rajasthan have been proposed for selection by the EC, under this programme.

Commonwealth

As the Commonwealth's largest member, one of its largest financial contributors, and

an active proponent of its fundamental political values and principles, India enjoys a prominent position in the Commonwealth. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee led the Indian delegation to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), which was held in Abuja from 4-8 December 2003. The outcomes of the Abuja CHOGM are detailed in the Abuja Communiqué and the Aso Rock Declaration on the special theme of the CHOGM, 'Democracy and Development: Partnership for Peace and Prosperity'. A separate Statement on Multilateral Trade was also adopted, with the objective of a forward-looking and development oriented approach to international trade issues after the recent breakdown of WTO talks at Cancun.

India participated actively in the meetings of various Commonwealth committees and organisations. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha represented India at the 21st and 22nd meetings of the CMAG held at London and New York in May and September 2003, as well as the special meeting of the CMAG held at Abuja on December 4, 2003, ahead of the CHOGM. At the Abuja CHOGM, India was named for a renewed two-year term as a member of CMAG. India is also a member of the Commonwealth Committee on Terrorism set up in January 2002, as part of the Commonwealth's efforts to build the capacity of member countries in fulfilling their obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 1373. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha attended a meeting of the Commonwealth Committee on Terrorism in New York in September 2003. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha also represented India at the Ministerial Group on Small States Meeting in Abuja on 4 December 2003. India was also represented at the Ministerial level in the Meeting of Commonwealth Law Ministers in London in May 2003. Minister of Law and Justice and Commerce and Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley, attended the meeting that aimed to draw up principles on good practice governing relations between the executive, legislature and judiciary in the

promotion of good governance, the rule of law and human rights. Minister for Human Resources Development, Science and Technology and Ocean Development, Shri Murli Manohar Joshi, attended the Meeting of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Edinburgh in October 2003.

India also participated at the Senior Official level at the meeting of Commonwealth Finance Ministers in Brunei in September 2003. During 2003, India was also a member of the Commonwealth Intergovernmental Committee to Review the Mandates of Commonwealth Organizations. India continued to contribute actively to the ongoing activities of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation,

Commonwealth Youth Programme, Commonwealth Science Council, and the Commonwealth Foundation and Commonwealth Media Development Fund.

India's successful bid to host the 2010 Commonwealth Games is a reaffirmation of the important role India plays in the Commonwealth. On 13 November 2003, at a meeting of the General Body of the Commonwealth Games Federation at Montego Bay, Jamaica, New Delhi won its bid to host the 2010 Games over Hamilton, Canada by a vote of 46-22. The Indian delegation to the meeting was led by Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Vikram Verma. India will be the second Asian nation after Malaysia to host the Commonwealth Games.



8. The Americas

United States

Since January 2001, the Bush Presidency has repeatedly voiced its commitment to complete the process of qualitative transformation in India-US relations in recognition of India's status as an emerging world power and the many common strategic interests that the two countries share in Asia and beyond. This view was reiterated by President Bush in his meeting with Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee on 9 November 2001, and formally made a part of President Bush's National Security Strategy Document in September 2002. Secretary of State Colin Powell's foreign policy speech on 5 September 2003 described India as a major world power with whom the United States must focus to develop its relationship.

As a result, India and the United States remained intensively engaged in 2003 across a full spectrum of issues: combating international terrorism, peacekeeping, defence, strategic issues, science and technology, health, trade, space, energy and environment. The most visible symbol of this bilateral engagement is the high frequency of bilateral visits at political and official levels, and the existence of Bilateral Dialogue Architecture, now comprising more than 15 institutional dialogues. The Prime Minister met President Bush in New York on 24 September 2003 and briefly at St. Petersburg on 31 May 2003. The Deputy Prime Minister visited the United States in June 2003 when he met President Bush. Other high-level exchanges in 2003 include visits by National Security Adviser to the United States in May 2003 (which included a brief meeting with President Bush) and by US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage in May 2003. The External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha visited Washington DC in January 2004 and had meetings with President Bush, Secretary Powell and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice. He had earlier met Secretary of State Colin Powell in Moscow in May 2003 and in Phnom Penh in June 2003. In addition, the Commerce and Industry Minister visited the United States in May 2003 and the Power Minister in June

2003. Foreign Secretary visited Washington DC in June – July 2003. Defence Secretary co-chaired the fifth meeting of the India-US Defence Policy Group in Washington DC in August 2003.

During the year, the most significant progress in bilateral cooperation occurred in the realm of bilateral strategic dialogue between India and the United States on the "Quartet Issues" comprising cooperation in civilian space programme, civilian nuclear programme, trade in "dual use" high-technology and missile defence. During their meeting in New York in September 2002, the Prime Minister and President Bush agreed to explore cooperation opportunities in these areas.

Then Foreign Secretary Shri Kanwal Sibal visited US from 3-5 February 2003 during which he met US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley, Under Secretary for Commerce Kenneth Juster, Under Secretary for Defence Douglas Feith, Under Secretary for Global Affairs at the State Department Paula Dobriansky and Under Secretary for Political Affairs at the State Department Mare Grossman. During the visit, India and the United States reached an agreement on principles governing high-technology commerce including trade in dual-use technology between the two countries, reflecting their new relationship and common strategic interests. The two sides agreed to take steps to promote and facilitate such trade by addressing systemic barriers; generating market awareness; undertaking promotional activities; conducting industry outreach programmes; reviewing policies and processes on export of dual-use goods and technologies to India; and pursuing export control cooperation.

Director of Policy Planning in the State Department Richard Haass visited New Delhi in January 2003 for broad ranging discussion on Indo-US relations.

An important milestone was crossed on 12-13 January 2004, when the leaders of the two countries issued, in their respective capitals, a joint

statement that describes the next steps in the India - United States strategic partnership. These steps include an expansion of cooperation in civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programmes and high-technology trade together with an expanded dialogue on missile defence. Bilateral cooperation between India and the United States in these areas will deepen the ties of commerce between the two nations and promote stability. In this context, the two sides have established a High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG), the first that the United States has with any country.

This Group met in Washington DC in July 2003 and in New Delhi in November 2003. Significant progress was made during the HTCG meetings when the two sides agreed to take appropriate regulatory and promotional measures to stimulate India-US high-technology commerce, including trade in dual-use goods and technologies.

The area of defence cooperation continued to see major progress. In 2003, the two sides continued to strengthen their institutional framework of engagement in the area of defence and build on the foundation for resumption of defence relations that was laid during the resumed Defence Policy Group meeting in December 2001. In addition to the high level exchanges, broad based engagement continued through institutional mechanisms. A delegation from Ministry of Defence and Ministry of External Affairs participated in an India-US bilateral workshop on missile defence was held in New Delhi in January 2003. The apex level Defence Policy Group met again in August 2003. The bilateral Executive Steering Groups of the Army, Navy and Air Force, the Security Cooperation Group to coordinate defence supply relationship, and the Joint Technical Group to advance R & D collaboration in defence production (including in India's Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) project) meet every six months. During the year, the two sides conducted



Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee calls on US President George W. Bush, 16-28 September 2003.

mutually beneficial combined exercises in India and the United States, expert exchanges and joint training as also revitalized defence research & development cooperation and defence supplies relationship. As part of facilitating the bilateral defence cooperation, the enabling bilateral agreements such as the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) and intelligence sharing agreements are now in place and military contacts, exchanges and exercises are developing their own internal dynamics.

As part of their continuous dialogue on international security issues, India and the United States have ongoing consultations in the area of missile defence. A workshop was held with US experts in Delhi in January 2003, followed by a visit in June 2003 by Indian experts to a missile defence workshop in Japan. India was also invited as observer in “Roving Sands” missile defence exercise in Texas in June 2003, which was cancelled due to the war in Iraq. An expanded dialogue with the United States on missile defence is now a part of the Next Steps on Strategic Partnership.

An important emerging element of the bilateral engagement between India and US has been cooperation on combating international terrorism. The terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001 and on the Indian Parliament on 13 December 2001 have led to a deepening of Indo-US cooperation in this field. The United States acknowledges Pakistan's links with, and its Government's responsibility to stop, cross-border terrorism in India. Accordingly, the United States has, under its own law, designated and proscribed a number of Pakistan-based terrorist organisations such as Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. On 16 October 2003, the United States declared Dawood Ibrahim as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. The designation recognizes Dawood Ibrahim's underworld and terrorist connections, his efforts to destabilise India, his involvement in the 1993 Mumbai bombings and his support to LeT. This subsequently led to the inclusion of his name in the United Nations

listing as well. On 29 October 2003, a key US State Department official described India as a victim of terrorism and asserted that the US was asking Pakistan to redouble its efforts to stop infiltration and prevent extremist groups operating on its soil from crossing the Line of Control.

India and the United States have a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism that was established in January 2000 and has met five times. The Joint Working Group focuses on expanding mutually beneficial cooperation in counter-terrorism capacity, institution building, training programmes, intelligence and investigative cooperation and counter-terrorism technology. Due to scheduling problems, the sixth meeting of this Working Group could not be held in 2003.

The United States has publicly, privately and repeatedly conveyed strong appreciation of Prime Minister's peace initiative towards Pakistan, describing it as a far-reaching act of statesmanship. President Bush himself conveyed these sentiments to the Prime Minister during their conversation in St. Petersburg in May 2003 and in New York in September 2004. On 6 January 2004, the US Secretary of State Colin Powell described the Vajpayee-Musharraf meeting in Islamabad as a historic meeting that had opened new opportunities for achieving peace. The State Department termed the India – Pakistan joint statement at Islamabad as a historic development that had been taken through a series of acts of statesmanship. While expressing hope for normalization of relations and eventual resumption of India-Pakistan dialogue, the United States maintains that it is for the two countries to resolve all outstanding issues bilaterally and that while the United States would be willing to play a facilitating role in creating an atmosphere for the dialogue process, it does not seek a mediatory role between the two countries. During the year, the United States continued to recognize that cross-border terrorism continues and has repeatedly stated that it continues to press President Musharraf to end infiltration and take action on terrorist camps.

On 18 March 2004, Secretary of State Mr. Colin Powell announced in Islamabad that the US had decided to designate Pakistan as a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA). India expressed its disappointment at the manner of the announcement. Secretary Powell tried to reach External Affairs Minister after the announcement and spoke to him on 21 March explaining that the intention had not been to spring a surprise on India. The US conveyed its offer of considering a similar status for India; India has not given any consideration to any such proposal. India is studying the implications of this US announcement, in relation to Pakistan, that would become clearer once it is notified by the US President to the Congress.

As part of the exchange of views with our major partners on issues of regional and international interest, India and the United States continued their discussions on the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The US Administration expressed interest in Indian involvement in post-war stabilisation operations in Iraq in early May 2003. Wide-ranging consultations were held by India with the United States, UN, Iraq's neighbours, other concerned countries as well as the Iraqi people. The Government also sought to reach a national consensus on the issue. A decision was taken on the US request, taking into account India's longer term national interests, our concern for the people of Iraq, our long-standing ties with the Gulf region as a whole, as well as our growing dialogue and strengthened ties with the United States. While the US State Department reaction on 14 July 2003, expressed US hope “that India would have made a different choice, that they would be there”, it also reiterated that India remains “an important strategic partner for the United States, and that the continuation of the transformation of Indo-US relations is something that's important to us and that we expect to see”. In recognition of our concerns, the US Secretary of State Colin Powell said in an interview on 22 September 2003 that though India had a large standing body of troops, it was probably politically too difficult for India to send any troops to Iraq. India's potential for contribution to the

post-war reconstruction and development efforts in Iraq is recognised by the United States.

India and US have also maintained a regular dialogue regarding developments concerning Afghanistan. The two countries remain engaged on economic reconstruction, security situation and future political evolution in Afghanistan, and held discussions on these issues in New Delhi, Washington and at various multilateral fora.

An emerging area of close consultations between India and the United States is developments in Asia, including South Asia. With a growing US engagement in the region, the two sides decided to hold regular dialogue on South Asia, in order to coordinate and harmonize the respective approaches to the region. A Regional Forum dialogue germinated out of these discussions, the second round of which was held during US Assistant Secretary of State, Christina Rocca's visit to New Delhi in September 2003. The two governments have also agreed to institutionalize dialogue on other areas of mutual interest, including East, Southeast and Central Asia.

As part of the process of strengthening the strategic framework of relations, the two countries are seeking to build closer bilateral consultations on multilateral issues. In this context, the two Governments have launched a bilateral Global Issues Forum to enhance consultation on multilateral social and economic issues of mutual interest. Foreign Secretary held talks under this Forum with the US Under Secretary for Global Affairs, Paula Dobriansky in February 2003. There is also an ongoing dialogue on human rights issues in the multilateral context. The United States has also proposed a similar forum to improve consultation and coordination on political issues in the UN General Assembly. The two countries already have a Joint Working Group on UN Peacekeeping issues, which has enabled closer India-US coordination on peacekeeping issues in the UN in New York as also in policy discussions in the two capitals. The Group had its fourth meeting in Washington in October 2003.

The bilateral Agreement between India and the United States regarding non-surrender of persons to international tribunals that had been signed in December 2002 came into force in December 2003. The Agreement protects the primacy of national judicial institutions from a potential impingement by international tribunals like the International Criminal Court that India and the United States do not recognize. Under the Agreement, nationals of both countries are protected from being handed over to any international tribunal by either country without explicit consent of the other country.

India-US bilateral trade in goods in 2002 increased to about US\$ 16 billion and trade in services to about US\$ 8-10 billion. US direct investment declined to about US \$ 250 million and portfolio investments to less than US \$ 1.0 billion. However, against decline in both overall US exports and imports in 2002, India's exports to the United States grew 21.4% to reach US\$ 12 billion, and came close behind the 22.4 % growth in China's exports, although the growth in India's case was on a substantially narrower base. US exports to India, stagnant in recent years, grew 9.1% in 2002 to about US\$ 4.1 billion. Services trade grew by about 20%. In the nine-month period January – September 2003, while India's exports rose by 13.08% over the corresponding period in 2002, US exports to India increased by over 24%.

Secretary of State Colin Powell's visit to India

The US Secretary of State Colin Powell made a working visit to New Delhi on 15-17 March 2004. During this visit, Secretary Powell called on the Prime Minister and had extensive discussions with the External Affairs Minister, Finance Minister and National Security Advisor on 16 March 2004. This was Secretary Powell's first visit to India since July 2002 and followed External Affairs Minister's visit to Washington DC in January 2004.

Secretary Powell's visit focused on bilateral issues, especially economic relations. The two sides discussed issues related to the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO). To give an impetus to bilateral economic relations, it was decided to restructure the bilateral economic dialogue, in partnership with the private sector, to attain specific trade and investment targets. Secretary Powell clarified that the US was not seeking a *quid pro quo* on outsourcing in terms of market access in India. The two sides also discussed nuclear proliferation from Pakistan. Secretary Powell was appreciative of India's effort to take forward the peace dialogue with Pakistan and agreed that the end of cross-border activity along the LoC needed to remain permanent beyond the winter months. Issues of international concern that included developments in Iraq and Afghanistan were also discussed during this visit.

Canada

Relations with Canada were marked by a process of re-engagement, which was supported by both countries. Canada identified India as one of the four countries in the world (with China, Mexico and Brazil) that present Canada with new opportunities for productive partnerships. It also identified India, along with China and Japan, as one of the key countries in Asia for developing close ties. The year witnessed greater involvement of the Indian-Canadian community as an emerging factor in relations between the two countries. Two high-level visits took place from Canada to India in quick succession in October 2003. Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien visited India on 24-25 October 2003 with a delegation including the Canadian Minister for Natural Resources, two Members of the Canadian Parliament, one Privy Council Member, four prominent Indian-Canadians besides senior officials.

A Joint Statement entitled "Partners for the 21st Century" was released after talks between two Prime Ministers, outlining their vision to strengthen

government, commercial and civil society linkages between India and Canada. The Statement, *inter alia*, committed the two countries to deepen their engagement to strengthen international and regional peace and security; prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons; enhance their strategic dialogue; upgrade Canadian representation in India; promote cooperation on counter-terrorism; formalise an annual dialogue on global issues; and hold annual high-level trade policy consultations. The Canadian Prime Minister inaugurated the Canadian Consulate General in Chandigarh and announced upgradation of the Consulate in Mumbai to Consulate General.

Just preceding this high level visit, Canadian Foreign Minister Bill Graham held wide-ranging talks with External Affairs Minister during his visit to India on 13 October 2003. He conveyed that the Canadian Export Development Corporation had identified India as a major market for Canadian exports and that Canada wanted cross investment in information technology and other emerging technologies. The two Ministers also signed an agreement for promoting cooperation between the Foreign Service Institutes of the two countries, under which two Canadian diplomats would attend Foreign Service Institute's programmes in New Delhi in 2003-2004.

The year also saw an expanded interface between different Ministries of the two Governments. The Canadian Minister of Industry, Mr. Allan Rock held talks in India with the Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and the government of the state of Maharashtra from 15-19 October 2003 and a six-member delegation of the Canadian Parliament Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs met their counterparts from the Parliament Standing Committee on External Affairs in Delhi from 20-22 October 2003. The Premiers of British Columbia and Alberta visited India from 8-12 November 2003 and 11-16 January 2004 respectively.

The Canadian Minister for Agriculture visited India from 4-10 December 2003 and held talks with his counterpart.

The newly appointed Canadian Minister of State for New and Emerging Markets, Mr. Gar Knutson visited India from 25-30 January 2004. He held discussions with the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Information and Broadcasting and Secretary, Civil Aviation to identify areas of cooperation and mutual interest in the fields of information and broadcasting and civil aviation. Mr. Gar Knutson has the specific mandate of exploring further cooperation with the three countries – India, China and Brazil – identified by the Government of Canada as new and emerging markets.

In a statement issued on 6 January 2004 regarding the meeting between Indian Prime Minister and Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf on 5 January 2004, on the margins of the 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad, Canadian Foreign Minister Bill Graham said he welcomed the “positive development in relations between India and Pakistan as an important step toward finding a peaceful solution to their outstanding issues”.

Latin America

This year has seen a far greater level of engagement between India and the countries of the region in pursuance of India's policy of strengthening and deepening our relations with countries in Latin America. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha had very fruitful visits to Brazil and Peru in June 2003. These were the first ever visits by an Indian Foreign Minister to these countries. While in Peru he signed an agreement on a mechanism for political consultation and cooperation with the Community of ANDEAN nations (CAN). During his visit to Brazil, apart from covering a wide range of issues pertaining to bilateral, regional and international topics of mutual interest, the unique trilateral initiative – the India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum was launched. It was for the first time that three major countries of the South representing three continents came together

to promote cooperation amongst themselves in diverse fields and to voice jointly the demands and concerns of the South.

From the region, the Presidents of Suriname and Guyana visited India during the year. The Foreign Ministers of Colombia, Chile and Brazil also paid highly successful visits that have helped in a better understanding and appreciation of each other's views on a variety of issues and matters of mutual interest and concern to India. A CARICOM delegation comprising the Foreign Minister of Jamaica and the Secretary-General of CARICOM also visited India in November 2003 and paved the way for the establishment of an institutional linkage for regular political dialogue between CARICOM and India with the signing of an agreement to set up a standing Joint Commission on consultation, cooperation and coordination between the Caribbean community and the Government of India.

India's relations with Latin America and the Caribbean countries were further widened and deepened through certain important initiatives taken in recent months including the signing of a framework agreement with the Market of Southern Cone countries (MERCOSUR), the Community of ANDEAN nations (CAN), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and finalization of agreements with Association of Caribbean States (ACS), Association of Central American States and the Rio-Group Troika, with the aim of finally entering into free trade/preferential trade agreements with countries of this region.

The first meeting of the System of Central American Integration (SICA) took place in New Delhi on 2 February 2004, with the External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, meeting a delegation of Foreign Ministers and other dignitaries from the countries that make up the SICA (Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Dominican Republic). For institutionalizing the mechanism for interactions with the SICA Group of countries, an Agreement for the Establishment of a Mechanism of Political Consultations and Cooperation was signed between India and SICA.

In keeping with the trade trends of Latin America, a positive trend emerged in trade between India and countries of the region as a consequence of the thrust given to the promotion of trade and commerce between India and the region. The bilateral trade increased from US\$ 473.66 million in 1991-92 to US\$ 2445.44 million in 2001-02 leading to an increased awareness on both sides, of the potential and possibilities of trade between India and the Latin American Countries (LAC).

At the multilateral level, India and the countries of the region showed a great deal of commonality of approach on a number of multilateral issues pertaining to the reform of the UN system, the WTO, the environment, etc. This approach was in much evidence during the Cancun Ministerial Meeting through the continued joint efforts and coordination by the Group of 20.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that since the commencement of the "Focus LAC Programme" in 1997, which is continuing, India's relations with countries of this region have continued to make important strides and that areas of cooperation in diverse fields have grown significantly. In an increasingly global environment, distance and language barriers were no longer allowed to come in the way of closer cooperation between India and the countries of the LAC region. Given the size and potential of the region, it has remained an important aspect of our overall policy to consolidate ties with this increasingly important region of the world.

Argentina

India's relations with Argentina remained cordial and friendly. The Embassy collaborated with a local cultural organisation *Kororu Darshan* to host a cultural programme called Sacred India in March-April 2003. In the following months, the Embassy held an exhibition of Indian dolls and dresses, organised an exhibition of paintings on India by a local artist, held the performance of Rajasthani Folk dance in Buenos Aires and in Rosario city in the Santa Fe province, all sponsored by the ICCR.

Paraguay

On 17 June 2003 the Mercosur countries and India signed the India-Mercosur Framework Agreement on Cooperation in Asunción during the 24th Mercosur Summit. Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Shri S.B. Mukherjee signed the agreement on behalf of Government of India while Foreign Ministers of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay signed on behalf of Mercosur. The agreement would contribute to the expansion of the bilateral commerce and the development of closer relations amongst India and Mercosur countries.

Brazil

This year has been an important milestone in relations between India and Brazil. In his inaugural speech on 1 January 2003, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva made a positive reference to India expressing Brazil's desire for closer relations with China, India, Russia and South Africa. The following important events during the year highlight the importance of our growing relations:

The Seventh Round of Foreign Office Consultations was held on 10 April 2003 in New Delhi. Bilateral cooperation in the areas of pharmaceuticals, software, information technology, science and technology, space and ethanol was discussed.

Prime Minister met President Lula on 2 June 2003 in Evian. The meeting gave an added impetus to the growth of closer relations with Brazil.

India-Brazil relations witnessed a historic moment with the first ever visit by an Indian Foreign Minister to Brazil. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha accompanied by a 4-member CII business delegation visited Brazil from 4 June-9 June 2003. On 5th June, External Affairs Minister held intensive discussions with Brazilian Foreign Minister Mr. Celso Amorim. India and Brazil stated their natural claim to a permanent seat in UN Security Council to make it more representative, effective and legitimate. He had fruitful discussions with Brazilian Vice President and with Brazilian Ministers of Planning, Finance and Health

on a wide range of issues. The External Affairs Minister also called on President Lula and had discussions on the importance of the bilateral relationship. President Lula had since accepted the invitation to be the Chief Guest on Republic Day in January 2004.

On 6 June 2003, External Affairs Minister and the Foreign Ministers of Brazil and South Africa held a trilateral meeting and established a trilateral India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum to promote mutual cooperation and to voice jointly the demands and concerns of South. A Trilateral Joint Commission was also set up. It was agreed that all the three countries should cooperate in opening up their markets to each other and not depend entirely on the developed countries for investment and export etc. Agriculture, defence, aeronautics, IT, biotechnology, civil aviation, etc. were identified as areas of cooperation. The three countries also voiced jointly their demand for democratisation of the UN system and agreed to project unitedly the views of the developing countries on WTO matters, etc.

As an important member of MERCOSUR, Brazil provided valuable assistance to India for signing a Framework Agreement with the bloc. It is hoped that the Framework Agreement, signed on 17 June 2003, will eventually lead to a Free Trade Agreement with MERCOSUR.

Raksha Mantri Shri George Fernandes visited Brazil from 7- 11 July 2003. This was the first ever visit by an Indian Defence Minister to Brazil. He discussed with Brazilian Defence Minister bilateral as well as trilateral defence cooperation in the areas of defence production, joint venture, joint marketing etc. involving India, Brazil and South Africa. Shri Fernandes also called on President Lula and discussed co-operation between countries like India, Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa.

India and Brazil adopted a common approach during the WTO meeting in

Cancun, Mexico in September 2003 to ensure an equitable international trade. On 3 September 2003 Defence Secretary Shri Ajay Prasad announced Government of India's decision to purchase 5-legacy jets from Brazil's Embraer at a cost of US\$ 158 million.

External Affairs Minister met Foreign Ministers of Brazil and South Africa on 24 September 2003 on the margins of UN General Assembly. The three Foreign Ministers underlined the need to strengthen multilateralism and agreed to cooperate among themselves and with the UN Secretary General to further UN reform. They agreed to cooperate in international fora and in discussions on multilateral issues. The three Ministers stressed the importance of development agenda in the WTO and renewed their commitment to work together to foster reform in trade in agriculture to ensure access to markets in developing countries. Prime Minister, Brazilian President Lula and President Mbeki of South Africa also met during a dinner hosted by Brazil during the course of the UNGA.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim paid an official visit to India on 20-21 October 2003. An important official and business delegation accompanied him. During the visit, the First Meeting of the India-Brazil Joint Commission on Political, Economic, and Scientific Technical Co-operation was held in New Delhi on 21 October 2003. During the discussions, the External Affairs Minister re-iterated India's offer to launch a Brazilian scientific micro-satellite by an Indian rocket and the sale of India's supercomputer 'Param'. He also underlined the great possibilities for cooperation in the field of infrastructure between the two countries and flagged India's interest to be involved in railway projects being envisaged in Brazil. Various sub-commissions like Sub-Commission on Environment, Science & Technology, Culture, Education, Space, Health, Energy, Agriculture and Sub-Commission on Multilateral Cooperation met under the aegis of the Joint Commission and discussed matters of bilateral as well as multilateral interest.

In 2002, the two way trade between India and Brazil had reached US\$ 1.226 billion, an all time record. Bilateral trade during January-September 2003 had reached US\$ 873.29 million.

Chile

The official visit of Chile's Minister for External Relations, Ms. Maria Soledad Alvear to India, from 24-27 April 2003, marked a new phase in India's bilateral relations with Chile. It was the first visit by a Chilean Foreign Minister to India in 46 years. This visit, as also the visit to India by the President of the Senate, Mr. Andres Zaldivar, in January 2003, to participate in Indian Parliament's Golden Jubilee celebrations, underlined the priority being attached by Chile to developing closer links with India. The joint statement issued on conclusion of Foreign Minister's visit reaffirmed Chile's support to India on issues of vital importance such as on Jammu and Kashmir, combating international terrorism, and a formal statement of support to India's claim to a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. The holding of the second meeting of senior officials in New Delhi in April carried forward the process of Foreign Office Level Consultation put in place in August 2000. The meeting of the two Foreign Ministers on September 25 in New York on the margins of the UNGA session reinforced bilateral consultations on major international issues including on Iraq, international security, reform of UN systems, etc. India and Chile also maintained close interaction in fora such as the Community of Democracies and the Rio Group. Chile's President, Mr. Ricardo Lagos formally accepted an invitation of India's President and Prime Minister to pay a state visit to India.

A 12-member Indian Parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Speaker, Shri P.M. Sayeed, participated in the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) Conference in Santiago from 6-12 April 2003. The delegation expounded the clear stance of Indian Parliament on the war and conflict in Iraq, and stoutly defended India's

legitimate right to establish and sustain a minimum nuclear deterrence.

Bilateral commercial relations grew steadily with exchanges of several business delegations. The signing of a bilateral cooperation agreement on animal health in April 2003 and the exchange of drafts for an Agreement on cooperation between Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Instituto Nacional de Investigacion Agropecuaria (INIA) have set the stage for closer bilateral cooperation in the fields of agriculture and animal husbandry. Similarly drafts of agreements on cooperation in science and technology and space technologies are being finalised. The visit of a delegation of Ministry of Trade and Industry to Santiago initiated the process towards concluding a Preferential Trade Arrangement with Chile.

A Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2003-05 was signed during the visit of Chile's Foreign Minister to India in April 2003. A Rajasthani folk, dance and music group visited and gave six performances in Santiago, Valparaiso and Rancagua under this Cultural Exchange Programme. The Embassy also participated in an Asia Cultural Week organised by Santo Tomas University in Santiago, by presenting Indian music, dance and cuisine. The Municipality of Rancagua raised a monument to Mahatma Gandhi with a bronze bust donated by ICCR. The Monument was inaugurated by the Mayor of Rancagua and the Deputy Speaker Shri P.M. Sayeed on 10 April 2003. Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated in Santiago, at the India Square dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Rabindranath Tagore, at a joint function organised by the Mayor of Providencia and the Indian Mission.

The Mission attended promptly to the consular needs of the Indian community numbering around 1100, and actively involved them in the Socio-Cultural activities of the Mission. A bilateral agreement was also signed in April 2003 waiving visa requirements for diplomatic and official passport holders.

Colombia

Relations with Colombia continued to be warm and trouble free during the year. The momentum generated by a sizeable number of high level visits in 2003-04, including that of the Colombian Foreign Minister Carolina Barco to India in February 2003, continued to positively effect the relations. Colombia has supported the initiation of and the signing of an agreement to establish a mechanism of political consultation and co-operation between India and the Andean Community, which was signed during the visit of the External Affairs Minister to Lima (Perú) in June 2003. Colombia has shown sensitivity to India's concern regarding problems faced by Indian nationals to obtain Colombian visa and has taken action to make amendments in the Colombian law for removing certain statutory requirements and authorising its Embassy to issue visas without prior approval.

ITEC training slots for Colombia were increased from 5 to 15 this year on the basis of good response last year when 16 nominees went to India for training. This year at least 20 are expected to receive training in India. Colombia has also been responding positively to the PCFD courses at FSI and this year two Colombian diplomats have attended the training.

Trade and economic relations between India and Colombia continued to grow during the year. A large number of Colombian companies participated in exhibitions and trade promotion events in India organised by CII and other export promotion councils under the Focus-LAC programme. A six-member business delegation from the Punjab State Small Industries and Export Corporation visited Colombia to promote exports of engineering products from India. A Combined Indian Textiles Exhibition will be organised in Colombia and Ecuador in March 2004. RITES, which owns equity in the Atlantic railway concession of Colombia continued its interest and entered into negotiations with the consortium to extend its involvement for providing advisory & technical services for ten years. Member Planning Commission Shri D. N. Tewari

visited Colombia in June 2003 to promote India's participation in projects for fabrication of biofuels in Colombia. With the passing of law in Colombia for obligatory mixing of alcohol in petroleum from 2005, opportunities for Indian companies for technical consultancy and investment have opened up. For the first time India has also got a pavilion in the annual handicrafts fair of Bogotá. Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts organised the participation of six Indian handicrafts companies in the fair held from 5-18 December 2003.

A bust of Mahatma Gandhi donated by ICCR was inaugurated on 10 February 2004 in the grounds of a prominent city library and recreation complex – El Tunal.

Minister of Bilateral Relations Mr Camilo Reyes attended the ceremony. Large numbers of activities were organised during the year under the ambit of the India-Colombia Cultural & Educational Exchange Programme 2002-04. Two Colombian professors of dramatic arts visited the National School of Drama, New Delhi to conduct theatre workshops in reciprocation of the visit of two professors from the National School of Drama to Colombia in August 2003. In addition to the three ICCR troupes visited Colombia in 2003, a 12 member Odissi dance group is participating in the prestigious Iberoamerican theatre festival of Four ICCR troupes visited Colombia this year. In June 2003, a 10-member Kathak group led by Ms Vaswati Mishra performed in various cities. In August 2003, India was special invitee at the first International Music and Dance performances by Bharatnatyam dancers Radhika & Shobhana and a sarod/sitar group led by Ustad Kirit Khan and Sree Gangopadhyay enthralled large audiences.

Ecuador

Relations between India and Ecuador continued to be friendly and warm. Ecuador appointed an Honorary Consul in India and authorised him to provide consular services. Ecuador was also supportive of the initiation of political dialogue between India and the Andean Community. Around ten nominees

are expected to receive training in various institutes of India this year under the ITEC programme against the slot of 5.

Trade ties between the two countries remained modest. Indian exports during 2003 were worth US\$ 16.37 million while Ecuador's exports were valued at US\$ 0.913 million. A sizeable number of Ecuadorian companies participated in exhibitions and trade promotion events in India organised by CII and other export promotion councils under the Focus-LAC programme. Two Ecuadorian nationals attended ITEC training programmes in India during the year. Quito has been declared as the Iberoamerican Culture Capital for 2004 for which the municipality of Quito has requested India's participation with a folk dance group and through the organisation of a film festival, details of which are being worked out.

An ICCR donated bust of Mahatma Gandhi sculpted by Shri Gautam Pal has been installed in a beautifully renovated city square of Quito, which has been renamed as "Plaza República de la India". Ambassador Smt. Nilima Mitra and the Mayor of Quito Mr Paco Moncayo jointly inaugurated the Plaza on 13 October 2003. To celebrate the occasion, an Odissi dance recital by Smt Ranjana Gauhar and group was also organized at the venue.

Cuba

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh, paid a 2-day official visit to Cuba on 12-13 June 2003. During his stay, he held official talks with his counterpart First Deputy Minister for External Affairs Mr. Fernando Ramirez, besides meeting with Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque, Government Minister Ricardo Cabrisas, Information and Communication Minister Roberto Ignacio Gonzalez Planas and Vice President of the Council of Ministers Jose Ramon Fernandez (Chairman of the Cuban Olympic Committee). He also had a 50-minute meeting with President Fidel Castro on 14 June before his departure, and delivered a letter from the President of India, inviting President Castro to visit India.

President Castro spoke at length about the current world situation, with special reference to Latin America, relations with the EU, and Cuba's efforts and achievements in social development.

During the visit, Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh held a conference of Heads of Missions (HOMs) from the Caribbean and Central American countries, in Havana on 12 June 2003. The Conference was attended by Secretary (EAA), JS (LAC) and HOMs from Mexico, Jamaica, Cuba, Panama, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago.

Mrs Meena Gupta, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Environment and Forests, participated at the Sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, held in Havana from 25 August -5 September 2003. Shri Madhusudan Mistry, Member of Parliament, participated in the Round Table Conference of Parliamentarians of the Sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, held in Havana from 25 August - 5 September 2003.

The Centre for Molecular Immunology and its commercial wing CIMAB SA and BIOCON India Ltd. Finalized a joint venture agreement to establish a new company BIOCON Pharmaceuticals Ltd. The company would manufacture and market a select range of biotechnology products for human health care primarily in the Indian market. The products include monoclonal antibodies for treatment of brain and neck cancers.

A Cuban-Italian joint venture company FINAUTO has been selling Tata vehicles in Cuba. From the reports it seems Tata Indica is doing well because of its competitive prices. FINAUTO has been promoting the car in the International Transport Fair (FIT) held in September each year and the Havana International Fair (FIHAV) held in November each year.

Indian Ambassador unveiled the statue of Mother Teresa in a garden named after her in Old Havana on 6 May 2003. Speaking on the occasion, he gave a detailed account

on the life and work of Mother Teresa, her two visits to Cuba and meeting with President Fidel Castro, and the functioning of the Missionaries of Charity with 36 sisters in 9 communities in Cuba.

Guyana

Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo, President of Guyana paid a State Visit to India from 24-29 August 2003. Mr. Jagdeo held fruitful discussions in India with President of the Republic of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Vice President, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Human Resource Development, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Smt. Sonia Gandhi, called on President Jagdeo. In India, President Jagdeo also visited his ancestral village in District Rae Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh.

The following agreements were signed during the State Visit:

- (a) Cultural Exchange Programme
- (b) Educational Exchange Programme
- (c) Agreement for waiving off the outstanding balance from the first credit line extended to Guyana in 1989.

As an immediate outcome of the visit, Guyana has decided to reopen its Mission in Delhi in 2004.

Foreign Office Consultations between India and Guyana were held in New Delhi on 21 August 2003. On 25 September 2003, President of Guyana declared in the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly that he would support the candidature of India, in addition to Brazil and an African country, for the permanent seat of an expanded Security Council. During the Presidential visit, an MoU between Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Georgetown Chamber of Commerce establishing a Joint Business Council (JBC) was signed.

The External Affairs Minister has approved,

in principle, the construction of a cricket stadium in Georgetown, Guyana with a seating capacity of 15,000 (extendable to 25,000) subject to a grant ceiling of US\$ 6 million. The project will be funded with a grant element from the Ministry of External Affairs. The Government of India has agreed to extend to Guyana a concessional line of credit of US\$ 25.2 million through the EXIM Bank of India for the modernization of three sugar plants surveyed by a team from the Sugar Technology Mission. The Indian side also agreed to consider extending a similar line of credit through EXIM Bank of India for the modernization of the remaining sugar plants in Guyana.

As in previous years, ITEC Programme continues to be the main area of cooperation between India and Guyana. From April 2003 - October 2003, 11 Guyanese and 1 St. Lucian national have proceeded to India to attend various ITEC courses. At present there are six ITEC experts from India to Guyana out of which three joined during the period under report. During the Presidential visit, India agreed to enhance the quota of ITEC scholarships offered to Guyana from 25 to 35.

A 4-member delegation of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) visited Guyana from 30 April – 4 May 2003. They identified following projects for technology transfer to Guyana: Solar Timber Seasoning Kiln; Production of Bricks and Roof Tiles; Parboiling Facility (for rice) and Mini Rice Mill; Dehydration of Fruits and Vegetables. An 8-member delegation of Sugar Technology Mission of India visited Guyana from 3-10 May 2003. During their stay, they visited various sugar mills under operation of Guyana Sugar Corporation Inc. (GUYSUCO).

On 14 August 2003, India donated, under ITEC, a demonstration vehicle equipped with audio/visual facilities, which could be used for imparting training in processing of agricultural produce. On 6 November 2003, an MoU for supply of Solar Photovoltaic Water Pumps System to Guyana under ITEC was signed in Georgetown.

Jamaica

India's relations with Jamaica continued to be friendly and cordial. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh, paid an official visit to Jamaica from 6-7 September 2003. He had a meeting with Senator Delano Franklyn, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Government of Jamaica. The two leaders discussed bilateral relations and regional and global matters of mutual interest.

A large Indian delegation led by Shri Vikram Verma, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, visited Montego Bay, Jamaica, to participate in the annual meeting of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth Federation from 10-15 November 2003. The delegation included Lt. Governor of Delhi, Shri Vijay Kapoor, Mayor of Delhi, Shri Ashok Kumar Jain, and Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Rajiv Srivastava. The meeting was held to decide the venue of the Commonwealth Games 2010, out of the two proposed venues, Viz. New Delhi and Hamilton in Canada. An ICCR sponsored 12-member Gujarati Folk Dance Group that was touring the Caribbean at that time-visited Montego Bay during the meeting and gave performances.

Jamaica and the other member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have welcomed India's interest in developing closer relations with the CARICOM. This was expressly stated in the communiqué issued at the close of the 24th meeting of the CARICOM Heads of Government held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, from 2-5 July 2003. The communiqué noted the importance of strengthening relations between the region and India and exploring opportunities for expanding trade and economic ties and also welcomed the Government of India's proposal to establish an institutional linkage for regular political dialogue between the CARICOM and India.

Prime Minister P.J. Patterson of Jamaica sent a message of felicitation on the occasion of the 7th World Hindi Conference held in Suriname from 4-9 June 2003. In his message, the Prime Minister noted that the

people of Indian descent were an inseparable part of modern Caribbean society and commended them for their contributions to Caribbean economy and development for nearly 200 years. He said that the Hindi language deserved the attention being accorded to it by the Conference and was one of the truly dynamic and important languages of what was the rich and fascinating Caribbean linguistic mosaic.

India continued to offer training facilities to Jamaicans under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme in areas such as human resource development, security, forensic science, information technology and banking and finance. During the year under report, the Government of India arranged the deputation for two years of a foundry engineering expert and a dairy engineering expert to Jamaica under the ITEC programme.

The possibilities of expanding trade relations between India and Jamaica were explored. Shri Daler Singh, Representative of the India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO) in Brazil, visited Jamaica from 9-13 October 2003.

He held discussion with Jamaican Government officials and business leaders on increasing trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

There has been some growth in India's exports to Jamaica in recent years, particularly in the area of pharmaceuticals. The value of India's exports to Jamaica in 2002-2003 was Rs. 212.7 million, the chief items of export being motor parts, textiles, readymade garments, plastic and linoleum products and pharmaceutical products.

Mexico

President of Mexico, Vicente Fox Quesada, met the Prime Minister in Evian (France) in June 2003 on the margins of the expanded G-8 Summit. He underlined Mexico's interest in deepening economic cooperation with India and in view of the common perspective and complementarities of the two countries, agreed for closer bilateral coordination on some aspects of multilateral

trade issues. The two leaders also discussed a range of other issues of bilateral and multilateral concern. Prime Minister also renewed an invitation to President Fox to visit India.

Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Arun Jaitley, headed a strong inter-ministerial delegation comprising nearly 50 members to the 5th ministerial conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), held at Cancun (Mexico) from 10-14 September 2003. India, a leading member of the so-called "G Plus" group, played a key role in mobilizing the developing countries in defending their core interests, especially with regard to agriculture and 'Singapore issues'.

A four-member delegation, headed by the Reserve Bank of India Governor, Shri Y.V. Reddy, attended Morelia, (Mexico) from 26-27 October 2003. On an invitation from the President of the Mexican Federal Electoral Institute, a three-member delegation led by the Election Commissioner of India, Shri T.S. Krishnamurthy, visited Mexico from 4-8 July 2003 to witness the congressional elections. A nine-member delegation from the Ministry of Environment & Forests (E&F), led by Shri K.C. Mishra, Secretary (E&F), visited Mexico from 25-27 June 2003 to exchange views and experiences on protection of environment and wildlife.

An 18-member team from the National Defence College, New Delhi, paid the first-ever visit to Mexico in June 2003. The visit facilitated establishment of high-level contacts with the Mexican defence establishment. As a gesture of goodwill, the Mexican Defence Minister has accepted the installation of the Indian national flag at their National Heroic Military Academy. The flag was installed at an impressive ceremonial parade. The Indian flag is amongst a select group of countries in the ceremonial flags room of the Military Academy.

Mexico continued to be a major centre for Indian cultural activities. The Mexican Senate organized a week of Indian Culture in June 2003. The President of Senate, Enrique Jackson, inaugurated the event and

the weeklong activities covered a variety of exhibitions, presentation of Indian dances, a fashion show and seminars by prominent Indologists on subjects of bilateral interest. Later, two separate weeks of Indian Culture were organized in Jalapa, the capital of the state of Veracruz and Guadalajara, the capital of the state of Jalisco in September-October 2003.

In July 2003, a bust of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled at a prominent location by the mayor of Guadalajara, the second largest city of Mexico. The bust has been gifted by the ICCR.

A five-member Odissi dance troupe, sponsored by ICCR, participated in the famous Cervantino International Festival of Art in the Mexican city of Guanajuato in October 2003, followed by presentations in three different cities of the state of Jalisco as part of the October Festival.

In spite of a severe economic slow down in Mexico, bilateral economic relations have demonstrated a healthy growth trend. In the first seven months of 2003, the two-way trade grew by over 34% compared to the same period last year, reaching a figure of US\$ 508 million. During January-July 2003, Indian exports to Mexico went up by 10% reaching an amount of US\$ 280 million with a trade surplus of US\$ 52 million in favour of India. The year 2003-04 also witnessed several important trade promotional events. Several Indian companies participated in three major trade fairs: (1) automobile parts fair "PAACE" in July, (2) Latin America's largest automobile and auto-parts fair "Rujac" in August; and (3) Latin American Coating Show in July. Two well-known commercial journalists, from the publications department of the Foreign Trade Bank of Mexico (Bancomext) and from the publicity wing of the National Association of Exporters and Importers (ANIERM), were invited to India under the Focus LAC programme of Ministry of Commerce. As a result, a series of special supplements/articles on India were published.

The President of ICCR formally released on 9 September 2003 the book entitled

"India – Mexico: Similarities and Encounters Throughout History", written by a famous Indologist Dr. Eva Uchmani of the Mexican National Autonomous University. Two more books on India were released in collaboration with the Embassy: (1) a book of poems on India "Sonetos de la India" written by Mr. Ignacio Orendain in May; and (2) "India – Love at First Sight" by Ms. Gloria Friscione de Perez-Jacome.

Nicaragua

India was the first country to sign a bilateral agreement with Nicaragua on 29 March 2004 for canceling the debt of US\$ 5 million owed to it by the Government of Nicaragua under the Culmination Point Documents approved for Nicaragua by the IMF and World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative.

Central America

India and countries in Central America have traditionally enjoyed good relations despite the challenge imposed by the barriers of geographical distance and language. Roughly equivalent in size to a quarter of Mexico, a total population of about 35 million, GDP in conventional terms amounting to US\$ 75 billion (US\$ 160 billion in PPP terms), Central American countries have seen the gradual strengthening of democracy and put the civil wars and instability of the past behind them. They are now inching towards integration under the aegis of SICA while simultaneously negotiating FTAs amongst themselves and collectively with countries such as the United States.

India has received positive signals to its expression of interest to develop bilateral and multilateral strategic linkages. Trade figures with the region, though extremely small, in comparative terms with other parts of the world have nevertheless registered a modest increase growing from US\$ 103.4 million in 2001-2002 to US\$ 117.54 in 2002-2003 – an increase of 14% overall.

The ITEC Programme continued to remain extremely popular with all countries in Central America and over 40 trainees visited

India to undergo various courses in diverse areas.

Panama

Panama remains the only country in Central America with the significant presence of PIOs. However, the region is being used as transit by some persons trying to illegally enter North America. This year, 14 persons were apprehended and while the majority has been repatriated to India, some remain to be repatriated. Such cases have prompted governments to put in place extremely strict visa regimes for Indian nationals wishing to travel to their countries.

Minister of States for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh paid an official visit to Panama at the invitation of Vice Minister Nivia Rosanna Castrellon from 8-12 February 2003. He called on First Vice President Arturo Vallarino and Second President Kaiser Bazan. In addition he had substantive meeting with Minister of External Relations Harmodo Arias Cerjack as well as a separate working session with the Acting Vice Minister Mendes. He was accorded the honour of Distinguished Visitor to the City of Panama by Mayor Juan Carlos Navarro. He also met the Indian community and visited the Panama Canal and Colon Free Zone.

The first ever official Parliamentary delegation to pay a bilateral visit did so from 5-9 July 2003 and was led by Shri Manohar Joshi, Speaker Lok Sabha in the Centenary Year of Panama's Independence from Colombia. The delegation was received by the highest echelons of Government in Panama, including President Mireya Moscoso and had substantive meetings with Carlos Alvarado, President of the National Assembly and Marco Ameglio, President of the Foreign Relations Commission in the Assembly. The two sides agreed to establish an India-Panama Parliamentary Friendship Association. Speaker extended an invitation to the President of Legislative Assembly to lead a delegation to India.

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India participated in the Cotal 2003 Congress held in Panama City from 5-11 May 2003 and the Tourism Fair held during the same period. The India Tourism Office (New York) Stall was adjudged the best international stall at the fair. Two major tour operators from Panama attended the Fifth International Tourism Mart in New Delhi from 5-11 September 2003. The India Handicrafts and Gifts Fair in New Delhi from 13-16 October 2003 generated interest with seven Panamanians, including four invitees attending the event.

INS Tarangini, the only sail training ship in the Indian Navy, was in Panama from 10 - 15 November 2003, crossing the Panama Canal on 11 November 2003 in time to celebrate the Centenary of Panama's Independence and as part of the Navy's efforts to build bridges of friendship across the oceans. Ranjana Gauhar, noted Odissi dancer and four musicians accompanying her, performed to appreciative audiences in Panama in September 2003 as part of India's participation to celebrate the Centenary of Panama's Independence.

Efforts were also made to reach out to the wider Panamanian audience, particularly students, through special screenings of Indian films and a Film Festival titled "*Introducing Bollywood*", all of which proved extremely popular with viewers.

Panama has approximately 12,000 people of Indian origin who remain a vibrant and dynamic part of Panamanian society. Some concern, however, has crept in, over significant numbers who have come in recent times and over-stay without proper

documentation. A major initiative was taken by the community with the Department of Immigration to regularize such persons during the year.

Costa Rica

A 10-member delegation from India led by Shri K.C. Mishra, Secretary, Environment and Forests, visited Costa Rica from 17-28 June 2003 on a study tour.

Peru

The highlight of the year was an official visit by the External Affairs Minister, accompanied by a CII business delegation, to Lima from 3-4 June 2003. He called on President Toledo and held talks with Foreign Minister Allan Wagner, First Vice President and Minister for External Trade and Tourism, Raul Diez Canseco, Education Minister Gerardo Ayzanoa. During the visit, India and Peru signed a Joint Statement, which inter alia, included Peru's support to India's candidature for permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council. In addition, an agreement on abolition of visas for holders of diplomatic and official passports was signed. An invitation on behalf of the President of India to President Toledo to visit India was accepted with pleasure.

At a multilateral level, since Peru holds the current Chair of the Rio Group, External Affairs Minister met with Peruvian Foreign Minister Wagner and Representatives of Brazil and Costa, the three countries that make up the current Rio Troika, for talks between India and the Rio Group. In addition, he also met with the Secretary General of the Andean Community (CAN), Guillermo de Soto. On behalf of CAN, Foreign Minister Wagner also signed an agreement with the External Affairs Minister to establish regular contacts between India and CAN.

The External Affairs Minister met with Foreign Minister Wagner and other members of the Rio Group Troika (Costa Rica, Brazil) on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York as part of the India - Rio Troika meeting. The First

Lady of Peru, Dr. Eliane Karp, visited India to participate as a Special Invitee of the Government of India in the New Delhi Conference on "Dialogue Among Civilizations: Quest for New Perspectives", held in New Delhi from 9-10 July 2003. External Affairs Minister sent a message of felicitations to the new Foreign Minister of Peru, Manuel Rodriguez, after Allan Wagner was appointed as the Secretary General of the Andean Community (CAN).

India and Peru celebrated the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries this year. Foreign Minister Allan Wagner hosted a special reception and also attended a reception hosted by the Indian Ambassador. Various other events, including a special supplement on India in Peru's leading daily, were organised throughout the year to mark the event.

The 2nd round of bilateral foreign office consultations were held in New Delhi on February 20. Under Secretary for Asia and the Pacific Basin in the Foreign Ministry, Luzmila Zanabria, led the Peruvian delegation to the talks, while Secretary (EAA) led the Indian delegation. Mrs. Zanabria also called upon External Affairs Minister during the visit. As a special gesture to India, on 30 April 2003, the Peruvian Congress reactivated the Indo-Peru Parliamentary Friendship League.

Economic and commercial relations continued to strengthen with increase in India's exports. Various Indian delegations visited Peru in different sectors like jewellery, small industries, tea, etc, as well as a team from UNESCO India. Many Peruvian businessmen and government officials also went to India on sponsored visits. APTECH started operations in Peru while another pharmaceutical company set up offices in Lima. India's exports to the armed forces of Peru also continued to rise. Indian companies participated in the two major fairs in Lima. For the first time, Peruvian Government sent two Indian importers to Lima on a sponsored visit.

In the cultural sphere, after a gap of more than 5 years, three ICCR-sponsored cultural

troupes performed in Lima. A special event was organised to celebrate Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in 2003.

Bolivia

The President, Shri A.P.J. Abdul Kalam sent a message of felicitations to the new Bolivian President Carlos Mesa on his assumption of charge.

Education Minister of Bolivia, Hugo Carvajal, participated in the New Delhi Conference on Dialogue Among Civilizations “Quest for New Perspectives”, held in New Delhi from 9-10 July 2003. The conference was organised jointly by Ministry of Human Resource Development and UNESCO. This was the first visit by a Bolivian Minister to India.

In the natural gas sector, Bolivian companies expressed their interest in Indian participation – equity, upstream / downstream operations, supply of equipment, etc. GAIL also expressed its interest in the Bolivian market. For the first time, Indian companies participated in Bolivia’s largest trade fair, Expocruz 2003.

An ICCR sponsored Bharatnatyam dance group visited Santa Cruz from 10-13 August. This was the first ever visit by a dance troupe from India to Bolivia.

Suriname

Cordial relations between India and Suriname received a fresh impetus with the State Visit of Mr. Ronaldo Ronald Venetiaan, President of Suriname, to India from 15-20 March 2003. President Venetiaan’s delegation included Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Agriculture and Planning, besides senior officials and representatives of business and media. A Joint Press Statement was issued at the end of the visit.

Agreements signed during the visit included US\$10 million Government of India Line of Credit to Suriname, an agreement on cooperation in the field of agriculture and a cultural exchange programme. A gift of Indian medicines worth US\$100,000 and doubling of ITEC slots from 15 to 30 per

year were also announced. At the private sector level, an agreement to set up a Joint Business Council was signed between the Federation of Chamber of Commerce & Industry, India (FICCI) and the Suriname Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KKF).

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh, visited Suriname from 3-9 June 2003 as the leader of the Indian official delegation to the VII World Hindi Conference, which was organized in Paramaribo from 5-9 June 2003. Besides presiding over the activities of the Conference, the Minister of State had bilateral meetings with the Surinamese Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Education. He was also separately received by President Venetiaan, Vice President Ajodhia and the Speaker of the Surinamese National Assembly Ram Sardjoe.

Barbados

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh paid a bilateral visit to Barbados from 15-18 June 2003. This was the first official visit by a high-ranking Indian dignitary, since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Besides detailed talks with Ms. Billie Miller, Senior Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Minister of State also met Ms. Mia Motley, Deputy Prime Minister and Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs. An MoU on regular Foreign Office Consultations was signed during the visit.

Trinidad & Tobago

Bilateral relations between Trinidad and Tobago and India continued to be friendly and cordial during the year 2003-04. A large delegation from Trinidad attended the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2003, led by Dr. Linda Baboolal, President of the Senate. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh, visited Trinidad from 4-6 February 2003. During the visit an Intergovernmental Joint Commission Agreement was signed and invitation was extended to Prime Minister Manning to visit India. On the cultural front, the ICCR-

sponsored Bhojpuri music troupe and a Rajasthani folk dance troupe visited Trinidad. An exhibition entitled ‘Temple Art from India’ curated by Ms. Jaya Patel and an exhibition on life and works of Mahatma Gandhi were organized at the National Museum in Port of Spain. Two Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lectures were organised, one on the Gandhian ideas for social change and another the Mahatma Gandhi and Globalisation.

Under the ITEC programme, Government of India sponsored a pre-feasibility study for Light Rail Transit system in Trinidad, done by a two-member RITES team. The idea was discussed during the visit of Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh, earlier this year and the concept paper has already been prepared. Several training slots in various fields including information technology, engineering, etc. were offered during the year.

Promotion and propagation of Hindi was actively pursued and classes at different levels are being organized at different locations in Trinidad. Two Hindi Kavi Sammelans were organized in May and October 2003.

Indian Arrival Day was commemorated with a series of month-long cultural events in collaboration with various Indian cultural organizations. This included an International Seminar on Indian Diaspora in which, apart from local scholars, scholars from India, US, Suriname, Guyana and Jamaica participated.

Strong emphasis has been placed on enhancing commercial cooperation and several promotional events have been organized in this direction. These include:

- 4-member Trinidadian tourism promotion delegation was sent to South Asian Travel and Tourism Expo (SATTE) in April 2003.
- A well-attended seminar on ‘Information Technology in India’ was organized, which resulted in NIIT launching two-franchise education and training centers in Trinidad. They had also presented a concept paper on establishing a Centre of Excellence on Information

Technology by the Government of Trinidad. The Government of Trinidad & Tabago is examining this.

- A tourism seminar was organized to promote India bound tourism in May 2003.
- An Indian Food Festival was organized with chefs coming from India.
- Indian Fashion Shows were organized in March and September showcasing Indian fashion wears, inter alia, featuring a former Miss India.

A Major Festival of India was organized from 7-15 September 2003, including an exclusive Indian Consumer Goods Fair, an Indian Food Fair, daily Indian cultural programmes, film shows and two Indian Fashion Shows. A fifty-member business delegation from India visited Trinidad & Tabago in connection with the trade fair leading to a number of new significant business linkages. An Ayurveda promotional workshop was organized in July 2003 to promote and propagate Ayurveda with participation of an Indian Ayurveda expert. Similarly, India has actively endeavored to strengthen and deepen friendship and cooperation with countries of concurrent accreditation, namely, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Montserrat and Anguilla. The Minister of Culture of St. Kitts and Nevis participated in the International Conference on "Dialogue Among Civilizations: Quest for New Perspectives" in Delhi in July 2003.

Venezuela

India's relations with Venezuela were warm

and friendly. After postponing G-15 Summit twice in the past, Venezuela finally hosted the Summit on 26-28 February 2004. The Summit was attended by six Heads of States/Governments including Iranian President Khatami, Zimbabwe's President Mugabe, Argentinean, Brazilian and Colombian Presidents and the Prime Minister of Jamaica. The Indian delegation was led by the External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha. During the Summit, he announced India's willingness to contribute US\$100 million for establishing a Fund to assist Africa in collaboration with NEPAD. He also suggested that the G-15 Group should be more pro-active, forward-looking and take full advantage of the revolution in Information and Communication Technology. There were demonstrations led by the Opposition during the Summit in order to attract international attention. External Affairs Minister met President Chavez and Foreign Minister Jesus Perez also.

Venezuelan State Oil Company PDVSA and Oil India Ltd. signed an agreement on 7 October 2003 for carrying out consultancy service/technical cooperation, including detailed geo-scientific and reservoir engineering studies of Baghewala Oil field in Rajasthan for exploitation of heavy crude oil for feedstock in power-plants. Under the agreement, Intevep, a subsidiary of PDVSA will set up a Pilot Plant for exploitation of heavy oil and bitumen, and commence prospective drillings within a year. Depending on the preliminary results of drilling, the two sides plan to set up a Joint Venture in the area.



9. United Nations & International Organisations

The UN system, its role and relevance in the international order, its efficacy and limitations came under scrutiny during the year. Continuing acts of international terrorism and developments surrounding Iraq overshadowed discussions in the UN and other international organizations. The United Nations launched new Peace Keeping Operations in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire and maintained its activities in the areas of human rights, socio-economic development, humanitarian activities etc. India continued to play a prominent role in discussions at the UN, and often played a role in building consensus on important questions, while preserving and promoting its interests as a developing country, with a perspective of its own on key international issues.

The 58th Session of the UN General Assembly

The 58th session in September was held in the aftermath of the Iraq war. The impact of unilateral action on the future of multilateralism and the UN was a constant theme that ran through the general debate, in which a large number of world leaders participated. The impression that the UN's role and relevance had been challenged following the unilateral war in Iraq, appeared to have been replaced by a recognition of the limits of unilateralism and a renewed commitment to multilateralism. In this context, there was also an awareness of the need to revisit issues relating to the fundamentals of the international order, to look at new threats and challenges as also the institutions to deal with them and the necessity of reforms in the UN system.

In his speech to the General Assembly, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan emphasized the urgent need to focus on UN reforms and the adequacy and effectiveness of the UN's organs, especially the need for a more representative Security Council. With a view to comprehensively addressing the issue of UN reforms, the Secretary General established a sixteen member High-Level Panel of Eminent Personalities on Global Security, Threats and Reform of the

International System. The Panel has been tasked with examining the major threats and challenges the world faces in the broad field of peace and security, including economic and social issues in so far as they relate to peace and security, and making recommendations for the elements of a collective response. Based on the Panel's report, the Secretary General would make recommendations to the 59th session of the General Assembly next year. The 58th session also looked at some practical steps towards UN reform, including revitalisation of the General Assembly and review of the current planning and budgetary processes.

The situation in Iraq was a subject of considerable concern and focus in the 58th session of the General Assembly. Although there were shades of differences and a feeling of uncertainty about the road ahead, there appeared to be a growing recognition in the international community, of the need to empower the Iraqis and to move towards a speedy restoration of Iraqi sovereignty, as also an enlarged role for the UN in this process. The General Assembly also reiterated the importance of combating terrorism. The other major issues that engaged the attention of world leaders were the situations in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee led the Indian delegation to the 58th session and addressed the General Assembly on 25 September 2003. In his speech, the Prime Minister said that the Iraq crisis had emphasized the urgent need for an enlarged and restructured Security Council, with more developing countries as permanent and non-permanent members. Expressing concern for the suffering of the people of Iraq, Prime Minister stressed the imperative need to empower the Iraqi people to determine their own future and the immediate priority of ensuring security, restoring basic infrastructure, and outlining a political roadmap for a representative Iraqi Government. He also reiterated India's

continued support for efforts to combat international terrorism. Prime Minister had bilateral meetings with the Heads of State / Government of the United States, Brazil, South Africa, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Ukraine, Portugal, Afghanistan, Russian Federation, and Zimbabwe. He participated in a meeting with the Presidents of Brazil and South Africa in the context of the India-Brazil-South Africa initiative [IBSA].

External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha accompanied the Prime Minister to the General Assembly session. He had separate bilateral meetings with a large number of his counterparts. These included Foreign Ministers of Algeria, Arab League, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Chile, Egypt, France, Germany, Iraqi Governing Council, Israel, Mauritius, Myanmar, Palestinian National Authority, Philippines, Romania, Senegal, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, UK and Vietnam. For the first time, the External Affairs Minister met with Foreign Ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council and of the Rio Group. He participated in two trilateral meetings, one with China and the Russian Federation, and the other with Brazil and South Africa. He also had a separate meeting with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The External Affairs Minister attended meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77, the Commonwealth, Asia Cooperation Dialogue, and SAARC. He also had extensive interactions with the international and Indian media during his stay in New York.

The General Assembly had a special meeting on 22 September 2003 to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome of the special session on HIV/AIDS. It also held a high-level dialogue on the follow-up to the Monterrey conference on financing for development on 29-30 October 2003. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna participated in the meeting. Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh spoke in the General Assembly on 10 December 2003, which commemorated the 55th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human rights and the 10th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

The Security Council

In the year 2003, India participated in 12 open meetings of the Security Council on issues of importance such as the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, Middle East, Afghanistan, Timor-L'este as well as on thematic issues such as threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, women and peace and security, role of the Security Council in the pacific settlement of disputes and protection of civilians in armed conflict.

The Working Group on the question of reform of the Security Council met four times during the year. The Working Group achieved a modest degree of success in discussions on the working methods of the Security Council. There was expectedly no agreement on the core issues pertaining to expansion of the reformed Security Council. India continued to participate actively in the discussions of the Working Group. India's candidature for permanent membership in a reformed Security Council received further expressions of support during the year.

Political Issues

India made statements on all issues of political and strategic importance at the 58th United Nations General Assembly plenary, including Afghanistan, the Question of Palestine, the situation in the Middle East and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Iraq

India participated in open meetings of the Security Council on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait held on 18 February, 11 March and 26 March 2003. In these statements, India called for an early end to the hostilities and for ensuring that the sovereignty, integrity and secular traditions of Iraq were fully preserved. Underlining the right of the Iraqi people to determine their political future and control their resources, India emphasized the need to secure lasting peace and a stable future for the Iraqi people. India also announced its willingness to fully participate in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Iraq.

On 27 January 2003, an important report by the Arms Inspectors was placed before the Security Council. Discussions on the need for Iraq's compliance, the report of the Arms Inspectors and further action by the Security Council and the International community continued. By February, the situation pertaining to Iraq had reached crisis proportions and the possibility of military operations against Iraq with or without the UN mandate had become a critical issue. India's position was of commitment to resolution of the problem through the UN and the multilateral process. The situation in Iraq dominated the work of the Security Council throughout the year, which adopted landmark Resolutions 1483, 1500 and 1511. Resolution 1483 of 22 May 2003 granted interim governing powers to the United States and its coalition partners in Iraq, a role for a UN Special Representative working with this coalition and lifting of sanctions imposed on Iraq. India welcomed Resolution 1483, as in its view, the adoption of the resolution enabled the international community to help the long suffering people of Iraq and reaffirmed principles important to India, such as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq; the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their political future and control their natural resources; the existence, to an extent, of an internationally accepted roadmap for rebuilding Iraq and the involvement of the Secretary General's representative in this process.

Resolution 1500 of 14 August 2003 reaffirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, welcomed the establishment of the Governing Council of Iraq and set up for an initial period of 12 months, the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to coordinate the UN's humanitarian and other activities in Iraq.

Resolution 1511 of 16 October 2003 called on the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq to return governing authority to the Iraqi people as soon as practicable and invited the Iraqi Governing Council to provide a timetable for drafting a new constitution and holding of democratic elections by 15 December 2003. India

welcomed the unanimous adoption of Resolution 1511 as a positive step towards the restoration of sovereignty to the Iraqi people although it noted that the Resolution lacked specificity regarding the timing of the transfer. It took positive note of the reaffirmation of the right of the Iraqi people to determine their political future as well as the mandate to the Governing Council to draw up a time table for the drafting of a new constitution and holding of democratic elections. Taking note of the appeal in the resolution to UN Member States to assist in reconstruction efforts, the Indian Government reiterated its readiness to contribute to the restoration of infrastructure, medical, health, education, communication and other civilian needs of the Iraqi people.

In early 2004, developments in the UN with regard to Iraq continued to be a major focus of international attention. In February 2004, in response to requests from the CPA and the Iraqi Governing Council for UN involvement in the transitional political process in Iraq, the UN Secretary General dispatched a fact-finding team led by UNSG's Special Advisor, Lakhdar Brahimi, to mainly establish whether elections for a transitional national assembly could be held before the transfer of sovereignty to Iraq on 30 June 2004, and if not, to explore possible alternatives to take the political process forward. The team concluded that while elections were necessary, credible elections could not be held before the end of 2004.

On 17 March 2004, in separate letters to the UNSG, the Iraqi Governing Council and CPA formally invited the UN to play a role in forging a consensus on the setting up of the interim government and providing assistance in ensuring the conduct of direct elections by January 2005. Subsequently, in response, UNSG, with the support of the Security Council dispatched a team led by Lakhdar Brahimi to Iraq in early April.

The UN has been engaged in Iraq in a tentative way and it remains to be seen whether this would eventually lead to greater involvement and a more substantive role for the UN in Iraq. It is as yet unclear what role

the UN would be able to play in Iraq with regard to transfer of sovereignty, endorsement of the interim government and constitution, the provision of security in terms of setting up of a Multinational Force and in the situation post 30 June 2004. In end March, there was also considerable speculation about the necessity of a new resolution of the UN Security Council to address these issues.

Afghanistan

An issue of critical importance that continued to attract a lively debate pertained to strengthening the triangular relationship between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs). India has played a lead role all along in this debate, which saw the passing of Resolution 1353, and a Note by the President of the Council dated 14 January 2003, envisaging a new mechanism of cooperation and Joint Meetings between the Working Group of the Security Council on PKO's and TCCs. India participated in the open debate held in the Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan on 17 June 2003 to take into account the views of the larger membership, especially on the issue of drugs and its implications on the political process and reconstruction efforts. While highlighting the serious challenge posed to the peace process by drugs and the deteriorating security situation and the need to address them firmly and resolutely, India reiterated its support to international efforts aimed at reconstruction and emergence of Afghanistan as a peaceful, strong, prosperous, united and independent nation.

In the backdrop of increasing concern over the challenges being mounted against the Government of Afghanistan and the process of stabilization and reconstruction, India, at the High level ad-hoc meeting on Afghanistan held on the margins of the UN General Assembly on 24 September 2003, reiterated its strong support to the Afghan Government and its people, to re-establish a strong, independent, sovereign and united Afghanistan, including through bilateral assistance and contribution.

The Security Council unanimously approved

resolution 1510 on 13 October 2003, extending the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force for 12 months and authorizing expansion of its mandate to allow it to support the Afghan Transitional Authority and its successors, in the maintenance of security in the areas of Afghanistan outside Kabul.

The Security Council welcomed, as a very significant step, the new Constitution agreed by Afghanistan's Loya Jirga on 4 January 2004. UN Secretary General hailed the "historic achievement" as evidence of the determination of the Afghan people to establish a stable and democratic State. As regards the holding of elections in Afghanistan in June 2004 as originally envisaged in the Bonn Accords, the UN has expressed doubts about the possibility of adhering to the Bonn schedule, in view of the slow pace of voter registration, mainly due to continuing insecurity. Efforts are being made to impart added momentum to the voter registration process so that elections can be held as soon as possible.

Mr. Jean Arnault of France has been appointed as the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Afghanistan, in place of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, who has been appointed as the Special Adviser to the Secretary General.

Berlin Conference

To review the progress made since the Bonn Conference and to assess the current situation in Afghanistan, a major International Conference was convened in Berlin, under the UN on 31 March and 1 April 2004. India participated in this Conference and Foreign Secretary Shri Shashank led the Indian delegation. While expressing its concern over the recent surge in incidents of violence and terrorist attacks threatening peace and security in Afghanistan, India reiterated its support and commitment towards the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. India renewed its financial commitments for Afghanistan's reconstruction,

amounting to around US \$ 400 million. India also signed the Berlin Declaration, which emphasizes the commitment of the international community towards the reconstruction, development and maintenance of peace and security in Afghanistan.

Middle East

The UN witnessed a contentious debate on a number of issues related to the situation in the Middle East.

The Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly on the situation in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory was re-convened on three separate occasions, on 19 September, 20-21 October and 8 December 2003. At the meeting of 19 September 2003, a resolution demanding that Israel desist from any act of deportation and cease any threat to the safety of the elected President of the Palestinian Authority was adopted. India voted in favour of the resolution.

At the meeting held on 20 October 2003, a resolution was adopted demanding that Israel stop and reverse construction of the "Security Wall" in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around Jerusalem. The resolution requested the Secretary General to report periodically on compliance with the resolution, with the first report on compliance with the demand to cease construction on the wall presented within one month. India voted in favour of the resolution. The meeting on 8 December 2003 was held in the backdrop of Secretary General's report that Israel was not in compliance with the General Assembly's demand that Israel stop and reverse construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. At this meeting, a resolution seeking advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences arising from the construction of the wall was adopted. India voted in favour of the resolution.

The Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1515 on 19 November 2003, which for the first time endorsed the Quartet

Road Map and called on the parties to fulfill their obligations under the Road Map in cooperation with the Quartet, for achieving the vision of two States living side by side in peace and security.

African Issues

The Security Council remained seized of several issues relating to the African continent including conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Western Sahara, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Eritrea. The Council authorized new peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire and approved extension in the mandates of the other existing missions in the African continent. It also expressed support for regional and sub-regional efforts to bring peace to the areas of conflict.

Terrorism

On the important issue of the threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, India participated in three open meetings of the Security Council, which were held on 4 April, 29 July and 16 October 2003. While reiterating that terrorism was a common foe to all peoples, beliefs and religions as also of democracy, pluralistic societies and peace, India pointed out that the terrorist goal of disrupting normal peaceful functioning of societies including by launching attacks upon places of worship, parliamentary institutions, candidates and voters engaged in democratic electoral processes were tactics employed by externally sponsored terrorists to achieve their political objectives. India underscored the point that the fight against terrorism could be addressed effectively only when all nations, including those that saw a vested interest in encouraging such tendencies, realized that terrorism was a malaise that could strike at will in any part of the world.

In various Joint Working Groups on Terrorism with other countries, India

continued to emphasize that terrorism was a global phenomenon and the fight against terrorism had to be comprehensive and sustained. There could be no double standards in combating terrorism. It could not be ad-hoc, selective or compartmentalized in terms of regions, religions or organizations and there could be no justification for terrorism: religious, political, ideological or any other.

The Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC) established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1373 followed an active programme of implementation, involving appropriate legislative framework and measures to check financial flows to terrorists. India continued to interact with the CTC. India submitted its third report to the Committee detailing legislative and other counter-measures in place against terrorist activities. During the interactions with the CTC India emphasized that while it attached importance to the work of the Committee, it also felt that the CTC should be clear about its objective of ensuring stricter compliance, rather than mere collection of information. India stressed that the CTC should become more effective and purposive, and needed to go beyond the process of mere reporting, to a more serious examination of the actual actions taken by States in their international counter-terrorism effort.

The Security Council on 17 January 2003 adopted Resolution 1455 to improve the implementation of measures imposed under Security Council Resolutions 1267, 1333 and 1390 against Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and associated entities. India was among the States that submitted their reports to the Al-Qaeda/Taliban Sanctions Committee within the specified time.

Peacekeeping

India continued to be a major troop contributor. It is presently contributing to 11 of the 15 UN peacekeeping operations, providing Infantry Battalions to two of them [UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and UN

Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)], helicopters with support crew to the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) and a major civilian police component in the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). India has also committed, in principle, to contribute to the envisaged UN Peacekeeping Mission in Sudan aimed at facilitating an end to the long-running civil war in Sudan.

The annual session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations was held in March 2003. Apart from a discussion on the more well-entrenched concepts in peacekeeping such as strengthening cooperation between the troop-contributing countries and the Security Council, rapid deployment, operational planning and integrated mission task forces, the new issues that came to the fore were disarmament, demobilisation and re-integration [DDR] of armed groups, Rule of Law issues, Conduct and Discipline of peacekeepers, the problem of HIV/AIDS, Children and Peacekeeping and issues relating to Peacekeeping Oversight. The concept of 'robust peacekeeping' was broached by the Secretariat. It was emphasised that while consent was still the basic principle under which the UN operated, for a mission to succeed in the changed realities of today, an understanding was required on the need for a robust force, deployed and configured not only to be able to use force but to keep the initiative and, if challenged, to defend itself and the mandate. Such an escalation capability was essential to project credibility. This debate is expected to be taken forward during the discussions on peacekeeping in 2004.

The Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK), established by the Government of India under the aegis of the United Service Institution of India (USI), with the aim of meeting part of the UN related training requirements and promoting comprehensive exchange and research has been actively engaged in building a data base on peacekeeping, organising national and

international Seminars and training capsules for various segments, with participation of nominees from foreign countries. The Government of India is funding some of the nominees from developing countries. Apart from the annual calendar of training events and Seminars this year, a Peacekeeping Command Post Exercise (CPX) was hosted jointly by India and US under the aegis of CUNPK in February. 115 foreign nationals from 16 countries and 35 Indian officers participated in the exercise. In October this year, India also co-hosted with the UN, a training course for Military Observers and Civilian Police from emerging troop-contributing countries at the CUNPK.

In his keynote address at the inaugural session of the National Seminar at the CUNPK on 21 August 2003, the Foreign Secretary emphasized that while India viewed peacekeeping in the traditional sense as a classical UN peacekeeping operation to assist in 'keeping peace' between two conflicting States on their request, India was fully alive to the reality of the changing nature of peacekeeping and the growing complexity and scale of these operations. India was sensitive to the fact that the UN was increasingly involved in complex intra-State conflicts, and UN operations had widened from 'peace keeping' to 'peace enforcement', 'peace building' and management of 'post conflict' situations leading to an increasingly large spectrum of activities. India has also noted that there are varying mandates under which these operations are being undertaken. India's policy on involvement in peacekeeping operations continued to be shaped by a commitment to the UN and its ideals. Within this framework, our response for assistance is based on an assessment of India's overall national interest, taking into account several considerations such as bilateral relations, regional equations, public sentiments, operational aspects and our international profile.

India has a bilateral dialogue on peacekeeping issues with the US and UK. Three India-UK Peacekeeping Seminars have been held so far. The third Seminar was held in Shrivenham, UK from 13-16 October 2003. The objective of these seminars, in the nature of a Joint Working Group, is to develop a better understanding of each other's perspectives on different aspects of both conceptual and operational dimensions of peacekeeping. It is also a forum to exchange views on new developments and emerging challenges in the domain of peacekeeping.

Four meetings of the India-US Joint Working Group on peacekeeping have so far taken place. The fourth meeting was held recently in Washington DC on 1 October 2003. The JWG is not only a forum for exchanging views on policy aspects and operational issues, but also for planning joint activities under CUNPK and identifying institutional cooperation on peacekeeping.

Non-Aligned Movement

The XIII Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement was held at Kuala Lumpur from 20-25 February 2003. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee led the Indian delegation to the Summit. The theme of the Summit was the 'continuing revitalization of NAM'. In the Conference, India stressed that the Non-Aligned Movement needs to focus on a priority agenda of global themes of contemporary relevance that unites the membership rather than divides it. NAM should adopt a positive and forward looking agenda with emphasis on

- multilateralism,
- reform of the UN system,
- North-South engagement,
- South-South cooperation,
- democracy
- multi-culturalism.

India insisted that the approach and tone of NAM has to be pragmatic. The objective should be to position NAM as a major pole in the multi-polar world. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's address and External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha's

presentation underlined these aspects. The Conference adopted the Kuala Lumpur Declaration, which reflects many of India's ideas, and proposals.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) participated actively in the Open Meeting of the Security Council on Iraq, convened on 26-27 March 2003. Condemning the unilateral military action in Iraq as a violation of the principles of international law and the UN Charter, NAM asked for an immediate halt to the war. Reiterating its commitment to multilateralism and the fundamental principles of the non-use of force and respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States, NAM urged for a speedy and peaceful resolution of the issue through the UN.

The Ministerial meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement was held on the margins of the General Assembly on 26 September 2003. In his statement, the External Affairs Minister underlined the need for a collective approach through multilateral institutions in tackling issues of international peace and security and the UN's central and critical role in the same. He also expressed agreement with UN Secretary General that a comprehensive reform and restructuring of the UN system including the Security Council was an urgent imperative. He reiterated that the menace of terrorism could not be justified on the basis of political, territorial, or ideological arguments.

The NAM Committee on Palestine, of which India is a member, also met at Ministerial level on the sidelines of the 58th session of the General Assembly in New York in September. In keeping with its mandate, the Committee continued to explore measures to further support the rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with international law and the will of the Movement. The Committee also continued to work with all the parties concerned for the achievement of a just, durable and comprehensive peace in the Middle East that would enable the Palestinian people to exercise their rights in freedom and sovereignty in their independent homeland.

In continuation of the constructive role India played in the XIII NAM Summit in Kuala Lumpur in February 2003, India continued to emphasize in relevant forums that if NAM is to be revitalized, it should adopt a contemporary and forward-looking approach, focusing on key issues of common concern - issues that unite rather than divide the 116 member countries. India continued to stress that NAM's objective should be to position itself as a major pole in a multipolar world and to emerge as a collective, pragmatic and serious voice of the South.

The International Conference of New or Restored Democracies

Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna led the Indian delegation to the 5th International Conference for New or Restored Democracies. The Conference adopted Ulaanbaatar Declaration and Plan of Action on Democracy, Good Governance and Civil Society. This was yet another step signifying India's commitment to strengthening the process of democratisation worldwide. In his address, Shri Vinod Khanna, while citing the unique example of India as a successful democracy, spoke of the need for strengthening the process of democratic governance and institution building; empowerment of women and the weaker sections by consolidating self-government at the grass roots level. He also urged a concerted approach to tackle the global menace of terrorism that threatened the foundations of democratic societies everywhere. On the Chairman's invitation, India accepted membership of the fifteen-member group of Friends of the Chairman, which has been entrusted to ensure an effective follow-up of the Conference.

The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

India participated in the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent held in Geneva from 2-6 December

2003. The Conference discussed the contemporary challenges posed to the concepts and notions of war and peace, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the nature of humanitarian activities during conflict, the role of the Red Cross etc., particularly in the wake of recent attacks on the ICRC in Iraq and Afghanistan. There was an acceptance in the Conference that many of these concepts needed a review.

Information activities

The Committee on Information which makes recommendations to the General Assembly on the policy and activities of the Department of Public Information (DPI) held its annual session in April-May 2003. The Department of Information had been heavily criticized by the developed countries, which in the 1990s had sought to close it down as part of the UN reform exercise. Having failed to do so, they continued to seek to pare down its activities and reallocate resources to other departments. Some of the major issues dealt with in the Committee on Information included the goal of achieving a new information order, information support to UN peacekeeping, a UN radio broadcasting capacity, a more efficient UN website, parity in all official languages in the work of the UN and the work of the United Nations Information Centres (UNICs).

Economic and Social Issues

The Economic and Social Council

The substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was held in Geneva from 30 June-25 July 2003. The theme of the high-level segment this year was "Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development". The Ministerial declaration adopted at the conclusion of the high-level dialogue recognised the need to make rural development an integral part of national and international development policies, including response strategies of bilateral donors and activities and programmes of the UN system. It also stressed the importance of ensuring full implementation of the Doha Ministerial Declaration of the World Trade

Organisation, including the provisions on implementation issues and the operationalisation of provisions relating to the special and differential treatment of the developing countries.

The Council also decided that the theme for the substantive session in 2004 would be "Resource Mobilisation and Enabling Environment for Poverty Eradication in the Context of the Implementations of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010".

Environment and Sustainable Development Issues

The Eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development was held in New York from 20 April- 9 May 2003. This was the first meeting of the Commission since the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) was held in Johannesburg from 26 August - 4 September 2002. The Indian Delegation led by Minister of Environment and Forests, Shri T.R. Baalu emphasized the critical significance of the means of implementation for the developing countries, the importance of the future work programme of the Commission covering all major issues of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the necessity to provide inter-governmental guidance to partnerships in this area.

India participated actively in the negotiations related to the organization of the work of the Commission and its multi-year programme of work. After prolonged negotiations, a cluster approach for the multi-year programme of work was adopted. It was agreed that issues on which the international community had earlier decided on targets would be given priority. The Commission also agreed to a two-year implementation cycle, the first year being a review-year that would focus on developing a broad understanding on the gaps and constraints in the implementation process through dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders while maintaining the intergovernmental character of the Commission. The second year, called the

policy year, would take decisions on how to overcome obstacles and constraints in the implementation process.

A major achievement of the Commission on Sustainable Development was the inter-governmental agreement on a set of criteria and guidelines on partnerships. India worked with other leading developing countries with the Group of 77 as well as with other delegations for the finalization of the guidelines on partnerships.

Convention against Corruption

An Ad-hoc Inter-Governmental Committee has been negotiating an International Convention against Corruption in Vienna with the intention to adopt a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary instrument against corruption. The Ad-hoc Committee derived its mandate from a decision of the UN General Assembly. The importance of the Convention lies in its aim to provide an international legal framework that is facilitative in its attempt to return wealth illegally acquired through corruption back to the country of origin, while also providing a preventive framework as well as enforcement measures to guard and combat against corruption. India actively participated in the negotiating process and chaired the Open Ended Expert Group that laid down the terms of reference for negotiations by the Ad-hoc Committee.

India provided a moderating voice in the negotiating process to bridge the developing versus developed countries divide that surfaced during the negotiations wherein the former were requiring obligatory provisions in the convention for the return of assets generated through corruption and parked in safe havens abroad and the latter demanding obligatory provisions for effective preventive measures and good governance mechanisms in the concerned country. India also focussed on the need for international co-operation to combat trans-national aspects of corruption including transfer of funds and their repatriation to countries of origin without political pre-conditionalities.

The Ad-hoc Committee successfully negotiated the conclusion of this instrument in October 2003 in Vienna, which was adopted by the UNGA in its 58th session in October 2003. A three-day conference was held in Merida, Mexico from 9-11 December 2003 for signing the Convention against Corruption. The Indian delegation to this conference was led by the then Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Shri Harin Pathak,

Social, Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues

Close coordination and interaction continued to retain its high priority within the domain of India's interactions with the various human rights organizations and bodies within the UN system. The Permanent Missions of India in Geneva and New York played an active role in the deliberations of the Commission for Human Rights in Geneva as well as the Third Committee in the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Proceedings of the related UN bodies such as the Sub-Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Working Group on Minorities, Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, Working Group on Indigenous People, various treaty bodies and special procedure entities, were closely followed. An active and balancing role was adopted in the multilateral fora for discussions on all aspects of human rights. As a party to various international covenants, conventions and declarations on human rights, India continued to claim a major stakeholder role in this important global deliberative process.

In keeping with its stature as the largest democracy, India's approach in these fora was guided by its commitment to the rule of law, the values of freedom, justice, pluralism and tolerance and respect for human rights as enshrined in its Constitution and international human rights instruments. In its statements, India projected the concerns of, and challenges faced by developing countries while reaffirming the principles of universality and indivisibility of human rights. It also called for depoliticisation of

human rights debates and reiterated its conviction that national capacity building and dialogue were the most effective means of promoting human rights. India also monitored closely developments relating to standard setting in the field of human rights.

India's participation in the 59th session of the Commission on Human Rights held from 17 March - 25 April 2003 was marked by proactive engagement on substantive issues and facilitation of consensus on contentious issues. India refrained from aligning itself with any 'coalitions' and its engagement with delegations across the board was issue based. India made statements under all major agenda items, which were well received and appreciated. India cosponsored a large number of resolutions during the session and participated in negotiations on all major resolutions and other initiatives.

Foreign Secretary led the Indian delegation to the 60th Session of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) in Geneva (15 March-23 April 2004). He addressed the High Level Segment of the Session on 18 March. In his address, he highlighted the strength and achievement of secular and pluralistic Indian democracy as guarantor of human rights. Foreign Secretary stressed that human rights cannot be used as instruments of foreign policy and commended the report of the Acting High Commissioner for advocating in his Report that the struggle against poverty should remain at the forefront of the human rights agenda. Mentioning that CHR owed a special responsibility to recognize and address the rights of the victims of terrorism, he underlined the need to effectively fight terrorism internationally without compromising rule of law and human rights. He underscored the need for national capacity building in promoting and protecting human rights and pointed out the role of technical cooperation and advisory services in this regard.

In keeping with its consistent position that the human rights agenda cannot be used for furthering narrow political and foreign policy objectives, India firmly rejected and exposed Pakistan's attempts to use the Commission for its anti-India propaganda at the Sessions.

India also strongly refuted Pakistan's allegations and referred to its own record in democracy and human rights.

India's second periodic report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child was considered by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child at its session in January 2004. The 8th Annual Meeting of Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) was held in Kathmandu from 16-18 February 2004. National human rights institutions from twelve countries, which are members of APF, attended the Meeting including NHRC from India. Government of India was represented by the Ministry of External Affairs.

India's re-election to the Commission on Human Rights for the period 2004-2006 was a vindication of its long-standing and multifaceted contribution to human rights within the UN system. India will discharge its responsibilities in this body during its next term with seriousness and sense of purpose.

Within the domain of discussions on alternative approaches for improving the enjoyment of human rights, a wide number of issues such as human rights and terrorism, human rights and democracy, elimination of all forms of religious intolerance, right to development, human rights education, human rights and responsibilities were carefully monitored so as to keep the process balanced and rational from the perspective of developing countries.

India participated actively in the second meeting of the Adhoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Promotion and Protection of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities held in June, 2003 and was chosen as a member of the Working Group of the Adhoc Committee set up to elaborate on a legal instrument.

A number of eminent Indians continued to serve with distinction as members of important Treaty Monitoring Bodies and human rights mechanisms. These include Shri P.N. Bhagwati (Member of the Human Rights Committee), Mrs. Chokila Iyer

(Member, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), Shri Arjun Sengupta (Independent expert on the Right to Development and former member of Planning Commission), Shri R.V. Pillai (Member of the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination), Shri Miloon Kothari (Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing) and Mr. Soli Sorabjee (Expert member in the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights).

Health

A one-day meeting on "Global Polio eradication Initiative" was organized by the WHO in Geneva on 15 January 2004 where The Geneva Declaration for the Eradication of Polio was signed by six countries including India and by the donors. The 113th session of the Executive Board of the WHO was held in Geneva from 19-23 January 2004. Though India is not a member of the Executive Board of the WHO, a delegation led by DGHC Dr. S. P. Agrawal visited Geneva to take part in the meeting.

Refugees and Humanitarian Affairs

India took part in the meetings of the Standing Committee and various informal consultations of the UNHCR. It also participated in the annual 54th Session of the Executive Committee of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in September–October 2003. India highlighted its historical commitment to humanitarian traditions of refugee hosting, asylum and protection since independence. In its interactions with the UNHCR, India articulated issues of particular concern to developing countries which host the bulk of refugees today such as the need to address the phenomenon of massive and mixed refugee flows, international burden sharing and responsibility in the context of abject poverty and deprivation around the globe, enhancement of the capacities of developing countries and the link between humanitarian assistance and long-term development as key inputs for preventive strategies for refugee protection. India also reiterated its consistent

position that durable solutions can only be based on the consent of concerned member states, and therefore, where bilateral processes are underway, these should be given their full chance to succeed.

Specialised Bodies

Operational activities of the UN development system

India continued to play an important role in the work of the UN funds and programmes. India resumed its membership of the executive boards of the UN Development Programme [UNDP]/UN Fund for Population Activities [UNFPA] in 2003. India was also a member of the executive board of the UN International Children's Fund [UNICEF]. In the deliberations of these bodies, India's efforts were to underscore the primacy of country-driven programming, in accordance with national development plans and priorities.

UNESCO

The Government of India in association with UNESCO organized an International Ministerial Conference on "Dialogue among Civilisations – Quest for New Perspectives" in New Delhi from 9-10 July 2003. The Prime Minister of India inaugurated the Conference on 9 July 2003. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister for Human Resource Development and Director General of UNESCO Dr. Koichiro Matsuura addressed the inaugural session. The Conference was attended by around 80 national delegations, 25 special invitees drawn from eminent scientists, social scientists including Nobel laureates and leaders from the world of culture and education. The Conference sought to emphasize the importance of global dialogue and the impact it can have on the promotion of tolerance, respect for pluralism and diversity as components of development and human advancement. The Conference ended with the adoption of the "New Delhi Declaration" by consensus.

The Declaration recognizes that tolerance is a fundamental value that is common to all civilizations and this includes respect for others. It underlines the importance of

crucial role that education can play in promoting understanding between different civilizations. Education, the Declaration further states is necessary to develop communities and societies rooted in principles of democracy, justice and respect for human rights. The New Delhi Declaration urges governments to take full and effective measures to ensure that educational institutions are protected from teachings that promote extremism, intolerance and violence. A very significant aspect of the Declaration is the reaffirmation that all acts of terrorism represent attack against humanity, as the killing of innocent civilians in order to spread terror is despicable to the values of all civilizations. The Delhi Declaration also gives importance to science as a powerful source of social and economic transformation and the role of information and communication technologies in enhancing inter-cultural communication leading to greater understanding between civilizations. The Executive Board of UNESCO later endorsed the New Delhi Declaration adopted at this Conference.

UNEP

UNEP is an important UN programme dealing with environmental issues. The 22nd session of the Governing Council (GC)/Global Ministerial Environmental Forum (GMEF) was held in Nairobi from 3-7 February 2003. This was an important meeting, as it was the first meeting of the UNEP GC/GMEF after the adoption of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) at the World Summit for Sustainable Development. Besides the implementation of JPOI, important issues such as the state of the environment, sustainable production and consumption, marine environment, climate change and issues relating to environmental governance etc. were also discussed at the meeting.

United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC)

India continued its engagement with the activities of the UNODC in the areas of drug control and crime prevention. India participated in the 46th session of the

Commission on Narcotics Drugs (CND) held in Vienna from 8-16 April as well as the High Level Ministerial Segment held from 16-17 April 2003.

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)

The 12th session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was held in Vienna from 13 – 22 May 2003 with India being endorsed for the post of the Vice Chairperson of the Bureau and the Indian delegation actively participated in it.

Conferences and Seminars

Word Summit on Information Society (WSIS)

India participated actively in the intergovernmental consultations (Paris, 15-18 July 2003) and Preparatory Committee Meeting-III (Geneva, 15-26 September and 10-14 November 2003) held in the run up to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva from 10-12 December 2003. Our delegations to these meetings were headed by Secretary (Telecom), Government of India and included representatives from the Department of Telecommunications and Department of Information Technology respectively. The Minister for Communications & Information Technology Shri Arun Shourie headed the delegation for the 10-12 December Summit meeting. India played a significant role in the multilateral endeavour to make Information and Communication Technologies more accessible to the developing world.

Conference on Land-Locked Developing Countries

The Conference on Land-Locked Developing Countries was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from 25-29 August 2003. The Conference adopted the Almaty Declaration and Programme of Action on Transit Transport Co-operation among land-locked countries, transit developing countries, donor countries and international institutions. The Declaration and Programme of Action were endorsed by the General Assembly in its 58th session. India

played a leading role in the negotiations in Almaty on the Programme of Action and the Declaration and defended the interests of the transit developing countries.

Elections

Former Foreign Secretary Smt Chokila Iyer was elected to the Committee on Economic and Social Cultural Rights for a four-year term beginning January 2003.

India was re-elected to the CHR at the elections in the ECOSOC held on 29 April 2003, with the highest number of votes, securing 47 out of 53. India was also re-elected to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination at elections held in New York on 14 January 2004. Shri R.V. Pillai of India polled 146 votes, the highest among the nine victorious candidates out of 16.

During the Congress of the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) held in May 2003 in Geneva, Dr. S.K. Srivastava, Additional Director General of India Meteorological Department (IMD), was elected to the Executive Council with a record number of 127 votes in India's favour out of total of 146 votes polled.

Shri Vijayendra N. Kaul, Comptroller & Auditor General of India was elected as the External Auditor of the World Health Organisation (WHO) for the term 2004 – 2007, elections to which were held during the Executive Assembly of the WHO in May 2003 in Geneva. In addition, India was elected to the CND, CCPCJ, UN-HABITAT and the Executive Board of the WFP, having earlier been endorsed by the Asian Group.

Shri P.C. Sharma was elected to the post of Vice-President, INTERPOL (Asia) at the elections held in the 72nd General Assembly of INTERPOL in Benidorm, Spain in September-October 2003 by a comfortable margin winning 84 of the 118 votes cast at the election. India was also elected unopposed to the United Nations Environment Programme, the UN Committee on Conferences and the Commission on Human Settlements.

Group of 77

The Annual meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 was held on 25 September 2003 in New York. This was preceded by a meeting of senior officials on 24 September 2003. Foreign Ministers of Mauritius, Nepal, Indonesia, Costa Rica, Iran, Benin, Malawi, Thailand and China attended the meeting. In his statement, the External Affairs Minister outlined the difficulties faced by the developing countries in the current global economic situation and stressed the importance of achieving greater equity in international economic relations and ensuring a greater voice for developing countries in the decision-making structures in international trade, monetary and financial institutions. While expressing disappointment that the Fifth Ministerial Meeting at Cancun failed to produce an agreement that would have addressed the interests and concerns of developing countries, he emphasized the need for developing countries to retain their unity of purpose and solidarity as demonstrated at Cancun. He also emphasized the need to strengthen UNCTAD and enhance its capacity to assist developing countries and enable it to play an important role in integrating the development dimension into the international legal framework and rules on trade. The Ministerial meeting elected Qatar as the Chairman of the Group of 77 for the year 2004 and admitted Timor L'este as the 135th member of the G-77. The meeting adopted a Ministerial Declaration.

The meeting of the Heads of State/Government of the member countries of the Group of 77 (G-77), who met in Cuba in April 2000 on the occasion of the first-ever South-South Summit, decided to convene a conference on South-South Cooperation in the year 2003. As the Chair of G-77, Morocco hosted this meeting entitled 'the High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation' in Marrakesh from 16-19 December 2003. India was represented by a delegation led by Shri Rajiv Sikri, Special Secretary (ER) in the Ministry of External Affairs.

The meeting in Marrakesh was of particular

significance to India, given the importance India attaches to South-South cooperation and the proactive role that it plays in this area. The meeting took stock of the progress on the Havana Programme of Action which issued from the Havana Summit and which laid down the practical roadmap for South-South cooperation. India has been proactive both bilaterally and through regional groupings and its record of implementation is notable. Besides this, India is also at this moment, on the threshold of a major policy initiative in terms of its programme of development aid to other countries in the South.

Visit of Deputy Secretary-General to India

Ms. Louise Frechette, the first person to hold the office of Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations since the post was established in 1997, paid an official visit to India from 25-30 January 2004. On behalf of the UN, Ms. Frechette delivered the keynote address at the 6th Asian Security Conference on the theme 'International Security, Multilateralism and the United Nations' organized by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA). She also had meetings with leaders, senior officials and the heads of the UN agencies in India.

Disarmament

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

Bilateral dialogues with key countries commenced after May 1998 continued to be pursued this year. Harmonisation of India's national imperatives and security obligations

with international concerns on non-proliferation and disarmament also progressed steadily. On the regional level, India's participation in the confidence and security building process and structure under the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) acquired greater momentum. India also participated in the meetings of Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) during the year.

Regular contact was maintained with key international and non-governmental organisation active in the field of disarmament with a view to disseminating the Indian perspectives on disarmament issues. Enquiries from Members of Parliament on all relevant developments were also responded to and due information brought to the attention of the Parliament.

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

India took part in the work of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) through participation in the various meetings organised under the aegis of the ARF, including the first Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crimes (ISM on CT-TC) held in Sabah, Malaysia on 30-31 March 2003, the ARF Senior Officials' Meeting held in Phnom Penh in April 2003 which took stock of the developments and prepared for the ARF Ministerial Meeting in June; Workshop on 'Consequence Management' organized by Australia and Singapore from 3-5 May 2003 in Darwin, Australia and the Inter-sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures (ISG on CBMs) held in Beijing from 20-22 November 2003.

The 10th ARF Ministerial meeting was held in Phnom Penh on 17-18 June 2003. The External Affairs Minister led the Indian delegation. The issue of terrorism and terrorist threat to the region as a whole continued to dominate the ARF agenda. The Ministers deliberated on ways and means to increase practical cooperation among member states in this respect and adopted a 'Statement on Cooperative Counter-Terrorist Actions on Border Security' as well as a Statement on

‘Cooperation Against Piracy and Other Threats to Maritime Security’. The External Affairs Minister in his intervention emphasized the need for concerted fight against global terrorism without any double standards or equivocation and underlined the potential risks in its linkages with WMD proliferation.

India hosted the 7th Annual Meeting of the ARF Heads of National Defence Colleges/ Institutions in New Delhi from 15-17 October 2003. India’s offer to host this meeting had been endorsed by the ARF Ministers at 10th ARF meeting. More than 40 participants from 18 ARF member states attended the meeting, and were highly appreciative of the presentations made and the organisation as well as the content of the Annual Meeting.

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

India continued to play an active role on disarmament issues in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. At the 58th Session of the First Committee, in recognition of the widely shared concern of the international community about the heightened dangers posed by the risk of terrorists getting access to weapons of mass destruction, India’s resolution on “Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction”, was adopted once again unanimously. India had first tabled this resolution at the 57th Session of the UNGA.

India reiterated commitment to its principled stand on global nuclear disarmament based on the firm conviction that progressively lower levels of armaments globally and imaginative control over them will guarantee undiminished security for all. India’s Resolution on “Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons” which was first introduced in 1982, calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances, as a first step towards reducing the salience of nuclear weapons.

India’s Resolution on “Reducing Nuclear Danger”, first introduced in 1998, calls for the review of nuclear doctrines and immediate and urgent steps to reduce the risk of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons.

India’s resolution ‘Role of Science and Technology in the Context of International Security and Disarmament’, highlighted the qualitative aspects of the arms race, and the need for a genuinely multilateral and non-discriminatory response. India has maintained that technology denial to responsible States does not serve the objectives of non-proliferation but only signals a punitive intent. All these resolutions were adopted by a good majority as in previous years.

Conference on Disarmament (CD)

The Conference on Disarmament, the ‘sole multilateral disarmament treaty negotiating body’, held three sessions during 2003 at Geneva on 20 January - 28 March, 12 May- 27 June and 28 July-10 September. India held the rotational Presidency of the CD during the first four weeks of the First Session this year. India assumed the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament from 1 January to 14 February 2003 on the basis of rotation among the 66 members of the CD. The last time India had held the Presidency of CD was in 1994. On this occasion, the then Foreign Secretary Shri Kanwal Sibal addressed the plenary meeting of the CD on 23 January 2003. In his statement, he focussed on the dimension of international terrorism as a threat to global security and highlighted the linkages between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. He reiterated India’s commitment to negotiations on nuclear disarmament, including Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty and for prevention of an arms race in outer space. India also underlined its support to the cross-group initiative of the five ambassadors, made in 2002 for removing the existing deadlock on the programme of work.

India also actively participated in the deliberations on various proposals to end the impasse in the CD over adoption of a Programme of Work. (The CD has been unable to adopt a Programme of Work since 1999 due to the lack of consensus on the mandates for various Ad-hoc Groups to be set up on various agenda items.)

United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC)

The Substantive Session of the UNDC in 2003 was held from 31 March- 17 April 2003 in New York. The UNDC had commenced consideration in 2000, as part of a three year cycle, of two subjects: (a) ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament and (b) practical confidence building measures in the field of conventional arms. The 2003 Session was devoted to consideration of these two subjects. India participated actively in the deliberations on both the subjects. The session however, failed to reach consensus on substantive recommendations on either of the two subjects and adopted a procedural report containing annexes of documents on nuclear disarmament and confidence building measures.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The 47th Session of General Conference of the IAEA was held from 16-20 September 2003. The Indian delegation was led by Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission. As in the past few years, the most important issues were the resolutions on strengthening of safeguards and that relating to transport safety. Under the Chairmanship of the Indian Ambassador, the resolution on transport safety obtained consensus in record time. India also endeavored to maintain a balanced approach in the General Conference resolution on ‘safeguards’ for all the Member States of the Agency without discrimination.

An international conference on Innovative Technologies for Nuclear Fuel Cycles and Nuclear Power was held by IAEA in end-June 2003 in which a high-level delegation from India, including Dr. R. Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Advisor and several other

scientists participated. India contributed to IAEA's efforts to locate and secure orphaned radioactive sources and towards concluding an International Code of Conduct on Radioactive Sources.

Chemical Weapons Convention

India continued to play an active role at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) at The Hague during the year. India is an original State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). India played a key role at the successful First Review Conference of the States Parties to the CWC at The Hague (28 April – 9 May 2003) and made substantial contributions towards the finalization of both the Political Declaration and the Final Report of the Review of the Operation of the CWC by the Review Conference.

India effectively engaged in the deliberations and decision-making during the Eighth Conference of States Parties from 20-24 October 2003 and highlighted all issues of concern to us and to other developing countries.

India continued to fulfil all its commitments under the Convention. Having declared possession of chemical weapons to the OPCW in 1997, India's destruction efforts, under OPCW inspection, have been proceeding according to the destruction timelines established in the Convention, with the OPCW having duly taken note of the destruction plans. During the year, India received inspections from the Technical Secretariat of OPCW at different facilities and these have been conducted in a smooth manner.

Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

The Resumed Session of the Fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological (Bacteriological) and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) in November 2002 had decided to hold three Annual Meetings of the States Parties of one week duration each in 2003, 2004 and 2005, leading up to the Sixth Review Conference to be held not later than the end of 2006. It had also decided that each Annual Meeting was to be prepared by a two week Meeting

of Experts. The First Annual Meeting of States Parties to the BWC was held at Geneva on 10-14 November 2003 to discuss and promote common understanding and effective action on (i) the adoption of necessary national measures to implement the prohibitions set forth in the Convention, including the enactment of penal legislation; and (ii) national mechanisms to establish and maintain the security and oversight of pathogenic micro organisms and toxins.

It was prepared by a Meeting of Experts in Geneva from 18-29 August 2003. India participated in the deliberations at both the Meeting of Experts and the Meeting of the States Parties. India reiterated its firm commitment to implement the provisions of the BWC and to combat bio-terrorism and informed the participants about the national measures adopted by it to implement the prohibitions set forth in the Convention, including the enactment of penal legislation and legislative and other mechanisms to establish and maintain the security and oversight of pathogenic micro organisms and toxins.

Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

India is a High Contracting Party to the Convention on Prohibitions Or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and has ratified all its protocols including the Amended Protocol II on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of Mines, booby traps and other devises. India chaired the Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), which was held in Geneva from 27-28 November 2003. The meeting adopted by consensus a new Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), which would be annexed to the Convention on CCW as Protocol V. As Chairman, India played a crucial role in developing consensus on a draft Protocol and India's role was appreciated by the States Parties.

The Annual Meeting of the States Parties to the Amended Protocol II to the

Convention on CCW on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby traps and other devises was also held at Geneva on 26 November 2003. India informed the Meeting about the steps taken by it to implement the provisions of Amended Protocol II and its commitment to the vision of a world free of landmines. India also contributed to the efforts to review the continuing operation and further development of the UN Register of Conventional Arms. The scope of the Register was expanded to include Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS).

Small Arms and Light Weapons

India is acutely aware of the problem of proliferation of and illicit trafficking in small arms and remains committed to participating actively in international search for effective solutions, including the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) adopted at the UN Conference on Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July 2001.

The first Biennial Meeting of the States to consider the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects at the National, Regional and Global levels was held in New York from 7-11 July, 2003. The primary focus of this meeting was on the implementation of the PoA by States at the national level. The meeting also provided an opportunity to take stock of the progress achieved so far. India submitted a Report on implementation of the UN Programme of Action to the Biennial Conference and appraised it of the comprehensive system of regulatory policies and practices established in India relating to small arms and light weapons. India reiterated its commitment to remain constructively engaged in the international efforts to address the problem of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

India's Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament chaired the Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing and Marking of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, established by the UN Secretary

General pursuant to the Resolution 56/24 V of the UN General Assembly. The Group of Governmental Experts, in their Report submitted to the UN Secretary General for presentation to 58th Session of the UN General Assembly, recommended by consensus that it was both desirable and feasible to develop an international instrument to enable States to identify and address in a timely and reliable manner illicit small arms and light weapons. Contribution of India in chairing the Group was appreciated by the UN Secretary General. The 58th session of the General Assembly has endorsed the recommendation of the Group and the work on this issue is likely to commence in the next year.

Outer Space Affairs

The 46th Session of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN COPUOS) was held in Vienna from 11-20 June 2003. This session apart from a general exchange of views on space matters, the Committee deliberated on implementation of recommendations of UNISPACE-III, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes, issues of space debris and the international system for search and rescue. The Committee saw a live demonstration of satellite-based telemedicine. The Committee also reviewed and endorsed the reports of the 40th session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the 42nd Session of the Legal Sub-Committee, which had held their meetings earlier. India actively participated in the deliberations of the Committee projecting and promoting its objectives; highlighting the achievement of its Space Programme and innovative Space Applications like Telemedicine and Disaster Management.

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia

Working level meetings of the CICA member states were organised by Kazakhstan in Almaty from 1-7 July 2003 and 26 November – 2 December 2003. Indian delegations participated actively in

these meetings, where discussions on the future Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures, CICA Rules of Procedure and Statute of the CICA Secretariat took place. Discussions on these documents would continue and they are likely to be finalised by the time of the meeting of Foreign Ministers of CICA scheduled for late 2004.

India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum

At the invitation of the External Affairs Minister, Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Mr. Celso Amorim, and South Africa Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma participated in the First meeting of the Trilateral Commission of the IBSA Dialogue Forum held in New Delhi from 4-5 March 2004. The IBSA Dialogue Forum was established in June 2003, when the three Foreign Ministers met in Brasilia and adopted the Brasilia Declaration. The Brasilia Declaration covers the entire range of issues of concern in the bilateral and multilateral context and, *inter alia*, provides for regular political consultations on international agenda items, exchange of information on areas of mutual cooperation so as to coordinate positions on issues of common interest as well as establishment of a Trilateral Commission. This First meeting of the Trilateral Commission marked a watershed in the evolution of IBSA Dialogue Forum.

The three Foreign Ministers adopted the New Delhi Agenda for Cooperation and Plan of Action. The Agenda for Cooperation provides for cooperation and coordination among the three countries in various multilateral forums dealing with trade, economic, political, social, environmental and security issues with a view to highlight the concerns of the developing countries. The Ministers also reaffirmed the commitment to work together in various forums to ensure that globalisation benefits developing countries and becomes a positive force for sustained economic growth.

The meeting emphasised that trilateral cooperation among the three countries could serve as an important tool for achieving the promotion of social and economic development. With this view, discussions for promoting trilateral cooperation in various sectors were also held. The sectors covered include Health, S&T, IT, Civil Aviation and Shipping Links, Tourism, Trade and Investment, Infrastructure, Defence, Education and Energy. The Plan of Action adopted by Ministers details the specific action points agreed upon for promoting trilateral cooperation in these sectors in a timely and focussed manner.

The three countries had earlier agreed to set up an IBSA Funding Facility under UNDP auspices for undertaking projects in other developing countries for alleviation of poverty and hunger. These projects would be based on the best practices of India, Brazil and South Africa. At the Trilateral Commission meeting, the Guidelines for Operationalising this Facility were also approved by the Foreign Ministers. External Affairs Minister also announced the decision of the Government to make a financial contribution of US\$100,000 for the Facility.

The next meeting of the Trilateral Commission will be held in South Africa in the first quarter of 2005.

International Law and Developments

Elections

India was elected to the Governing Council of the UNIDROIT, an inter-governmental organization in the field of private international law. Indian candidate Mr. Biswanath B. Sen, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India was re-elected to the Governing Council, securing 45 of 55 valid votes as the Indian representative in the elections held in Rome on 28 November 2003.

Sixth (Legal) Committee of the UN General Assembly

During the 55th General Assembly Session, the Sixth Committee considered several agenda items including the Establishment of



External Affairs Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha with Celso Amorim, Minister of External Relations, Brazil and Nkosazana-Dlamini Zuma, Foreign Minister, South Africa at the India-Brazil-South Africa Trilateral Meeting in Brasilia, June 6, 2003

the International Criminal Court, Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and the strengthening the role of the Organisation; Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism; Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property and United Nations Programme of Assistance in Teaching.

The Rome Statute for the establishment of an International Criminal Court entered into force on 1 July 2002 and the Court started its work on 1 July 2002, at the Hague. The election for judges of the Court was held at the UN Headquarters, New York, from 3-7 February 2003. Eighteen Judges were elected. In addition the Prosecutor of the Court was also elected. A Working Group is presently considering the elements of the crime of aggression.

The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organizations considered several proposals relating to: maintenance of international peace and security; peaceful settlement of disputes between states; the Trusteeship Council; coordination with other committees etc. concerning the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular with regard to assistance to third States adversely affected by sanctions. India's stand over the years has been that the Security Council should hold the primary responsibility towards the affected third States, as a part of the sanctions imposing decisions. The Council should establish a 'Trust Fund' for that purpose based on the scale applicable to the peacekeeping operations as well as the voluntary contributions.

The Ad Hoc Committee and the Working Group of the Sixth Committee on Terrorism continued their consideration of the Draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism proposed by India. Discussions were mainly focused on the outstanding issues especially on the exclusion clause (Article 18) and on the definition of offences (Article 2). The Committee decided to continue its efforts to resolve the outstanding issues through the Ad hoc Committee during its meeting from 26 June

- 2 July 2004. A decision was also taken by the Sixth Committee to continue the work of the enlargement of the Scope of the Convention on Safety of the United Nations and Associated Personnel, including a Protocol.

Having successfully adopted the draft provisions on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property, the Sixth Committee decided to reconvene an Ad Hoc Committee to formulate a preamble and final clauses with a view to completing a Convention on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property.

The Sixth Committee decided, after a vote, that the item entitled "International Convention Against the Reproductive Cloning of human Beings" should be included in the provisional agenda of the 60th session of the General Assembly. The decision was mainly aimed at avoiding a decision on the Costa Rican proposal cosponsored by more than 85 countries to evolve a mandate for a convention to ban "all forms of cloning".

International Humanitarian Law

This Division participated in the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which adopted an agenda for action for protecting human dignity in the areas relating to the fate of missing in situations of armed conflict and armed violence, strengthening the protection of civilians from indiscriminate use and effects of weapons, minimizing the impact of disaster through the implementation of disaster risk reducing measures and reducing the risk of impact of diseases like HIV/AIDS.

Oceans and Law of the Sea

The work under this item in the UN General Assembly aims to ensure sustainable development of oceans, sustainable fisheries, conservation and management of oceans, ensuring maritime safety and protection of marine ecosystems.

At the 55th Session, the UN General Assembly considered two draft resolutions, which made recommendations that would impact beneficially on both the safety of

navigation and the protection of marine environment. Adopting the resolution relating to sustainable fisheries, by consensus, the world body called on all States to become parties to the Convention, while reaffirming the importance attached to the long-term conservation, management and sustainable use of the marine living resources of the world oceans and seas. India acceded to this Convention on 19th August 2003. It has been decided to establish an Assistance Fund under Part VII of the 1995 Fish Stocks Agreement to assist developing countries in the implementation of the Agreement. The flag and port States have been urged to take all measures consistent with international law to prevent the operation of sub-standard vessels and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities.

In the draft resolution on "Oceans and the Law of the Sea", main focus is put on the resource management and capacity building matters, which remained a significant impediment to the full implementation of the Convention in many areas.

India's statement on this agenda item has highlighted for assistance to developing states in acquiring knowledge and skills for the preparation of claim submissions on the outer limits of continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles. India has expertise on the assessment and mapping of the continental shelf, and was willing to extend cooperation in training developing countries for that purpose. Further, we have expressed concern with regard to the increase in incidence of crimes at sea including acts of terrorism against shipping, while recognizing the importance of regional cooperation to combat piracy.

Piracy

This Division participated in the development of a Regional Cooperation Agreement on the Prevention and Suppression of Piracy and Armed Robbery in Asia. The draft regional agreement has been finalized. The important function of the Agreement is to encourage cooperation amongst the Contracting Parties in their efforts to prevent and suppress piracy and armed robbery. Cooperation includes providing mutual legal assistance and



Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and President Putin of Russia signing joint declaration on November 12, 2003.



Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee in meeting with President Fidel Castro of Cuba

extradition in accordance with the law of the requested State. An important component of the Agreement is the capacity building of the Contracting Parties in their fight against piracy and armed robbery and in this connection, a regional information centre is proposed to be established.

UNCITRAL

The Legal & Treaties Division participated in Working Group Meetings relating to Arbitration, Electronic Commerce, Transportation, Insolvency Law and Security Interests. During its 36th Annual Session in July this year, the Commission adopted the Model Legislative Provisions on Privately Financed Infrastructure Projects. The new model provisions offer concrete legislative guidance on essential elements of a favourable framework for private investments in public infrastructure.

International Hydrographic Organisation

This Division involved in the restructuring of International Hydrographic Organization (IHO). Towards this end, this Division participated in the Strategic Planning and Working Group (SPWG) and also in the Legal Experts Meeting to amend the Convention on International Hydrographic Organization, 1956.

Asian African Legal Consultative Organisation (AALCO)

The Annual Conference of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) for the year 2003 was held at Korea from 16-12 June 2003. It re-elected Ambassador, Dr. Wafik Z. Kamil of Egypt as the Secretary General for a consecutive second term of three years. During the Conference, items considered include several subjects of international law, viz., Report on the work of the International Law Commission at its 53rd Session; Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property; Establishment of International Criminal Court and Recent Developments; Corruption and a special meeting on the Relevance of International Humanitarian Law in Today's Armed Conflict.

Participation of Legal and Treaties Division in the Development of International Law

This Division also participated in the meeting of the Legal Committee of the IMO held in April. An important agenda item for consideration of the legal committee is the revision of the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts (SUA) and its protocol, which are part of the international legal framework for fighting terrorism. The Division examined the relevant provisions of laws of various countries in order to assess whether they are eligible to be included in the list of countries for grant of dual citizenship, matters pertaining to refugees, human rights and international humanitarian law.

This Division participated in bilateral negotiations for concluding extradition treaties/agreements with number of countries. Extradition treaties with Tajikistan, Mauritius, South Africa, and Bulgaria were signed. A treaty with the Republic of Korea has been finalized. Negotiations were held with Nepal to replace the existing Treaty of 1953, however, negotiations are continuing on certain outstanding issues. The Division examined extradition requests and other requests for international cooperation received from foreign jurisdictions as well as from within India and rendered legal advice therein.

Similarly, Agreements on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters have been finalized South Africa, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Belarus. However, certain issues remained outstanding with Nepal. Moreover, this Division is involved in various stages of negotiations both on extradition and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters with Brazil, Portugal, Israel and Islamic Republic of Iran. This Division took part in the 42nd session of the Legal Sub-Committee of the COPOUS which was held in Vienna, along with a representative of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and provided necessary inputs on the international legal aspects concerning space activities.

The Legal and Treaties Division has been providing inputs on various proposals

submitted for the ongoing negotiations within the World Trade Organization, particularly on the Dispute Settlement Understanding from the international legal angle. During this year negotiations were held with Seychelles, Tunisia, Nepal, Mozambique, Brunei and Slovenia. While with Mozambique the draft text of the agreement is finalized, with Seychelles, Tunisia, Nepal, Brunei and Slovenia negotiations were at different stages. The Legal and Treaties Division has been part of these negotiations.

This Division also participated in the negotiations on the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation with the Association of South East Asian Nations; the Framework Agreement for Establishing Free Trade Area with the Kingdom of Thailand; and the Framework Agreement with the South Africa Customs Union (SACU). This Division participated in the comprehensive exercise proposed by the CPV Division regarding issues pertaining to 'minors passport' in the light of the changing legal trend towards the 'single parent concept'. This Division also examined the proposal for amendment to the various provisions of the Passport Act as suggested by the Parliamentary Standing Committee.

Various other international legal issues and cases, in particular before the Indian courts, relating to the application of Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961; Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963; and Passport related matters under the provisions of the Passports Act, 1967. Section 86 of the Indian Civil Procedure Code requiring the consent of the Central Government before suing the foreign government in Indian Courts was examined. The L&T Division also dealt with various Parliament Questions in the subject of international law.

India has signed/ratified many multilateral/bilateral treaties/agreements entered into by India with foreign countries during the year. The list is placed at Appendix IX list of Instruments of Full Powers issued during the year 2003 is at Appendix X and a list of Instruments of Ratification is at **Appendix XI.**



10. Foreign Economic Relations

During the year under review, India continued its active role in championing the legitimate interests of developing countries in various international organizations and multilateral, regional and sub-regional groupings. India also intensified its interaction with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN); Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand Economic Cooperation, which now also includes Bhutan and Nepal as full members (BIMST-EC); Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) initiative; Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC); and Community of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

ASEAN

Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, led the Indian delegation to the 2nd India-ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia on 8 October 2003. India's relations with ASEAN, a direct outcome of our 'Look East Policy', have gained momentum and multifaceted cooperation has deepened.

India-ASEAN trade for the year 2002-03 crossed the US\$10 billion mark, an increase of over 360% on 1992-93 trade figures.

Prime Minister, in his address to the Second India-ASEAN Business Summit in New Delhi, has set the target for India-ASEAN trade to reach US\$15 billion by 2005 and US\$30 billion by 2007.

At the Bali Summit, India and ASEAN concluded the following three documents:

- The Framework Agreement for Comprehensive Economic Cooperation signed by the leaders of the ASEAN and India,
- The accession document to the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, signed by the Minister of External Affairs, and
- Adoption of the Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism.

The Framework Agreement envisages the establishment of an India-ASEAN Regional Trade and Investment Area, which includes a Free Trade Area in goods, services and investment. Negotiations on the Free Trade Area in goods have commenced and are to be completed by June 2005. The negotiated FTA would commence from January 2006. Tariff reduction/elimination will be completed by December 2011 between Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand on the ASEAN side and India. Tariff reduction/elimination between the Philippines and India will be completed by December 2016. Tariff reduction/elimination between Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam (CLMV countries) and India would be completed by the CLMV countries by December 2016 and by India by December 2011.

For trade in services and investments, the negotiations on the respective agreements shall commence in 2005 and be concluded by 2007. The Framework Agreement includes an Early Harvest Programme (EHP) on trade in goods under which progressive tariff reduction on 105 agreed items shall commence from November 2004. Tariff elimination/reduction shall be completed by Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and India by October 2007, and by Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam by October 2010.

In addition, India has also given unilateral tariff-concessions to Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam on 111 items. An India-ASEAN Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) has been established to carry out the FTA negotiations, which held its first meeting in Jakarta on 6-7 March 2004.

The Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism envisages cooperation in

- exchange of information,
- legal and enforcement matters,
- institutional capacity augmentation, and
- training.

India's accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in Southeast Asia signifies India's commitment to work with the ASEAN countries in maintaining regional peace and stability.

Prime Minister also floated an "Idea of the Future" for an 'Asian Economic Community' by noting that the 14 countries present in Bali; 10 ASEAN countries plus China, India, Japan and Republic of Korea could combine to promote overall competitiveness and create a new engine of growth in the entire region. He also laid emphasis on better connectivity to benefit from geographical proximity and offered daily flights to the designated ASEAN Airlines to Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai and unlimited flights to 18 other tourist destinations in India. Prime Minister also floated the idea of an India-ASEAN Motor Car Rally "to draw dramatic attention to our geographical contiguity". The rally will be held in November-December 2004. For easier movement of people, India has proposed procedural facilitation and offered reciprocal visa free travel for diplomatic and official passport holders and fast track issue of visas to genuine businesspersons.

Other areas of cooperation include science & technology, human resource development, health and pharmaceuticals, space sciences, information and communication technology, transport and infrastructure, tourism and culture, and small and medium enterprises etc. Another joint project being taken up is the establishment of an India-ASEAN Science and Technology Digital Library. India will also hold a training programme in remote sensing applications for ASEAN countries in India in May 2004 as part of cooperation in the space sciences.

The Track-II consultation process for India-ASEAN Vision 2020 document has been completed and the resultant document has been circulated to the ASEAN member countries. India has also submitted a draft Track-I Vision document at the 6th India-ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), held in Vientiane, Lao PDR, from 25-26 March 2004. The approved Track-I Document will be presented at the 3rd India-

ASEAN Summit in Vientiane for consideration and adoption by leaders.

As part of its contribution to the IAI (Initiative for ASEAN Integration) endeavour of ASEAN, India will set up an Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI) in each CLMV country. For this, an expert team visited the CLMV countries in February 2004. The final project proposals and budget projections will be prepared on the basis of the report of the team. The host governments would be expected to provide the infrastructure, building, electricity and water, as their contribution to the EDI. India also conducted training programmes in English language in Myanmar, Lao PDR and Vietnam. Forty-eight railways officials of the CLMV countries were trained in India during the year under review. Twenty-two professors from ASEAN Universities Network also visited India in December 2003.

India organised the 2nd India-ASEAN Business Summit on 4-6 September 2003 in New Delhi and Mumbai. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee inaugurated the Business Summit. Ministers, the Secretary General of the ASEAN and official delegations from various ASEAN countries participated in the Business Summit. An India-ASEAN web portal was also launched during the Business Summit.

BIMST-EC

BIMST-EC, a sub regional economic cooperation grouping of countries on the rim of Bay of Bengal, is another important component of India's 'Look East Policy'. The 6th BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting, which took place in Phuket, Thailand on 8 February 2004, was preceded by the Senior Officials Meeting on 6 February 2004 and Trade and Economic Ministers' Meeting on 7 February 2004. Nepal and Bhutan were formally admitted to BIMST-EC and participated in all the meetings as full members. BIMST-EC now comprises Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The highlight was the signing of the Framework Agreement of the BIMST-EC FTA by all member countries except Bangladesh, which

would join the Agreement in near future. External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha led the Indian delegation to the Ministerial Meeting. BIMST-EC provides a bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia. An Under-18 BIMST-EC Football Tournament was also organized concurrently with the Ministerial Meeting to promote people-to-people participation.

The meeting reviewed cooperation in the six priority sectors identified for cooperation in BIMST-EC, namely:

- Trade and investment;
- Technology;
- Energy;
- Transportation and communications;
- Tourism
- Fisheries.

It was recommended that BIMST-EC works towards greater air transport liberalization, short-sea shipping, and trilateral highway linkages among India, Myanmar and Thailand, and among Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand, including linkages with other BIMST-EC countries.

The 1st BIMST-EC Summit will now be held in Bangkok on 30-31 July 2004. The immediate priority of the grouping is consolidation of its activities and making it attractive for economic cooperation.

India's offer to undertake a feasibility study on Dawei Deep Sea Port and the road linkage between the Port and Kanchanaburi in Thailand was noted. The ministers agreed that special attention should be paid to human resource development, development of hydrocarbon and hydropower potential, trans-BIMST-EC natural gas pipeline, management and sustainable utilization of fisheries resources in the Bay of Bengal, facilitation of business travel and people-to-people contacts. The ministers also acknowledged the central role of the private sector in BIMST-EC. In human resource development, India's offer of 150 training scholarships and Thailand's offer of 150 training scholarships was welcomed. In tourism, the "Visit BIMST-EC 2004" project was commended and the ministers encouraged more activities, such as joint

marketing for tourism and combining of destinations, etc.; it was also decided to extend the project to 2005. It was agreed to set up a Technical Support Facility for BIMST-EC in Bangkok, to serve as a mini-secretariat for BIMST-EC for two years, after which the issue of setting up a permanent secretariat would be revisited.

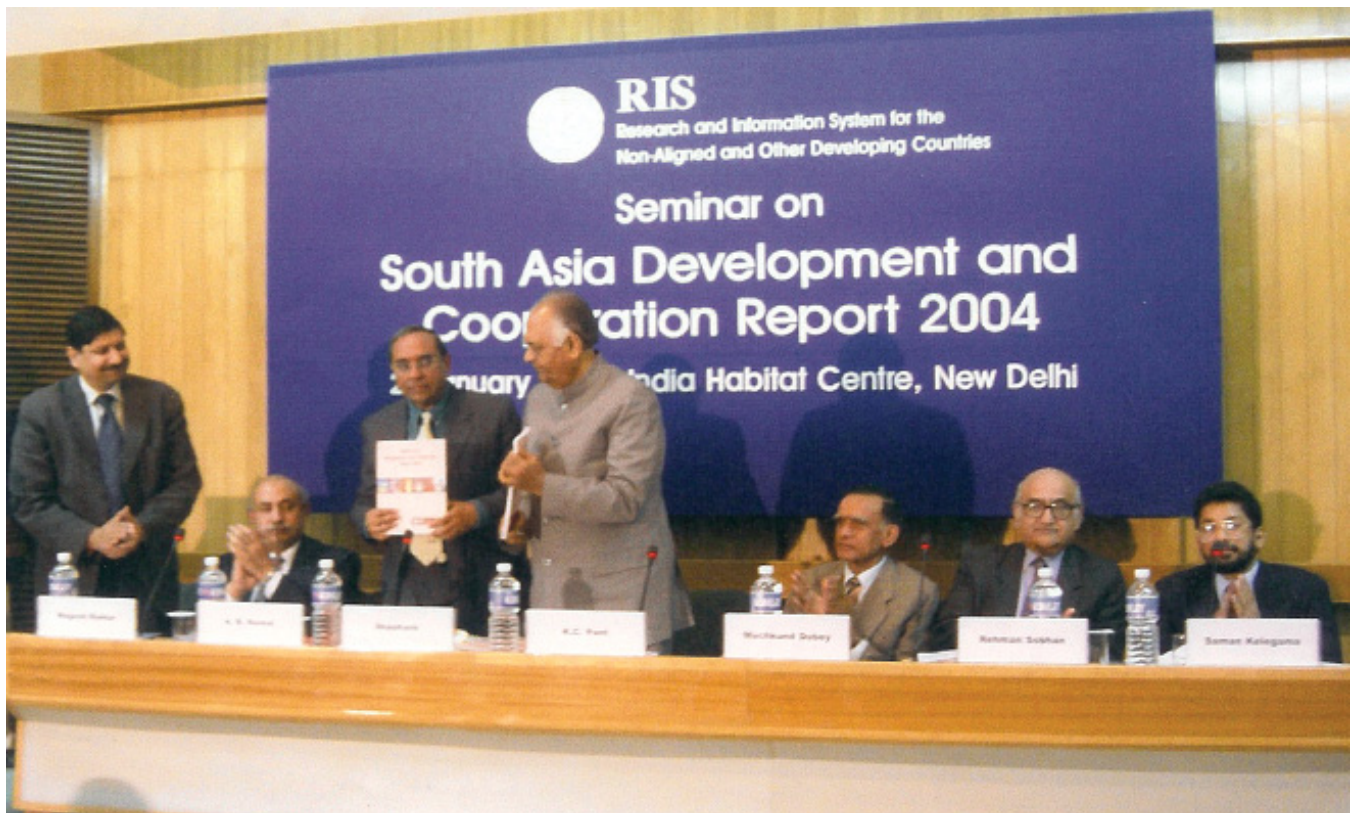
COMESA

India and COMESA signed an MoU on economic cooperation on 10 February 2003 in New Delhi. The MoU was signed by External Affairs Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha and the Mauritian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation, Anil Kumarsingh Gayan for COMESA. The MoU focuses on the potential for bilateral cooperation between India and the COMESA States through increased trade and investment flows. It identifies areas for increased technical and economical cooperation such as pharmaceuticals, information technology, agriculture, biotechnology, and human resource development, provision of low cost housing, tourism, industry, non-conventional energy, research and regional infrastructure development. The two sides have agreed to establish "Closer Economic Association." They have agreed to take trade harmonization measures such as exchange of information on policies and procedures for investments, dialogue on standards, quality and customs procedures, exchange of information on public health issues and trade promotion measures such as facilitating the exchange of business delegations, participation in trade fairs and exhibitions and increased contacts between the Chambers of Commerce. The following two cooperation projects are under active consideration for implementation:

- imparting training to COMESA personnel on harmonisation of drugs and pharmaceutical standards and registration procedures; and
- deputing experts to determine the feasibility of the Great Lakes Irrigation Project.



External Affairs Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha at the opening ceremony of the 6th BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting at Phuket in Thailand on February 8, 2004



Foreign Secretary Shri Shashank receiving the first copy of the South Asia Development and Cooperation Report 2004 from Shri K. C. Pant, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission and Chairman, RIS.

G-15

As a founder member of the Group of Fifteen (G-15), India is involved in various G-15 projects and activities and is actively involved in economic and technical cooperation with the member countries. India has been an active player in the ongoing discussions among the Permanent Representative of the G-15 countries in Geneva for revitalizing the grouping to make it more relevant in the present changing global context. India has been coordinating a number of projects such as Solar Energy applications, training courses in Information Technology etc. HMT (International) has completed the project for revival of Nigeria Machine Tool (NMT) in Nigeria (Oshogbo) with a grant of US\$5 million from India. Another project for setting up a toxicology laboratory at the University of Kingston, Jamaica, is currently under implementation.

External Affairs Minister led the Indian delegation to the XIth G-15 Summit, held in Caracas (Venezuela) on the 27- 28 February 2004, as well as to the meeting of the G-15 foreign ministers (26 February) that preceded the summit. The theme of the summit was 'Energy and Development'. The XIth Summit adopted a joint communiqué and the 'Caracas Declaration on Energy and Development' reflecting the concerns of the member countries. The communiqué makes particular reference to the need for more intense economic cooperation, particularly exchange of trade preferences among developing countries, possibly by launching the third round of Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) among developing countries, which could be launched at the forthcoming UNCTAD conference in Sao Paulo in June 2004.

IOR-ARC

India is a founder member of the 18-member IOR-ARC for the promotion of trade and investment flows among the member countries. Its membership includes

Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Mauritius, Malaysia, Mozambique, Madagascar, Oman, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Seychelles withdrew from membership of the IOR-ARC earlier in the year. India participated in the 4th Meeting of the IOR-ARC Council of Ministers in Colombo on 12-13 October 2003. India has been the prime mover in setting up the IOR-Net, an internet web portal which focuses on trade and investment related information among the member countries. IOR-Net is managed by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). The completion of the IOR-Net project has been highly appreciated by the other members of the IOR-ARC. India has offered to host an E-Business Summit, a workshop on tropical cyclones and a workshop on trade facilitation in the WTO context. India is also a member of the core group along with Kenya, Oman and Sri Lanka to carry out a feasibility study for the establishment of a Preferential Trading Agreement (PTA), among the IOR-ARC countries.

Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC)

The Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC), was launched in Vientiane, Lao PDR in November 2000 by India, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, and aims at cooperation in tourism, education, culture, and transport and communications. The 3rd MGC Ministerial Meeting, held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 20 June 2003, reiterated their collective resolve to expedite implementation of agreed projects and also explored new sectors for cooperation.

At the 3rd Ministerial Meeting, External Affairs Minister announced additional 100 scholarships to MGC countries under ITEC program. In tourism sector, India offered to host an early meeting of the MGC Tourism Ministers. India has also announced the contribution of US\$100,000 towards the MGC Cooperation Fund for financing mutually agreed MGC projects.

In order to augment India's physical connectivity, both with MGC member countries and the ASEAN, India also agreed to the proposal of Cambodia and Vietnam for a New Delhi-Hanoi Rail Link and External affairs Minister offered to get a pre-feasibility study carried out in this regard. As a first step, the Rail India Technical & Economic Services (RITES) have been assigned to undertake the pre-feasibility study of laying the missing link of about 315 km between Jiribam (India) and Kalay (Myanmar) and upgrading the existing railway section from Kalay to Mandalay.

As part of MGC cooperation in culture, India is giving US\$ 1 million worth of assistance for the establishment of a Museum of Traditional Textiles of MGC countries at Siem Reap, Cambodia. The museum would showcase textile products from the MGC countries and enhance the level of regional cooperation and bonding. For this purpose, an expert level meeting was held at Siem Reap on 4th March 2004.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

India's relations with the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have intensified considerably in recent years and continue expanding. The OECD has been involving emerging economies, such as Brazil, China, India, and Russia in a dialogue on important economic and trade issues. Since 1999, India has participated in the OECD Special Dialogue with non-member countries and in a number of OECD events, in areas such as Small & Medium Enterprises, Taxation, Global Biodiversity, Agriculture, Steel, Investment, Information Technology and E-Commerce, Competition Policy, Corporate Governance and other such issues.

Cooperation with OECD on issues relating to competition policy, commercialization of space technology, as well as cooperation in large-scale projects in astronomy and

astrophysics, are also being discussed. In May 2003, India attended the OECD Global Forum on Competition in Paris, as well as the first OECD Asia Contact meeting of the OECD's Centre for Cooperation with Non-Members (CCNM). India also participated in the OECD Global Forum on International Investment (GFII) in Johannesburg from 17-19 November 2003 and has offered to organize the Global Forum on International Investment in 2004.

Technical Cooperation

The Technical Cooperation Division has been responsible for administration of offering technical assistance under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme and the Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Plan (SCAAP) to developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Gulf countries and small Islands in the Pacific and Caribbean region. While ITEC programme is more general, SCAAP is for the Commonwealth countries of Africa for the civilian training. All other programmes are covered under ITEC. The ITEC and SCAAP together cover 155 countries and the latest one to be included is Turkey.

The Technical Cooperation programme has earned goodwill for India and has exposed its human skill and technical and industrial progress. The Budget allocation for the year 2003-04 has been Rs.30.5 crores for ITEC, Rs.5.5 crores for SCAAP and Rs.5 crores for Aid for Disaster Relief.

The ITEC has the following contents: -

- Training (both Civil and Military)
- Projects and Project-related assistance such as supply of equipment
 - Consultancy services and feasibility studies
- Deputation of Indian experts
- Study visits of senior officials/decision makers to India

The civilian training is most popular and most effective means of cooperation for

which all expenses like international air travel, tuition fees, living allowance, study tours, medical assistance in case of sickness and book allowance are borne by the Ministry of External Affairs. The civilian training covers Audit, Banking, Finance & Accounts, Drugs and Pharmaceuticals, Education Planning & Administration, English Language, Entrepreneurship, Food Technology, Manpower Resource Planning, Information Technology, Journalism & Mass Communication, Labour Administration, Management, Parliamentary Studies, Remote Sensing, Rural Development, Small Scale Industry, Standardisation, Small Business Development and Textile Technology.

In the current financial year, the TC Division intends to provide civil training to 3080 persons for whom 2834 applications have been received by 30 November 2003 and 1065 persons have been given training. The list of institutes offering courses under Categories 'B' and 'C' to foreign nominees under ITEC/SCAAP programme of the Ministry of External Affairs are at **Annexure-XIV**. Country-wise position about slots earmarked and utilised under ITEC for the period April-November 2003 is at **Annexure-XV**. During the period under report, 224 slots have been utilised under SCAAP. The statement showing allocation and utilisation of civilian training slots under SCAAP programme from April to November 2003 is at **Annexure-XVI**. **Annexure-XII** is the expenditure statement for the financial year 2003-04.

India offers training in all the three wings of Defence Services to selected number of countries in some of the prestigious institutions like National Defence College, New Delhi, and National Defence Services Staff College, Wellington in Tamil Nadu. The training covers a number of fields, such as, Security and Strategic Studies, Defence Management, Artillery, Electronics, Mechanical Engineering, Marine and Aeronautical Engineering, Anti-Marine Warfare, Hydrography, Logistics and Management & Qualitative Assurance Services.

In case of ITEC-I Scheme, the entire cost of air travel, tuition fees, living allowance, medical and study tours are borne by the Government of India while in case of training programmes under ITEC-II only cost of international air travel is met by the beneficiary countries. There is a provision for training under Self-Financing and Reciprocal Scheme also.

The 44th NDC Course (National Defence College) in New Delhi begins on January 2004 and 21 officers from foreign countries would be participating in the course whose duration is almost one year. Under Self-Financing Scheme, foreign participants are charged US\$30,000 each and the government of India pays the equivalent amount in Rupees for trainees under ITEC and Special Aid Plan (SAP). 32 foreign defence personnel received training at the 59th DSSC Course (Defence Services Staff College) in Wellington, which began in June 2003. 13 officers were given scholarship under ITEC and the rest were under Self-Financing Scheme. During 2003-04, 387 slots have been allotted under ITEC. 234 slots have been allotted for the Army courses (172 under ITEC and 62 under Self-Financing Scheme), 49 in the Air Force Courses (30 under ITEC, 19 under Self-Financing Scheme) and 51 in the Naval Courses (46 under ITEC and 5 under Self-Financing Scheme). Rs.11 crores have been earmarked for Defence training and Rs.7.84 crores have already been spent by the end of November 2003.

The details of Defence training may be seen at **Annexure-XVII**.

Aid for Disaster Relief

Supplies of pharmaceuticals were the main items of disaster relief to Least Developed Countries like Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia and Vietnam. The amounts spent on this account were Rs.8 lakhs for Cambodia, Rs.9.29 lakhs for Lao PDR, Rs.23.94 for Mongolia and Rs.7.69 lakhs for Vietnam. Medicines worth Rs.2.29 lakhs were also donated to Bosnia Herzegovina. There was also an urgent request for supply of indelible ink for General Elections, which were held

in Cambodia on 27 July 2003. The Division supplied 26,000 jars of indelible ink at the cost of Rs.81.12 lakhs.

Projects

Cambodia

A commitment was made by the Vice President of India to the Prime Minister of Cambodia and subsequently, an Agreement was signed between the two Governments in April 2002 during Indian Prime Minister's visit to Cambodia for the conservation and restoration of Ta Prohm Temple Complex at Siem Reap in Cambodia through Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). ASI had estimated the total cost of the project as Rs.19.57 crores to be implemented in 10 years. Therefore, the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure (CNE), Ministry of Finance was approached for obtaining its concurrence for the proposal. CNE approved the first phase (2003-04, 2004-05) amounting to Rs.3.50 crores and also accorded its approval in principle for the total (estimated) cost of the project i.e., Rs.19.57 crores. Sanction order was issued on 10.09.2003.

Djibouti

Two experts from EdCIL were deputed to Djibouti for a period of 5 days in May 2003 for conducting a feasibility study, to identify specific areas of human resource development prior to the State Visit of Djibouti President to India, which involved an expenditure of around Rs.94,569.

Fiji

In pursuance of a request made by the Government of Fiji to the Government of India, four sugar experts from Sugar Technology Mission, Department of Science and Technology were deputed to Fiji in January 2004 for a period of 10 days to undertake studies of four sugar mills.

Guyana

An Agro-Produce Processing/Training/Demonstration equipments mounted on Ashok Leyland vehicle was donated to Guyana costing about Rs.32,70,000. National Agriculture Federation (NAFED)

supplied the vehicle. Two experts were also deputed for three months for commissioning of the project and to provide training.

Indonesia

India was requested to set up a Vocational Training Centre for Construction Sector at Jakarta during the State Visit of the former President of Indonesia to India in February 2000. The MoU between the Governments of India and Indonesia was signed in April 2002 during the visit of the Indonesian President Megawati to India. The National Small Industries Corporation Ltd. (NSIC), after its feasibility study, estimated the cost of setting up this centre at Rs.308.70 lakhs. After obtaining the concurrence of the Integrated Finance Division and the Ministry of Law to the proposal, the Agreement between Ministry of External Affairs and NSIC was signed on 10.7.2003. Sanction order was issued on 14.7.2003. An amount of Rs.42, 00,000 has already been released to NSIC towards first installment (advance payment) against Bank Guarantee of equal amount. NSIC would despatch all the machinery and equipment within 6 months as per the agreement.

Ivory Coast

The President of Ivory Coast had requested the Government of India for assistance in the computerization of his offices and residences. Therefore, an IT expert from the Department of Information Technology, New Delhi has been deputed to Ivory Coast for a period of 30 days from 14 November 2003 for conducting a feasibility study in this regard. The cost involved in the said deputation is around Rs.2, 15,806.

Kenya

RITES undertook a feasibility study for Performance Improvement Work Plan of Kenya Railways from 1 June 2003 for 30 man-weeks. The study entailed an expenditure of Rs.4, 65,000 plus US\$ 7560. They have since submitted their feasibility study report.

Laos

An expert from NIC, Department of Information Technology was deputed to

Laos from 2-6 June 2003 to conduct a feasibility study for setting up of an IT Centre, as discussed at the 4th India-Laos Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation held in New Delhi. An amount of around Rs.1,04,471 was incurred for the said feasibility study. A multi-sectoral delegation comprising experts in Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and dairying were deputed to Laos for a period of 8 days from 10-17 December 2003 to conduct a feasibility study in connection with the Work Plan on Agriculture with Lao PDR.

Mozambique

In pursuance of a request made by the Foreign Minister of the Government of Mozambique, four experts nominated by the Ministry of Agriculture were deputed to Mozambique from 5-14 April 2003 for conducting a feasibility study for setting up of a comprehensive agricultural project at Maputo. The expenditure incurred in the said deputation was around Rs.4, 21,844.

Namibia

In pursuance of a commitment made at the level of our Prime Minister, fifteen nos. Ford Tractors (70 HP) along with implements, accessories and spare parts at a cost of Rs.1, 70, 09,710 (CIF) were supplied to the Government of Namibia in August 2003.

Senegal

A maize expert from the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture was deputed to Senegal in January 2004 for a period of 10 days to advise them on post-harvest operations of maize.

Tanzania

In pursuance of a request made by the President of Zanzibar, one sugarcane expert from the Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research, Lucknow was deputed to Zanzibar for a period of two weeks in August 2003 to advise the Zanzibar authorities on the introduction of sugarcane cultivation and the industrial processing of sugarcane into sugar/khandsari/ jaggery. It was processed and finalized in consultation with the

Ministry of Agriculture and the Chief Director (Sugar), Directorate of Sugar, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, New Delhi. The total expenditure involved in the said deputation was approximately Rs.89, 421.

Trinidad and Tobago

Two experts from RITES undertook a feasibility study in Trinidad and Tobago for 10 days for Light Rail Transit Project in September 2003. The total cost involved in the deputation was around Rs.6 lakh.

Zimbabwe

The Government of India made a commitment to the Government of Zimbabwe for the development of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises under G 15 Cooperation Programme and US \$ 5 million was earmarked for the same. Therefore, 2 experts from HMT(I) were deputed to Zimbabwe for two weeks in August 2003 to conduct a fresh feasibility study on the basis of which the implementing agency would be decided for the project. The total expenditure involved in the said deputation was Rs.2, 74,860.

Study Visits

Mr. Vikram Oditt, Chairman, Guyana Sugar Corporation, along with his wife, was invited to India to see Sugar industry. They visited Daurala Sugar Mills of Sri Ram Group in Uttar Pradesh, Wallchand Nagar Industries in Pune.

Dr. Lenny Saith, Minister for Information Technology, Government of Trinidad and Tobago, came to India in November on study visit. He was accompanied with his wife and Permanent Secretary of his Ministry. Dr. Saith had meetings with Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh, Chairman of Union Public Service Commission, and Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. He also visited IT companies in Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad.

A 4-member delegation of Federal Police Services from Ethiopia was invited to visit India for studying Police training facilities in India as well management of prisons.

Rector of University of Manila came to India to study the Information Technology industry. He had meetings with the officials of Ministry of Information Technology in Delhi and later visited Bangalore.

A 5-member delegation led by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Namibia, Windhoek, visited India from 10-23 January 2004 with a view to establishing academic links with Indian institutions of higher learning. The delegation called on senior officials in Ministry of Human resource Development. The delegation also visited IITs in India and various Indian Universities in Delhi, Hyderabad and Bangalore.

A six member delegation led by the Rector of the Thammasat University, Bangkok, visited India from 26 February - 2 March 2004 in order to promote better understanding between the academic institutions of the two countries. The delegation visited Jawahar Lal Nehru University, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay and IITs in Delhi and Bombay.

Deputation of Experts

Demand for services of Indian experts has increased and the total number of experts deputed to various countries has doubled during the period under report. The experts deputed are in various fields such as Architecture, Dairy Farming, Medicine, Security, Town Planning, Remote Sensing, Agriculture, Television Transmission, WTO Matters, etc. Details of experts deputed in the current financial year as also of experts who were sent earlier but whose deputation is still under continuation, are at **Appendix-XVIII.**



11. Investment and Trade Promotion

The ITP Division published a booklet “India 2003-04 Reliable Business Partner-Attractive FDI Destination”. This publication contains comprehensive information on the competitive advantages of India for foreign investors and business. It has been published in several languages including Japanese, Chinese, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Arabic, and Russian. The CD ROMs in different languages containing the same information were also made. Both the books and CD ROMs were distributed to all the Missions and also at the Investment Promotion and Business Events held in India and abroad.

The Division participated actively in the meetings of Foreign Investment Promotion Board, Reserve Bank of India and other policy meetings contributing to reforms and liberalization of the economy and investment procedures. It took active part in Governmental and non-Governmental meetings on Energy issues. The Division has been advocating that India should acquire petroleum and gas assets abroad for strategic energy security.

The Division interacted with Export Promotion Councils, Trade and Industry bodies, Commerce Ministry and the Missions for promotion of India’s exports. It has been decided to sign a Memorandum

of Understanding (MoU) with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) providing support of the Ministry of External Affairs for the organization of their Annual Partnership Summits.

The Division supported the efforts of the Ministry of Commerce in organizing interactive sessions between Commercial Representatives of select west European countries with Indian business and industry in Chennai, Bangalore, Mumbai and Delhi in January 2004.

The Division supported FICCI in the organization of “Made in Pakistan” exhibition held in New Delhi in March 2004.

The Division has been highlighting to the media and the business community in India and abroad of the importance being attached by the Ministry of External Affairs to economic diplomacy to promote India’s economic and commercial interests. As part of this, the Missions are being encouraged to be pro-active in the promotion of India’s economic and commercial interest.

A new website devoted exclusively for the economic and commercial aspects of India’s diplomacy is being set up. This would give comprehensive information for global investors and businessmen about the opportunities in India.

As part of the new policy of active Promotion foreign investment into India, the Division organized Investment Promotion Seminars in Taipei and Tokyo in collaboration with Indian Missions, the investment promotion agencies of host countries and the private sector of India as well as the Department of Industrial Planning and Promotion. The Division is planning to organize a number of events in 2004 in other business capitals of the world.



12. Policy Planning and Research

Policy Planning

The Policy Planning & Research Division serves as a nodal point for interaction with the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) formerly known as the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), the University Grants Commission (UGC) and its affiliates and the Area Study Centres (ASC) located in various universities and specializing in research on various regions of the world.

The Division extended financial assistance to various academic institutions/think tanks located in different parts of the country for holding conferences, seminars, undertaking study/research projects, preparation of research papers, exchange of scholars and support for Track-II programmes on issues related to India's external relations and security. A list of seminar/conferences/meetings/study projects organized/undertaken by institutions/NGOs partly funded by the Policy Planning and Research Division is at **Appendix-XII**. The seminars, conferences and research projects funded by the Division covered themes such as International private law issues, affecting the NRIs, Military action against Iraq and opportunities and challenges for India in the post-war Iraq, India-ASEAN relations, Central Asia's Security concerns and its implications for India, Peaceful uses of atomic energy, Globalization and India, Himalayan Studies in the 21st century, India and New Europe, Broader Economic and Political Trends in Asia, Bio-Terrorism and Bio-Defence, Discourse of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Economic Cooperation between CIS-East Europe and India, Comprehensive Security, India and the emerging Asia, India's Nuclear Diplomacy after Pokhran-II, India-Australia Joint Study for drawing up a Road map for strategic partnership and, India's bilateral relations with countries like China, Australia, Russia, Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia, Canada and South Korea. Financial support was also extended to an Indian scholar attending a conference in New Zealand.

The MEA-JNU Joint Seminar was also revived with the holding of the Joint Seminar on India and Emerging Asia on 23 March 2004 at Sapru House. The Foreign Secretary inaugurated the seminar and delivered the inaugural address. This was followed by an opening session on Emerging Asia: Security and Identity in which presentations on key issues of security in Asia were made by eminent professors from Jawaharlal Nehru University.

The Policy Planning Division also undertook the work of preparation and issue of the Monthly letter by External Affairs Minister to Heads of Missions/Posts covering developments of importance concerning India and its foreign relations.

The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) was declared as an institution of national importance and taken over by the Government through an ordinance promulgated in September 2000, later replaced by the ICWA Act 2001 (No.29 of 2001) in September 2001. Government's decision has been widely acclaimed and appreciated. Supreme Court has also upheld the ICWA Act, 2001. In order to provide more clarity to, and streamline certain provisions of, the said Act, the PP&R Division, after taking approval of the Cabinet, moved the ICWA (Amendment) Bill 2003 which was considered and passed by the Parliament in its Winter Session 2003. The said Bill became operational after receiving Presidential assent on 7th January 2004.

Research Section

The Research Section of the Division continued to edit and publish the Annual Report of the Ministry. The Report serves as a compendium of India's interaction with the rest of the world in the political, economic and cultural fields, including the views of the government on various facets of international relations.

The Research Section also remained seized of the depiction of India's international boundaries in foreign publications. Cases of incorrect depiction were taken up with the concerned governments or the publisher

through Indian missions abroad for necessary corrective measures. The Division was also responsible for scrutinizing the depiction of India's external boundaries in the foreign publications imported into the country, and offered its advice to the Ministries dealing with the matter. It coordinated the supply of map-sheets to various Government and semi-Government agencies for use in their official work with the Survey of India and the Ministry of Defence. The Research Section dealt with requests from research scholars for access to the records of the Ministry.

As per the initiative of the Foreign Secretary, the Research Section also undertook the revival of the Monthly Summary for the Cabinet. This covers the broad spectrum of India's relations with different countries of the world during the month.

Record Management Section

There are about five lakh files, both classified and unclassified, lying in the Records Management Section of the Ministry. RM Section has been sending old files for reviewing regularly to the concerned officers/Sections/Divisions for taking a decision regarding retention or otherwise of these files. 769 files which were no longer required were destroyed by burning.

Library

To support research, the Ministry's Library has modern information technology equipment and rich resource materials, with over one hundred thousand books and a large collection of maps, microfilms and official documents. The Library receives and maintains 600 periodical titles. It has in-house computer systems with fifteen terminals/computers, including some supporting data entry and retrieval in Hindi. Library has CD-ROM work station and CD-ROM databases on foreign affairs and current affairs. The Library is also equipped with a CD-Writer, a Colour Scanner (with OCR capability as well as facility for storage and retrieval of Images), a microfilm/fiche reader printer, plain paper photocopier, as well as a VTR and colour monitor and a

laser printer with Desk Top Publishing (DTP) software. This has enabled better presentation of publications and documents of the Library/Division.

Documentation/Bibliographic Services as well as other library operations and services have been computerized, using an integrated library software package. Information on all books, maps, documents and selected periodical articles received in the Library since 1986 [and pre-1986 publications in active use] are available on-line through each terminal/computer in Main Library Patiala House. Library's information databases can also be accessed on Internet by our officials both at Headquarters and in our Missions abroad on MEA Library's website: <http://mealib.nic.in>

The library's Internet facilities are being gradually made available to visiting users who include Research Scholars and former Foreign Service Officers. Library now also welcomes users to submit their reference queries while surfing Library's website or through e-mail. Answers to these queries where possible are sent through e-mail for faster response.

All new documents received in the Library – books, maps, microfilms, selected articles from periodicals – are being fed into the in-

house computer system to create a database on foreign affairs. Using this database and CD-ROM Databases, the Library provides Current Awareness Service and Bibliographical and Reference Services. In addition, the Library regularly publishes:

- “Foreign Affairs Documentation Bulletin” — monthly list of selected periodical articles mostly with abstracts,
- “Recent Additions” — an annotated monthly list of publications added to the Library, and
- “Chronicle of Events”, fortnightly.

CD-ROM Publication(s)

Library in cooperation with NIC has brought out a full text CD-ROM version of Annual Reports of MEA [from 1948 to 1998-99] and Foreign Affairs Record [from 1955 to 1999 (August)]. The information on the CD can be retrieved via combination of searches including search on any given word or combination of words. This CD-ROM version was prepared based on material available as on 1 January 2000. This CD can be consulted in the main Library of the Ministry at Patiala House, New Delhi. Revised/updated version of this CD is planned to be issued next year.

Further, the MEA Library has gone in for an integrated Library management software covering all the features of Library. Built around its own centralised bibliographic database, LIBSYS follows MARC and supports both print and non-print materials. LIBSYS has different formats to describe adequately each material type using different fields with variable field lengths. It facilitates import/export of data in standard exchange format such as MARC as well as in non-MARC format. LIBSYS supports word-based free text searching using Boolean operators. LIBSYS provides online validation of input data prior to updating the database. LIBSYS assures security by allowing access only through passwords if so required.

Library users including research scholars are welcome to access the Library's website or the on-line computer-based information in the Library at Patiala House, New Delhi in different databases, including CD-ROM Databases, and the Foreign Affairs Information Retrieval System (FAIRS). Photocopying and Computer Print-out facilities are also available to all Library users including research scholars.

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13. External Publicity

The External Publicity Division continued to effectively project and promote India and its viewpoint on various issues of concern through its active association with the Indian and international media including dissemination of information and publicity material through Indian missions abroad. The division assiduously worked to promote understanding of the Government's policies, the Ministry's role and India's positive image through regular press briefings, publications, audio-visual media and its website which is updated on a daily basis. Prime Minister's peace initiative with Pakistan, his visits to New York (UNGA), Russia, China, Central Asia, South-East Asia, West Asia and the Arab World, India's stand on international and cross-border terrorism, Middle East, Iraq and WTO related issues were among the main topics which found special focus of our publicity efforts.

With intense media interest in developments in Indo-Pak relations in the wake of Prime Minister's offer extending India's "hand of friendship" to Pakistan in April 2003, sustained effort was exerted to keep the media abreast of latest happenings on this front. India's peace initiatives – Prime Minister's Srinagar speech in April 2003, the 12-point proposal made in October 2003, the announcement of ceasefire along LOC, international border and Siachen in J&K by both sides in November 2003, establishment of communication links, the meetings between the leadership of the two countries on the sidelines of SAARC Summit in Islamabad in January 2004, the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries in February 2004 etc – were given wide publicity. This was also reflected in the coverage.

India's excellent relations with major countries of the world and the progress achieved by India in the domains of economy, S&T, IT, biotechnology etc. were also highlighted. The success of this approach was evident from the prominent coverage received during PM's visits abroad and India's interaction with multilateral organizations like UN, SAARC, ASEAN, ARF and EU. The assistance provided by India to Afghanistan was given wide

publicity. India's stand on the Middle East and Iraq issues was appreciated especially in the Arab press.

Spokesperson's Office

The Division took a proactive stance in expounding India's foreign policies through regular and special media briefings by the Spokesperson, press releases, statements and backgrounders. Arranging media interviews with the Prime Minister, External Affairs Minister and other dignitaries, planning and managing media campaigns and developing strategies to convey Government of India's policies to the media and public, were among the other important functions in this context. The office also liaised with the press during incoming and outgoing high-level visits and managed to achieve good coverage for all events in both Indian and international media.

The Spokesperson's office kept pace with the numerous visits witnessed as a result of India's intense engagement with the international community. The Spokesperson's office used the opportunities provided by these visits to state India's positions on all issues. Around 210 press releases and statements were issued and more than 150 press briefings and media interactions were held during the period. These were circulated among the Indian and international media and Indian missions. All of them were also posted on the Ministry's website in a timely manner.

A new, better structured, comprehensive and more secure website of the Ministry, <http://meaindia.nic.in>, came into operation in August 2003. The website is updated on a real time basis (frequently several times a day) with latest press releases, briefings, statements, documents, reports, Question-Answers in Parliament, interviews and relevant articles and op-ed pieces from Indian and international press. In addition, hyperlinks are provided to websites of Indian missions, states, ministries and

reputed organizations. Audio-visual material is also incorporated. The weekly MEA Newswire covering important developments of the week continued to target intellectuals, opinion-makers, think-tanks and India-watchers across the globe. The Ministry of External Affairs website proved to be a vital tool in dissemination of information by the Office of the Spokesperson and a source of information related to India and the Ministry. It consistently featured among the top 5 GOI websites with document access of over 75000 per day from both inside and outside India.

Visits by Foreign Media

External Publicity Division in coordination with Indian missions abroad facilitated the visits of more than 75 foreign journalists to India between January 2003 and March 2004. These familiarization visits by senior journalists and editors from Austria, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Hungary, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Nepal, Russia, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, Hongkong, Seychelles, Trinidad & Tobago etc. were aimed at providing them a flair of modern India through visits to important institutions and cities and meetings with senior officials, intellectuals, academicians, businessmen etc. The visits had the desired effect and led to increased positive coverage of India and its achievements in reputed foreign journals.

Media Facilitation

An important role of the External Publicity Division is to provide logistical and liaison support to foreign media accompanying Heads of State/Government visiting India and Indian media delegations accompanying Prime Minister, President and Vice President on their foreign visits. The division played its role in providing accreditation facilities, access to ceremonial areas, transport, accommodation etc. and issuing media advisories to foreign and Indian media

during the visits to India of Heads of State/ Government of Afghanistan, Armenia, Bahrain, Bhutan, Brazil, Canada, Djibouti, France, Germany, Guyana, Iran, Israel, Lesotho, Laos, Mauritius, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Singapore, Slovak Republic, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname and Zambia. Similar facilities were also provided to the Indian media delegations travelling abroad on VVIP visits. The Division contributed effectively by setting up media centres with Internet, telephone, fax and other facilities as also liaison with local authorities during the VVIP visits to Bulgaria, China, France, Germany, Indonesia, Myanmar, Russia, Seychelles, Sudan, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, UAE and New York (UNGA). External Affairs Minister's visits to Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Cambodia, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritius, Myanmar, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey and USA were also serviced in a similar manner. Elaborate arrangements, including transport by two chartered aeroplanes, were made for a media contingent of over 300 journalists, which covered the 12th SAARC Summit, held in Islamabad in January 2004. Assistance was also provided to Indian journalists based in foreign countries and those going abroad on special missions.

The Division provides assistance in respect of credential documents, visas, residence permits etc. to approximately 300 representatives of foreign news agencies and media organizations based in India. During the period under report, visa extension and/or accreditation facilities were extended to about 195 foreign journalists. More than 70 journalists from ethnic media from abroad were serviced during each of the 1st and 2nd Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in New Delhi in January 2003 and January 2004.

India Perspectives

The Ministry's monthly magazine, "India Perspectives" remained the cornerstone of the Division's efforts to promote India with special emphasis on India's rich cultural

heritage. The circulation of the magazine through Indian missions and posts remained largely steady at about 55000 copies per month. The magazine continued to be published in 10 different international languages chosen to give it wide reach. Besides Indian culture, conscious efforts were made to project modern India to the world audience through carefully selected articles on the impressive achievements of the Indian economy, rapid strides made by India in IT and S&T, global appeal of popular Indian films, immense potential for tourism in India etc. The articles, encompassing all facets of life in India, were illustrated by aesthetic photographs and caricatures. India's foreign policy orientations in today's world scenario were also sought to be projected in a subtle manner through the magazine. The current and old issues of India Perspectives were also made available on the website of the Ministry. Judging from the positive feedback received from Indian embassies around the world, the magazine has been able to establish a niche for itself in several countries. The January 2003 issue of India Perspectives was solely devoted to the Indian Diaspora to mark the First Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

Audio-Visual Publicity

The commissioning and supply of documentaries, presentation/lending of old documentaries and feature films to Indian missions and foreign governments/ organizations, dubbing and subtitling of films in foreign languages, procurement and supply of feature films for participation in film festivals and Indian film weeks abroad, organizing cultural publicity and exhibitions etc. are some of the major audio-visual publicity activities undertaken by the External Publicity Division.

A crisp 15-minute film, "Fulfilling the Vision", showcasing modern India and the rapid strides that the country has taken, particularly in infrastructure, space and IT over the last 5 years was produced in September 2003. The film was shown during Prime Minister's interactions worldwide and many Missions used it during the Republic Day 2004 celebrations.

Seven more documentaries were completed on a variety of themes consistent with Indian foreign policy and promotion of Indian interests. The documentaries included "Kashmir - The Land of Divine Love", "Kyrgyzstan: The Land of Manas", "Made in Bollywood", "East meets West", "Fabric of Love" "Vishwa Hindi Ka Rachna Sansar", and "Hindi Hain Hum". Proactively, films on Child Labour in India, Biotechnology and Muslim Women in India were approved to be commissioned. A 24-capsule documentary on Jammu & Kashmir and several other documentaries were also commissioned and are in various stages of completion.

Special screenings of documentary films "Kashmir - The Land of Divine Love" and "Sikkim-Treasure of the Snow" commissioned by the Ministry were organized for the diplomatic community based in New Delhi, Indian and foreign media personnel and eminent persons from the world of art and cinema. The latter also won the "Best Promotional Film" award at 50th National Film Awards 2003. The External Publicity Division actively supported the 34th International Film Festival of India and 5th Cinemaya Festival held in New Delhi in October and July 2003 respectively. Indian feature film festivals/film weeks were organized in Chile, Egypt, France, Kenya, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, Netherlands, Russia, Spain, UK and USA (Washington, New York, Houston) also with the support of the Division.

Documentaries and feature films were also acquired and sent to the missions for non-commercial telecast on foreign TV channels. Besides, audio-visual material in the form of telecast quality Betacam cassettes, CD-ROMs, audio and video CDs and cassettes were also supplied to the missions for libraries and presentation purposes. The material was chosen carefully to represent the diverse colours of India. Requests for sanction of audio-video equipment and other hardware like TVs, VCRs, dish antennas etc. received from missions were also processed. The Division also received about 250 documentary filming proposals

from different countries. Of these, more than 200 were cleared on receipt while the rest were sent to respective ministries, states and other organizations for further processing.

Special Publications and Books

The External Publicity Division, under its ongoing scheme of supplying books for reference and presentation purposes to Indian missions, dispatched several books depending on the requirements of the Missions. A committee comprising Ministry's high-ranking officials takes the decision for purchase of these books. The Division also brings out special publications on important issues and visits. Between January 2003 and March 2004, special publications: "India: Scripting Future Histories" (in English, Italian and Urdu), "Facets of Indian Foreign Policy" (Volume I and II : A collection of External Affairs Minister's speeches/ interviews/statements in Hindi and English), a brochure on Hyderabad House, "Kashmir-

The True Story" (updated version) and "Sammelan Samachar Samagra" have been brought out. For the first time in recent years, Ministry of External Affairs Diary "India 2004" was printed. 5000 copies of the diary, showing various facets of India through caricatures by cartoonist Sudhir Dar, were distributed among media personalities locally and sent to Indian Missions. A press kit for the 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad and special publications on Prime Minister's visits to Cambodia, Singapore, Cyprus, Denmark, UK, New York and China were also published.

In addition, the Division also plans to bring out French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Japanese versions of "India: Scripting Future Histories", as well as an update on Indian democracy (entitled "India: A Dynamic Democracy") and new publications on Indian Aid to Afghanistan in March 2004 and Indian elections, in April 2004.



14. Protocol

The Protocol Division remained fully occupied with numerous incoming and outgoing VVIP visits, conferences, credential ceremonies and other multifarious functions. Activities of Protocol Division contributed to India's enhanced international image and profile. Special efforts were made to streamline protocol norms and standards.

A. Visits by Heads of State/Government/Vice Presidents and other high dignitaries

Visits for the period January 2003 – March 2004

1. H.E. Mr. S. R. Nathan, President of The Republic of Singapore and Mrs. S. R. Nathan	3-11 January 2003
2. The Rt. Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius and Lady Sarojini Jugnauth	5-11 January 2003
3. H.E. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Chief Guest of Republic Day)	24-28 January 2003
4. H.E. Mr. Jean- Pierre Raffarin, Prime Minister of France and Mrs. Raffarin	6-8 February 2003
5. H.E. Mr. Leszek Miller, Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland and Mrs Miller	15-18 February 2003
6. H.E. Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of Namibia	26 Feb -1 March 2003
7. H.E. Mr. Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan	28 Feb - 4 March 2003
8. H.E. Mr. Johannes Rau, President of the Federal Republic of Germany and Mrs. Rau	1-6 March 2003
9. H.E. President of Suriname	16-20 March 2003
10. HM King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Kingdom of Nepal	20-30 March 2003
11. H.E. Mr Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of Singapore	7-11 April 2003
12. HH Aga Khan	13-20 April 2003
13. H.E. Levy P. Mwanawasa, SC, President of Zambia	20-27 April 2003
14. H.E. Mr. Nong Duc Manh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Socialist Republic of Vietnam	29 April - 2 May 2003
15. H.E. Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President of Mozambique	10-15 May 2003
16. H.E. Mr. Ismail Omar guelleh, President of Djibouti	18-23 May 2003
17. H.E. Mr. Bounnhang Vorachith, Prime Minister of Lao People's Democratic Republic	15-22 June 2003
18. The Right Honourable Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisilli, Prime Minister of Lesotho	31 July - 7 August 2003
19. H.E. Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo, President of The Co-operative Republic of Guyana	24-29 August 2003
20. H.R.H. Dasho Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk, Crown Prince of The Kingdom of Bhutan	28 August -1 September 2003
21. H.E. Mr. Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister of Israel	8-13 September 2003
22. HM Jigme Singye Wangchuk, King of Bhutan	14-19 September 2003
23. H.E. Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal	12-15 October 2003
24. H.E. MR Thabo M Mbeki, President of South Africa	16-18 October 2003
25. H.E. Mr Robert Kocharin, President of Armenia	27-31 October 2003

26.	HRH Prince of Wales	October 28 - 5 November 2003
27.	H.E. Mr Peter Medgyessy, Prime Minister of Hungary	2-5 November 2003
28.	H.E. Mr Pascal Couchepin, President of Swiss Federation	6-11 November 2003
29.	H.E. Mr Paul Raymond Berenger, Prime Minister of Mauritius	20-25 November 2003
30.	H.E. Mr Jia Qinglin, Chairman of Chinese CCPPC	23-27 November 2003
31.	H.E. Prof. Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission	28-30 November 2003
32.	H.E. Mr Nicolae Vacaroiu, President of the Senate of Romania	14-19 December 2003
33.	H.E. Mr Bharrat Jagdeo, President of Guyana	6-13 January 2004
34.	H.E. Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, Prime Minister of Bahrain	11-19 January 2004
35.	H.E. Mr Nambaryn Enkhbayar, Prime Minister of Mongolia	14-19 January 2004
36.	HRH Paras Bir Bikram Shah Dev, Crown Prince of Nepal	18 January - 1 February 2004
37.	H.E. Mr Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil (Chief Guest of Republic Day 2004)	25-28 January 2004
38.	H.E. Mr Ion Iliescu, President of Romania	28 January to 1 February 2004
39.	H.E. Mr Amani Abeid Karume, President of Zanzibar	7-12 March 2004
40.	H.E. Ayatollah Hashemi Shahroudi, Head of Judiciary of Iran	9-15 March 2004

B. Working Visits of Head of State/Government to India in year 2003-2004

1	H.E. Mrs Chandrika Kumaratunga, President of Sri Lanka	7-10 April 2003
2	H.E. Mr. Ranil Wikramasinghe, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka	19-21 October 2003
3	H.E. Jean Chretien, Prime Minister of Canada	24-25 October 2003
4	H.E. Mr. Askar Akaev, President of Kyrgyzstan	10-11 November 2003
5	H.E. Mr. Surya Bahadur Thapa, Prime Minister of Nepal	23-25 November 2003
6	H.E. Mr Goran Persson, Prime Minister of Sweden	9 January - 11 November 2004

C. Transit visit/Halts by Head of State/Government/ Vice President

1	H.E. Mrs. Megawati Soekarnoputri, President of Indonesia	18-27 April, 2003
2	German Chancellor Mr Gerhard Schroder	10 May - 16 May 2003
3	President of Eritrea	27 September 2003
4	President of Djibouti	27 September - 3 October 2003
5	President of Uganda	1 October 2003
6	President of Peru	16 October 2003
7	HM The King of Morocco	17-26 October 2003
8	H.E. Mr. Ion Iliescu, President of Romania	5 February 2004
9	H.E. Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of Poland (Kolkata)	21 February 2004
10	H.E. Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of Poland (Delhi)	27 February 2004

D. Miscellaneous visits

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|---|--|---------------------|
| 1 | 1 st Lady of Peru | 7-11 July 2003 |
| 2 | Former President of USA Mr. Bill Clinton | 20-22 November 2003 |

E. Official Visits by Foreign Ministers or Equivalent level: Year 2003-2004

- | | | |
|-----|--|------------------------------|
| 1. | H.E. Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, Minister of Foreign Minister of Japan | 7-8 January 2003 |
| 2. | H.E. Mr. M. Dan Geana, Foreign Minister of Romania | 14-17 January 2003 |
| 3. | H.E. U Win Aung, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar | 19-24 January 2003 |
| 4. | H.E. Dr. Jose Ramos Horta, Senior Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor- Leste | 23-31 January 2003 |
| 5. | H.E. Mr. A. H. Kamilov , Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan | 3-4 February 2003 |
| 6. | H.E. Mr. Anil Kumarsingh Gyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius | 8-10 February 2003 |
| 7. | H.E. Mr. M Morshed Khan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh | 13-16 February 2003 |
| 8. | H.E. Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand | 13-17 February 2003 |
| 9. | H.E. Ms. Carolina Barco, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Columbia | 26-28 February 2003 |
| 10. | H.E. Dr. Charles Murigande, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Rwanda | 27-30 March 2003 |
| 11. | H.E. Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam | 29 Mar -1 April 2003 |
| 12. | H.E. Mrs. Maria Soledad Alvear, Minister of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Chile | 24-27 April 2003 |
| 13. | H.E. Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lao People's Democratic Republic | 4-8 May 2003 |
| 14. | H.E. Mr. Ali Said Abdella, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea | 7-12 May 2003 |
| 15. | H.E. Dr. Mladen Ivanic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia & Herzegovina | 6-8 May 2003 |
| 16. | HE. Mr. Igor S. Ivanov, Minister of foreign Affairs of The Russian Federation | 15-17 June 2003 |
| 17. | HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chief of Staff of UAE Armed Forces | 29 June - 1 July 2003 |
| 18. | H.E. U Win Aung, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar | 10-11 July 2003 |
| 19. | H.E. Mr. Anatoliy Zlenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine | 11-13 August 2003 |
| 20. | H.E Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Islamic Republic of Iran | 24 August 2003 |
| 21. | H.E. Dr. Nabeel Shaath, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Palestinian National Authority | 29 August - 1 September 2003 |
| 22. | H.E. Mr Bill Graham, Foreign Minister of Canada | 10-14 October 2003 |
| 23. | H.E. Mr Celso Amorim, Foreign Minister of Brazil | 19-22 October 2003 |
| 24. | H.E. Mr Goran Svilanovic, Foreign Minister of Serbia & Montenegro | 20-22 October 2003 |
| 25. | H.E. Mr Olu Adeniji, Foreign Minister of Nigeria | 29-31 October 2003 |
| 26. | H.E. Mr Alinars Slesers, Deputy Prime Minister of Latvia | 24-29 November 2003 |
| 27. | H.E. Mr K. D. Knight Foreign Minister of Jamaica | 24-30 November 2003 |
| 28. | H.E. Mr U Win Aung, Foreign Minister of Myanmar | 21-23 December 2003 |
| 29. | H.E. Dr Surakiart Sathirathai, Foreign Minister of Thailand | 21-23 December 2003 |
| 30. | H.E. Dr Yoong Young Kwan, Foreign Minister of Korea | 21-23 December 2003 |
| 31. | Hon J K Cuttaree, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius | 6-11 January 2004 |

32. Ministers and Representatives of System of Central American Integration (SICA)	1-5 February 2004
33. Rt Hon Jack Straw, Secretary of State of UK	5-8 February 2004
34. H.E. Mr Silvan Shalom, Foreign Minister of Israel	9-12 February 2004
35. H.E. Mr Dominique de Villepin, Foreign Minister of France	12-13 February 2004
36. H.E. Mr Dimitrij Rupel, Foreign Minister of Slovenia	14-18 February 2004
37. India-EU Troika Ministerial Meeting	15-16 February 2004
38. H.E. Dr Edmund Stoiber, Minister President of Free State of Bavaria	16-21 February 2004
39. Visit of TEAM-9 Foreign Minister from Western Africa	Feb 29 to Mar 3, 2004
40. Visit of Foreign Ministers of Brazil & South Africa for India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Meeting	4-5 March 2004
41. Working Visit of H.E. Mr Colin L Powell, Secretary of State of United States of America	15-17 March 2004

F. Outgoing visits by Indian dignitaries in 2003-2004

President of India

1. 18-25 October 2003	UAE, Sudan and Bulgaria
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Vice President of India

1. 8-12 September 2003	Seychelles
2. 2-5 November 2003	Union of Myanmar

Prime Minister of India

1. 22-25 February 2004	Kuala Lumpur (13 th NAM summit)
2. 22-27 June 2003	China
3. May 27 to 3 June 2003	Germany, St. Petersburg and Evian (G-8 Summit)
4. 16-28 September 2003	Turkey and New York (58 th UNGA)
5. 5-12 October 2003	Bali (India-ASEAN Summit) and Thailand
6. 11-16 November 2003	Russia, Tajikistan and Syria
7. 4-7 December 2003	Nigeria (CHOGM Summit)
8. 3-6 January 2004	Islamabad (For SAARC Summit)

Deputy Prime Minister of India

1. 10-12 November 2003	Maldives
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External Affairs Minister of India

1. EAM's visit to Greece	15-18 January 2003.
2. EAM's visit to CA countries (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan)	January 28 - 1 February 2003
3. EAM's visit to Moscow & Kuala Lumpur for NAM Summit (joined PM in Kuala Lumpur)	19-25 February 2003
4. EAM's visit to Tanzania and Botswana	24 April - 1 May 2003
5. EAM's visit to Russia and UK	13-21 May 2003
6. EAM's visit to Germany (with PM)	27-31 May 2003
7. EAM's visit to Peru and Brazil	2-11 June 2003
8. EAM's visit to Cambodia for AREPMC+Mekong Ganga co-operation	16-19 June 2003

9. EAM's visit to China (with PM)	22-27 June 2003
10. EAM's visit to Mauritius & South Africa	30 June - 5 July 2003
11. EAM's visit to Bangladesh	4-16 July 2003
12. EAM's visit to Syria and Turkey-separately (not with PM)	1-6 August 2003
13. EAM's visit to Australia, Indonesia and Singapore	25 August - 2 September 2003
14. EAM's visit to UNGA(New York)-separately (not with PM)	19-30 September 2003
15. EAM's visit to Indonesia & Thailand (with PM)	6-12 October 2003
16. EAM's visit to Sri Lanka	14-16 October 2003
17. EAM's visit to Brussels(Belgium)	26-30 October 2003
18. EAM's visit to Uzbekistan	6-9 November 2003
19. EAM's visit to Russia, Tajikistan and Syria with PM	11-16 November 2003
20. EAM's visit to Nigeria (CHOGM)	2-10 December 2003
21. EAM's visit to Iran	12-15 December 2003
22. EAM's visit to Pakistan (SAARC Summit)	1-6 January 2004
23. EAM's visit to US	17-23 January 2004
24. EAM's visit to Phuket, Thailand (BIMST-EC FM's Meeting)	6-9 February 2004
25. EAM's visit to Caracas, Venezuela (G-15 Summit and FM's Meeting)	25-29 February 2004

Visits by Minister of State (MOS) for External Affairs, Shri Vinod Khanna

1. MOS visit to Thimpu, Bhutan (India Festival Inauguration)	5-8 June 2003
2. MOS visit to Amman, Jordan (Multilateral Meeting)	21-23 June 2003
3. MOS visit to Kuwait, (Bilateral Meeting)	23-25 June 2003
4. MOS visit to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, (Signing of Haj Agreement)	21-23 September 2003
5. MOS visit to Ulaanbataar, Mongolia (5 th International Conf. On New and Restored Democracies)	7-15 September 2003
6. MOS visit to Thimpu, Bhutan, (Royal Funeral)	17-19 October 2003
7. MOS visit to Madrid, Spain (International Donors Conference for Iraq Reconstruction)	23-24 October 2003
8. MOS visit to New York, US (High Level Dialogue on Financing for Development (UN))	26-29 October 2003

Visits by Minister of State (MOS) for External Affairs, Shri Digvijay Singh

1. MOS visit to Iran	4-5 January 2003
2. MOS visit to Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago	1-12 February 2003
3. MOS visit to France	20-22 May 2003
4. MOS visit to Suriname, Barbados, Cuba	3-17 June 2003
5. MOS visit to Armenia, Austria, Kenya and Ukraine	14-24 July 2003
6. MOS visit to Seychelles	8-12 September 2003
7. MOS visit to Croatia, Senegal and Czech Republic	14-25 September 2003
8. MOS visit to Myanmar	2-5 November 2003
9. MOS visit to Estonia	20-22 November 2003

List of Foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners who Presented their Credentials during the period 1.4.2003 to 31.3.2004

Name	Presentation of Credentials
H.E. Dr (Mrs.) Jutta Stefan Bastl Ambassador of Austria	20 January 2003
H.E. Mr. Jantsan Gulgou Ambassador of Mongolia	20 January 2003
H.E. Mr. Dominique Girard Ambassador of France	20 January 2003
H.E. Mr. Siavash Zargar Yaghoubi Ambassador of Iran	20 January 2003
H.E. Mr. Pierre Passi Non-Resident Ambassador of Republic of Congo	20 January 2003
H.E. Mr. Lefa Joseph Mokotjo Non-Resident High Commissioner of Kingdom of Lesotho	20 January 2003
H.E. Mr. Oteng Jenamo Tebape Non-Resident High Commissioner of Botswana	20 January 2003
H.E. Mr. Jean Christian Obame Non-Resident Ambassador of Gabon	20 January 2003
H.E. Mrs. Haja Alari Cole Non-Resident High Commissioner of Sierra Leone	20 January 2003
H.E. Mr. Chirasak Thanesnant Ambassador of Thailand	16 April 2003
H.E. Mr. Don Rafael Conde de Saro Ambassador of Spain	16 April 2003
H.E. Mr. Osama Musa Al-Ali Ambassador of the State of Palestine	16 April 2003
H.E. Mr. Jonathan Wutanwunashe High Commissioner of Republic of Zimbabwe	16 April 2003
H.E. Mr. Jaime Jose Infante Lacouture Ambassador of Colombia	16 April 2003
H.E. Mr. Saleh M. Al-Ghamdi Ambassador of Saudi Arabia	16 April 2003
H.E. Maj. Gen. Charles Dickson Ndaxu P. Namoloh High Commissioner of the Republic of Namibia	16 April 2003
H.E. Archbishop Pedro Lopez Quintana Ambassador of Holy See	16 April 2003
H.E. Mr. Gabriel Fassil Ambassador of Eritrea	10 July 2003
H.E. Mr. Dino Debeljuh Ambassador of Republic of Croatia	10 July 2003
H.E. Mr. Aziz Ahmad Khan High Commissioner of Islamic Republic of Pakistan	10 July 2003
H.E. Mr. David Danieli Ambassador of Israel	24 September 2003

H.E. Mr. Patrick de Beyter Ambassador of Belgium	24 September 2003
H.E. Mr. Donnilo Anwar Ambassador of Republic of Indonesia	24 September 2003
H.E. Mr. Charles Walimbwa High Commissioner of Uganda	24 September 2003
Her Excellency Mrs. Lucie Edwards High Commissioner of Canada	24 November 2003
H.E. Mr. Eric Franciscus Charles Niehe Ambassador of Netherlands	24 November 2003
H.E. Mr. Michael Arthur CMG High Commissioner of United Kingdom	24 November 2003
Her Excellency Mrs. Laura Q. del Rosario Ambassador of Philippines	24 November 2003
H.E. Mr. Juan Carretero Ibanez Ambassador of Republic of Cuba	24 November 2003
H.E. Mr. Dragovest Goranov Ambassador of Republic of Bulgaria	24 November 2003
H.E. Mr. Francisco Da Camara Gomes Ambassador and Head of Delegation of European Commission	24 November 2003
H.E. Mr. Viktor Karafil Kalemi Non-Resident Ambassador of Republic of Albania	24 November 2003
H.E. Mr. Jose Leopoldo Francisco Riestra Elizondo Non-Resident Ambassador of Republic of Nicaragua	24 November 2003
H.E. Mr. Walid Adel Nasr Ambassador of Lebanon	30 December 2003
H.E. Mr. Hemayetuddin High Commissioner of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	30 December 2003
H.E. Mr. U ky Thein Ambassador of Union of Myanmar	30 December 2003
H.E. Mr. Vasile Sofineti Ambassador of Romania	30 December 2003
H.E. Mr. Jorge Heine Ambassador of Republic of Chile	30 December 2003
H.E. Mr. Fahd Salim Ambassador of Syrian Arab Republic	30 December 2003
H.E. Pundit Manideo Persad High Commissioner of Trinidad & Tobago	30 December 2003
H.E. Mr. Jon Westborg Ambassador of Norway	23 February 2004
H.E. Mr. Yasukuni Enoki Ambassador of Japan	23 February 2004
H.E. Mr. Karna Dhoj Adhikary Ambassador of Kingdom of Nepal	23 February 2004

H.E. Dr. David Campbell Mulford Ambassador of United States of America	23 February 2004
H.E. Mr. Eduardo Ernesto Vilanova-Molina Non-Resident Ambassador of El Salvador	23 February 2004
H.E. Mr. Sverrir Haukur Gunnlaugsson Non-Resident Ambassador of Republic of Iceland	23 February 2004

List of Foreign Ambassadors/High Commissioners who left India during the period 1.1.2003 to 31.3.2004 on completion of Assignment

Name	Left on
H.E. Mr. Don Alberto Escudero Ambassador of Spain	24 January 2003
H.E. Mr. Jose Eloy Valdes Ambassador of Republic Cuba	26 February 2003
H.E. Mr. Salah Al-Mukhtar Ambassador of Republic of Iraq	12 March 2003
H.E. Mr. Ahmed El Mansour Diop Ambassador of Senegal	29 June 2003
H.E. Mr. Kabiru Ahmed, mni High Commissioner of Nigeria	30 June 2003
H.E. Mr. Robert D. Blackwill Ambassador of United States of America	31 July 2003
H.E. Dr. Bhekh B. Thapa Ambassador of Nepal	15 August 2003
H.E. Mr. Guy Trouveroy Ambassador of Belgium	23 August 2003
H.E. U. Kyaw Thu Ambassador of Myanmar	18 September 2003
H.E. Mr. Jose P. del Rosario, Jr. Ambassador of Philippines	22 September 2003
H.E. Dr. Jean Daniel Ambassador of Lebanon	30 September 2003
H.E. Mr. Manuel Cardenas Ambassador of Chile	30 September 2003
H.E. Mr. Peter F. C. Koch, Ambassador of Netherlands	30 September 2003
H.E. Mr. Peter H. Sutherland High Commissioner of Canada	30 September 2003
H.E. Sir Rob Young KCMG, High Commissioner of United Kingdom	13 October 2003
H.E. Mr. Truls Hanevold Ambassador of Norway	25 October 2003
H.E. Mr. Michael Caillouet Ambassador and Head of Delegation of European Commission	26 October 2003

H.E. Mr. Tufail K. Haider High Commissioner of Bangladesh	27 October 2003
H.E. Mr. Petru Petra Ambassador of Romania	9 November 2003
H.E. Mr. Uladzimir Sakalouski Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus	15 December 2003
H.E. Mr. Dato Choo Siew Kioh High Commissioner of Malaysia	19 December 2003
H.E. Mr. Jang Kwang Son Ambassador of Democratic People's Republic of Korea	20 January 2004
H.E. Mr. Abdullah Al-Murad Ambassador of the State of Kuwait	24 January 2004
H.E. Mr. Gerardo Manuel Biritos Ambasador of Argentina	2 March 2004
H.E. Mr. Johan Nordenfelt Ambassador of Sweden	2 March 2004
H.E. Mr. Kwon Soon-Tae Ambassador of Republic of Korea	10 March 2004
H.E. Mr. Benedetto Amari Ambassador of Italy	19 March 2004
H.E. Mr. Walter Marquez Ambassador of Venezuela	28 March 2004
H.E. Mr. Lazarus O. Amayo High Commissioner of Kenya	30 March 2004

List of Conferences organized during the period January 2003 – March 2004

Conference

Passport Officers' Conference	27-29 January 2003
6 th ASEAN-India Working Group Meeting	6-7 February 2003
BIMST-EC Workshop on Cyclone & Tropical Monsoons	25-27 March 2003
5 th ASEAN-India Joint Cooperation Committee(JCC) Meeting.	22-23 April 2003
5 th ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting (SOM).	20-21 May 2003
Second ASEAN -India Business Summit.	4-5 September 2003
Protocol assistance provided in 2 nd Pravasi Bharatiya Divas	9-11 January 2004
TEAM-9 Foreign Ministers' Meeting	29 February - 2 March 2004
SAARC Inter-Governmental Experts Group (IGEG) Meeting on Investment, Arbitration and Avoidance of Double Taxation	22-23 March 2004



15. Passport, Visa and Consular Services

The CPV Division of the Ministry of External Affairs through the Central Passport Organisation (CPO) and through the passport, visa and consular wings of Indian Missions and posts abroad provide a direct interface with the general public in India, with the Indian community resident abroad and with the foreign nationals. The Ministry issues passports and renders passport related services through its Passport Offices in India.

Currently there are 30 Passport Offices in India. The last one was opened in Surat in August 2003. Government has also decided to open Passport Offices in the remaining two new states i.e. Chhatisgarh and Uttarakhand as well as in the city of Shimla. Arrangements for opening of these three passport offices are being worked out.

As part of Decentralisation Scheme, District Passport Cells (DPCs) have been opened at districts level where the office of the District Magistrate or Superintendent of Police receives passport applications and after scrutiny and police verification forwards them to the concerned Passport Office for issuance of passports. Currently there are about 380 DPCs covering more than half of the districts in India.

All Passport Offices, including the recently opened Passport Office in Surat, are computerized. All Passport Offices are issuing machine printed and machine readable passports.

As part of strengthening of public grievances mechanism, all Passport Offices have been instructed to set up Facilitation Counters and Help Desk to assist applicants and also to attend to any grievances/complaints promptly.

Passport Services

Decentralisation through Post Offices and District Offices

The Division aims at making the passport services easily accessible to the public by enabling them to deposit their passport applications through a wide network of offices at the District/Sub-divisional level.

District Passport Cells

Decentralisation at district level envisages acceptance of passport applications at district level through a designated office (DM or SP) in each district of the country. The designated offices function as the 'District Passport Cells' (DPCs). Under the system, the DPCs after accepting the applications get police verification carried out and send the applications with the Police Verification Reports to the concerned Passport Office. As of now, 380 DPCs are functioning in the country. Opening of DPCs has resulted in decongestion in Passport Offices to a large extent. Besides speeding up police verification process, it has also provided a great relief to the public who do not have to travel long distances to reach Passport Offices. The passport applications are also received through the network of Speed Post Centres. Currently there are about 150 such Speed Post Centres accepting Passport Applications.

Ongoing Innovations

The 'Tatkaal' Scheme for out-of-turn issue of passports has enabled the system to speedily respond to demand for issuance of passports in urgent cases. During the year 2003 a total of 1,61,216 Passports were issued under Tatkaal Scheme resulting in additional revenue of Rs.24.37crore.

Review of Passport Issue System

A Committee on 'Review of the Passport Issue System' which was set up in the Cabinet Secretariat in 2001, made various recommendations to simplify the passport issue system. A large number of recommendations have already been implemented and the remaining recommendations are being processed in consultation with the concerned agencies.

The main recommendations of the Committee relate to the decentralisation of the passport issue system at the State level through the establishment of District Passport Cells and the simplification of procedures so as to do away with the police verification requirement for applicants from certain categories.

Building Projects

The Government has taken up construction of buildings to house the Passport Offices at Bangalore, Kolkata, Lucknow, Jaipur, Bhubaneswar. At present, Passport Office buildings at seven places (Mumbai, Cochin, Kozhikode, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Panaji and Patna) are owned by the Ministry of External Affairs. The building for Passport Office at Chandigarh was completed. Passport Office buildings at seven places are owned by Central Government/State Government and are rented in 18 places. The process for purchase of land at five places i.e. Thiruvananthapuram, Tiruchirapalli, Guwahati, Jammu and Jalandhar is also in progress. The Division is also trying to take a property for Passport Office Srinagar on long-term lease.

Computerisation

At present, all the 30 Passport Offices have been computerised. Websites have been established in almost all Passport Offices. Status check of passport applications through Internet is operational.

Volume of Passport Applications

During the year, a total number of 29,55,529 passports were issued and 3,28,935 miscellaneous services were rendered. While there was an increase of 10.84% in the issue of Passports, the miscellaneous service rendered registered a decrease of 5.27% in comparison to passports issued/ miscellaneous services rendered during the corresponding period in the year 2002. Detailed figures of receipt of passport applications/passports issued/ miscellaneous services rendered including total revenue and expenditure of passport offices are at **Appendix IV**.

Machine Writing of Passports

All 30 Passport Offices are issuing machine printed and machine readable passports which have the scanned photograph and signature of the applicant printed on the passports.

Scanning of Passport Files

A project to scan all passport files in Passport

Offices is currently underway and is likely to be completed by the end of 2004.

Training of the CPO Personnel

In order to improve working skills of the officials of passport offices, computer training was arranged for 328 officials of Passport Offices.

Passport Officers Conference

Passport Officers Conference was held from 27-29 January 2003. The Conference was inaugurated by External Affairs Minister, who also launched the Central Database of passport holders. The External Affairs Minister emphasized on modernization, decentralization, elimination of pendencies, speedy redressal of public grievances, proper maintenance of Passport Office premises and zero tolerance towards corruption and negligence. These also formed part of the agenda of the conference.

Consular Services

All Missions and Posts abroad render consular services to Indian nationals living and working in foreign countries. In cases of deaths of Indians abroad, prompt assistance was provided by our Missions and Posts for completing the formalities for early despatch of the mortal remains, liaison with the local and Indian authorities and keeping the relatives of the deceased informed.

Visas

Over the years, the procedure for grant of visa by our Missions and Posts has been liberalised. Many Missions and Posts grant visas either on the same day or within 48 hours.

161 Indian Missions and Posts abroad provided visa services to 7,46,702 foreigners during the period from January, 2003 to June, 2003.

Visa related agreements

In order to strengthen friendly relations and facilitate travel between Indian and other countries, bilateral agreements on visa free travel for diplomatic and official passport holders were signed with Thailand, Chile, Armenia, Israel, Hungary, Peru, Tajikistan and Myanmar during the year 2003-04.

Consular Attestation

During the year 3,75,545 documents were accorded consular attestation in CPV Division, of which 1,70,270 were commercial documents.

Bilateral Agreements

In order to provide a legal and institutional framework to combat organised crime, international terrorism and drug trafficking, and to respond to the growing international dimensions of financial and other crime, bilateral agreements are being negotiated with several countries to provide legal underpinning to this international effort. These consular agreements include Extradition Treaties, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs) in Criminal Matters and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties in Civil Matters. Extradition Treaties were signed with France, Poland, South Africa, Mauritius, Bulgaria and Tajikistan. Extradition Treaties and a MLAT in Criminal Matters were also initialled with Thailand and Belarus.

In addition, an Agreement on Combating Organised Crime and International Terrorism with Poland was signed in February 2003 and an Agreement on Mutual Protection of Classified Information with Ukraine was signed in August 2003.

During the period, official delegations visited South Africa, Belarus, Thailand and Nepal

to negotiate Extradition Treaties and MLATs in Criminal Matters.

Extradition Cases and Legal Assistance

The Ministry actively pursues request for extradition and legal assistance from foreign Governments both for criminal and civil/commercial offences. The requests for extradition emanate from our obligations under the Extradition Treaties or Extradition Arrangements entered into with various countries. During the year 2003, five extradition requests from various Indian investigating agencies were forwarded to the foreign governments. During the same period India received five extradition requests from the foreign Governments. In the year 2003, two persons were extradited by the Government of India. One person was extradited to India in 2003. In the year 2003, the Government of India received 105 requests for legal assistance from the foreign Governments and 24 Indian requests for legal assistance in criminal matters were forwarded to the foreign Governments.

Vision

The Consular, Passport and Visa Division is the public face of the Ministry of External Affairs. The aim of the Ministry has been to provide citizen friendly services through the Passport Offices in India and Missions abroad. The Ministry also aimed to make the passports as secure and tamper proof as possible. In order to achieve this Ministry has gone in for:

- Modernisation- through massive computerization in order to provide speedier services to the increasing number of applicants;
- Decentralisation- by expanding the network at District level in the Indian States.
- Construction of our own Passport Office buildings to replace the rented ones.

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16. Administration and Organisation

In the global arena, the areas of activity of the Ministry of External Affairs have increased over a period of time. This Ministry is actively engaged in various activities like promoting free trade areas between India and other parts of the world, extradition, security related and anti-terrorism issues, as well as on pursuing bilateral cooperation in the commercial, economic and scientific fields with US, Russia and other countries. The foreign policy pursuits and interests of India in the region and beyond have been growing steadily. Given the present pace and intensity of diplomatic activity in which India is engaged, the need for additional manpower in the Ministry of External Affairs being felt now is more acute than ever.

While delivering the Inaugural Distinguished Persons Lecture in the Foreign Service Institute in January, 2003, Shri Yashwant Sinha, External Affairs Minister had emphasized that: *"As an emerging world power, 600 and odd officers are not sufficient to provide the sinews for Indian diplomacy".*

With the opening of Indian Consulate General at Birgunj, the number of resident Indian Diplomatic Missions/Posts and other offices abroad increased to 162. The total strength of the Indian Foreign Service A (IFS A), Indian Foreign Service B (IFS B), Interpreter and Legal & Treaties (L&T) cadres of the Ministry is 3491 as detailed in the table at **Appendix I**.

Recruitments made in the Ministry in 2003-04 through Direct Recruitment (DR), Departmental Promotions (DP) and Limited Department Examinations (LDE) including the reserved vacancies, are given in the table at **Appendix II**. The language proficiency of the officers in the Ministry is reflected in the table given at **Appendix III**.

The cadre review of Indian Foreign Service, both Branch A and B, is at an advanced stage of finalisation to meet the functional requirements of the Ministry and also to improve the legitimate promotional avenues of the respective cadres.

The revised Financial Powers of Government of India's Representatives Abroad have been brought out on a CD-ROM for easy referencing by users. In its continuing efforts to provide facility to serving officers, Amendments to Para 5 of Annexure XI to IFS (PLCA) Rules were carried out to grant passage to a parent who becomes single and dependent on the officer at the time when the officer is posted abroad.

Establishment Division

The Establishment Division of the Ministry of External Affairs is a service Department administering expenditure related to Capital Outlay for purchase of properties and construction and renovation projects in India and abroad.

In addition, the Division is responsible for renting and maintenance of Ministry of External Affairs premises in India and abroad, fixation of allowances and grants and supply of office and residential equipment, furniture, art objects to Missions as well as Offices at Headquarters.

Properties for Chancery and Residences in Prague and Consul General's Residence in Chicago bought during the year.

Missions paying the high rentals have been asked to locate suitable properties for purchase and send proposals to the Ministry. A shortlist of stations have been drawn up in this regard and Missions were advised to locate appropriate properties, which could be purchased by the Ministry. Properties in Prague, Chicago and Panama were identified for this purpose. Properties in Prague and Chicago were accordingly purchased. It is proposed to set up a Cultural Centre in Washington DC and the transaction for a property which had been identified could not be completed owing to absence of local zoning laws. It is now proposed to redevelop one of our existing properties to house an auditorium and cultural centre. In September 2003 the Delegation of Financial Power Rules have been liberalized and the Ministry's financial power for such matters

has been raised from Rs.5 crores to Rs.15 crores. This is expected to encourage acquisition of properties by the Ministry and our Missions/Posts have been told to send suitable purchase proposals for processing in the Ministry.

The Ministry owns seventeen plots of land in various countries abroad for which project proposals have been processed and are in various stages of planning and implementation. The Foreign Secretary heads a Monitoring Committee to review progress of project proposals.

The Ministry has a number of plots of land abroad, which have been acquired for construction of Chanceries and Residences for our Missions. During the year 2003-04 substantial progress was made to develop these plots and commence planning and construction activities in a systematic manner.

Construction of High Commissioner's Residence in Gaborone has been completed, interior decoration of the Chancery and Embassy Residence in Abu Dhabi is in progress. The rectification of defects in the IGCIC, Mauritius has been completed. Financial approvals for the construction of an Embassy Complex in Beijing, a Cultural Centre in Port of Spain and re-development of PR's Residence in Geneva have been obtained. Construction of the Muscat Embassy Complex is to commence soon, but, the Embassy Complex project in Doha, which has reached an advanced stage of planning, has been delayed in view of shifting of the venue of the diplomatic enclave. A fresh plot of land has now been allotted. Financial approvals for redevelopment project for High Commissioner's Residence in Singapore and Embassy Complex in Warsaw are awaited. Architects for projects in Abuja, Brasilia, Kathmandu, Kyiv and for 8 SAS, London property have been selected through design competitions. It is proposed to build Chanceries, Residences for Heads of Missions and other residences in Abuja and Brasilia and Chancery and Residence in

Kathmandu. Design selection process for project in Dar-es-Salaam is also underway. An architect has been selected for the Moscow project and the preliminaries for getting the financial approval are being completed through Internal Finance Division of the Ministry. It is proposed to build 99 residences and a school in Moscow. Construction projects in Tashkent and Warsaw have been revived and the process of planning for getting financial approval is on. Design brief for our project in Dhaka has been finalized and architects shortlisted for the Project have been asked to submit design concept entries. Construction of a Cultural Centre in Tokyo and renovation of other properties of the Mission are at planning stage.

A residential complex in Dwarka with 231 flats has been completed and is being made available for allotment to officers and staff of the Ministry.

In India construction of a building complex for Foreign Service Institute, Hostel and Residences and headquarters for Asian-Afro Legal Consultative Organisation are at advanced stages. An additional strip of land has been acquired for the FSI complex. ICCR building in Kolkata and Regional Passport Office building in Lucknow are also being constructed. Construction of RPO building in Chandigarh has been completed and the building was inaugurated in February 2004. Construction of a housing complex for Ministry of External Affairs officers in Pappankala, Dwarka has also been completed. Financial sanction for Ministry of External Affairs Officers' Housing Complex in Chanakyapuri is awaited.

As the design competition for Videsh Bhavan was terminated by the Ministry, the task of formulating a fresh design concept was entrusted to the CPWD. A presentation of the design concept was made to the External

Regional Passport Office building in Chandigarh has been inaugurated.

Affairs Minister on 17 February 2004 and the concept has been approved in principle.

In pursuance of the recommendations of Standing Committee of Parliament on External Affairs with regard to close monitoring, evaluation and control of construction projects and property acquisition proposals, a Monitoring Committee under the chairmanship of the Foreign Secretary has been set up in June 2003. A Sub-Committee chaired by Additional Secretary (Human Resource) in the Ministry meets every week to monitor progress of projects and submits a monthly report to the Chairman.

The Information Technology Task Force monitors implementation of the Minimum Agenda for e-Governance for enhancing the use of information and communications technology in the Ministry and all Missions/Posts.

The reconstituted Objects d' Art Committee encouraged the acquisition of works of art as also handicrafts from various regions of India. The Information Technology Task Force held meetings to review and Monitor the implementation of the Minimum Agenda for e-Governance with the objective of enhancing the functional efficiency of the Ministry and all Missions/Posts in respect of Information and Communications Technology. A Five Year Action Plan has prioritized proposals which include standardization of websites and secure e-mail networking communications. One of the Mission Mode Projects of the Ministry pertains to the utilization of IT in the processing of consular work of the CPV Division.



17. Coordination

The Coordination Division consists of three Wings: Parliament Section, Coordination Section and Students Cell.

Parliament Section

Coordination Division is the nodal point of the Ministry of External Affairs for all work relating to Parliament. The Coordination Division also organizes the meetings of the Consultative Committee on External Affairs, and coordinates and looks after work relating to Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs and other Parliamentary Committees in relating to matters handled by the Ministry of External Affairs.

Coordination Section

Coordination Section processes requests for grant of no objection from political angle to the visits by Governors, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha, Union Ministers, Ministers in the State Governments, MPs, MLAs, members of the Judiciary, Government officials etc. Political clearance is normally accorded by the Ministry of External Affairs after taking into consideration several factors. These include guidelines laid down by the Government of India for this purpose; the political and functional justification for the visit; the background and antecedents of the organizers; and the recommendation from our Mission/Post concerned. The recommendations of this Ministry is an essential input before a Government official is permitted to proceed abroad.

In the field of Sports, which is also dealt with by the Coordination Section, the successful

holding of the 1st Afro-Asian Games in Hyderabad from 24 October to 1 November 2003, put India firmly in the international sports map. This was followed by our successful bid to hold the Commonwealth Games in New Delhi in 2010. During the year, Coordination Section also processed a large number of approvals for participation of various Indian sportsmen and sports teams in international events abroad and foreign sports teams in India.

During the year, Anti-Terrorism Day (21st May), Sadbhavana Diwas (20th August) and Quami Ekta Week/Diwas (19-25 November) were observed with due solemnity. Pledges were administered, both at Headquarters and in our Missions abroad.

The nominations of foreign nationals for the Padma Awards were processed and, based on the recommendations of our Heads of Missions, seven foreign nationals were awarded Padma Awards on the eve of Republic Day 2004.

Requests for grant of no objection for holding international conferences, seminars, workshop, acceptance of foreign aid/grants, approvals under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, grant of Amateur W/T Licence under the Indian Telegraph Act 1885, grant in aid to Indo-foreign cultural friendship and cultural societies located in foreign countries, were also processed during the year in an expeditious manner. Similarly, diplomatic clearance for non-scheduled flights, visits by foreign naval ships and vessels were processed.

Students Cell

Students Cell, a part of the Coordination Division, deals with the selection, nomination and admission of foreign self financing students against reserved seats in MBBS/BDS, Engineering Degree, B. Pharmacy and Engineering Diploma courses in Medical and Engineering institutions.

It also deals with political clearance in respect of foreign students seeking admission to Graduate and Post Graduate courses in Engineering, Medicine, Management and other technical and professional courses including Elective training in various medical institutions and research courses.

It liaises with the various government Ministries/Departments and institutions in connection with the issue of political clearance and admission of self financing foreign students to various technical and professional courses.

132 valid applications for admission to MBBS/BDS were received in the academic year 2002-2003, and 149 in the year 2003-2004. Similarly 120 and 122 applications were received during the years 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 respectively for admission to reserved seats for Degree/Diploma in Engineering and Pharmacy.

During the years 2002-2003 and 2003-2004, in addition to processing of applications for admissions against reserved seats, 893 and 1123 applications respectively were processed for grant of no objection from political angle.

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18. Non Resident Indians and People of Indian Origin Overseas

Continuing our policy of active engagement of the Indian Diaspora, several steps were taken to address their concerns and meet their expectations and aspirations.

Responding to the long standing demands of the Indian Diaspora to strengthen emotional and cultural bonds with India and in pursuance of the Prime Minister's assurance at the PBD 2003, the Ministry of External Affairs, in coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs, secured passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2003 in December 2003, which has since been enacted to grant Dual Citizenship to the Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) in 16 specified countries, whose legal systems are compatible with the concepts of the Dual Citizenship and which have a large concentration of the Indian Diaspora. Consequential changes in the Citizenship Rules are being finalized by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

In pursuance of the assurance of the Prime Minister at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2003, the Ministry of External Affairs pursued with the Ministry of Human Resource Development and secured the Government's decision to reserve 1/3rd of the 15% supernumerary seats reserved for NRIs/PIOs, across different disciplines in educational institutions, for children of NRIs in the Gulf, at the fees applicable to the resident Indians.

To promote welfare of the overseas Indian workers, the Ministry of External Affairs coordinated efforts with the Ministry of Labour in launching of the Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, applicable to all Indian emigrant workers in December 2003.

The Seventh World Hindi Conference was held in Paramaribo, Suriname in June 2003, with participation of over 500 delegates. It was inaugurated by the President of Suriname. Shri Digvijay Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs led the Indian delegation.

An official delegation from India participated in the 150th Anniversary celebrations of the Indian arrival in the

French Caribbean island of Martinique in June 2003. A delegation from the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe led by the Deputy Chairman of its General Council visited India in November 2003 to discuss the programme of the 150th Anniversary celebrations of the first Indian arrival in Guadeloupe. The delegation met the Chief Minister of Pondicherry from where most of the PIOs in the Island originally came and invited a delegation to visit Guadeloupe for the occasion.

A website www.stio.nic.in was launched jointly with the Department of Science and Technology for interactive exchanges with Scientists and Technologists of Indian origin, with a view to assist them in their endeavour to play a role in national development.

An Empowered Committee was constituted by the Government to discuss possible role for scientists and technologists of Indian Origin in the USA, in areas of Internal Security within the ambit of Indo-American bilateral relations. The Committee held three meetings including one in USA.

A national seminar on Private International Law was organized in December 2003 jointly with Indian Society for International Law to discuss various matters concerning marriage, divorce, alimony, child custody, inheritance etc., which have a bearing on matrimonial alliance of NRIs and PIOs in India. Difficulties being faced by NRI/PIO ex-servicemen abroad in receiving pensions from India were discussed with Ministry of Defence and appropriate steps were taken to obviate the difficulties.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) 2004 was held on 9-11 January at New Delhi. Over 2000 delegates including 1321 from 61 countries attended it. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is, perhaps, the largest gathering of the Indian Diaspora on one platform. It contributed to galvanizing a sense of Global Indian community. Issues related to concerns, expectations and aspirations of the Diaspora were discussed. It was co-organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and FICCI. Twelve prominent PIOs were honoured with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award. It

was decided to establish a Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra, as an autonomous institution, to promote multi-dimensional welfare of the Indian Diaspora. The Prime Minister also announced the decision to allot a plot of land and a grant of Rs. 25 crores.

Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awardees 2004

- Justice Mr. Ahmed Moosa Ebrahim (Zimbabwe), Retired Supreme Court Judge
- Mr. Bharrat Jagdeo (Guyana), President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana
- Prof. Dipak C. Jain (US), Dean, Kellogg School of Management, US
- Mr. Fitz Remedios Santana De Souza- (Kenya), Freedom Fighter
- Late Ms. Kalpana Chawla (US), Astronaut
- Lord Meghnad Desai (UK), Economist and Member of House of Lords
- Dr. Mariam Chisti (Kuwait), Senior Consultant in Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- Mr. P. Mohamed Ali (Oman), Entrepreneur and Philanthropist
- Mr. Mahendra Pal Chaudhry (Fiji), MP and Leader of Fiji Labour Party
- Dr. Narinder Singh Kapany (US), Known as the "Father of Fibre Optics" and a Philanthropist
- Mr. Shashi Tharoor (US), Writer, Scholar & International Civil Servant
- Ms. Sukhi Turner (New Zealand), Mayor of Dunedin, New Zealand





Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee with Shri Bharrat Jagdeo, President of Guyana) at the inaugural of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, on January 9, 2004.



The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awardees with the Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

19. Foreign Service Institute

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) continued in its endeavor to train foreign diplomats from all over the world apart from training of IFS Probationers. The 2002 batch of the Indian Foreign Service completed the training at the FSI and the 2003 batch commenced their training at the FSI from January 2004. Foreign Service Institute organised thirty-second Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) from 13 January to 21 February 2003 in which 23 diplomats participated. In addition, two diplomats from Afghanistan and one from Israel participated in the above-mentioned PCFD in term of special agreement. The thirty-third PCFD was successfully held from 24 March to 2 May 2003. The 34th PCFD was conducted from 27 October to 5 December 2003, in which diplomats from 26 countries participated. Another *Special Course for Afghan Diplomats (SCAD)* was also conducted during the period from 21 July to 12 September 2003. Apart from these a special Course for Lao Diplomats (SCLD) was conducted from 15-26 December 2003.

Earlier FSI used to conduct an Orientation Course for diplomats resident in India. However, in order to also target senior-level diplomats from the capitals of major players in world affairs, and to expand India's outreach in keeping with its emerging regional and global role, it was decided to subsume the orientation course in the *Advanced Course on Asia for Foreign Diplomats (ACAFD)*, covering Asian affairs with special references to South Asia and India.

The first ACAFD was successfully held from 15-26 September 2003 on a self-financing basis. Participants included diplomats from USA, Russia, China, Canada, Germany, Kuwait, UAE etc. Given the enthusiastic

response to the course, FSI intends to conduct one such course every six months.

Also, in pursuance with the Government of India's policy to continuously develop knowledge and skills of government officials, FSI has been entrusted with the responsibility of the mid-career training of the Indian Foreign Service. Given the constraints of our officers being dispersed all over the world in different time zones, classroom kind of teaching was found unsuitable for such training. Development in Information Technology now make it possible in delivering online training programmes through a virtual campus. Accordingly FSI has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IGNOU for designing an inter/intranet-based virtual campus for the mid career programme.

Keeping in view the changing nature of diplomatic work, FSI restructured the training programme for the 2002 batch officer trainees of Indian Foreign Service, to include a two month long module on economic diplomacy consisting of the following:

- Lecture sessions on contemporary issues in the field of international trade & commerce and Indian & International economy by a pool of experts.
- One week long attachment in Bankers Training College, Mumbai on functioning of Financial Institutions.
- Six week long corporate attachment organized by Center for Public Policy, IIM Bangalore.
- One-week attachment with the Commerce Ministry.

Also, to inculcate proper communication skills, a workshop was organized with the help of our former diplomats and an expert from Indian Institute of Mass Communications.

During the year 2003, MoUs for cooperation between the FSI and the Foreign Service Institutes of Palestine, Canada and Uzbekistan were signed. Discussion were also held with delegations from the Foreign Service Institutes of South Africa, Palestine, Cuba, Canada as well as the Diplomatic Institute, Vienna on matters relating to cooperation in training and research.

Acceding to the request made by the Dean of Iraqi Foreign Ministry's Training Department, Foreign Service Institute (FSI) conducted a Special Course for Iraqi Diplomats from 19 January -12 March 2004. Initially, 15 Iraqi Diplomats joined the training. However, one Diplomat had to leave due to personal exigencies. Furthermore, 35th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats for six weeks commenced from 8 March 2004 for participants from 24 different countries.

Furthermore, FSI was requested to give a demonstration of its distance training methodology developed to provide mid-career training to IFS officer via internet, at an International Conference of Diplomatic Training held in London from 28 January 2004. FSI's distance training methodology has been acclaimed as one of the technically most advanced methods globally and has evoked interest from a number of diplomatic training institutes in other countries. Dean (FSI) and Shri Ved Goyal of Indira Gandhi National Open University represented India at this conference which was held in London from 28-30 January 2004.

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Probationers of 2002 and 2003 Batch of the IFS call on the President, March 6, 2004.



Probationers of 2002 Batch of the IFS call on the Prime Minister, August 25, 2003.

20. Implementation of Official Language Policy and Propagation of Hindi Abroad

The Ministry of External Affairs is making all efforts for the promotion and propagation of Hindi in its offices as well as in Missions/Posts abroad. Besides implementing the official language policy of the Government of India, it plays an important role in the promotion and propagation of Hindi abroad. Documents like Bilateral Treaties, Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, Credentials, Speeches of President, PAC paragraphs, Annual Report of the Ministry and Parliament Questions submitted to both the Houses of Parliament are issued bilingually.

The Ministry has a well-formulated scheme of propagation of Hindi abroad. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) deputed visiting Hindi Professors to various foreign Universities. Indian Missions/Posts abroad promote and assist in the learning of Hindi through correspondence courses conducted by Central Hindi Directorate. In 2003-04, one hundred slots were allotted to the students of different countries to learn Hindi at the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. Hindi teachers were appointed in about 28 Indian Missions /Posts abroad under a special scheme to teach Hindi to the children of Mission personnel and other officials of organisations like Airlines, Banks etc.

Hindi teaching material and related children literature on various subjects, such as, Indian Culture, Art, literature, History and Philosophy were sent to Indian Missions/Posts for their libraries and also for donating to educational institutions and various voluntary organisations engaged in promotion of Hindi. Nine prominent Hindi magazines are also sent to Missions/Posts abroad. Teaching material, including textbooks, dictionaries, audio-visual cassettes, computer software, CD-ROMs etc. are also sent on a regular basis.

The Missions/Posts maintain close contact with local organizations and people of the Indian community, and fulfill their Hindi language requirements. Some of our Missions/Posts organised Hindi conferences, literary events, Hindi essay competitions etc. to promote Hindi. Some Indian Missions such as London, Yerevan and Kathmandu publish Hindi magazines. Financial assistance is given to organisations engaged in teaching and promotion of Hindi as well as Indian culture abroad. E/I Budapest was granted Rs. 1.75 lakh for continuing Hindi classes for higher learning.

The VII World Hindi Conference was organised from 5-9 June 2003 in Suriname. The official delegation comprised of 58 members and was led by Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Digvijay Singh. Other delegations were from many State Govts./Universities/Institutions in India and there were also several representatives from abroad, including delegations from Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Nepal, Russia, Japan, France, Poland, UK, Tajikistan, South Africa, Mauritius, Fiji, US, Holland, Hungary etc. The Conference was inaugurated by the President of Suriname, Mr. Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan. A message from Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India, was video telecast on this occasion, and a special postal first-day-cover was released by the Govt. of Suriname on this occasion.

An Agreement on the establishment of the World Hindi Secretariat was signed between India and Mauritius on 21 November 2003, during the visit of the Mauritian Prime Minister Mr. Paul Berenger to India. The Secretariat will liaise with Universities and organizations promoting Hindi all over the world.

A high level committee under the chairmanship of Shri Digvijay Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, has been set up to look into the matters concerning recognition of Hindi in the United Nations as an official Language. The first meeting of the Committee was held on 29.7.2003 under the chairmanship of the External Affairs Minister. Further follow up meetings under the chairmanship of Shri Digvijay Singh, and subsequently under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary (HR) were also held.

Efforts are being made to create a Hindi Website on United Nations as a link to UN's official website. Hindi Website on UN will provide useful information on UN to people in general and also make a step forward towards popularizing Hindi. A Hindi Fortnight was organized in the Ministry in September 2003. Various competitive programmes like Hindi noting/drafting, Hindi essay writing, Hindi stenography and Hindi typing competitions were held in which a large number of Ministry of External Affairs officials participated. Hindi day was observed in several Missions/Posts abroad for which substantive grants were given by the Ministry from the Hindi Budget.

Hindi forms an integral part of the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) training programmes. Intensive training on Government's Official Language policy and its implementation (Rules and Regulations) is given to the trainees. Meeting of the Official Language Implementation Committee was held on 17.1.2003. The Committee of Parliament on Official Language inspected the Regional Passport Offices at Goa (14.2.2003), Mumbai (8.7.2003), Chennai (30.8.2003), Jaipur (11.9.2003) and Kolkata (9.10.2003). Passport offices were also separately inspected by the Hindi Section of the Ministry for encouraging progressive use of Hindi.



21. Gender Issues

Gender equality is actively fostered by the Ministry. Equal opportunities are provided to women officers to take up challenging positions and assignments. At present, there are 2 women officers at Secretary level, 6 women officers at Additional Secretary level and 20 women officers at Joint Secretary level. Presently there are 16 women officers posted as Ambassadors/High Commissioners/

Permanent Representatives /Consuls General. Women officers have also held important positions representing India in prominent international organizations such as United Nations and its related organizations such as UNESCO, ESCAP, etc. The women diplomatic officers are equally distributed between Headquarters and Indian Missions/Posts abroad. The

present distribution of women officers among the various cadres in the Ministry of External Affairs is at **Appendix XIX**. An Additional Secretary level officer heads a Women's Cell created in the Ministry to address any complaint of sexual harassment of women officers at the work place and to interact with institutions/bodies such as National Commission for Women.



External Affairs Minister Shri Yashwant Sinha and Foreign Secretary Shri Shashank with lady officers of the Ministry of External Affairs.

22. Cultural Relations

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (hereinafter referred to as the Council or ICCR) is an autonomous body that was set up in 1950, with the primary objective of establishing, reviving and strengthening cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. The major activities of the Council include:

- (i) administration of scholarship schemes for overseas students on behalf of the Government of India;
- (ii) exchange of exhibitions;
- (iii) organization of and participation in seminars and symposia;
- (iv) exchange of performing arts groups;
- (v) establishing and maintaining Chairs and Professorships for Indian Studies abroad;
- (vi) presentation of books and musical instruments;
- (vii) annual organization of the Maulana Azad Memorial Lectures and Maulana Azad Essay Competition and other programmes on behalf of MEA;
- (viii) providing the secretariat for the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding;
- (ix) publications;
- (x) maintaining Indian Cultural Centers abroad and supporting special bilateral programmes.

Scholarships and Welfare of International Students

One of the important activities of ICCR was the continued implementation of its scholarship programmes. The Council administered over 2000 scholarships under various scholarship schemes for students in graduate, post-graduate and doctoral programmes as well as for pursuing professional courses such as, engineering, pharmacy, humanities and accountancy. The thrust of the scholarship programme is towards developing nations with a special

focus on neighbours in South Asia. A total of 1093 new scholarships were offered this year to students from 60 different countries under various ICCR Scholarship Schemes and also under agency work on behalf of Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Finance. Whereas 602 students pursued various courses under different ICCR Scholarship schemes, 69 students pursued courses under the Agency work on behalf of Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Finance.

Apart from this, the Council also looks after the general welfare of international students studying in India under self-finance and on ICCR scholarship schemes. Under this programme, the Council arranged summer camp for Simla-Kullu-Manali/ during May-June 2003. The Council had also organized seven Winter Camps in the States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Orissa. All the camps were well-received. The Council brought out ICCR Newsletter for foreign students "At Home in India" October – December, 2003. As another measure to streamline the disbursement of scholarship dues of the scholars, the Council has introduced ATM cards for foreign students through which they can withdraw their dues payable by the Council from the ATM machines nearer to their institutions.

The Council celebrated the 11th International Students Festival at Hamsdhwani Theatre, Pragati Maidan on 10 November 2003. Students from 18 countries participated enthusiastically in the Festival. The Council organized an Orientation Programme for IFS Probationers in May-June, 2003.

Indian Cultural Centres Abroad

In order to promote awareness and appreciation of India's composite cultural heritage abroad, the Council has set up and maintains 16 Cultural Centres in different parts of the world. There Centres are located at Cairo (Egypt), Berlin (Germany), Port Louis (Mauritius), Paramaribo (Suriname),

Georgetown (Guyana), Jakarta (Indonesia), Moscow (Russian Federation), London (UK), Almaty (Kazakhstan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Durban and Johannesburg (South Africa), Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Dushanbe (Tajikistan) and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). All these cultural centres are functioning under the administrative control of the Indian Missions in the respective countries.

The activities of the Cultural Centers reflect the cultural needs of the local population. The Centers organize panel discussions, lectures, exhibitions of visual arts, essay competition, performance of dance and music, staging of plays, screening of Indian films, publication of news bulletins, seminars on Indian topics etc. Some of the Cultural Centers also have regular teaching classes of Indian music, dance, tabla, yoga and Hindi language. The Centers also maintains Libraries and Audio-Video material for the visitors. To facilitate the above programmes, ICCR periodically sends books in Hindi, English, Sanskrit and Urdu and audio-video material.

Apart from organizing their own activities, these Cultural Centers also provide a supportive role to the respective Indian Missions for coordinating various cultural activities. The Centers develop and maintained contacts with the local citizens particularly students, teachers, academicians, opinion makers and cultural personalities to project holistic picture of India's rich and diverse cultural heritage.

Visiting Professors and Chairs of Indian Studies Abroad

The Council also deputed Visiting Professors at prestigious universities abroad and maintain Chairs of Indian Studies to teach Indian languages and other related subjects. The deputation of Professors abroad are done under the bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP). Presently 17 Professors are on deputation. These Chairs are in Moscow (Russia), Paris (France), Warsaw (Poland), Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago), Osh (Kyrgyzstan), Bangkok (Thailand),

Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Bucharest (Romania), Suriname (Paramaribo), Ankara (Turkey), Seoul (South Korea), Sofia (Bulgaria), Beijing (China), Madrid (Spain) and Budapest (Hungary) to teach Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Modern Indian History and Indian Civilization.

Publications

Under its Publication programme the Council regularly brings out six journals in 5 different languages. These are 'Gagananchal' (Hindi), 'Africa Quarterly' and 'Indian Horizons' (English), 'Thaqafat-ul-Hind' (Arabic), 'Papeles de la India' (Spanish), and 'Rencontre Avec L'Inde' (French).

In the current year the Council brought out two special volumes to mark the Vishwa Hindi Sammelan in Suriname - 'Vishwa Hindi Rachna' and 'Smarika'. The Council published number of books during the year. These were - "Mexico : Similarities and Encounters Throughout History" by Prof. Eva Alexandra Uchmany, a coffee table book on children's stories entitled "Once Upon a Time in India", Devnagri transcription of Council's founder President, Maulana Azad's manuscript "Tarjumanul Quran" by Prof. Akhtarul Wasey etc.

The Council mounted an exhibition of its publications from 9-11 January, 2004 at Vigyan Bhavan on the occasion of the Second Bhartiya Pravasi Diwas. The Council also participated in the International Book Fair from 14-22 February, 2004 organized by the National Book Trust at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

Presentations

During the period, the Council presented twelve bronze busts of Mahatma Gandhi, one bust each of Guru Rabindranath Tagore, Mother Teresa and Swami Vivekananda for installation in South Africa, US, Russia, Turkey, Italy, Germany, Syria, Djibouti, Brazil and Trinidad & Tobago, Martinique Island, Mauritius, Colombia, Canada, France and the US. Four

life size statues in bronze of Mahatma Gandhi were sent to Kazakhstan, Colombia and Canada (Quebec City and Ottawa) for installation at prominent places.

The Council sent books, art-objects, audio-visual material, musical instrument etc. highlighting Indian culture, art, architecture, cuisine, dance and music to 48 countries.

Library

The ICCR Library was established in 1950. It started with the personal collections and rare manuscripts of the Council's founder President and the first Education Minister of India, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Over the years it has grown manifold and now has a collection of 50,000 volumes mainly on Indian history, art and culture. The main attraction of the library is a collection of 195 rare manuscripts in Urdu, Arabic, Persian languages. The manuscripts and other rare books along with the microfilm rolls, are housed in a special section of the library called 'Gosha-e-Azad'. The Library is a boon for researchers in Indology. The Library is a member of DELNET (Developing Library Network). 4152 visitors have used the facilities available at Azad Bhavan Library. During the same period, the Library has added 1000 (one thousand) books to its collections. The Library has also supplied Urdu, Bengali, Hindi, Malayalam and Tamil publications to the Tagore Cultural Center in Berlin. The Council has awarded 11 (eleven) short-term Library Fellowships to Indian nationals. The Library has also submitted the list of manuscripts to the National Mission for Manuscripts during May 2003. Retro-conversion and Bar-coding of English and Hindi records are completed during October, 2003. The Council has started digitization of manuscripts. The Council has brought out an annotated bibliography of manuscripts available in Gosha-e-Azad this year in Printed Catalogue Format.

Exhibitions

The Council sent two major exhibitions viz. 'Indian Dolls and Dresses' to Venezuela,

Argentina, New Zealand and Fiji and 'Exhibition of Madhubani Paintings' to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Syria and Baku. An exhibition entitled "Ode to Peace" was sent to Washington. An exhibition of Indian Musical Instruments displayed in Tashkent in collaboration with Sangeet Natak Academy.

The Council organized a photo-exhibition on "Mirza Ghalib" (Reflection on various moods of his work) at Sapru House, New Delhi from 22 May to 2 May 2003. Besides this, the Council organized two Exhibitions, namely a photo and screening exhibition on "Plight of the Kashmiri Pandits" at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi during November, 2003 and a Philatelic Exhibition called "Beyond the Boundaries" during January, 2004 on the occasion of the 2nd Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas.

Incoming & Outgoing Distinguished Visitors Programme

Sharing the ideas and holding free discussions has been a part of India's cultural tradition. In keeping with this tradition and as part of its effort to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries, the Council facilitates exchanges of scholars, intellectuals, academicians and artistes under the Distinguished Visitors Programme.

Under this programme, ICCR plays host to eminent musicians, dancers, writers, intellectuals, scholars and other eminent personalities from all over the world. Sharing of ideas and free discussions are arranged by way of meetings, lectures, seminars, interactions etc. Reciprocally, distinguished Indians from diverse fields of culture are sent to other countries to interact with their counterparts and to participate in international seminars, conferences, workshops or to lecture on different subjects.

During the period, the Council hosted the visit to India of 65 Incoming Visitors from 37 countries and sponsored 78 Indian visitors to 26 countries.

Creative Dialogue (Award/Seminar/Symposia)

Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding

The Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding 2003 was announced. The Awardee for 2003 is Mr. Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of Singapore. The Jury for Jawaharlal Nehru Award also decided the period 1995-2002 as a No Award Period.

Maulana Azad Essay Competition

Maulana Azad Essay Competition has been an annual feature since 1989. Since September, 2003, the Competition has been given an international status and made open for citizens of all the countries below the age of 30 in three languages namely Arabic, Hindi and Urdu and in English language the competition is open for citizens of India and SAARC countries. The competition for 2003 in all four languages has been announced and circulated all over the world through media and our Missions abroad. The Council received a wide response from India and abroad.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Memorial Lecture

Dr. N. R. Narayana Murthy, Chairman and Chief Mentor Officer, Infosys Technologies Limited delivered the annual Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Memorial Lecture 2003 – “The Travails of Philanthropy in India” on 29th March 2004 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

Seminar and Symposia

During the period, the Council organized/assisted in organizing 6 seminars namely, “Rethinking a Millennium: India from the

Eighth to Eighteenth Century”; “Katha Indo-European Storytelling Festival: Linking Diversities; Forging Identities”; “India and the World — Crossed Glances and Relations”; “India and Central Asia: Classical to Contemporary Period”; “Omar-Khayyam” and India” and “Indian Diaspora”.

Performing Arts

During the period April-November 2003, the ICCR sponsored the visits of 119 Outgoing Cultural Delegations to 85 countries, covering all continents of the world. Special emphasis was given to holding workshops-cum-lecture demonstrations with local artistes, in addition to performances. Visit of groups to neighbouring countries was encouraged. A significant number of younger artistes and folk groups from various parts of the country were also sponsored.

Some of these groups participated in major festivals/events e.g. ‘7th World Hindi Conference, Suriname, ‘Festival of India’ in Bhutan, ‘Edinburgh International Festival’ in United Kingdom, ‘4th Asia Pacific Week’ in Germany, ‘Annual International Festival of Music and Dance’ in Bogota, ‘International Film Festival’ in Cairo, ‘2nd International Odissi Festival’ in US and GOPIO International Convention in Mauritius.

During the year 2003-04, the Council hosted the visit of 38 foreign cultural troupes to India from 32 countries. These groups were hosted from Turkmenistan, Myanmar, Uzbekistan, South Africa, Poland, Armenia, New Zealand, Portugal, Italy, Finland, Belgium, Hungary, Luxembourg, France, Slovenia, Ireland, Austria, Germany, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Fiji,

China, Pakistan, Reunion Island, Trinidad & Tobago, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Syria, Afghanistan, Egypt and Iran under the ambit of existing cultural exchange programmes/ outside CEPs. During the above period, the Council organized four major international festivals, i.e. European Union Cultural Week (22 November – 2 December 2003) Kaleidoscope (13-18 December 2003), First Island Festival (21-25 January 2004) and Sufi Festival (10-15 March 2004). Apart from Delhi, the foreign groups also performed in other cities in India, i.e. Mumbai, Kolkata, Siliguri, Chennai, Andaman & Nicobar, Jaipur, Haridwar, Kullu, Mussorie, Dehradun, Jammu, Srinagar, Mysore, Bangalore, Chandigarh, Bakhra Dam, Hyderabad, Goa, Thiruvananthapuram, Bhopal, Indore, Mangalore, Lucknow and Khajuraho.

The Council hosted the visit of 26-member Pakistan Theatre Group (Ajoka), who performed a play “Bullha” at Kamani Auditorium, New Delhi.

The Council under its “Retrospectives” Series organized the performances by the eminent empanelled artistes. During 2003-04, the Council organized four theme festivals in New Delhi, which were “Thumari”, “Andaz-e-Ghalib”, “Malhar” and “Krishna”. In addition to these festivals, the Council also organized two major festivals in Gidhaur and Mandhar, small towns in Bihar.

Accounts

ICCR’s approved Budget Estimates for general activities were Rupees 5450.00 lakhs for the year 2003-04. The final Estimates were Rupees 5650.00 lakhs. The expected receipt is Rupees 30.00 lakhs.



23. Indian Council of World Affairs

The Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) was founded in 1943 with a view to encourage the study of Indian and International affairs. It is one of the most prestigious centres for the study of international relations in the country. After being declared as an institution of national importance, the ICWA pursued a vigorous programme of activities in pursuance of its mandate. It aimed to provide through its seminars, publications, lectures and a specialized library, information for basic understanding of the complexities of the international system.

Sapru House Building

Major civil repairs were undertaken and will soon be completed. The auditorium, Conference Room and Conference Hall were renovated and made operational for academic and intellectual activities. Sapru House is being restored to the status appropriate for housing an institution of national importance. There is a proposal for the construction of parking zone and canteen in the Sapru House premises.

Grant-in-Aid

ICWA's grants-in-aid for the year 2003-04 was projected and approved for Rs.1.60 crores.

Publications

Besides its periodical publications, India Quarterly and Foreign Affairs Report, the Council brought out other publications namely: (1) Second Africa Day Lecture delivered by Shri I.K. Gujral, Former Prime Minister of India and "Ethnicity versus Nationalism: The Devolution in Sri Lanka" by Partha S. Ghosh.

CSCAP India Secretariat and Africa Centre

The Council for Security and Cooperation

in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) India Secretariat was relocated to the Sapru House. A seminar on the topic: India - ASEAN: Evolving Strategic Partnerships" was held on 10 October 2003 at Sapru House under the Chairmanship of Ambassador A.N. Ram. The distinguished journalists and academicians attended this seminar. Sapru House also has the Africa Centre which was inaugurated by the then Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh. The 3rd Alfred Nzo Memorial Lecture on "India and South Africa: Special Partners for all Seasons" was delivered by Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa on 16 October 2003. This lecture was chaired by Shri I.K. Gujral, Former Prime Minister of India, and was well attended by Africanists from all over India and distinguished personalities. The Africa Centre also has good collection of books on Africa which are helpful for the research scholars.

Library

The Sapru House Library, after repairs, renovation, extension of space, is air-conditioned and has been bettered for use as reference library for international affairs. It has a special collection of League of Nations, United Nations and European Community publications supplemented by a collection of press-clippings from Indian and foreign newspapers. It has a large stock of books, some rare books and about 27,000 volumes of serials and bound journals. The Library has 389 titles of research journals and important dailies from India and abroad. Out of these, 180 titles of eminent journals were indexed as part of its 'Current Awareness Service' to the scholars. To widen the scope of bibliographical support to the users, 'Select List of Articles on Current Affairs' was published in Foreign Affairs Report of ICWA. The Library collection was increased with new additions of journals and books. There is a proposal to purchase

Library books on International Relations and Political Science as recommended by the Library Committee.

More than 8,000 visitors used the library for their research work and reference. These included research scholars from recognized universities viz. Aligarh Muslim University, Banaras Hindu University (Varanasi), Ahilaya Vishvidyalaya (Indore), Guru Nanak Dev University (Amritsar), G.G.S. Indraprastha University (Delhi), Himachal Pradesh University (Shimla), Jamia Millia Islamia (New Delhi), Jawahar Lal Nehru University (New Delhi), Lucknow University, Punjabi University (Patiala), Delhi University, University of Jammu, University of Mumbai, University of Pune and Rani Durgawati Vishvidyalaya (Jabalpur) etc.

The computerisation work of the library is in hand. Efforts are afoot to provide internet facilities to the users. A separate multi-media section is being created for this purpose.

Seminars/Symposia/Conferences

The ICWA conducted a number of seminars, symposia and conferences during the period under the report. Special Lectures were delivered by Shri Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, Shri Peter Medgyessy, Prime Minister of the Republic of Hungary and Shri Joseph Lapid, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice of Israel, and foreign affairs Minister of Ukraine. There was a special Lectures on: "Integration and Globalisation", by Mr. Ion Iliescu, President of Romania.

A complete list is at **Annexure-XX**.

■ ■

24. Research and Information System for the Non-aligned and Other Developing Countries (RIS)

Policy Dialogue on International Economic Issues

The Research and Information System for the Non-aligned and Other Developing Countries (hereafter RIS) is an autonomous body set-up in 1984 in New Delhi with the objective of creating a think-tank on global issues in the field of international economic relations and development cooperation. RIS is mandated to function as an advisory body to the Government of India on matters pertaining to multilateral economic and social issues, including regional and sub-regional cooperation arrangements, as may be referred to it from time to time. RIS has also been envisioned as a forum for fostering effective intellectual dialogue among developing countries.

Highlights of RIS' work during the year are presented below:

Research and Policy Inputs Provided to the Government of India

RIS conducted research studies to assist the policy formulation and preparations for major Summit Meetings and other negotiations held in the year. Some of these inputs include the following:

- **XIII NAM Summit:** RIS provided inputs to Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of External Affairs for preparations for the Summit and also brought out a report *Globalization and the Non-aligned Movement: An Economic Agenda for Action* which was circulated among the delegations through the Conference Secretariat.
- **Second ASEAN-India Summit:** RIS provided inputs to Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of External Affairs for preparations for the Summit.
- **Twelfth SAARC Summit, Islamabad:** RIS prepared policy notes for Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of External Affairs on the Road to a Single Currency for South Asia, Economic Cooperation in the SAARC Region, and on Moving Forward on

SAFTA. RIS prepared a *South Asia Development and Cooperation Report 2004* on the eve of the Summit which was launched later by Deputy Chairman, RIS in the presence of the Foreign Secretary on 27 January 2004.

- **Prime Minister's Visit to China:** RIS provided inputs to Prime Minister's Office for preparations for the visit.
- **BIMST-EC Ministerial Meetings:** RIS prepared a report on the Future Directions of BIMSTEC in consultation with think-tanks of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Thailand and presented to the Ministry of External Affairs in preparation of the Ministerial Meetings.
- **IOR-ARC Ministerial Meetings:** RIS represented India at the Meeting of the IOR Academic Group held in Colombo in October 2003.
- **Cancun Ministerial Conference of WTO:** RIS assisted in preparation for the Cancun Ministerial with detailed studies on possible multilateral framework on investment and on non-agricultural market access (NAMA) in addition to other subjects. One book, one special issue of the *South Asia Economic Journal*, several discussion papers and four policy briefs were prepared specifically on the agenda of the Ministerial for the benefit of the negotiators. In addition, RIS prepared the *World Trade and Development Report 2003: Cancun and Beyond* which was presented and discussed in New Delhi and in Cancun on the sidelines of the Ministerial.
- **Joint Study Group on India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement:** RIS provided inputs to the JSG on the tariffs and trade policy.
- **Joint Study Group on India-Sri Lanka Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement:** RIS provided a draft chapter on Investment for the work of JSG.

■ **Joint Negotiating Group for India-Thailand FTA:** RIS has regularly provided inputs for the meetings of the JNG.

■ **Joint Study Group on India-China Comprehensive Economic Cooperation:** RIS is represented on the India-China JSG set up as a follow-up of the Prime minister's visit and is assisting its work with a number of studies.

■ **India-Korea JCC:** RIS provided inputs to Ministry of External Affairs for preparations for the JCC Meeting held in December 2003.

In addition, major on-going studies on the relevance of an Asian Economic Community; strategic approach for strengthening the international competitiveness in knowledge-based industries; international food safety regulations and processed food exports of India and Thailand; FDI, trade and development; implications of SAPTA, Feasibility study on India-Mauritius free trade agreement; foreign direct investment, trade and development; biotechnology and development, and on short-term forecasting of Indian exports, among others, progressed.

Policy Dialogue, Conferences and Symposia

RIS has organized a number of policy dialogues, conferences and symposia to fulfill its mandate of fostering intellectual dialogue among developing countries. The select major events organized in the period include (others are listed in Annex 1):

International Conference on Building a New Asia: Towards an Asian Economic Community, 10-11 March 2003: The Conference was organized in collaboration with the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta. Shri K.C. Pant, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission and Chairman, RIS delivered the inaugural address at the Conference. Mr. Koichi Kato, former Secretary General of

the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan delivered the keynote address. Shri I.K. Gujral, the former Prime Minister of India, delivered the valedictory address. A delegation of the distinguished conference participants also called on Shri Yashwant Sinha, External Affairs Minister at his office. The Conference had the participation of the heads of important policy think-tanks and senior experts and policy makers from China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand besides India. At the Conference, there was a consensus on the desirability of a broader Asian Economic Community in a gradual and phased manner.

ASEAN-India Network of Think-Tanks Meeting on Vision 2020

RIS organized a high-level Meeting of ASEAN Think-Tanks in New Delhi on 4-5 March to finalize the draft "ASEAN-India Vision 2020: Working Together for Shared Prosperity" with ASEAN inputs. This Meeting was attended by the heads or senior representatives of the ASEAN Think-tanks associated with ASEAN-ISIS network and other policy institutions. RIS had held extensive consultations with think-tanks and other stakeholders within the country in the course of preparation of the Draft paper. Mr Rajiv Sikri, Special Secretary (ER), MEA made opening remarks at the Meeting.

India-China Policy Dialogue

RIS hosted a high level delegation from Development Research Centre (DRC) of State Council of China which visited India from 9-15 March led by Dr. Sun Xiaoyu, Vice-President (Vice Minister), DRC. The delegation held detailed discussions with RIS on issues of establishing institutional cooperation between RIS and DRC followed by "RIS/DRC Policy Dialogue on China and India in the Global Economy". The session was co-chaired by Dr. Sun Xiaoyu and Ambassador S.T. Devare, Vice-Chairman, RIS.

Seminar on Economic Cooperation between India and Central Asia

RIS, jointly with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), organized a half-day Seminar on Economic Cooperation between India and Central Asia, in New Delhi on 17 October 2003. Shri Digvijay Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, delivered the inaugural address. Sessions were chaired by Dr S.R. Hashim, Member, UPSC and Mr. Rajiv Sikri, Special Secretary (ER) MEA.

Outreach, Global Presence and Networking

In order to influence the international development policy agenda and strengthen its outreach, an attempt has been made to participate in major international events. RIS participated in the XIII NAM Summit, Kuala Lumpur, February 2003 and in the Fifth Ministerial Conference of WTO, Cancun, September 2003. A number of events were organized on the sidelines of the WTO Ministerial. DG-RIS addressed the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for UNCTAD XI in Geneva on 23 February 2004.

The networking with other policy think-tanks for collaborative activities was strengthened with MoUs signed with the International Institute for Trade Development (Bangkok) and the Ethiopian Institute for Development Research. UN-ESCAP has invited RIS to be a core institution for the Asia-Research Network on Trade (ARTNET). RIS continued to participate in the activities of SAARC Network of Researchers as India's National Focal Point nominated by the Ministry of External Affairs. RIS has set up a New Asia Forum, as an institutional network to advance the agenda of formation of an Asian Economic Community with a quarterly journal *New Asia Monitor* and a dedicated website www.newasiaforum.org.

RIS collaborated with the Asian Development Bank (Manila), UNDP's Asia Trade Initiative (Hanoi), Food and

Agricultural Organization (Bangkok), UN-ESCAP, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (Geneva), International Food Policy Research Institute (Washington), South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (Dhaka), Thammasat University (Bangkok), Australian National University, Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (Singapore), Malaysian Institute for Economic Research, CSIS (Jakarta), Institute for Policy Studies (Colombo), Pakistan Institute of Development Research (Islamabad), among others.

Visiting Fellowship Programme on International Economic Issues and Development Policy: Capacity Building in Other Developing Countries

Under this programme, conducted in conjunction with ITEC Programme of Ministry of External Affairs, nominees from Nepal, Egypt and Uzbekistan visited RIS during February-June 2003 to receive an orientation in contemporary international economic policy issues and work on a research project jointly with RIS faculty.

RIS Publications

RIS published six books and reports, issued twelve policy briefs and 25 Discussion Papers (Appendix XXI) during the period. Two issues each of the *South Asia Economic Journal* and the *Biotechnology and Development Review* were brought out. A new journal *New Asia Monitor* was launched. Four issues of new newsletter *RIS Diary* were brought out. RIS publications can now be downloaded from its website <http://www.ris.org.in>.

Budget

RIS received a budgetary support of Rupees 137 lakhs during 2003-04 from the MEA.

A detailed list of the conferences/seminars/workshops and the publications of RIS is at **Appendix XXI**.

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Appendices

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Appendix 1

Cadre strength at Headquarters and Missions/Posts abroad during 2003-2004 (Including posts budgeted by M/o Commerce & those held in abeyance/ex-cadred)

S. No	Cadre/Post	Posts at Headquarters	Posts at Mission	Total
1	Grade I	4	22	26
2	Grade II	5	29	34
3	Grade III	27	118	145
4	Grade IV	32	103	135
5	Jr. Admn. Grade/Senior Scale	47	133	180
6	(I) Junior Scale	1	29	30
	(ii) Probationers Reserve	27	..	27
	(iii) Leave Reserve	15	..	15
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	19	..	19
	(v) Training Reserve	7	..	7
	IFS(B)			
7	(I) Grade I	43	100	143
	(ii) Deputation Reserve	6	..	6
8	(i) Grade II/III	96	178	274
	(ii) Leave Reserve	30	..	30
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	16	..	16
	(iv) Training Reserve	25	..	25
9	(I) Grade IV	215	407	622
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	..	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	55	..	55
10	(I) Grade V/VI	267	193	460
	(ii) Leave Reserve	60	..	60
	(iii) Deputation Reserve	14	..	14
11	(I) Grade II of Cypher Cadre (Cypher Assistant)	51	143	194
	(ii) Leave Reserve	24	..	24
S. No	Cadre/Post	Posts at Headquarters	Posts at Mission	Total
*12	(I) Private Secretary	35	199	234
	(ii) Leave Reserve	14	..	14
13	(I) Personal Assistant	133	195	328
	(ii) Leave Reserve	33	..	33
	(iii) Training Reserve(Hindi)	10	..	10
	(iv) Deputation Reserve	12	..	12
14	Stenographer(Gr. III)	17	77	94
15	Interpreters' Cadre	6	27	33
16	L&T Cadre	14	1	15
	Total	1420	1954	3374

(* The figure for Private Secretary include 60 posts which have been upgraded to Principal Private Secretary (PPS). Out of 60 posts of PPS, 22 posts have further been upgraded to Sr PPS.)

Appendix II

Data on recruitment through Direct Recruitment (DR), Departmental Promotions (DP) and Limited Departmental Examination (LDE), made in various groups in the Ministry of External Affairs and reserved vacancies filled by Schedule Caste/Schedule Tribe/Other Backward Classes(OBC) categories from April 2003 to February 2004

Group	Total No. of vacancies	Number of vacancies			
		Reserved			Unreserved
		SC	ST	OBC	
Group-A	10	0	0	5	5
Group-A (Ex Cadre)	2	0	0	0	2
Group-B	45	9	2	1	33
Group-C	50	9	5	0	36
Group-D	1	0	0	0	1
Total	108	18	7	6	77

Appendix III

Language-wise Statement of Officers and Missions (Grade - I of IFS to Junior Scale of IFS) (as on 11.11.2003)

S.No	Language	Total No. of Officers
1	Arabic	91
2	Burmese	1
3	Bhasa Indonesia	14
4	Chinese	56
5	Dutch	1
6	French	74
7	German	32
8	Gorkhali	1
9	Hebrew	3
10	Hungarian (Magyar)	1
11	Italian	5
12	Japanese	27
13	Kazakh	1
14	Kiswahili	8
15	Nepalese	3
16	Persian	22
17	Portuguese	18
18	Russian	77
19	Swedish	1
20	Spanish	59
21	Sebo-Crotian	3
22	Sinhalese	2
23	Thai	2
24	Tibetan	2
25	Turkish	6
26	Ukranian	1
27	Vietnames	1
28	Malay	1
29	Mandarin	1

Appendix IV

Statement showing the number of applications received and passports issued including under Tatkaal Scheme, miscellaneous applications received and services rendered as well as Revenue (including revenue under Tatkaal Scheme) and Expenditure figures of the Passport Offices from 1 January 2003 to 31 March 2004

S.No.	Name of RPO/PO	Number of Applications received	Number of Passports issued	Number of miscellaneous applications received	Miscellaneous services rendered	Passports issued under Tatkaal Scheme	Revenue under Tatkaal Scheme	Total revenue	Total Expenditure
1	Ahmedabad	252131	311938	26382	26798	12825	23483700	277535892	27437222
2	Bangalore	189486	191314	31241	31199	11618	15115100	212156854	26894333
3	Bareilly	47400	40970	3328	3312	1464	2225000	50675114	9198172
4	Bhopal	52750	48336	5057	5007	2211	2973000	56199587	6566359
5	Bhubaneswar	25362	22178	2502	2502	970	1469500	26886460	4512287
6	Chandigarh	218096	213561	26881	25208	5915	8914000	243965826	26464471
7	Chennai	273037	260379	31159	30065	20433	30150500	310499041	29490673
8	Cochin	204029	195917	32499	32528	16136	22334800	229297936	24097256
9	Delhi	218049	195705	35106	35681	19678	24865200	258230777	39284238
10	Ghaziabad	51801	43577	6499	6503	2005	2759500	50964558	5891337
11	Guwahati	20354	20571	1697	1402	2116	3123500	24957200	4195279
12	Hyderabad	331614	321899	34932	34546	21623	46870018	372948121	37109166
13	Jaipur	154314	119732	8834	7158	6442	9192000	163718841	17906138
14	Jalandhar	201572	201649	19274	18643	1085	1626600	223193850	21258700
15	Jammu	14582	11147	1001	984	511	702000	16761635	2959699
16	Kolkata	131584	124312	14474	14043	3002	4094200	139783252	14758387
17	Kozhikode	283895	239105	20920	20631	20763	30270000	324895910	26534350
18	Lucknow	183728	151642	11350	10918	1901	2595500	190417841	25962576
19	Mumbai	256969	233542	34681	33379	11811	19058600	2093541990	57556324
20	Nagpur	27237	25356	1984	1921	2294	2970000	30175749	4078013
21	Panaji	34500	33273	10696	10587	2622	3948250	43345097	5270360

Appendix IV

S.No.	Name of RPO/PO	Number of Applications received	Number of Passports issued	Number of miscellaneous applications received	Miscellaneous services rendered	Passports issued under Tatkaal Scheme	Revenue under Tatkaal Scheme	Total revenue	Total Expenditure
22	Patna	69642	41859	2959	2798	760	991400	66387000	10882103
23	Pune	69653	65336	8517	8201	5046	6412000	76205420	8016067
24	Ranchi	20032	13565	2057	1521	989	1325000	21654585	2081249
25	Srinagar	12060	12627	871	817	374	482300	13223495	6594792
26	Surat	38926	16690	2996	2725	1154	1557500	39465850	*
27	Thane	96310	92025	9863	9778	4887	6795000	102469335	**
28	Trichy	316807	284383	21686	16641	7852	10855000	339120565	27703984
29	Trivandrum	152656	143745	20009	18543	16628	24046500	184102077	16281585
30	Vishakha'nam	73095	66578	7829	7661	1978	2872500	80575190	8001776
Total		4021671	3742911	437284	421700	207093	314078168	6263355048	496986896

* expenditure included in RPO Ahmedabad's as LOC combined with RPO Ahmedabad.

** expenditure included in RPO Mumbai's as LOC combined with RPO Mumbai.

Appendix V

Finances of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2003-2004

The Budget Allocation of Ministry of External Affairs in the Budget Estimates (BE) 2003-2004 is Rs. 3410.00 crores which is an enhancement over BE 2002-2003 by Rs. 171.66 crores i.e. by 5.30%. There is no increase in Final Estimates (FE) 2003-2004.

Comparative figures of Expenditure and Budget of MEA for the past five years are as follows:

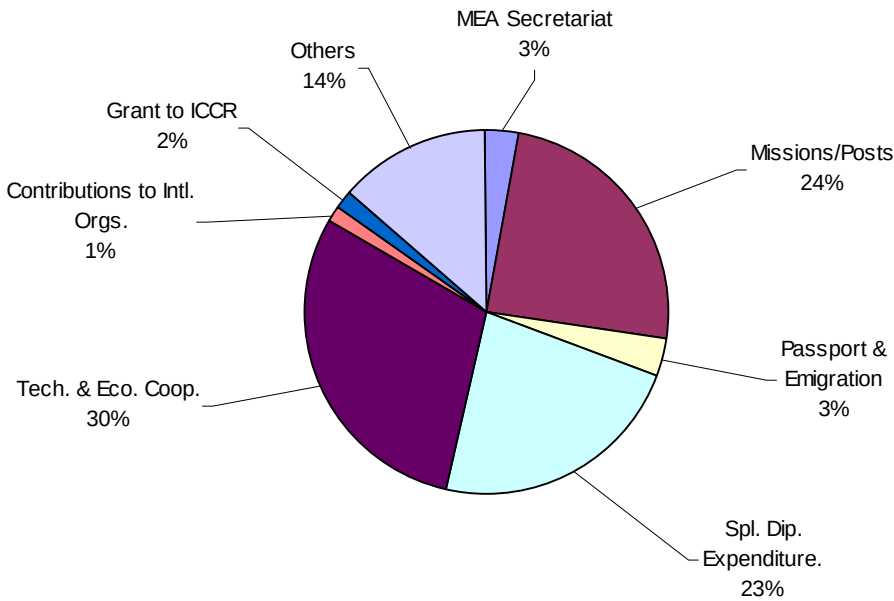
Years	Actuals (in crores)	%age variation with previous Financial year
1999-2000	2133.16	2.86%
2000-2001	2488.85	16.67%
2001-2002	2624.55	5.45%
2002-2003	3253.79	23.97%
2003-2004 (BE)	3410.00	4.80%
2003-2004 (FE)	3410.00	NIL

Appendix VI

The Major Sectoral Allocations in the 2003-2004 Budget are as follows:

	(In Rupees Crores)
MEA Secretariat	Rs. 106.94 crores
Embassies and Missions	Rs. 831.82 crores
Passport and Emigration	Rs. 111.15 crores
Spl. Diplomatic Expenditure	Rs. 767.52 crores
Technical & Economic Cooperation	Rs. 1025.64 crores
Contributions to International Organisations	Rs. 42.10 crores
Grant to Indian Council for Cultural Relations	Rs. 56.50 crores
Others	Rs. 468.33 crores

Principal Allocations in the Final Estimates 2003-2004



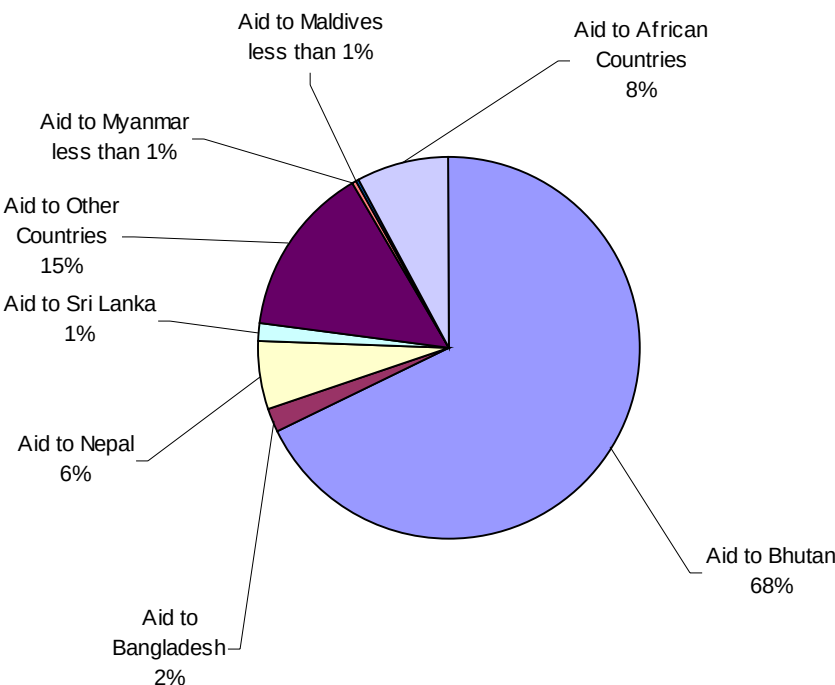
Appendix VII

India's Aid Programmes

The principal beneficiaries of our Aid Programmes in the Current Financial Year are as under :

Aid to Countries	(In Rupees Crores)
Bhutan	696.00
Bangladesh	20.00
Nepal	58.48
Sri Lanka	13.90
Myanmar	2.10
Maldives	3.94
African Countries	80.00
Others (Including Developing Countries)	151.22

In absolute terms the principal destinations of India's Aid Programmes are as follows:



3.1 Aid to Bhutan accounts for 68% of India's total aid budget. Other important destinations for Indian aid programs include African countries- 8%, Nepal – 6%, Bangladesh- 2 %, Sri Lanka – 1%, and Other countries – 15%.

3.2 The Government of India has extended loans to the Governments of Bangladesh and Bhutan to assist in the implementation of developmental projects. During 2003-2004. The loans extended to Government of Bangladesh and to Government of Bhutan amount to Rs.20.50 crores and Rs.327.50 crores, respectively.

4. The Budget of the Ministry of External Affairs is essentially a Non-Plan Budget. However, from 1996-97, a Plan head has been established with the approval of the Cabinet. This primarily caters to certain large developmental projects undertaken in Bhutan, as part of project assistance requested by Government of Bhutan in the Government of India's "Aid to Bhutan" Programme. The Tala Hydroelectric Project currently under implementation in Bhutan is a prestigious and important project. The other projects being funded from the Plan head are the Kurichu Hydroelectric Project and the Dungsum Cement Plan project, both in Bhutan.

5. The estimated expenditure on the Headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs during the current financial year is estimated to be of the order of Rs. 106.94 crores which forms about 3.5% of the total estimated revenue expenditure of the Ministry. Estimated expenditure on Indian Missions and Posts abroad is expected to be of the order of Rs. 831.83 crores which is about 27% of the total revenue expenditure of the Ministry.

6. The Ministry of External Affairs' revenue from Passport and Visa fees and other receipts are likely to be of the order of Rs. 1074.52 crores. It is estimated that Passport fees would account for about Rs. 505.69 crores, Visa fees for Rs. 544.91 crores and other receipts for Rs. 23.92 crores.

Appendix VIII

C & AG Report of Ministry of External Affairs

REVIEW OF GRANT NO. 22

Unspent Provision: The unspent Provision registered a constantly increasing trend from Rs. 116.26 crore in 1999-2000 to Rs. 136.85 crore in 2000-2001, which further increased to Rs. 258.84 crore during 2001-2002.

Schemes Affected by Unspent Provision: The main areas/ schemes affected by unspent provision during 2001-02 were Embassies and Missions (Rs. 36.12 crore); Discretionary Expenditure (Rs. 54.03 crore); aid to Bhutan (Rs. 25.25 crore); Aid to Nepal (Rs. 69.47 crore); Construction-External affairs (Rs. 41.77 crore) and loans to Government of Bangladesh (Rs. 26.84 crore). This trend of large unspent provision was also persistent during previous years 1999-2001.

Surrender of Unspent Provision: while the Ministry surrendered only 33 to 51 per cent of the total unspent provision during the period 1999-2002, even these were not surrendered till the last day of the financial year except on 28.03.02 for 2001-2002.

Unrealistic Budgeting: Under 17 sub-heads there was excess provisioning leading to unspent provision ranging between 23 and 99 per cent during 2001-02. Under 7 sub-heads under-provisioning lead to excess expenditure over the original budget estimates during 2001-2002.

Injudicious re-Appropriation: In 5 cases re-appropriation of funds to sub-heads remained fully unutilised during 2001-2002. In 2 cases sub-heads from which funds were re-appropriated, ultimately ended up with excess expenditure. Similar trend in previous years 1999-01 also.

Irregular Re-Appropriation: Augmenting funds in excess of Rs. 1.00 crore through re-appropriation in a sub-head was made without approval of Secretary(Expenditure).

Rush of Expenditure: Under six major heads the expenditure incurred during March 2002 and last quarters of 2001-02 ranged between 13 to 65 per cent and 31 to 67 per cent of total expenditure under the major head respectively. Similar trend existed during 1999-2001 also.

Deficient Control by PAO: The Pay and Accounts Office of the Ministry made excess payment of Rs.50.07 crore over the available funds during 2001-02 under three sub-heads.

Unauthorised expenditure on engagement of locally recruited and contingency-paid personnel: Notwithstanding repeated audit observations and instructions issued in pursuance thereof, Missions and Posts abroad continued to violate the rules and regulations governing the employment of locally recruited personnel

and staff paid form contingencies resulting in unauthorised expenditure aggregating to Rs.5.99 crore.

Avoidable additional expenditure: Non-adherence by the Indian Missions at Bratislava, Bucharest, Minsk, Moscow, Prague and Warsaw to the Ministry's specific instructions in regard to provision of air tickets to trainees nominated under the ITEC Programme resulted in an estimated additional expenditure of Rs.1.70 crore.

Avoidable additional expenditure on property purchase: Contrary to its own norms and the assurance to the Public Accounts Committee, the Ministry approved the purchase of a residential property in Budapest far in excess of the entitlement of the officer for whom it was intended and containing inessential and ostentatious facilities involving substantial additional investment and recurring expenditure on maintenance.

Avoidable expenditure on premature leasing of a temporary residence: Failure, in contravention of the Ministry's specific instructions, to synchronize the leasing of a temporary residence for the Ambassador to Spain with the renovation of the Government owned Embassy Residence resulted in avoidable expenditure of Rs.36.49 lakh.

Avoidable additional expenditure: Failure of the Indian Mission at Warsaw to entrust the painting of the exterior of the Embassy Residence to the lowest bidder resulted in avoidable additional expenditure of Rs.14.50 lakh.

Irregularities in hiring of Embassy residence and avoidable expenditure on rent: Contrary to the specific stipulation prohibiting any private understanding with landlords and in transgression of the dictates of propriety, the Mission in Algiers entered into two separate lease deeds prescribing different rents in respect of the Embassy Residence in compliance with the landlord's wishes.

(Para 4.6 of Report No.2 of 2003)
Transaction Audit Observations

Recurring loss of interest attributable to deficiencies in resource management: Repeated audit observations notwithstanding, cash management by overseas Missions continuing to be deficient resulting in retention of cash balances in excess of actual requirements and consequential recurring loss of interest.

(Para 4.7 of Report No.2 of 2003)
Transaction Audit Observations

Appendix IX

Treaties/Conventions/Agreements Concluded or Renewed by India with other Countries during the period 1 January 2003 to 31 March 2004

S. No.	Title of Convention/Treaties Agreements, etc.	Date of Signature	Date of Deposit Ratification/ Accession/ Acceptance	Date of entry into force
MULTILATERAL				
1	Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.	10.09.2003		
2	Amendments to Article 74 and Articles 24 and 25 of the Constitution of the World Health Organization		02. 10.2003	
3	Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks		19.08.2003 (A)	24.04.2003
4	Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	14.05.2002		
5	SAARC Convention on Regional Arrangements for the Promotion of Child Welfare in South Asia	05.01.2002		
6	SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.	05.01.2002		
7	Annex III—Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Harmful Substances Carried by Sea in Packaged Form; Annex IV—Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Sewage from Ships; and Annex V—Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Garbage from Ships; to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), 1973 as modified by its Protocol of 1978		07.04.2003 (A)	
8	The United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, along with the other supplementing Protocols.	12.12.2002		
9	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity.	23.01.2001	17.01.2003 ®	11.09.2003
10	Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Inter-Country Adoption.	29.05.1983	21.04.2003	
11	The Copenhagen Amendment (1992), the Montreal Amendment (1997) and the Beijing Amendment (1999) to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 1987.		03.03.2003 (A)	01.06.2003
12	Amendments to the Agreement Establishing the Asia-Pacific Institute of Broadcasting Development (AIBD).			

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13	Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption	09.01.2003	06.06.2003	01.10.2003
14	International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism	08.09.2000	22.04.2003	22.05.2003
15	Protocol to the Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1948		21.11.2003	21.11.2004
BILATERAL				
ALBANIA				
1	Protocol of Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania.	03.02.2003		03.02.2003
ALGERIA				
2	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria on cooperation in the Veterinary Field.	25.01.2001	21.11.2003	
ARMENIA				
3	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	23.05.2003		
AUSTRALIA				
4	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and the Government of Australia on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism.	28.08.2003		28.09.2003
5	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and the Government of Australia concerning Cooperation in the field of Telecommunications.	29.08.2003		29.08.2003
6	Educational Exchange Programme between the Government of India and the Government of Australia.	23.10.2003		23.10.2003
BELARUS				
7	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments.	26.11.2002	11.07.2003	
BHUTAN				
8	MoU between the Government of the Republic of India and the Royal Government of Bhutan for Establishment of the India-Bhutan Foundation.	29.09.2003		29.08.2003
9	MoU between the Government of India and the Royal Government of Bhutan regarding the Preparation of Detailed Project Report for the Punatsangchhu Hydro-Electric Project in the Punatsangchhu Basin, Bhutan.	15.09.2003		15.09.2003

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BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA			
10	Trade Agreement between the Republic of India and Bosnia and Herzegovina.	23.04.2002	10.10.2002
CANADA			
11	Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Cooperation between the Indian Foreign Service Institute and the Canadian Foreign Service Institute	13.10.2003	13.10.2003
CARRIBEAN COMMUNITY			
12	Agreement between the Government of India and the Caribbean Community to Establish a Standing Joint Commission on Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination.	25.11.2003	
CHILE			
13	Agreement of Animal Health between the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and Agriculture and Livestock Service, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Chile.	24.04.2003	24.04.2003
CHINA			
14	MoU on Simplifying Visa Procedures between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Peoples Republic of China.	23.06.2003	23.06.2003
15	MoU for Enhanced Cooperation in the field of Renewal Energy between the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources, Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Water Resources, the Government of Peoples Republic of China.	23.06.2003	23.06.2003
16	Protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for Exporting Mangoes from India to China between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of India and General Administration of Quality Supervision Inspection and Quarantine of the Peoples Republic of China.	23.06.2003	23.06.2003
17	Executive Programme on Educational Cooperation and Exchange between the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Education, the Peoples Republic of China.	23.06.2003	23.06.2003
18	Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Peoples Republic of China.	23.06.2003	
19	MoU for Cooperation in the Field of Ocean, Science and Technology between Department of Ocean Development, Government of the Republic of India and State Oceanic Administration, Peoples Republic of China.	23.06.2003	23.06.2003
20	MoU between the Department of Science and Technology, the Republic of India and the National Natural Science Foundation of China, the Peoples Republic of China.	23.06.2003	23.06.2003

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21	MoU between the Government of the Republic of the Republic of India and the Government of the Peoples Republic of China on the Reciprocal Establishment of Cultural Centres in their Capitals.	23.06.2003		23.06.2003
22	Executive Programme of Cultural Exchanges between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Peoples Republic of China for the years 2003-2005.	23.06.2003		23.06.2003
23	MoU on Cooperation between the Ministry of Law and Justice of the Government of the Republic of India and the Supreme People's Prosecution Service of the Peoples Republic of China.	23.06.2003		23.06.2003
24	Memorandum between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Peoples Republic of China on Expanding Border Trade.	23.06.2003		23.06.2003
CROATIA				
25	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Croatia on Agricultural Cooperation.	13.11.2002	03.03.2003	
CYPRUS				
26	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus for the Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments.	09.04.2002		
27	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on cooperation in the fields of Public Health and Medical Sciences.	08.10.2002	10.09.2003	
28	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Cooperation in the field of Posts and Electronic Communications.	08.10.2002	09.05.2003	10.06.2003
DJIBOUTI				
29	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Djibouti relating to Air Services.	19.05.2003		19.05.2003
30	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Djibouti for the Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments.	19.05.2003		
EL SALVADOR				
31	MoU on Consultation between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of External Relations of the Republic of El Salvador.	02.02.2004		02.02.2004
ETHIOPIA				
32	Agreement on Technical Cooperation in Micro Dams and Small Irrigation Schemes between the Republic of India and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.	03.07.2002		03.07.2002

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EUROPEAN UNION				
33	Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the European Community.	23.11.2001	12.08.2002	
34	Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of India on Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance on Customs Matters.	29.11.2003		
35	Financing Agreement for Trade and Investment Development Programme (TIDP) between the European Community and the Republic of India.	29.11.2003		29.11.2003
FINLAND				
36	Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement between India and Finland.	07.11.2002	10.02.2003	09.04.2003
FRANCE				
37	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of France on Cooperation in the fields of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural Development, Forestry and Food Industries.	04.11.2003		04.11.2003
38	MoU between Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., India and SNECMA, France for formation of a Joint Venture.			
39	Cooperation Agreement between Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., India and Turbomeca, France for TM 333-26b Shakti I Ardiden			
40	Framework Agreement between Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., India and Institut Aeronautique et Spatial, France.			
GERMANY				
41	Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Germany on Extradition.	27.06.2001	26.06.2002	
GHANA				
42	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ghana for the Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments.	05.08.2002		
GUYANA				
43	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Cooperative Republic of Guyana on non-visa Regime for mutual visits of nationals-holders of diplomatic and Service/Official Passports.	04.02.2003		
HUNGARY				
44	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Hungary for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	03.11.2003		

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INDONESIA				
45	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia on visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders.	03.04.2002	04.03.2003	26.04.2003
IRAN				
46	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Iran on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology.	25.01.2003	02.04.2003	
47	MoU between Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Road Map to Strategic Cooperation.	25.01.2003		25.01.2003
48	The New Delhi Declaration between the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Iran.	25.01.2003		
49	MoU between the Republic of India and the Islamic republic of Iran on Cooperation in Urban Water Management and Hydrological Studies.	25.01.2003		25.01.2003
50	MoU between the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India and Ministry of Petroleum of Islamic Republic of Iran on Cooperation in the field of Hydrocarbons.	27.01.2003		27.01.2003
51	Executive Programme of Cultural Exchange between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the years 2003-2005.	25.01.2003		25.01.2003
ISRAEL				
52	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel on Cooperation in the field of Protection of the Environment.	09.09.2003		
ITALY				
53	MoU between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Italian Republic on Cooperation in the field of Telecommunications.	28.10.2002	02.04.2003	09.05.2003
54	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Italian Republic on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology.	28.11.2003		
55	Agreement on Defence Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Italian Republic.	03.12.2003		
JAPAN				
56	Loan Agreement for Delhi Mass Rapid Transport System Project (IV) between Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the President of India.	31.03.2003		31.03.2003

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57	Loan Agreement for Yamuna Action Plan Project (II) between Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the President of India.	31.03.2003		31.03.2003
58	Loan Agreement for Rajasthan Forestry and Biodiversity Project between Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the President of India.	31.03.2003		31.03.2003
59	Loan Agreement for Simhadri Thermal Power Station Project (IV) between Japan Bank for International Cooperation and National Thermal Power Corporation Limited.	31.03.2003		31.03.2003
60	Loan Agreement for Bakreswar Thermal Power Station Units Extension Project Delhi Mass Rapid Transport System Project between Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the President of India.	31.03.2003		31.03.2003
61	Loan Agreement for Ajanta-Ellora Conservation and Tourism Development Project (II) between Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the President of India.	31.03.2003		31.03.2003
62	Loan Agreement for Punjab Afforestation Project (II) Delhi Mass Rapid Transport System Project (IV) between Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the President of India.	31.03.2003		31.03.2003
REPUBLIC OF KOREA				
63	Agreement for the Joint Issue of Stamps between the Postal Administration of India and the Postal Administration of Republic of Korea.	10.12.2003		To be confirmed.
64	Memorandum of Understanding in the field of Investment Promotion between the Republic of India and Republic of Korea.	14.10.2003		To be confirmed
KUWAIT				
65	Agreement between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of India for the Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investment.	27.11.2001	12.03.2003	28.06.2003
LAO PDR				
66	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Lao People's Republic on cooperation in Science & Technology.	16.06.2003		16.06.2003
LITHUANIA				
67	Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.	20.02.2001	09.05.2003	
MAURITIUS				
68	MoU in the Field Social Defence including Welfare of the Elderly, Programme of Demand Reduction with regard to Drug Abuse, Welfare of Street Children, Juvenile Justice System and other areas in the General Field of Social Defence between Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment of the Republic of India and Ministry of Social Security, National solidarity and Senior Citizen Welfare and Reform Institution of the Republic of Mauritius.	01.07.2003		01.07.2003

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69	Joint Statement signed by Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs, Government of India and Mr. Anil Kumarsingh Gayan, Minister of Foreign affairs and Regional Cooperation, Government of the Republic of Mauritius.	02.07.2003	
70	MoU between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of the Republic of Mauritius on the Establishment of a Political Consultative Mechanism.	01.07.2003	01.07.2003
71	MoU between the National Small Industries Corporation Limited of the Republic of India and the National Women Entrepreneur Council of the Republic of Mauritius.	01.07.2003	01.07.2003
MONGOLIA			
72	Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and Mongolia.	03.01.2001	21.06.2002
73	Protocol on Exchange of Instruments of Ratification of the Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and Mongolia.	15.01.2004	
MERCOSUR			
74	Framework Agreement between the MERCOSUR and the Republic of India.	07.06.2003	01.08.2003
MOZAMBIQUE			
75	MoU between the Ministry of Labour of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Mozambique in the field of Labour	23.08.2003	23.08.2003
MYANMAR			
76	Protocol on Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Union of Myanmar.	20.01.2003	20.01.2003
PERU			
77	Agreement between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Peru on Abolition of Visa Requirements for holders of Diplomatic and Official/Service Passports..	03.06.2003	
78	Agreement for the Establishment of a Mechanism of Political Consultation and Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Andean Community.	03.06.2003	03.06.2003
79	India-Peru Joint Statement	03.06.2003	03.06.2003
POLAND			
80	Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland.	17.02.2003	10.09.2003
81	Treaty on Cooperation in Combating Organized Crime and International Terrorism between the Government of the Republic of India and Republic of Poland.	17.02.2003	

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82	Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland on air services	30.10.2003		30.10.2003
	ROMANIA			
83	MoU between the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of Romania for collaboration in Information Technology.	16.10.2002		
	SINGAPORE			
84	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Singapore and the Government of the Republic of India concerning a Third Country Training Programme.	08.04.2003		08.04.2003
85	Joint Declaration on the proposed India—Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA).	08.04.2003		
	SPAIN			
86	Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Spain.	20.06.2002	12.07.2002	25.02.2003
	SOUTH AFRICA			
87	Treaty on Extradition between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	16.10.2003		
88	Agreement for Cooperation in Hydrocarbon Sector between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South Africa.	16.10.2003		
89	Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	16.10.2003		
90	Executive Programme for Cultural Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of South Africa for the years 2004, 2005 and 2006.	16.10.2003		16.10.2003
91	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Republic of India concerning Cooperation in the field of Power.	16.10.2003		16.10.2003
	SUDAN			
92	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Sudan for Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	22.10.2003		

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93	MoU between Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Sudan on Cooperation on the field of Communications and Information Technology.	22.10.2003	22.10.2003
94	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India and the Republic of South Africa on civil aviation.	11.11.2003	11.11.2003
95	Agreement between Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Sudan for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	22.10.2003	
SWITZERLAND			
96	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Swiss Confederation on Cooperation in the even of Disasters.	10.11.2003	13.02.2004
97	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Swiss Federal Council on Cooperation in Science and Technology.	10.11.2003	
TAJIKISTAN			
98	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for Setting up of a Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism	30.01.2003	30.01.2003
99	Joint Deceleration on Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Republic of Tajikistan	14.11.2003	14.11.2003
100	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on setting up of Visa Requirements for Holders of Diplomatic Passports.	14.11.2003	
101	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on Cooperation in the field of Tourism.	14.11.2003	14.11.2003
102	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for Establishing Indo-Tajik Centre for Information Technology.	14.11.2003	14.11.2003
103	Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology of the Republic of India and The Ministry of Economy and Trade of the Republic of Tajikistan on Cooperation in Information Technology and Services.	14.11.2003	14.11.2003
104	Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	10.05.2001	19.10.2001 14.11.2003

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105	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on Encouragement and Protection of Investments.	12.12.1995	14.11.2003
THAILAND			
106	Programme of Cooperation between Department of Biotechnology, the Government of the Republic of India and National Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, national Science and technology Development Agency, Ministry of Science and Technology, the Government of the Kingdom Thailand.	09.10.2003	09.10.2003
107	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom Thailand on cooperation in the field of Agricultural Science, Technology and Economy.	09.10.2003	09.10.2003
108	Agreement on Tourism Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom Thailand.	09.10.2003	
109	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom Thailand on Exemption of Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports.	09.10.2003	
110	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom Thailand on Air Services.	12.10.2003	
TIMOR L'ESTE			
111	Joint Communiqué on the Establishment Relations between the Democratic Republic of Timor L'este and the Republic of India.	24.01.2003	24.01.2003
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO			
112	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Inter-Governmental Commission on Political, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation.	05.02.2003	
TURKEY			
113	Protocol of Intent on Cooperation in the Fields of Information and Technology and Computer Software between the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Turkey.	17.09.2003	
114	Protocol between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey for Setting up of a Joint Working Group on Combating Terrorism.	17.09.2003	

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115	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Turkey on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology.	02.09.2003	
	UKRAINE		
116	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ukraine on Merchant Shipping.	03.10.2002	10.02.2003
117	Extradition Treaty between Republic of India and Ukraine.	03.10.2002	
118	Treaty between the Republic of India and Ukraine on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	03.10.2002	12.03.2003
119	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Ukraine on Mutual Protection and Promotion of Investments.	01.12.2001	12.08.2003
120	Agreement between the Republic of India and Ukraine on the Mutual Protection of Classified Information.	12.08.2003	
	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		
121	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the United States of America regarding Surrender of Persons to International Tribunals.	26.12.2002	03.12.2003
122	Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United States of America on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	17.10.2001	22.03.2002
122	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the United States of America concerning Security Measures for the Protection of Classified Information.	17.01.2002	17.01.2002
124	Declaration for the Establishment of a Mechanism for Political Cooperation and Dialogue between the Republic of India and the States of the Central American Integration System.	02.02.2004	
127	Declaration for the Establishment of a Mechanism for Political Cooperation and Dialogue between the Republic of India and the States of the Central American Integration System.	02.02.2004	02.02.2004
	UZBEKISTAN		
128	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Setting up of a Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism	03.01.2003	03.01.2003
	VIETNAM		
129	Joint Declaration on the Framework of Comprehensive Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as they enter the 21 st Century.	01.05.2003	01.05.2003

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130	Agreement on cooperation between All India Radio and Radio Voice of Vietnam	02.04.2003	02.04.2003
	YEMEN		
131	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Yemen for the Promotion and Protection of Investments	31.10.2002	
	YUGOSLAVIA		
132	Air Services Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.	31.01.2003	
133	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for the Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments.	31.01.2003	

Appendix X

Instruments of Full Powers Issued during the period 1 January 2003 to 31 March 2004

S. No.	Convention/Treaty	Date of Full Power
1	Full powers in favour of Shri Shri Gingee N. Ramachandran, Minister of State for Finance (Revenue), to sign the Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	02.01.2003
2	Full Powers in favour of Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister for Science and Technology and Ocean Development, to sign the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Mozambique on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology.	10.05.2003
3	Full Powers in favour of Shri Shashank, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs to sign the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	23.05.2003
4	Full Powers in favour of Shri S.B. Mookherjee, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, to sign the Framework Trade Agreement between MERCOSUR and the Republic of India.	13.06.2003
5	Full Powers in favour of Shri D. C. Gupta, Finance Secretary, Ministry of Finance to sign the Credit Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar	20.06.2003
6	Full Powers in favour of Shri Shatrughan Sinha, Minister of Shipping to sign an MoU between the Ministry of Shipping, the Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Port Development and Shipping, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka in the field of Passenger Transport.	11.07.2003
7	Full Powers in favour of Shri Ashok Kumar, Ambassador of India to Sudan to sign the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Sudan for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	02.08.2003
8	Full Powers in favour of Shri Vijay K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, to sign the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).	10.09.2003
9	Full Powers in Favour of Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of Commerce and Industry to sign the Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the Hungary on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments.	19.09.2003
10	Full Powers in Favour of Shri Vijay K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, to sign the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.	10.09.2003
11	Full Powers in Favour of Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister for Commerce and Industry, Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of France on Cooperation in the fields of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural Development, Forestry and Food Industries.	28.10.2003

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12	Full Powers in Favour of Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Minister for Science and Technology, to sign the Agreement on Scientific and Techonological Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro.	17.10.2003
13	Full Powers in Favour of Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister of Finance, to sign the Convention between the Republic of Hungary and the Republic of India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.	29.10.2003
14	Full Powers in Favour of Shri Shashank Secretary (EAA), Ministry of External Affairs, to sign the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Swiss Confederation to cooperate in the event of the Disasters.	06.11.2003
15	Full Powers in Favour of Professor V. Ramamurthy, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology, to sign the Agreement between the Republic of India and the Swiss Federal Council for the Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology.	06.11.2003
16	Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Tourism between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka – 1.1.2004.	01.01.2004
17	Full Powers in favour of Shri B.S. Minhas, Secretary (SSI), Ministry of Small Scale Industries, to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Small Scale Industries, Republic of India and Ministry of Industry, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.	13.01.2004
18	Full Powers in favour of Smt. Rathi Vinay Jha, Secretary, Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Tourism between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.	21.01.2004

Appendix XI

Instruments of Ratification/Accession Issued during the Period 1 January 2003 to 31 March 2004

S. No.	Instruments of Ratification/Accession	Date of Issue of Ratification
1	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Cooperation in the fields of Science and Technology.	02.04.2003
2	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Italian Republic on Cooperation in the field of Telecommunications	02.04.2003
3	International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, 1999.	07.04.2003
4	Annex III—Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Harmful Substances Carried by Sea in Packaged Form; Annex IV—Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Sewage from Ships; and Annex V—Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Garbage from Ships; the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), 1973 as modified by its Protocol of 1978.	07.04.2003
5	Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption	21.04.2003
6	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.	05.05.2003
7	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Cooperation in the field of Posts and Electronic Communications.	09.05.2003
8	Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.	09.05.2003
9	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Belarus for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	11.07.2003
10	Framework Agreement between the Mercosur and the Republic of India.	01.08.2003
11	Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks.	01.08.2003
12	Amendments to Article 74 and Articles 24 and 25 of the Constitution of the World Health Organization.	29.08.2003
13	SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.	02.09.2003
14	SAARC Convention on Regional Arrangement for the Promotion of Child Welfare in South Asia.	02.09.2003
15	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Cooperation in the fields of Public Health and Medical Science.	10.09.2003
16	Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland.	10.09.2003

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17.	Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute under the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and University of World Economy and Diplomacy under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan.	06.11.2003
18	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria on cooperation in the Veterinary Field.	21.11.2003
19	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Sudan for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	23.01.2004
20	Agreement on Mutual Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic on Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Related Matters.	23.01.2004
21	Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).	22.01.2004
22	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Swiss Confederation on Cooperation in the Event of Disasters	13.02.2004
23	Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Hungary for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	13.02.2004
24	Ratification of the Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Hungary for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.	20.02.2004
25	Ratification of the Agreement between the Republic of India and the Swiss Confederation on Cooperation in the Event of Disasters.	20.02.2004
26	Ratification of the Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	18.03.2004
27	Ratification of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on the Inter-Governmental Commission on Political, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation – 18.3.2004.	18.03.2004
28	Ratification of the Treaty between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.	18.03.2004

Appendix XII

Conferences/Seminars/Meetings/Study projects organized/undertaken by Institutions/NGOs which were partly funded by Policy Planning & Research Division

1. Seminar "US-UK military action against Iraq, its genesis and international implications" (April 2003)	15,000/-	International Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies, New Delhi.
2. Research projects on private international law issues affecting the NRIs.(April, 2003)	3,00,000/-	Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi.
3. Study projects (a) opportunities & challenges for India in the post-war Iraq and the implications for the UN & int'l order & (b) Impact on the future US role in South Asia"(April 2003)	75,000/-	Group for Economic & Social Issues, New Delhi.
4. Research Project " Central Asia's Security Concerns : Implications for India "(additional financial assistance) (April 2003)	Rs.37,500/-	Centre for Russian, Central Asian & East European Studies, JNU, New Delhi.
5. Participation in the annual workshop-38 th Otago Foreign Policy School of Otago University, New Zealand(June 2003).	Rs.70,145/-	Dr. Chintamani Mahapatra, Associate Professor, SIS, JNU, New Delhi.
6. Seminar "India-ASEAN : Post Summit perspectives" (July 2003)	4,00,000/-	Centre for Indian Ocean Studies, Hyderabad.
7. Research Project on the Farghana Valley (July 2003)	US\$1500/- (Rs.70,500/- approx)	Dr.Jyotsna Bakshi, Visiting Assistant Professor to India Studies Centre in Osh State University, Bishkek
8. Inaugural function of South Asian Forum, New Delhi(August 2003)	Rs.40,384/-	South Asia Forum, New Delhi
9. 7 th Asian Regional Seminar on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy. (Sep.2003)	37,500/-	United Schools International, . N.Delhi
10. India-Sri Lanka Round Table in participation with Sri Lankan NGO, SAPNA, (Oct. 2003)	Rs.95,000/-	Asia Centre, Bangalore
11. Australia-India Security Roundtable 2003 (Oct. 2003)	Rs.29,440/-	Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, Chandigarh
12. 4 th India-Korea Dialogue in N.Delhi (Oct.2003)	Rs.90,000/-	Indian Council for Research in International Economic Relations, New Delhi
13. "Birth centenary of Russian writer Fyodor Ivannovich Tyutchev and his contribution to Russian thought" (Nov.2003)	56,250/-	Centre of Russian Studies, JNU, New Delhi.
14. Seminar "Significance of Indo-Russian Strategic partnership in the changing world situation" (Nov 2003)	Rs.40,000/-	International Institute for Asia-Pacific Studies, N.Delhi.
15. India-Yugoslavia dialogue in New Delhi, (Dec.2003)	Rs.1,20,000	Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi.
16. Publication of proceedings of V International Conference on "Hispanism & Luso-Brazilian Studies: Flashback from the Present" organized (Nov 2003.)	Rs.52,500/-	Centre for Spanish Studies, JNU, New Delhi.

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17. Participation in a joint seminar on the theme of broader politico-economic trends in Asia, Colombo, (Dec.2003)	82,546/-	Centre for Strategic & International Studies, New Delhi
18. Participation in a joint seminar on the theme of broader political economic trends in Asia in Colombo (Dec.2003)	Rs.1,65,094	Centre for Strategic & International Studies, New Delhi.
19. Seminar "Himalayan Studies in 21 st century" (Dec. 2003)	Rs.37,500/-	Centre for Himalayan Studies, North Bengal Univ.,Darjeeling.
20. Daily allowance for visit to Australia and Singapore in connection with research project on "Ethnic conflict in Fiji: challenges of assimilation before Indian Diaspora"(Dec. 2003)	Rs.15,880/-	Dr. Amba Pande, Document Officer, Centre for South, Central, South East & South West Pacific Studies, JNU, New Delhi.
21. Track-II dialogue with Chinese delegation from Development Research Centre of the State Council of China (January 2004.)	Rs.1,80,000	Research and Information System for Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries, New Delhi
22. Seminar "India and the New Europe" (Feb. 2004)	Rs.46,500/-	Association of Indian Diplomats, New Delhi.
23. Second round of Track-II India-Sri Lanka dialogue (January 2004)	1,84,763/-	India International Centre, New Delhi
24. Conference "Bio-Terrorism and Bio-Defence" (January 2004)	75,000/-	Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi
25. Research Project "Reshaping discourse on Pakistan-occupied Kashmir" (January 2004)	3,75,000/-	Centre for Strategic & Regional Studies, University of Jammu
26. Participation in a seminar entitled "Understanding Myanmar" (January 2004)	32,060/-	Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi.
27. 31 st World Marketing Congress on "CIS-East Europe and India: Synergies & Economic Cooperation" (February 2004)	3,00,000/-	Institute of Marketing & Management, New Delhi.
28. Seminar "Comprehensive Security: Need of the Hour" (February 2004)	75,000/-	Centre for Advanced Strategic Studies, Pune.
29. "Second Canada-India Dialogue" at Vancouver (March 2004)	1,44,600/-	Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi.
30. Seminar "Hydroind-2004". (March 2004)	1,50,000/-	National Hydrographic Office, Dehradun.
31. MEA-JNU Joint Seminar "India and the Emerging Asia" (March 2004)	1,94,250/-	JNU, New Delhi.
32. Seminar "Domestic turmoil in South Asia : Implications for India's security and foreign policy" (March 2004)	77,250/-	School of International Studies, Pondicherry University.
33. Research Project "India's nuclear diplomacy after Pokhran II : Its Government and Public Face" (March 2004)	2,00,000/-	ORF Institute of Security Studies, New Delhi.
34. Preparation of study report in connection with India-Australia Joint Study for drawing up a road map for strategic partnership. (March 2004)	37,500/-	Dr. C.Raja Mohan, New Delhi.

Appendix XIII

Expenditure Statement for the Financial Year 2003-2004 (ITEC-SCAAP Programme)

Major/Minor Heads	Total No. of Slots Allotted in 2003- 2004	No. of Trainees as on Feb 2004	Expenditure Incurred so far @ Rs. 1.7 lakh (Approx) per trainee	Budget Grant 2003-2004
Major Head-3605, 17-ITEC Programme, 17.00.32-Contribution	2559	1690	Rs. 39.51 Crore	Rs. 28 Crore
Major Head-3605, 19-ITEC Programme, 19.00.32-Contribution	569	508	Rs. 4.10 Crore	Rs. 5 Crore

Appendix XIV

List of Institutes offering 'B' and 'C' Category Courses to Foreign Nominees under ITEC/SCAAP Schemes (2003-2004)

Category 'B' courses

- 1 **Administrative Staff College of India**
General management Programme for Senior Executives
- 2 **Aptech Limited.**
Basics of Computing
Client Server Computing
- 3 **Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training**
International training Programme in Legislative Drafting
Parliamentary Internship Programme for Foreign
Parliamentary Officials
- 4 **Comptroller and Auditor General of India**
Audit of Public enterprises & Privatisation
Audit of Receipt
Auditing Information Technology
Auditing Information Technology - Challenges for SAIs
Chamber of Accounts
Audit of Rural Development Programmes
Audit of Social Service Sector
IT Invest Audit
- 5 **Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India**
Faculty Development Programme Entrepreneurship
Industrial Project Preparation & Appraisal
Management Development Programme
Training Programme for Capacity Building in the area of
"Micro Enterprise & Micro Finance Development"
New Enterprise Creation Training Programme for
Trainers of Developing Countries
- 6 **Human Settlement Management Institute**
Urban Development Management : Perspective and
Possibilities
Urban Infrastructure Planning and Management
Environmental Management and Urban Infrastructure
- 7 **Indian Institute of Mass Communication**
Diploma Course in Development Journalism for non-
aligned and developing countries
- 8 **Institute of Government Accounts Finance**
Government Accounts and Financial Management
- 9 **Institute of Secretariat Training & Management**
International Training of Trainers
- 10 **International Management Institute**
20th post graduate programme in International
management
- 11 **National Institute of Bank Management**
International Program in Banking and Finance
International Program in Banking For Development-XIX
International workshop for Top Management in Credit,
Treasury and ALM
- 12 **National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration**
International Diploma in Educational Planning &
Administration - XVIII
- 13 **National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education & Research**
Modern Analytical Techniques in Quality Control of
Drugs and Pharmaceutical
- 14 **National Institute of Rural Development**
Rural Micro Enterprises Development
Management of micro enterprises for Rural Women
Information technology for Rural Development
Micro Planning for poverty reduction and sustainable
development.
Strategies for sustainable agriculture and rural
development
- 15 **NIIT Limited**
Advance Networking Technologies
Office Tools and E-commerce
Software Development Techniques
- 16 **Research & Information System for the Non-aligned and Other Developing Countries**
Visiting research fellowships in International Economic
Issues and Development Policy research
- 17 **RITES**
Management Development Programme
Course on Power Electronics
- 18 **SIBIT**
Certificate Course in Office Productivity(CCOP)
Certificate Course in Network Design
Certificate Course in Web Designing
- 19 **TATA Infotech**
Mastering Enterprise Networks
Office Technologies and Internet Applications
Web Centric Technologies

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- 20 **Technical Teachers' Training Institute**
Advance Certificate Course in curriculum Design &
Instructional Material Development
Advanced Certificate Course on Educational Television
Production
- 21 **V.V. Giri National Labour Institute**
Information Communications Technology based Labour
market Information
Labour Administration and Employment Relation in a
Global Economy

Category 'C' Courses

- 1 **Bureau of Indian Standards**
Information Technology for National Standardization
Bodies of Developing Countries
Standardization and Quality Assurance for Developing
Countries
- 2 **Central Fertilizer Quality Control & Training
Institute**
Fertilizer Quality Control
- 3 **Central Food Technological Research Institute**
Flour Milling Technology
- 4 **Central Institute of English and Foreign
Languages**
English for Professionals
- 5 **Central Institute of Tool Design**
Advanced Techniques in Sheet Metal forming Tools
Application of CAD/CAM Technology in Tool
Engineering
Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided
manufacturing (Auto CAD + Auto CAM)
Computer Integrated manufacturing & Flexible
manufacturing Systems
Design of Cutting Tools
Design of Dies and moulds
Design of Jigs & Fixtures
Mechanics & its Application
Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC) for Advanced
Automation
3-D Modeling using Pro - engineer Software
- 6 **Central Poultry Training Institute**
Poultry Genetics & Breeding
Poultry Management and Farm Economics
Poultry nutrition and feeding
- 7 **Central Scientific Instruments Organisation**
Management Development Programme on Operation,
Maintenance and Repair of Analytical Equipment
Management development Programme on Operation,
Maintenance and Repair of Bio-Medical Equipment
- 8 **Centre For Development of Advanced Computing**
Advanced Course in Computer Aided Designing and
Drafting
Advanced Course in Computer Networks Engineering &
management
Advanced Course on Multimedia & Web Design
Repair and Maintenance of Telecom terminal
Equipment, PC & Peripherals
- 9 **CMC Ltd.**
Advanced Training Programme in Information
Technology
Essential Computer Skills for the e-World
Programme on Development, Implementation and
Management of Computer Software Applications
Training Programme in Computer Hardware and
Networking
Certificate Course on Office Automation Tools & Internet
Applications
Certificate Course in Computer Hardware &
Troubleshooting
Certificate Course in Client Server Technologies
Certificate Course in Website Design & Management
- 10 **Fluid Control Research Institute**
Flow Measurement & Control Techniques / Software in
Industrial Process Industries & Water Distribution System
Instrumentation & Control and Data Acquisition system
in Fluid in Process & petroleum Engineering
Oil and Gas Flow measurement and Control Techniques
and Standards
- 11 **Indian Institute of Production Management**
Condition Based Maintenance
Industrial Electronics & Instrumentation
Maintenance Engineering & Management
Manufacturing Engineering & Management
Power Management
Management Development Programme
- 12 **Institute Of Government Accounts & Finance
Public Expenditure Management**
- 13 **Indian Institute of Remote Sensing**
Short Course on Remote Sensing with Specialization in
Digital Image Processing
- 14 **Institute of Applied Manpower Research**
Diploma in Human resource planning and Development
Human Resources Planning & Development
International Training Programme in Human Resource
Planning & Development
International Training Programme in Manpower
Research
Master's Degree in Human Resource Planning and
Development

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- 15 **International Statistical Education Centre**
Statistical Training Diploma
- 16 **JIS College of Engineering**
Techno-commercial Engineering
- 17 **Narula Institute of Technology**
Materials Management
- 18 **National Crime Records Bureau**
Advanced Finger Print Science and Computers
Information Technology in Law Enforcement
- 19 **National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development**
Business Advisor's Training Programme(BATP)
Entrepreneurship Development and Promotion of Income Generation Activities(ED-PIGA)
Entrepreneurship for small Business Trainers/Promoters Programme(ESB-TP)
Small Business Creation and Development for Women Entrepreneurs(SBCD-WE)
Small Business Planning and Promotion(SBPP)
Women and Enterprise Development
- 20 **National Institute of Small Industry Extension Training**
Data Base Management Systems
Empowerment of Women through Enterprises:
Identification, Selection and Promotion
Food Processing Enterprises for Women
Promotion of Export Oriented Agro Industries
Promotion of Micro Enterprise
Small Enterprise Development and Promotion
Small Enterprise Financing-Approaches and Strategies
Small Enterprise Management Consultancy Skills
Total Quality Management and ISO 9000/14000 & QS 9000
Training Methods and Skills for Managers
- 21 **Postal Training Centre**
Information Technology in Postal Services
- 22 **South India Textile Research Association**
Personnel Management
Textile Extension
Textile Mill management
Textile Testing & Quality Control
- 23 **Water Resource Development Training Centre**
Hydro-Electric System Engineering & Management
Irrigation Water Management
Water Resources Development(Civil)
Water Resources Development (Mechanical)

Appendix XV

Statement showing Allocation & Utilisation of Civilian Training under ITEC Programme During the Year 2003-2004

S. No	Country	Slots	Utilised
1	Afghanistan	50	17
2	Albania	4	0
3	Algeria	6+3(G-15) (9)	5
4	Angola	15	4
5	Anguilla	2	0
6	Antigua and Barbuda	2+10(SFTC) (12)	5
7	Argentina	3(G-15) (3)	0
8	Armenia	20+20 (40)	29
9	Azerbaijan	10	0
10	Bahamas	10(SFTC) (10)	0
11	Bahrain	5	0
12	Bangladesh	50+20(BIMST-EC)+20 (90)	13
13	Barbados	2+10(SFTC) (12)	0
14	Belarus	10	0
15	Belize	2+10(SFTC) (12)	2
16	Benin	10	6
17	Bhutan	25+20 (45)	12
18	Bolivia	2	0
19	Bosnia - Herzegovina	2	0
20	Brazil	3(SFTC) (03)	1
21	Brunei Darussalam	10(ASEAN) (10)	0
22	Bulgaria	5	1
23	Burkina Fasso	10	0
24	Burundi	2	0
25	Cambodia	15+10(ASEAN)+20 (45)	32
26	Cape Verde Island	02	0
27	Cayman Island	02	0
28	Central African Republic	2	0
29	Chad	5	0
30	Chile	3(G-15) (3)	0
31	Colombia	5+10 (15)	9
32	Commonwealth of Dominica	2+10(SFTC) (12)	0
33	Comoros	05	0

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34	Congo	2	0
35	Costa Rica	02+10(SFTC) (12)	1
36	Croatia	2	1
37	Cuba	30	11
38	Czech Republic	5	0
39	Djibouti	20	0
40	Dominican Republic	02+10(SFTC) (12)	0
41	East Timor	20	0
42	Ecuador	5	1
43	Egypt	10+3(G-15) (13)	7
44	El-Salvador	2+10(SFTC) (12)	9
45	Equatorial Guinea	2	0
46	Eritrea	10	0
47	Estonia	02	13
48	Ethopia	20	7
49	Fiji	25+10(SFTC) (35)	9
50	Georgia	30	7
51	Grenada	2+10(SFTC) (12)	0
52	Guatemala	3	1
53	Guinea	15	0
54	Guinea Bissau	2	1
55	Guyana	15+10(SFTC)+20 (45)	7
56	Haiti	5	0
57	Honduras	2+10(SFTC) (12)	0
58	Hungary	2	0
59	Indonesia	30+3(G-15)+10(ASEAN) (43)	30
60	Iran	10	8
61	Iraq	60+10 (70)	0
62	Ivory Coast	10+20 (30)	17
63	Jamaica	5+3(G-15)+10(SFTC) (18)	2
64	Jordan	5	2
65	Kazakhstan	60	10
66	Kiribati	2	0
67	Korea(DPRK)	5	5
68	Kyrgyzstan	50	49
69	Laos	35+10(ASEAN)+20 (65)	27

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70	Latvia	4	0
71	Lebanon	2	0
72	Liberia	05+05 (10)	4
73	Lithuania	10	4
74	Macedonia	2	1
75	Madagascar	10	3
76	Malaysia	10+3(G-15)+10(ASEAN) (23)	1
77	Maldives	10+10 (20)	7
78	Mali	2	1
79	Marshall Islands	02+10(SFTC) (12)	0
80	Mauritania	2	0
81	Mexico	5+3(G-15)+10(SFTC) (18)	1
82	Micronesia	5+10(SFTC) (15)	1
83	Moldova	02	0
84	Mongolia	45	23
85	Montserrat	02	0
86	Morocco	10	1
87	Myanmar	70+20(BIMST-EC)+10(ASEAN) (100)	26
88	Nauru	2	0
89	Nepal	20	4
90	Nicaragua	2+10(SFTC) (12)	0
91	Niger	5	0
92	Oman	45	32
93	Palau	2	0
94	Palestine	10	5
95	Panama	5+10(SFTC) (15)	26
96	Papua New Guinea	10+10(SFTC) (20)	11
97	Paraguay	2	
98	Peru	5+3(G-15) (8)	5
99	Philippines	15+10(ASEAN) (25)	5
100	Poland	2	0
101	Qatar	02	0
102	Republic Of Sao Tome	2	5
103	Romania	10	1
104	Russia	70	42
105	Rwanda	10	0
106	Samoa	10(SFTC) (10)	0

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107	Senegal	17+3(G-15) (20)	12
108	Singapore	10(ASEAN) (10)	0
109	Slovak Republic	5	0
110	Solomon Island	02+10(SFTC) (12)	0
111	Sri Lanka	50+20(BIMST-EC)+20 (90)	20
112	St. Christopher & Nevis	02+10(SFTC) (12)	0
113	St. Lucia	10	0
114	St. Vincent & Grenadines	2+10(SFTC) (12)	0
115	Sudan	35	25
116	Suriname	15+15 (30)	2
117	Syria	35	22
118	Tajikistan	50+50 (100)	36
119	Thailand	10+20(BIMST-EC)+10(ASEAN)+20 (60)	11
120	Togo	02	0
121	Tonga	10	0
122	Trinidad & Tabago	10	15
123	Tunisia	2+8 (10)	4
124	Turkey	50	0
125	Turkmenistan	20	6
126	Turks & Caicos Island	2	0
127	Tuvalu	2	0
128	Ukraine	10	1
129	Uruguay	5	4
130	Uzbekistan	100	77
131	Vanuatu	10(SFTC) (10)	0
132	Venezuela	2+3(G-15) (5)	0
133	Vietnam	70+10(ASEAN)+30(S&T) (110)	27
134	Yemen	20	10
135	Zaire	3	0
	Total	2511	842

Appendix XVI

Statement showing Allocation and Utilisation of Civilian Training Slots SCAAP Programme during the Year 2003-2004

S. No	Countries	Slots	Utilised
1	Botswana	20	1
2	Cameron	5	0
3	Gabon	10	0
4	Gambia	5	4
5	Ghana	60	16
6	Kenya	45+3(G-15) (48)	11
7	Lesotho	5	3
8	Malawi	5	1
9	Mauritius	30	9
10	Mozambique	15+15 (30)	8
11	Namibia	15+15 (30)	14
12	Nigeria	40+3(G-15) (43)	31
13	Seychelles	05+10 (15)	6
14	Sierra Leone	5+10 (15)	3
15	South Africa(P)	50	14
16	Swaziland	5	1
17	Tanzania	45+15 (60)	44
18	Uganda	30+5 (35)	8
19	Zambia	30+10+10(SFTC) (50)	19
20	Zimbabwe	20+3(G-15)+25 (48)	30
	Total	569	223

Appendix XVII

Military Training Slots Allotted to various Countries (and utilised) during the period April-November 2003

S.No	Country	Army	Navy	Air Force	DSSC	NDC
Under ITEC/SAP						
1	Afghanistan	5	-	-	-	-
2	Bangladesh	4(4)	10(10)	12(11)	-	2(2)
3	Bhutan	-	-	-	1(2)	-
4	Botswana	3	-	-	-	-
5	Cambodia	7(7)	-	-	-	1(1)
6	Ghana	4	-	-	-	-
7	Egypt	-	-	-	1(1)	-
8	Indonesia	6(4)	-	-	-	1(1)
9	Kazakhstan	5(5)	-	-	1(1)	-
10	Kenya	4(4)	3(2)	-	-	-
11	Kyrgyzstan	6(5)	-	-	1(1)	-
12	Lao PDR	4(2)	-	-	1(1)	-
13	Lebanon	1(0)	-	-	-	-
14	Lesotho	2(2)	-	-	1(1)	-
15	Malaysia	3(3)	7(7)	5(5)	1(1)	-
16	Mongolia	3	-	-	1(1)	-
17	Mauritius	18(13)	8	9(9)	-	-
18	Myanmar	20(14)	4(4)	4(4)	-	1(1)
19	Nepal	-	-	-	2(2)	1(1)
20	Nigeria	6	2	-	-	-
21	Philippines	-	-	-	1(1)	-
22	Republic of Benin	-	-	1(1)	-	-
23	Seychelles	10(9)	9(9)	-	-	-
24	Sri Lanka	-	-	-	3(3)	2(2)
25	Sudan	-	-	-	-	1(1)
26	Syria	-	-	-	1(1)	-
27	Tajikistan	32(32)	-	-	-	-
28	Thailand	-	-	-	1(1)	-
29	Uganda	3(2)	-	-	-	-
30	Uzbekistan	4(1)	-	-	1(1)	-
31	Vietnam	19(18)	3(2)	-	-	1(1)
32	Zambia	3(2)	-	-	1(1)	-
	Total	172(123)	49(34)	30(28)	19(19)	10(10)

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Under SFS						
1	Australia	-	-	-	1(1)	1(1)
2	Botswana	22	-	17(4)	1(1)	-
3	France	1	-	-	-	-
4	Ghana	-	-	-	-	1(1)
5	Germany	-	-	-	-	1(1)
6	Malaysia	1	-	-	-	-
7	Nigeria	18	2	2	1(1)	2(2)
8	Oman	9(1)	-	-	-	1(1)
9	Qatar	1	-	-	-	1(1)
10	Singapore	-	3	-	1(1)	1(1)
11	S.Africa	5	-	-	-	-
12	S.Korea	-	-	-	1(1)	-
13	UAE	5	-	-	-	1(1)
14	US	-	-	-	1(1)	-
	Total	62(1)	5(0)	19(4)	6(6)	9(9)
Reciprocal						
1	Bangladesh	-	-	-	3(3)	-
2	U.K.	-	-	-	3(3)	1(1)
3	US.	-	-	-	1(1)	1(1)
	Total	-	-	-	7(7)	2(2)

Appendix XVIII

Deputation of Experts from April to November 2003

S.No.	Country	Name of Expert	Field	From	To
1	Seychelles	CHM Samson Vijay Kumar	VVIP Security Instructor	April 2003	April 2004
2	Jamaica	Shri K. Mohan	Milk Marketing	May 2003	May 2005
3	Laos	Shri Anand Kumar	To teach use of Indelible ink	June 2003 (7 days)	June 2003
4	Mauritius	Smt. Rajashre Bothale	Remote Sensing	June 2003	October, 2003
5	Guyana	Dr. RPS Kharb	Veg. Seed Expert	June 2003	June 2005
6	Guyana	Dr. A. Murugan	Dairy farming	July 2003	July 2004
7	Guyana	Shri Mukul Gupta	Town Planner	August 2003	August 2005
8	Mauritius	Shri AK Gupta	Architect	July 2003	July 2005
9	Lesotho	Major Sanja Kr. Maurya	Surgical Specialist	August 2003	August 2005
10	Lesotho	Major AK Gupta	Indian Army Training Team	August, 2003	August 2005
11	Lesotho	Major Pawan Dhull	Indian Army Training Team	August 2003	August, 2005
12	Lesotho	Major Neeraj Gossain	Indian Army Training Team	August 2003	August, 2005
13	Lesotho	Major Prabhat Gidda	Indian Army Training Team	August 2003	August, 2005
14	Lesotho	Major Vijay Manral	Indian Army Training Team	August 2003	August 2005
15	Seychelles	Major Rajindra Bana	Logistics Officer	August 2003	February 2004
16	Lesotho-IIInd Batch	Major Sanjay Mohla	Indian Army Training Team	September 2003	September 2005
17	Lesotho	Major JS Minhas	Indian Army Training Team	September 2003	September 2005
18	Lesotho	Major Harpreet Singh	Indian Army Training Team	September 2003	September 2005
19	Lesotho	Major NK Ohri	Indian Army Training Team	September 2003	September 2005
20	Seychelles	Lt. Col. LVR Singh	Military Adviser	October 2003	October 2005
21	Lesotho	Brigadier Padam Budhwar	Security Adviser, IATT	October 2003	October 2005
22	Zanzibar	Shri Agneshwar Sen	WTO Expert	November 2003	February 2004
23	Seychelles	Dr. Jagat Ram	Eye Specialist	November 2003	November 2005

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24	Guyana	Shri C.H. Ranga Rao	TV Transmission Engineer	November 2003	November 2005
25	Zambia	Col. U. K. Gurung	Indian Army Training Team	January 2004	January 2006
26	Zambia	Lt. Col. Raghu Srinivasan	Indian Army Training Team	January 2004	January 2006
27	Zambia	Wg. Cdr. VR Choudhary	Indian Army Training Team	January 2004	January 2006
28	Zambia	Lt. Col. Rajat Kumar Mathur	Indian Army Training Team	January 2004	January 2006
29	Guyana	Shri P. S. Narotra	IT Expert	January 2004	January 2006
30	Guyana	Shri P.K. Malhotra	Legal Expert	January 2004	January 2006
31	Seychelles	Lt. Cdr. A Rawal	Technical Adviser	February 2004	February 2006
32	Uganda	Professor DG Shewade	Prof. of Pharmacology	February 2004	February 2007
List of ITEC Experts presently stationed					
1	Laos	Major Alok Jha	Teaching English & Army tactics	19.09.2001	18.09.2004
2	Laos	Major Sandeep Nautiyal	Teaching English & Army tactics	19.09.2001	18.09.2004
3	Seychelles	Dr. K.M.Agarwal	Psychiatric Registrar	05.10.2001	04.10.2004
4	Zambia	Col. Anil Malik	Indian Military Advisory Team (IMAT)	02.01.2002	01.01.2004
5	Zambia	Lt. Col. Ajoy Pal	Indian Military Advisory Team (IMAT)	02.01.2002	01.01.2004
6	Zambia	Lt. Col. D.M.Gupta	Indian Military Advisory Team (IMAT)	02.01.2002	01.01.2004
7	Zambia	Wg.Cdr. A. Subramaniam	Indian Military Advisory Team (IMAT)	26.12.2001	25.12.2003
8	Seychelles	Sub. Ram Lal	Armourer	1.02.2002	1.02.2003
9	Philippines	Y.K. Dekate	Handloom expert	15/5/2002	14/5/2004
10	Guyana	Dr. V.C. Mathur	Group Planning		1.1.2004

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11	Guyana	Shri CD Banerjee	Digital Technology	01.09.2002	31.8.2005
12	Accra	Dr. RPS Bhatia	Eye Specialist	15.7.2002	14.7.2004
13	Mauritius	Shri RK Maheshwari	Tech.Co-operation Officer	15.8.2002	14.8.2004
14	Mauritius	Dr. SP Sharma	Seed Expert	1.11.2003	1.10.2004
15	Mauritius	Shri Ziley Singh	Co-operation Sector	25.11.2002	24.11.2004
16	Afghanistan	Maj.V.N. Chaturvedi	English Teacher	September 2002	September 2003
17	Losotho	Col. D.S. Negi	Military (I A T T)	17.10.2002	16.10.2005
18	Seychelles	Cdr. P Phokariyal	Naval Advisor	January 2003	January 2005
19	Jamaica	Shri KK Tiwari	Foundry Expert	11.2.2002	10.6.2005
20	Namibia	Shri Rk Dubey	Lecturer in Mathematics	1.3.2003	1.3.2005
21	Laos	Lt. Col. Vivek Sharma	English Language Teacher	March 2003	March 2006
22	Laos	Major SS Maini	English Language Teacher	March 2003	March 2006
23	Seychelles	Nb. Sub. AC Das	Armourer	March 2003	March 2004

Appendix XIX

Gender Issue Statistics

Cadre	Number of lady officers	Cadre Strength	As % of the total strength
IFS	79	618	13%
IFS-B	305	2822	11%
L&T Cadre	2	16	13%
Interpreter's Cadre	6	25	24%
Library Cadre	3	15	20%

Appendix XX

Seminars/Conferences/Round Tables Talks Organised by ICWA from April 2003

(Venue Sapru House unless otherwise specified)

S.No.	Date	Topic	Participants
1	15 January 2003	Lecture on “Expansion of the European Union and its Ramifications”	Shri V.K. Grover, Former Secretary, MEA. Dr. Charan D. Wadhwa, President & Chief Executive, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi. Prof. Balveer Arora, Rector, JNU. Prof. H.S. Chopra, Former Professor, JNU. Shri Eric Gonsalves, Former Ambassador to the European Union and Former Secretary, MEA.
2	21 January 2003	Lecture on “The Potential of Indo-Myanmar Relations”	U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar. Shri K.N. Bakshi, IFS(Retd.). U Kyaw Thu, Ambassador, Embassy of the Union of Myanmar. Shri I.P. Khosla, IFS(Retd.)
3	17 February 2003	Seminar on “Indo-Iran Relations – Retrospect and Prospect”	Prof. Mushirul Hasan, Jamia Millia Islamia University. Dr. A.K. Pasha, JNU. Prof. Gulshan Dietl, JNU. Ms. Kalyani Shankar, Columnist, the Hindustan Times. Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari.
4	28 February 2003	Seminar on “The War Against Terrorism—Quo Vadis”	Shri B. Raman, Director, Institute for Topical Studies, Chennai. Maj. Gen. Afsir Karim, AVSM(Retd.), Editor, AAKROSH. Prof. Kalim Bahadur, JNU. Prof. T. Sreedhar, Visiting Professor, JNU. Amb. A.N. Ram, Former Secretary, MEA and Chairman, CSCAP-India.
5	21 March 2003	Seminar on “ Migration and Refugee Policy”	Prof. Aslam Mahmood, JNU, Shri E.N. Rammohan, Former D.G., BSE. Shri B.G. Verghese, Visiting Professor, Centre for Policy Research. Prof. M.K. Premi, Professor, Formerly at JNU. Shri J.N. Dixit, Former Foreign Secretary.
6	1 April 2003	Book release ceremony “Afghanistan in Transition”	Shri Yashwant Sinha, External Affairs Minister
7	17 April 2003	Role of the UN in the Iraq Crisis	Dr. C.S.R. Murthy, JNU Prof. V.S. Mani, JNU Shri B.S. Prakash, JS(UNP), MEA Mr. Feodor Starcevic, Dir., UNIC Amb. C.R. Gharekhan, IFS(Retd), Former PRI to UN & Former Under Secy Gen. to the UN
8.	30 May 2003	Second Africa Day Lecture on “Recent International Developments: Implications for India & Africa”	Shri I.K. Gujral, Former Prime Minister of India, Ambassador J.R. Hiremath, Mohammad, Ambassador Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem of Sudan

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9	27 June 2003	“West Asia - Peace Prospects”	Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Former Ambassador. Prof. Gulshan Dietl, JNU. Shri Qamar Agha, Columnist. Shri S.K. Singh, Former Foreign Secy.
10	22 July 2003	Lecture on “West Asia after 9/11”	Shri Mohsen Aminzadeh, Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran.
11	1 August 2003	“India-Central Asia Energy and Transport Links of Future”	Air Cmdr. Jasjit Singh (Retd.), Former Director, IDSA. Prof. Nirmala Joshi, JNU. Prof. Gulshan Sachdeva, JNU. Dr. Meena Singh Roy, R. O., IDSA. Dr. Sanjay Deshpande, Dr. P. L. Dash, University of Mumbai. Dr. S.R. Hashim, Member, UPSC.
12	12 August 2003	Lecture on “Ukraine-india: Renewed Partnership in the New Millennium”	Mr. Anatoliy Zlenko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.
13.	10 September 2003	Lecture on “The Global War Against Terror – Israel and India”	Mr. Joseph Lapid, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice of Israel. Amb. S.K. Bhutani.
14	8 October 2003	“West Asia: Is the Road Map Tattered?”	Amb. C. R. Gharekhan, Former Permanent Representative of India to the UN and Former Under Secretary General to the UN. Prof. Gulshan Dietl, JNU. Shri Bibek B. Maitra, BJP. Shri Inder Malhotra, Former Editor, The Times of India.
15	10 October 2003	“India-Asean: Evolving Strategic Partnership	Mrs. S. Tripathi, Additional Secretary, MEA. Prof. S.D. Muni, JNU. Vice Adm. P.S. Das (Retd.), Member of USI. Maj. Gen. Afsir Karim, AVSM (Rtd.), Editor, Aakrosh. Dr. G.V.C. Naidu, IDSA. Amb. A.N. Ram, Chairman, CSCAP- INDIA.
16.	16 October 2003	The 3 rd Alfred Nzo Memorial Lecture on “India and South Africa: Special partners of All Seasons”	Shri Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa. Chairperson Shri I.K. Gujral, Former Prime Minister of India. Shri Digvijay Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs.
17.	4 November 2003	Lecture on “Hungary a New Member of the European Union: With an Open Eye to the World	Shri Peter Medgyessy, Prime Minister of the Republic of Hungary. Amb. S. K. Lambah (Rtd.).
18	19 November 2003	Lecture on “Boao Forum for Asia: Promises and Problems”	Prof. Manoranjan Mohanty, Co-Chairperson, Institute of Chinese Studies. Shri Jairam Ramesh, Economist.
19.	3 December 2003	Lecture on “China-Russia Relations”	Prof. L. I. Jingjie, Director, Institute of East European, Russian & Central Asia Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Amb. B.M. Oza.

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20.	16 December 2003	Lecture on: “ Impact of Iraq on the War Against Terrorism”	Shri B. Raman, Director, Institute for Tropical Studies. Amb. K.P.Fabian. Maj. Gen. H.S. Gill (Retd.). Amb. K.N. Bakshi.
21.	22 December 2003	Lecture on: “Domestic Affairs and Foreign Policy of China”	Amb. Liu Qiutian, President, Chinese Peoples’ Institute of Foreign Affairs. Amb. C.V. Ranganathan.
22.	31 December 2003	Lecture on: “SAARC Summit Prospects for Regional Cooperation”.	Amb. I.P. Khosla, Mem. Secy. ICSAC. Shri T. Ramachandran, Chief of Bureau, The Tribune. Prof. S.D. Muni, JNU. Amb. A.N. Ram, Chairman, CSCAP-India.
23.	21 January 2004	Indo-China Boundary Negotiations	Prof. C. Raja Mohan, JNU. Amb. C.V. Ranganathan
24.	29 January 2004	Lecture on: “Peace Operations and the UN-US Relationship”	Dr. Ramesh Thakur, Sr. Vice Rector, UN University. Amb. M.H. Ansari.
25.	31 January 2004	Lecture on: “Integration and Globalisation”	Mr. Ion Iliescu, President of Romania. Amb. I.P. Khosla.
26.	3 February 2004	7 th Dinesh Singh Memorial Lecture on: “12 th SAARC Summit & Beyond”	Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of External Affairs. Shri I.K. Gujral, former Prime Minister of India and Chairman, ICSAC. Amb. I.P. Khosla, Member Secy., ICSAC.
27.	4 February 2004	Lecture on: “The Presidential Election and the Referendum Issue in Taiwan”	Amb. Ranjit Gupta. Dr. Alka Acharya, JNU
28.	17 February 2004	Lecture on: “The New European Mosaic: The Role of the Small Nations of Europe”	Dr. Dimitrij Rupel, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia
29.	10 March 2004	Seminar on “Evolving Trends in South East Asia”	Shri B. Raman, Director, Institute for Topical Studies, Chennai. Prof. S.D. Muni and Prof. C. Raja Mohan, JNU. Amb. A.N. Ram, Chairman, CSCAP-India.
30.	31 March 2004	Lecture on “China and Central Asian Countries: Shanghai Cooperation Organisation(SCO)”	Prof. Pan Guang, Director & Professor of Shanghai Centre for International Studies & Institute of European & Asian Studies at Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. Amb. C.V. Ranganathan.

Appendix XXI

Conference/Workshops/Seminars Organised by RIS

- International Conference on Building a New Asia: Towards an Asian Economic Community, 10-11 March 2003
 - Workshop on International Food Safety Regulations and Processed Food Exports of India and Thailand, New Delhi, 27 March 2003
 - Seminar on the Doha Agenda, New Delhi, 22 May 2003
 - RIS/CRRID Workshop on WTO, Agriculture and IPRs, Chandigarh, 30 May 2003
 - Development Cooperation: Focus on Nepal, Egypt and Uzbekistan, 28 May 2003
 - India-ASEAN Forum Meet on the ASEAN-India Vision 2020, New Delhi, 18 July 2003
 - Workshop on A Strategic Approach to Strengthening the International Competitiveness in Knowledge-Based Industries, New Delhi, 24 July 2003
 - Policy Analysis and Advisory Network for South Asia (PAANSA) Meeting, New Delhi, 5 August 2003
 - Seminar on 'Development' in the Doha Development Round!, Delhi, 8 August 2003
 - Panel Discussion on Implementation-Related Concerns in the WTO Agenda at the National Symposium on Trade and Globalization: Agenda towards Cancun, 18-19 August 2003
 - Seminar on *World Trade and Development Report 2003*, New Delhi, 1 September 2003
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 - Panel Discussion on TRIPs and Development: Priorities for Developing Countries, jointly with FICCI in Cancun on 11 September 2003.
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Abbreviations

AALCO	Asian African Legal Consultative Organisations	EAA	Europe Africa America
ACD	Asian Cooperation Dialogue	ECGC	Export Credit Guarantee Corporation
ACS	Association of Caribbean states	EPG	Eminent Persons Group
AGPL	Actual Ground Position Line	ER	Economic Relations
ANA	Asia, North Africa	FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
APSEC	Asia Pacific Security Conference	FIEO	Federation of Indian Export Organisations
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum	FOC	Foreign Office Consultations
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations	FSI	Foreign Service Institute
BDR	Bangladesh Rifles	FTA	Free Trade Agreement
BIMST-EC	Bangladesh India Myanmar Sri Lanka Thailand Economic Cooperation	GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
BIPPA	Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement	GMEF	Global Ministerial Environmental Forum
BOOT	Build-own-operate-transfer	GOI	Government of India
BSF	Border Security Force	GSOMIA	General Security of Military Information Agreement
CAN	Community of ANDEAN Nations	HAL	Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
CARICOM	Caribbean Community	HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
CASS	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences	HOM	Head of Mission
CBM	Confidence Building Measures	HOP	Head of Post
CD	Conference on Disarmament	HTCG	High Technology Cooperation Group
CECA	Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement	IBPF	Indo-British Parliamentary Forum
CEP	Cultural Exchange Programme	IBSA	India, Brazil and South Africa
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting	ICCR	Indian Council of Cultural Relations
CHR	Commission on Human Rights	ICRC	International Committee of Red Cross
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia	ICWA	Indian Council of World Affairs
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry	IFS	Indian Foreign Service
CLMV	Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam	IIG	Indian Insurgent Groups
COMESA	Community of Eastern and Southern Africa	ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee	ITPO	Indian Trade Promotion Organisation.
CSCAP	Council for Security and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific	JEC	Joint Economic Commission
CUNPK	Center for UN Peacekeeping	JRC	Joint Rivers Commission
DAE	Department of Atomic Energy	JSG	Joint Study Group
DPC	District Passport Cell	JTC	Joint Trade Committee
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	JWG	Joint Working Group
		KLO	Kamtapur Liberation Organisation
		LAC	Latin American Countries
		LAC	Line of Actual Control
		LCA	Light Combat Aircraft

Abbreviations

LOC	Line of Control	SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam	SADC	Southern African Development Community
MERCOSUR	Market of Southern Cone Countries	SAFTA	South Asian Free Trade Area
MLAT	Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty	SAPTA	South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement
MNNA	Major Non-NATO Ally	SATTA	South Asian Travel and Tourism Expo
MONUC	UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.	SCAAP	Special Commonwealth Assistance for Africa Plan
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	SICA	System of Central American Integration
NAM	Non Aligned Movement	SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	TCC	Troop Contributing Countries
NDC	National Defence College	TCIL	Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd
NDFB	National Democratic Front for Bodoland	TEAM-9	Techno-Economic Approach for Africa India Movement
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development	ULFA	United Liberation Front of Assam
NRI	Non Resident Indian	UNAMI	UN Assistance Mission for Iraq
NSCS	National Security Council Secretariat	UNCOPUOS	UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
ODA	Official Development Assistance	UNDC	United Nations Disarmament Commission
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	UNGA	UN General Assembly
PCFD	Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats	UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugee
PCD	Policy Planning, Consular and Coordination, Diaspora	UNIFIL	UN Interim Force in Lebanon
PIF	Pacific Island Forum	UNMEE	UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
PIO	People of Indian Origin	UNMIK	UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
PKO	Peace Keeping Operation	UNODC	UN Office on Drug and Crime
PLA	People's Liberation Army	USI	United Service Institution of India
PTA	Preferential Trade Agreement	WSIS	World Summit on Information Society
RTES	Rail India Technical Economic Services	WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
ROK	Republic of Korea		