

Ministry of External Affairs

Major Achievements, Significant Developments and important events for the month of July 2019

I. Important policy decisions taken and major achievements during the month:

Argentina:

1. Mr. Luis Etchevehere, Secretary for Agroindustry of Argentina visited India on 17 & 18 July 2019. He met with Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar; Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Shri Giriraj Singh; Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal; Minister of Food Processing Industries, Smt Harsimrat Kaur Badal and Director General of Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Shri Trilochan Mohapatra to explore bilateral agricultural cooperation.

Armenia:

2. The flight of Mr. Nikol Pashinyan, Prime Minister of Armenia, on his way to Hanoi and Singapore and back, made technical halts at Nagpur airport on 4 and 9 July 2019. In view of the stature of the dignitary, necessary protocol courtesies (including receiving and seeing off by senior level State government officers) were provided to him at the Nagpur airport for which the Armenian Ambassador expressed his gratitude.

Australia:

3. External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar met with Foreign Minister of Australia Senator Marise Payne on the side-lines of Commonwealth Foreign Ministerial Meeting on 10 July 2019 to discuss the road map for bilateral relationship.

4. A 4-member team from the Indian Air Force, Navy and Army visited Australia from 11 to 19 July 2019 to observe the Defence Exercise Talisman Sabre.

5. A 3-member delegation led by Lt. Col Nawazesh Patel, IHQ of MoD (Army) visited Townsville to attend the Exercise Planning Conference of India-Australia Joint Special Forces Exercise (Exercise AUSTRAL HIND 2019) from 24 to 26 July 2019.

Azerbaijan:

6. Direct flights have been started on 25 June 2019 between Baku (Azerbaijan) and Delhi (India) by Azerbaijan Airlines (AZAL). AZAL will operate two flights a week on this sector.

During the 43rd Session of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO held in Baku from 30 June to 10 July 2019, Jaipur city was inscribed in the World Heritage List of UNESCO under cultural ties.

7. As a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, 'Azermarka' [under the Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan], commissioned a 70 Gépik commemorative postal stamp on Mahatma Gandhi on the occasion of the 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi in an event in Baku on 26 July 2019.

8. An Iranian flag Ship, MV SHABAHANG, having 7 Iranian and 2 Indian crew members carrying floor tiles from Bandar Anjali Port, Iran to Russia capsized in Caspian sea under territorial water of Azerbaijan at 1400 hrs on 26 July 2019. The Azerbaijan Navy rescued all the crew members including Indians on 26 July 2019. Consular officials of the Indian Embassy were in constant touch with the Azerbaijani authorities and received the two Indian nationals. They were brought to a hotel in Baku. The rescued Indians lost all their belongings including passports. With the efforts of the Indian Embassy, the two Indian crew members have safely been repatriated to India by Fly Dubai flight. They have reached home in Mumbai on the morning of 2 August 2019.

Belarus:

9. Ambassador called on Vladimir Ulakhovich, chairman of BelCCI, on 11 July 2019 to discuss the forthcoming visit of a CAPEXIL delegation to Belarus as well as other proposals for furthering commercial and economic cooperation between India and Belarus.

10. During the 11th meeting of the WTO working party on the accession of Belarus, the Indian delegation in Geneva supported the efforts of the Belarusian government to accede to the WTO and expressed the willingness to actively work with Belarus in 2019 for the early conclusion of the negotiation process.

Benin:

11. President Shri Ram Nath Kovind paid a State Visit to Benin from 28-30 July 2019. This was the first ever visit of HOS/HOG of India to Benin. He was accompanied by Shri Pratap Chandra Sarangi, Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises/Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries and MP, Shri. Dilip Ghosh. In addition to holding talks with President of Benin Mr. Patrice Talon in Cotonou on 29 July 2019, a special honour was extended to Shri Kovind as he addressed the National Assembly (Parliament) in Porto Novo. The President also met members of the Indian community at a reception hosted in his honour in Cotonou on 30 July 2019 before departing for The Gambia. During the visit, the following Agreements/MoUs were signed: (i) Agreement on Mutual Exemption of Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic, Official/Service Passports; (ii) Cultural

Exchange Programme for the years 2019-2023; (iii) Country Agreement for Benin to avail India's tele-education and tele-medicine programme - e-VBAB and (iv) MoU to help Benin set up an Export Credit Agency. President Shri Kovind announced the GoI's decision to extend e-visa facility to Benin to give a boost to business and people-to-people ties. In addition, India offered a fresh Line of credit of \$100 million to finance development projects in Benin.

Bhutan:

Visit of Foreign Secretary

12. Foreign Secretary Shri Vijay Gokhale paid an official visit to Bhutan on 4 & 5 July 2019. During the visit, he had an audience with the King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and called on the Prime Minister Lyonchhen (Dr.) Lotay Tshering. Foreign Minister Lyonpo (Dr.) Tandi Dorji hosted Shri Gokhale over dinner. The visit was an occasion for both the countries to discuss all aspects of bilateral relations and to explore avenues for further strengthening and expanding the multifaceted India-Bhutan ties. The visit of Foreign Secretary was in keeping with the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries.

Visit of Minister of Works and Human Settlement

13. Minister of Works and Human Settlement, Mr. Dorji Tshering visited India from 18-20 July 2019 to attend the Inaugural Session of the International Conference on Sustainable Civil Engineering Practices as a Keynote Speaker. The Conference was organized by Chitkara University Himachal Pradesh and was held in Chandigarh.

First ever consignment from Bhutan using Inland Waterways

14. Indian Minister of State for Shipping and Chemical and Fertilizers, Shri Mansukhlal Mandaviya digitally flagged off the first ship carrying nearly 70 truck-loads (1,000MT) of crushed stone aggregates from Bhutan from Dhubri river port in Assam on 12 July 2019. The vessel reached at Narayanganj, Bangladesh on 16 July 2019 using Indian Waterway.

Mangdechhu Hydro Power Authority (MHPA)

15. MHPA began selling the power generated from 180MW of Unit 2 from 8 July 2019. The unit is expected to generate about 18MW a day.

Botswana:

Indian Company provides training to Botswana nationals

16. KGK Diamonds Botswana Pty. Ltd, a diamond cutting and polishing factory established in Botswana in 2014 providing training in diamond trading to hundreds of Botswana locals in India. This

month, a second batch of the company's local employees arrived in India for a 3 months training in diamond cutting and polishing industries. According to KGK, its employees who have been trained in India and exposed to a new culture are now demonstrating enhanced business skills.

Kerala Food Festival organised by Botswana Kerala Samajam

17. On 28 July 2019, Botswana Kerala Samajam, organised Kerala Food Festival which was a source of attraction amongst the Indian/PIO community and locals.

Brazil:

18. Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways, Gen (Dr.) VK Singh (Retd.) visited Brazil on 25 & 26 July 2019 for BRICS Foreign Ministers Meeting. He met with Foreign Minister of Brazil on the sidelines.

Burundi:

LOC agreement

19. A Line of Credit agreement between the Government of Burundi and EXIM Bank was signed on 2 July 2019 in New Delhi for construction of the new Parliament Building in Gitega (\$ 102.27 million) and two Ministerial buildings in Bujumbura (\$59.09 million).

Cambodia:

20. The 2nd round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and Cambodia was held in New Delhi on 3 July 2019. The Indian side was led by Smt Vijay Thakur Singh, Secretary (East) and the Cambodian side by Ms. EAT Sophea, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation.

21. The 11th Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Senior Official Meeting (SOM) was held in New Delhi on 9 July 2019. A 3-member delegation from Cambodia led by Dr. Sok Soken, Under Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation attended meeting.

22. An MOU on further continuation of ICCR Chair in Sanskrit & Buddhist Studies at Preah Sihanouk Raja Buddhist University was assigned by Ambassador Smt Manika Jain and Venerable Preah Tepsattha Khy Sovanratana, Vice-Rector of the University at a ceremony in EoI Phnom Penh.

23. Smt Annabelle Arya, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Tourism visited Cambodia to represent India in the 22nd ASEAN-India Tourism Working Group in Siem Reap on 12 July 2019.

Canada:

Canadian High Commissioner's meeting with Maharashtra CM

24. Canadian High Commissioner to India, Mr. Nadir Patel held a meeting with Chief Minister Maharashtra Shri Devendra Fadnavis in Mumbai on 22 July 2019. During the meeting, the two sides discussed issues of mutual interest including enhancing commercial, educational, and people-to-people ties.

Rapid Increase in Indians acquiring permanent residency in Canada

25. According to recently released statistics, in 2018 Canada admitted 92,231 new permanent entry residents through its express entry system, a 41 % increase from 2017. Under this system, a total of 39,677 Indian citizens acquired permanent residency in Canada which is a 51 % increase from the year 2017. China, which was on the second rank in 2017, slipped to third rank with 5,885 Chinese obtaining permanent residency in 2018. Nigeria is now on the second place with 6,653.

India bans Pro-Khalistan Group Sikhs for Justice (SFJ)

26. On 10 July 2019, India banned the Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) under Section 3 of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act for its anti-national activities. The SFJ, which was formed in 2007, has been active in recent years and also been advocating for 'Sikh Referendum 2020'. Its primary objective is to establish an 'independent and sovereign country' in Punjab. It is run by a few Sikhs, especially in the US, Canada and the UK.

China:

27. The 14th meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs was held in Beijing on 29 July 2019. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Naveen Srivastava, Joint Secretary (East Asia), MEA, and the Chinese side was led by Mr. Hong Liang, Director General, Department of Boundary and Oceanic Affairs, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Indonesia:

28. The 1st India-Indonesia Consular Dialogue was held in Yogyakarta on 2 July 2019. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Sanjiv Arora, Secretary (Consular, Passport & Visa and Overseas Indian Affairs) while the Indonesian delegation was led by Dr. Andri Hadi, Director General for Protocol and Consular Affairs of Indonesia. During the interaction, Secretary (CPV & OIA) requested the Indonesian side, inter alia, to take necessary measures urgently to permit Indian crew, who have been detained on board commercial vessels, to return to India.

29. The 2nd India-Indonesia Policy Planning Dialogue was held on 11 July 2019 in Jakarta. The Indian delegation was jointly led by Ambassador Shri Pradeep Kumar Rawat and Joint Secretary (PP&R) Smt Nagma M. Mallick while the Indonesian delegation was led by the Head of Policy

Analysis and Development Agency of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia Dr. Siswo Pramono. The Discussions covered the entire spectrum of Geo-Political and Geo-Economic issues and exploring convergence on key issues.

30. Minister of Commerce & Industry and Railways Shri Piyush Goyal, held a bilateral meeting with Indonesian Minister of Trade Mr. Enggartiasto Lukita in New Delhi on 9 July 2019 on the sidelines of Troika Meeting with ASEAN Trade Ministers.

Japan:

31. The 8th Indian Navy- Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (IN-JMSDF) Staff Talks held at Japan from 9 - 11 July 2019.

Kazakhstan:

Tengiz Oilfield Incidence

32. A brawl broke out on the 29 June 2019 between foreign and local employees of CCEP (Consolidated Contracting Engineering and Procurement S.A.L. Offshore), Tengizchevroil, a JV between Chevron, ExxonMobil, KazMunayGas and LUKoil to develop Tengiz, Kazakhstan. Though there was no involvement of Indian workers in the brawl, it was reported that four Indian workers were injured in the incident. Our Embassy in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan took swift action and the Embassy officials met with the representatives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the high ranking officials of CCEP for safety and security of the Indian nationals. The Embassy also set up emergency helpline for the Indian workers. The situation was monitored by the Embassy as well as at the Headquarters on a daily basis. With the constant efforts of the Embassy, the injured Indian workers were provided immediate medical treatment by CCEP. Some of the Indian workers were also shifted to a secure place. The Embassy also helped some of the workers to visit India to overcome the trauma.

Kenya:

33. High Commissioner Shri Rahul Chhabra called on Deputy President Mr. William Ruto on 4 July 2019 and discussed various issues of bilateral interest especially government level collaboration in achieving the objectives of the Big 4 Agenda.

Chief Administrative Secretary (MoS) for Foreign Affairs Mr. Ababu Namwamba and High Commissioner visited RIVATEX in Eldoret on 26 July 2019 to see the ongoing Modernisation Project, funded through GoI's LOC. Since its inauguration in June 2019, RIVATEX has already created over 600 jobs and it is greatly appreciated by the Kenyan side. Mr. Namwamba and Shri Chhabra also commissioned a speed frame machine and a ring frame machine, respectively, to boost the production

of RIVATEX. Mr. Namwamba thanked GoI for its support and described the RIVATEX as a symbol of strong ties between India and Kenya.

34. As part of the 150th Anniversary Celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi and in order to promote yoga & Indian culture, Mission gifted books on Mahatma Gandhi & on Indian culture to students in Patterson Memorial Secondary School, Magadi Secondary School, Magadi Soda School and Oliciramatian Arid Zone Primary School in Magadi on 25 & 26 July 2019; and screened a movie 'Mahatma A Great Soul of 20th Century' in schools. A yoga session was also conducted in the schools. The event was attended by over 1000 people including students and teachers and the efforts of the Mission were greatly appreciated.

Laos:

35. Smt Chhaya Verma, MP (Rajya Sabha) visited Lao People's Democratic Republic from 3-6 July 2019 and participated in International Conference on Women's Issues.

36. A 3-member team of Lao Ministry of Foreign Affairs led by Mr. Virasac Somphong, Acting Director General, participated in 11th Mekong Ganga Cooperation Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in New Delhi on 9 July 2019.

Malaysia:

37. Primary Industries Minister Ms. Teresa Kok, led a business delegation for a Palm Oil Economic and Investment Mission to Mumbai from 29-31 July 2019 to address issues related to trade as well as exploring market and investment opportunities, in palm oil and rubber.

38. A 7-member Malaysian Junior Diplomats from Malaysian Foreign Affairs visited New Delhi for familiarisation visit from 27 July to 3 August 2019.

Maldives:

39. The 10-member Inter-ministerial delegation led by Mr. Uz Fayyaz Ismail, Minister of Economic Development visited Delhi from 22-24 July 2019. The delegation including representatives of Ministries of Economic Development, Higher Education, Tourism and Business Centre Corporation, held talks with Indian counterparts in the areas of skill development, LoCs, and Tourism sector. The visiting Minister had a meeting with Minister of Skill Development Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy, as well as with the Foreign Secretary Shri Vijay Gokhale.

Mongolia:

40. Mr. Baldan Baatarzorig, Chairman of the Civil Service Council (CSC) of Mongolia visited India from 3 to 7 July 2019 at the invitation of Shri Arvind Saxena, Chairman, Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). A MoU between CSC and UPSC was signed on 3 July 2019.

Mozambique:

Defence Minister's visit

41. Minister of Defence, Shri Rajnath Singh visited Maputo, Mozambique from 28 to 30 July 2019. This was the first ever visit of the Defence Minister to Mozambique as well as Shri Singh's first visit abroad as the Defence Minister. He was accompanied by a high level official delegation including Defence Secretary; DG, Coast Guards and senior officials of the MEA and MoD. During the visit Shri Singh called on the Prime Minister of Mozambique, Mr. Carlos Agostinho do Rosario, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. Jose Pacheco, Minister of Defence, Mr. Atanasio Salvador Mtumuke and Minister of Interior, Mr. Jaime Basilio Monteiro. Shri Singh discussed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations while meeting the Mozambican leaders and noted the excellent Government-to-Government ties, strong business exchanges, vibrant development partnership, and long-standing people-to-people links between the two countries.

42. In an elaborate ceremony two High Speed Interceptor boats were handed over to the Mozambique Defence Minister. Shri Singh also gifted 44 SUVs to the Minister of Interior. The defence ministers signed two MoUs on sharing white shipping information and cooperation in the field of Hydrography.

43. The PM of Mozambique, Minister of Defence, Interior Minister and other leaders expressed their gratitude and thanked India for timely and valuable assistance in the aftermath of cyclone IDAI, underlining that India was the first responder in the hour of crisis. The visit of Shri Singh is expected to further strengthen relations with Mozambique particularly, in the area of defence cooperation. The visit was concluded in warm and cordial manner.

Namibia:

Mission organises a talk on Mahatma Gandhi

44. On 11 July 2019, as a part of year long celebrations of 150th Birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the Mission organised a talk on Gandhiji 11 July 2019 at Euros Church in Windhoek. Over 100 people attended the event. During the talk, Dr Nikhila Hiremath, teacher of Indian Culture and Yoga, also touched upon Indian culture, Yoga and Ayurveda. The Mission also gifted books on Mahatma Gandhi on this occasion.

Nepal:

India-Nepal Oversight Mechanism meeting

45. The 7th meeting of India-Nepal Oversight Mechanism to review progress in the implementation of bilateral projects was held on 8 July 2019 in Kathmandu. The meeting was co-chaired by the Ambassador of India to Nepal and the Foreign Secretary of Nepal.

Meeting of Foreign Secretary

46. Foreign Secretary Shri Vijay Gokhale held a meeting with Foreign Secretary of Nepal Mr. Shanker Das Bairagi on 17 July 2019 in New Delhi to discuss bilateral issues of mutual interest.

India-Nepal Joint Team of Experts meeting

47. The 16th meeting of India-Nepal Joint Team of Experts on Sapta Kosi High Dam Multipurpose Project and Sun Kosi Storage-cum-Diversion Scheme was held on 25-26 July 2019 in New Delhi. The meeting was co-chaired by Member (River Management), Central Water Commission, Government of India and Director General, Department of Electricity Development, Government of Nepal.

Nicaragua:

48. Ms. Sonia Castro Gonzalez, Minister of Health, Nicaragua visited India from 30 to 31 July 2019. She met with Minister of Health and Family Welfare Shri Harsh Vardhan.

Rwanda:

Kigali Global Dialogue – 2019

49. The first edition of Kigali Global Dialogue 2019, organized by the Indian think tank, Observers Research Foundation (ORF), took place in Kigali from 3 to 5 July 2019. This was the first in the series of 5 KGDs which will take place from 2019- 2023. The objective of the KGD is to serve as a Rwanda based platform in which various actors will have conversation on contemporary issues of development and growth. KGD 2019 was organized by the ORF in partnership with the government of Rwanda and the government of UK (through Department for International Development) among others. Several participants from government, international bodies, academia, NGOs, industry and think tank took part in the KGD 2019. Participants included Mr. Boric Tadic, former President of Serbia and Mr. Mohamed Nasheed, former President of Maldives. The inauguration speech for the KGD 2019 was given by Dr. Richard Sezibera, Foreign Minister of Rwanda. The event also saw participation from several other Ministers of Rwanda which includes, Mr. Eugene Mutimura, Education Minister; Ms. Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT; Ms. Claudine Uwera, MoS in charge of Economic Planning in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning of Rwanda and Mr. Patrick Ndimubanzi, MoS in charge of Public Health and Primary Health Care.

50. The ministers from other countries who participated in the KGD 2019 were- Mr. Rufino Ovono Ondo Engonga, Minister of Transport Posts and Telecommunications, Equatorial Guinea and Ms. Patricia Appiagyei, Deputy Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ghana. From The MEA, Joint Secretary (East & Southern Africa) Smt Neena Malhotra participated in the KGD 2019 and participated as a speaker in two sessions.

Republic of Korea:

51. Mr. Kim Yu Geun, 1st Deputy Director of National Security of the RoK visited India from 29-30 July 2019. During the visit he called on NSA, Dy NSA, Chief of Army Staff, and Secretary (DP) and visited the Army Design Bureau.

52. Mr. Song Young Gil, President of the Korea-India Parliamentarians Association of the National Assembly of the ROK, visited India from 3 to 6 July 2019.

Russia:

53. The India-Russia Joint Working Group on Cooperation in Civil Aviation under IRIGC-TEC met in Moscow on 19 July 2019 and discussed ways of strengthening bilateral collaboration in aviation sector.

54. Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Mr. Yury Borisov visited New Delhi on 22 July 2019. He met EAM, Dr. S Jaishankar, for the India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC), which was co-chaired by both. The two also discussed preparation for the Bilateral Annual Summit scheduled to be held in September in Vladivostok.

55. INS Tarkash arrived at St Petersburg on 25 July 2019 and participated in the Russia Navy Day Parade.

56. On 26 July 2019, a MoU on 'Cooperation in the field of Deep Sea Mining' between National Institute of Ocean Technology Chennai and Krylov Institute was signed in New Delhi, between India and Russia in the presence of Secretary Ministry of Earth Sciences and Deputy Minister Mr. Ryazantsev.

57. A special session was held on India-Russia Perspectives on bilateral cooperation in the field of civil shipbuilding in New Delhi, on 26 July 2019, with the participation of FICCI and Ministry of Industry and Trade, Russia.

58. MoS, Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Kiren Rijiju visited Russia from 28 July to 2 August 2019, leading a 32 member youth delegation from India.

Saudi Arabia:

59. Mr. Khalid Al-Falih, Minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources, Saudi Arabia visited India from 24-25 July 2019. He met Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan on 25 July 2019 and discussed matters relating to bilateral cooperation in the field of petroleum and natural gas.

Singapore:

60. Initial Planning Conference (IPC) of inaugural India-Singapore-Thailand Trilateral Exercise was held at Singapore from 2-5 July 2019. A 2-member Indian Navy Delegation participated in IPC.

Tajikistan:

61. Ambassador Shri Viraj Singh assumed charge.

Tanzania:

62. High Commissioner-designate of India to Tanzania, Shri Sanjiv Kohli assumed charge at the Mission on 5 July 2019.

63. The Artificial Limbs --Jaipur Foot Fitment Camp that started on 6 June 2019 at the Muhimbili Orthopedic Institute, Dar es Salaam wound up on 13 July 2019. The technical team from Shree Bhagwan Mahavir Vikalang Sahayata Samiti, Jaipur prepared and handed over 551 limbs to 520 Tanzanian beneficiaries. The camp was organized under "India for Humanity" programme with GOI Grant.

Thailand:

64. Ms. Chutima Bunyapraphasara, then Deputy Minister of Commerce of Thailand, Mr. Enggartiasto Lukita, Trade Minister of Indonesia and Mr. Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN visited India for discussions related to Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). During the visit they met Shri Piyush Goyal, Commerce and Industry Minister on 9 July.

The Gambia:

65. President Shri Ram Nath Kovind paid a state visit to The Gambia from 30 July -1 August 2019. This was the first ever visit of HOS/HOG of India to The Gambia. President held delegation talks with President Mr Adama Barrow in Banjul on 31 July 2019. As a special gesture, the National Assembly (Parliament), which was in recess, held a special session for Shri Kovind's address. The National Assembly Building Complex in Banjul is one of the prominent projects in West Africa built under a GoI Line of Credit. The other elements of the visit included the inauguration of exhibitions on

Mahatma Gandhi and Khadi and reception with the Indian community. A MoU on Cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy was signed during the visit. The Gambian side handed over the instrument of ratification of the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement. President also announced GoI's decision to extend an assistance of US\$ 500,000 in support of skill development and cottage industry projects. It was also agreed to offer training in the fields of judiciary, police, administration and technical expertise, as per the request and in line with the priorities of the Gambian side.

UAE:

66. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates, paid an official visit to India from 7-9 July 2019. He was accompanied by a senior-level delegation. He held bilateral talks with EAM and also called on Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Uganda:

Parliamentary Commission Delegation

67. A 6-member delegation of Parliamentary Commission of Uganda led by Ms. Cecilia Atim Ogwal Barbara, Parliamentary Commissioner visited India on a study tour from 6-13 July 2019. The delegation was received by the Vice Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Shri Harivansh. The delegation exchanged information and views with the Rajya Sabha Committee on MPLADS.

550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev ji

68. On 21 July and 28 July 2019, High Commissioner Shri Ravi Shankar visited the Ramgarhia Gurudwara, Old Kampala and Shri Singh Sabha Gurudwara, Nakasero, Kampala respectively and addressed the gathering of around 200 devotees. During his address, he elaborated on GoI initiatives to celebrate 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev ji and handed over posters containing the details of commemorative events declared by the Cabinet Committee, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

Leather Delegation from India visits Uganda

69. A 19-member business delegation from Council for Leather Exports (CLE) led by its regional chairman, Shri Javed Iqbal, visited Uganda from 25-26 July 2019. During the visit, a round-table on Investment Opportunities in Uganda & B2B meetings were organized by Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa (SITA), where fruitful discussions were held amongst various stakeholders from both sides on the business opportunities and investments in Uganda. The delegation also visited

Namanve Industrial Park and Leatherland's Leather Goods Unit in Kampala and Leatherland (LWG tannery) in Masaka, Uganda.

United States of America:

President Trump's Remarks on Kashmir Issue

70. On 22 July 2019, President Donald Trump, in his remarks before the reporters in the White House Oval Office ahead of his talks with Pakistani Prime Minister Mr. Imran Khan, claimed that PM Shri Narendra Modi had asked him to mediate in the Kashmir issue during his meeting in Japan in June 2019. The Indian Government quickly denied this by saying that the PM had never made such a request to President Trump.

71. The US State Department's South Central Asia Bureau promptly clarified through a tweet on 22 July 2019 by saying that Washington still believes Kashmir is a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan, and US stands ready to assist the two parties. US Congressman Brad Sherman tweeted on 23 July 2019 that, "Everyone who knows anything about foreign policy in South Asia knows that #India consistently opposes third-party mediation re #Kashmir. Everyone knows PM Modi would never suggest such a thing. Trump's statement is amateurish and delusional. And embarrassing." He further said that he had "just apologized to Indian Ambassador @HarshShringla for Trump's "amateurish and embarrassing mistake." MEA spokesperson Shri Raveesh Kumar tweeted on 22 July 2019 that "No such request has been made by PM Narendra Modi to the US President. It has been India's consistent position that all issues with Pakistan are discussed only bilaterally. Any engagement with Pakistan would require an end to cross-border terrorism."

72. Following President Trump remarks on the Kashmir issue, Indian opposition political parties protested in the Parliament and sought clarification from the Government on this issue which led EAM, Dr S. Jaishankar to issue a statement in the Rajya Sabha on 23 July 2019. In his statement, the EAM categorically denied Trump's statement by saying that the PM had made no such request. The EAM said, "I would like to categorically state that no such request has been made by the Prime Minister to the US President...any engagement with Pakistan would require an end to cross-border terrorism." He further emphasized that "the Simla agreement and the Lahore declaration provide the basis to resolve all issues between India and Pakistan bilaterally." On 3 July 2019, Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh in a statement in the Lok Sabha also said that there was no discussion on Kashmir during the meeting between PM Shri Modi and President Trump in Japan and there is no question of any mediation on Kashmir issue.

73. Responding to a question on the denial by the Indian Government, White House Counselor Ms Kellyanne Conway told reporters on 25 July 2019 that the US has a very good and growing

relationship with PM Shri Modi and the Government of India. MEA spokesperson Shri Raveesh Kumar again repeated on 25 July 2019 that “It is time to move on” and added India’s relationship with the US remains very strong.

US Approves Foreign Military Sales to India and Pakistan

74. The US Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) in a statement on 26 July 2019, said that the State Department has approved “Foreign Military Sale to India of C-17 sustainment follow-on support for an estimated cost of \$670 million.” The statement said, the sale “will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to strengthen the U.S.-Indian strategic relationship and to improve the mobility capabilities of a major defensive partner.” It added that, “India needs this follow-on support to maintain its operational readiness and ability to provide Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR) assistance in the region.” The Trump Administration simultaneously approved \$125 million worth of technical and logistics support for Pakistani F-16 warplanes on 26 July 2019. The DSCA in its statement however said that a Technical Security Team (TST) will be “protecting US technology through the continued presence of US personnel that provide 24/7 end-use monitoring” of the refurbished F-16s.

Apache Guardian Helicopters Arrive in India from US

75. The Indian Air Force’s (IAF) first batch of four Boeing AH-64E Apache Guardian attack helicopters arrived at the Hindon Air Force Station (AFS), New Delhi, from the US on 27 July 2019. Four more helicopters are expected to arrive in August, with all slated for induction by March 2020.

US on India’s Purchase of S-400 from Russia

76. US Commander of Indo-Pacific Command, Admiral Philip Davidson said at the Aspen Security Forum in Colorado on 20 July 2019 that India’s buying of the S-400 missile defence system from Russia will have a ‘problem’ for the US. Highlighting the growing India-US defence cooperation, Admiral Davidson said that he has been trying to clarify to India that buying S-400 is unprofitable for it. However, he asserted that Washington will continue to hold dialogue with New Delhi over the issue.

US Seeks Consultations with India over Tariff Hike on 28 US Goods

77. On 4 July 2019, the US sought consultations with India under the TWO’s dispute settlement mechanism over the Indian government’s decision to impose retaliatory tariffs on 28 US goods. The US alleged that the decision is inconsistent with the global trade norms. According to a communication of the Geneva-based WTO, the US said that the additional tariffs imposed by India “appears to nullify or impair the benefits accruing to the US directly or indirectly” under the GATT

1994. The US said that India does not impose these duties on like products originating in the territory of any other WTO member nation. “India also appears to be applying rates of duty to US imports greater than the rates of duty set out in India’s schedule of concessions.” In response to the United States imposition of additional tariffs of 25 per cent and 10 per cent on import of steel and aluminum products in March 2018, the Indian Government imposed retaliatory tariffs on 28 products including almond, pulses, walnut, chickpeas and boric acid originating or exported from the US with effect from 16 June 2019. The retaliatory tariffs are expected to have an additional impact in terms of duty incidence of about \$ 217 million on these 28 products imported from US.

Trump says Indian Tariffs on American Products not Acceptable

78. President Trump said in a tweet on 9 July 2019 that “India has long had a field day putting Tariffs on American products. No longer acceptable!” The tweet came after his recent meeting with PM Shri Modi on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Osaka, Japan where the two leaders asked their respective trade teams to meet and iron out all the contentious issues.

India and the US Hold Trade Talks

79. The US delegation led by Assistant US Trade Representative (USTR), Mr. Christopher Wilson held trade talks with his Indian counterpart led by Additional Secretary in the Commerce Ministry, Shri Sanjay Chadha in New Delhi on 12 July 2019. The Commerce Ministry in a statement said that “the meeting was cordial and aimed at providing a new impetus to bilateral trade and commercial ties, in line with the mandate given by Prime Minister Modi and President Trump during their meeting at Osaka, Japan, on 28 June 2019.” During the meeting, both sides discussed broad contours of bilateral trade and commercial ties and “agreed to continue their discussions for achieving mutually beneficial outcomes aimed at further growing the economic relationship and addressing mutual trade concerns.”

India and China to Surpass the US in Tech Innovations by 2035

80. According to Bloomberg New Economy Forum survey released on 25 July 2019, 54 % of business professionals across the world believe that by 2035, China and India will have surpassed the US as the world’s centers of technology innovation. The survey said that the emerging economies are more optimistic than developed markets about the power of technology to shape a better world. It also noted that the emerging economics see technology more as an opportunity while the developed world has a greater sense of technology as a threat.

Indian Priest Attacked in New York

81. Swami Harish Chander Puri, priest of the Shiv Shakti Peeth temple in Glen Oaks in New York, was attacked on 18 July 2019, by an unidentified man who reportedly screamed: “This is my

neighbourhood”. Prominent US Congresspersons including Grace Meng and Tom Suozzi strongly condemned the attack and expressed solidarity with the Hindu community. Meanwhile, New York police arrested 52-year old Sergio Gouveia, in connection to the attack and charged him with the assault and potential hate crime.

Vietnam:

82. India-Vietnam Joint Exercise VINBAX was held on scale model in Thach That District, Hanoi to share experiences in dealing with situations that may arise during peacekeeping operations at United Nations from 8-14 July 2019.

83. Shri Chandan Brahma, Minister for Welfare of Plain Tribes and Backward Classes, Government of Assam led a delegation to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam from 5- 9 July 2019 to study sericulture, agricultural practices etc.

Zambia:

South African Court stays liquidation of Konkola Copper Mines (KCM):

84. In the ongoing tussle between the Government of Zambia and Anil Aggrawal owned Vedanta Resource’s Zambian Mining Project, KCM, South Gauteng High Court, Johannesburg granted an urgent interim injunction against ZCCM-IH and KCM Liquidator on 23 July 2019. However, Zambian Government stated that the South Africa Court’s ruling had no jurisdiction or enforceable mechanism or indeed applicability in the Zambian system.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) & South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC):

85. The first BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture (1st BAMB) preceded by the first BIMSTEC Senior Officials’ Meeting on Agriculture (1st SOM-A) was held on 11-12 July 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar which was attended by MoS, Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Shri Parshottam Rupala. India announced 5 Post Graduate and 5 PhD scholarships, for BIMSTEC students in Agriculture Sector.

86. The second Meeting of the track 1.5 BIMSTEC Security Dialogue Forum was held on 30-31 July 2019 in Dhaka (Bangladesh).

Counter Terrorism Division:

India-Uzbekistan Joint Working Group

87. The Joint Working Group reviewed threats posed by terrorist groups worldwide and in their respective regions including cross border terrorism. They exchanged views on current counter-

terrorism challenges like countering radicalization, combating financing of terrorism, preventing use of internet for terrorist purposes and returnee foreign terrorist fighters. The two sides also deliberated upon measures to strengthen bilateral cooperation in information sharing, mutual capacity building and sharing of best practices.

Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism

88. India and Turkey held Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism on 4 July 2019 in Ankara. The delegations discussed developments pertaining to their regions, and shared experiences in the areas of countering terrorism, prevent terrorist financing, countering extremism and radicalization and other issues of common interest.

Consular, Passport and Visas (CPV) Division:

89. An agreement on mutual exemption from visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official/service passports was signed between India and Benin during the visit of President Shri Ram Nath Kovind to Benin from 28-30 July 2019.

90. Various Passport Offices at the Passport Seva Kendras under their jurisdiction, organised 18 Melas, in order to provide passport services during the weekends. A total of 6,217 applications were processed at these Melas. As on 31 July 2019, a total of 412 POPSK were functional.

91. In all 11,22,900 passport related applications were processed during the month by the Passport Offices in India.

Economic Diplomacy & States Division:

92. The States section conveyed it's no objection to the Government of Tripura on 2 July 2019, regarding the project proposal for Power Sector Infrastructure Development seeking ADB assistance.

93. The States Section conveyed it's no objection to Ministry of DoNER on the Project Proposal from Government of Assam in Tourism Sector with External Assistance from World Bank on 5 July 2019.

94. The States Section conveyed it's no objection to Fund Bank & ADB Division, DEA for the proposal from State Government of Manipur for Construction of Imphal Ring Road and Improvement of Traffic Junction in Imphal City on 10 July 2019.

95. The States Section organized 'Curtain Raiser to Rising Himachal Pradesh Global Investors' Meet in collaboration with Government of Himachal Pradesh' to showcase its Investment opportunities at Hotel Pullman, Aerocity on 10 July 2019.

96. The States Section conveyed its no objection to Transport, Fisheries and Revenue Department, Government of Kerala for the MoU with Swiss eBus manufacturing firm HESS for assembly and manufacture of e-Bus in Kerala on 22 July 2019.

Foreign Service Institute:

97. The 1st Special Course for Diplomats from Central Asian Countries was conducted at FSI from 24 June - 06 July 2019. The Course was attended by 29 participants.

98. The 2nd Special Course for Diplomats from Maldives was conducted at Foreign Service Institute from 24 June - 06 July 2019. The Course was attended by 8 participants.

99. The 1st Special Course for Diplomats from League of Arab States was conducted at FSI from 22-29 July 2019. The Course was attended by 16 participants.

99. A Workshop on “Online RTI” for the officers of MEA was organised by FSI on 9 July 2019. The Workshop was attended by around 100 participants.

100. A 20 member media delegation from Maldives visited FSI for a Familiarisation Programme on 4 July 2019.

101. Seven diplomats and 2 faculty members from the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia visited FSI for a Familiarisation Programme on 29 July 2019.

MER Division:

102. The meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs / International Relations under the chair of Brazil was held on 25 & 26 July 2019, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with the representation of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa. The Ministers exchanged views on key issues on the international agenda. They also reviewed with satisfaction the progress of BRICS cooperation featuring mutual respect and understanding, equality, solidarity, openness, inclusiveness and mutually beneficial cooperation. The Ministers agreed to further deepen BRICS three-pillar-driven cooperation in the areas of economy, peace and security and people-to-people exchanges.

103. The 3rd meeting of BRICS Sherpas was held in Rio de Janeiro from 22 - 25 July 2019. The Sherpas reviewed the cooperation under BRICS and discussed the possible outcomes in preparation for upcoming BRICS Summit in November 2019.

OIA I:

104. The 5th High Level Dialogue on Migration and Mobility [HLDMM] between India and the European Union was organised in New Delhi on 11 July 2019. The Indian side was led by Shri Sanjiv Arora, Secretary (CPV & OIA) and the EU side was led by Ms. Paraskevi Michou, Director General (Migration and Home Affairs), European Commission. The dialogue was also attended by Heads of Mission and other representatives of the Diplomatic Missions of EU Member States in New Delhi, as observers. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss and review the entire gamut of migration and mobility issues of mutual interest. Both sides reaffirmed that migration and mobility are an important dimension of the strategic partnership between India and EU. Prior to the HLDMM, an India-EU Seminar on Sharing of Good Practices on Migration Governance was also held in New Delhi on 10 July 2019 under the Technical Support Project for undertaking collaborative activities in the framework of the Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM) between India and the European Union and its Member States, signed on 29 March 2016.
