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An initiative for Diplomats

imprint

*Magazine on India's Foreign Affairs and International Relations.
India's imprint in the world of Diplomacy.*



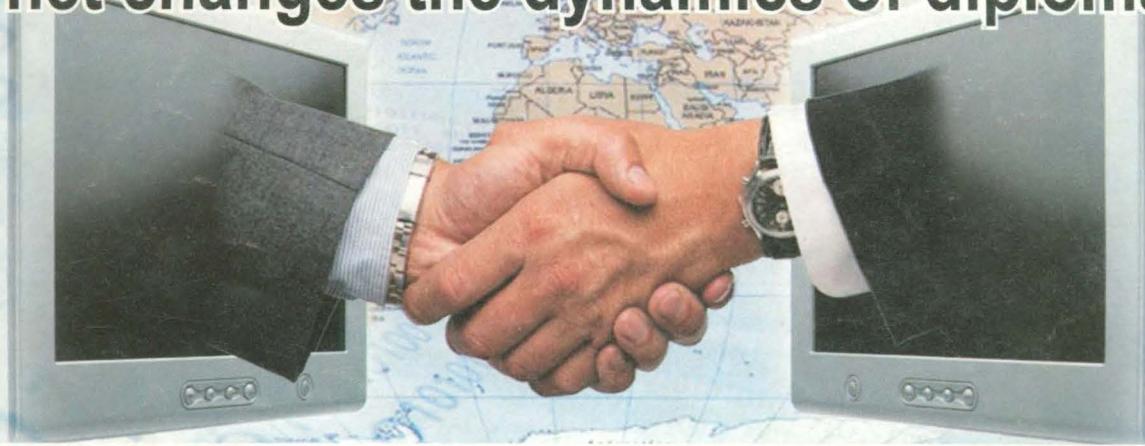
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Robert Gates visits India



NEWS:

Steven J White inaugurates the
US pavilion at DefExpo 2008

Digital Diplomacy Internet changes the dynamics of diplomacy



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India opens a new Embassy office in Argentina



Foreign Minister of Argentina, Jorge Taiana and the Minister of State for External Affairs, Anand Sharma inaugurate the new Indian Embassy office in Argentina on February 7, 2008

Argentina to open a new Consulate in Mumbai

INDIA and Argentina share a close relationship. It seems that the two countries are further going to strengthen this association between the two countries.

In the month of February, India opened a new Embassy office in Argentina. This new office of the Indian Embassy in Argentina was opened in Buenos Aires in the second week of February. The Foreign Minister of Argentina, Jorge Enrique Taiana and the Minister of State for External Affairs of India jointly inaugurated this new office of the Indian Embassy in Argentina on February 7, 2008. Media

reports inform that the disciples of Myrta Barwie performed Indian classical dance on the occasion. A reception followed the inauguration.

Now the Indian Embassy in Argentina has moved to the 19th floor of Torre Madero, 942, Avenida Eduardo Madero. Phone, fax and email addresses will remain the same. Sources inform that the new office has a large space, fantastic view of the River Plata and a Business Centre.

On this occasion the Foreign Minister of Argentina, Jorge Enrique Taiana underlined the growing importance of India in Argentina's export.

On this occasion the Foreign Minister of Argentina also announced that the new Consulate is going to be opened by Argentina in Mumbai within the coming few weeks.

Fernando Ras has been nominated as the first Consul General in Mumbai. He has an experience in Economic Diplomacy. He was Director General of Export promotion in the Foreign Ministry in the last three years and had visited India with an Argentine business delegation in July 2006. Mr. Ras was scheduled to reach Mumbai to open the consulate in February 2008.

The brief for *imprint* is to be a media for the Art and Practice of diplomacy. It circulates within the Indian Diplomatic community globally. *imprint* shall report the articles of Indian diplomats, as also the diplomatic activity in India of foreign diplomats. Send news to info@imprintworldwide.com

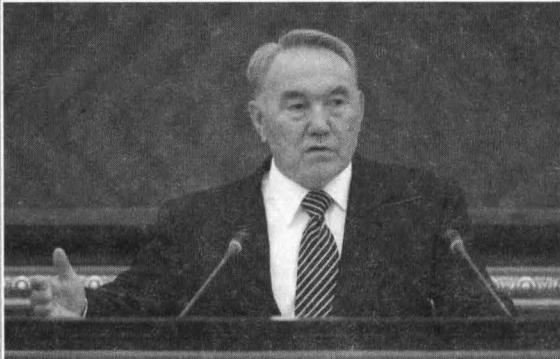
The Address of the President of Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the Nation

THE annual Address of President Nursultan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan "The growth of welfare of the citizens of Kazakhstan is the main goal of the state's policy" is a logical continuation of the Addresses of 2006 and 2007, which were devoted to Kazakhstan's strategy of joining the ranks of the world's 50 most competitive nations and modernization of society, as well as innovative development of economy.

The President specifically outlined the necessity for consistent modernization and ensuring Kazakhstan's stable economic growth. On this very basis the principle goal of preserving the pace of social development and growth of citizens' prosperity is planned to be achieved.

Speaking on "Consistent modernization and maintenance of stable economic growth" President Nazarbayev pointed out key priorities of economic policy. Namely, the Government of Kazakhstan is set to stimulate domestic investment resources with growing role of state holdings, development institutions and social-business corporations. Priority measures should comprise of:

- Consistent strengthening of State authority in strategically important branches of economy to consolidate Kazakhstan's position as an influential and responsible player in global energy markets, as well as to enter international market with value added goods;
- speedy infrastructural development of economy's main sectors, such as electricity generation and transportation system. With this in mind the Head of State instructed to start implementation of the largest transportation project in Kazakhstan "Transcontinental corridor Western Europe - Western China";
- development of non-extractive



Nursultan Nazarbayev

sector through the implementation of the "30 corporate leaders" program*.

The priorities of macroeconomic policy are focused on establishing an efficient response mechanism to financial instability threats and enhancing the international markets' confidence in Kazakhstan's economy. Structural reforms in financial system are to be continued to raise its competitiveness and stability, further improve management of systemic risks both in private and state sectors, as well as elaborate a quick response measures in case of force-major situations.

President noted that inflow of foreign capital into the banking sector is regarded as a vote of confidence in Kazakhstan, a source of financial support and best international practices of banking services.

On the agenda is to bring the tax system in line with the goals of the new stage of Kazakhstan development, thereby promoting modernization and diversification of Kazakhstan's economy, elimination of "shadow business". New Tax Code must become the law of direct action and prescribe the reduction of tax burden for non-extractive industries, especially for small and medium sized enterprises, at the expense of greater economic return from extractive sector.

The Address necessitates further improvement of Kazakhstan's model of political and state functioning through combining universally ac-

cepted mechanisms of democracy development and traditions of Kazakhstan society, with a view of maintaining long term stability, peace and harmony.

Increased effectiveness of public administration, further administrative reform, systemic measures against criminality and corruption are set to be accomplished within the framework of political modernization.

The President also noted the importance of comprehensive assistance to entrepreneurship, freeing it from a burden of administrative pressure and illegal interference.

According to "Increasing Kazakhstan population's prosperity" task, a provision of social welfare will remain amongst the most important targets. Healthcare and education are named nationwide priorities and they will be developed by attracting private capital as a part of corporate social responsibility.

The forth theme of the Address is devoted to the consolidation of international authority, regional stability and international security. It is underlined that the basic priorities of Kazakhstan foreign policy remain invariable.

Kazakhstan will continue to develop economic and political cooperation with Russia, China and the countries of Central Asia, thus creating a firm basis for stability, open dialogue and interaction in the region. With the purpose of strengthening security in Central Asia, constructive cooperation with the United States, the European Union and NATO will be expanded.

Due to the chairmanship of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the OSCE in 2010, a special program "Path to Europe" has been initiated by President Nazarbayev. It is to promote the development of economic cooperation, attract edge cut technologies and modern management practices, further legislation reform.

*In his Address to the Nation - 2007 President N.Nazarbaev called for close interaction of government with private structures through the "30 corporate leaders of Kazakhstan" Programme to further improve the country's competitive edge and regional role by implementing "breakthrough" projects in priority sectors of Kazakhstan's economy.



The High Commissioner of Seychelles, Dick Espanon, presenting his credentials to the President of India, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, on 13th February 2008.



The High Commissioner of Malawi, Brian Bowler, presents his credentials at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 13th February 2008.



The High Commissioner of Fiji, Savenaca Kaunisela, presenting his credentials to the President of India, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 13th February 2008.

Eight new Envoys present credentials

EIGHT envoys presented their credentials to the President of India, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil at a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan on February 13, 2008. The Envoys who presented their credentials were from: - Fiji, New Zealand, Uganda, Chile, Malaysia, Malawi, Greece and Seychelles.

The new High Commissioner of Seychelles is Dick Espanon; the new High Commissioner of Malawi is Brian Bowler; High Commissioner of Fiji is Savenaca Kaunisela; The Ambassador of Chile is Alfonso Silva; The High Commissioner of Malaysia is Dato Tan Seng Sung; The High Commissioner of Uganda is Nimisha Madhvani; the new High Commissioner of New Zealand is Rupert Holborow and the new Ambassador of Greece is Stavros Lykidis.



The Ambassador of Chile, Alfonso Silva, presents his credentials to the President of India, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 13th February 2008.



The High Commissioner of Malaysia, Dato Tan Seng Sung, presenting his credentials to the President of India, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 13th February 2008.



The High Commissioner of Uganda, Nimisha Madhvani, presenting her credentials on 13th February 2008.



The High Commissioner of New Zealand, Rupert Holborow, presenting his credentials on 13th February 2008.



The Ambassador of Greece, Stavros Lykidis, presents his credentials on 13th February 2008.

David Malone becomes the next President of IDRC

CANADIAN High Commissioner to India, David Malone has been appointed as the next President of the International Development Research Centre Canada. On his appointment, the Chairperson of IDRC Board of Governors said, "I am proud to welcome Mr. Malone, who brings a

wealth of diplomatic and scholarly experience to IDRC. He will build on the outstanding legacy of Maureen O'Neill, who has provided excellent leadership to the Centre for 10 years," said Barbara McDougall, Chair of IDRC's Board of Governors. "I had the pleasure of

working with David during my tenure as Secretary of State for External Affairs in the early 1990s, and know him to be a brilliant thinker and practitioner, as well as a long-time friend of IDRC."

Reports inform that David Malone joined the Canadian Foreign Service in 1975

and since then he has been posted at a number of places. He is currently Canada's High Commissioner to India and Ambassador to Nepal and Bhutan.



David Malone

French Embassy supports photo exhibition

A PRESS Release issued by the French Embassy states that at present IPN'08 is going on in India. IPN'08 is a platform for photography in India. It is a federative initiative promoting photography in India and encouraging new initiatives in this field throughout the year and the country. Born from the enthusiasm of various Indian and European partners, IPN'08 is a platform to showcase the vitality of photography.

The Press Release states that IPN'08, is part of

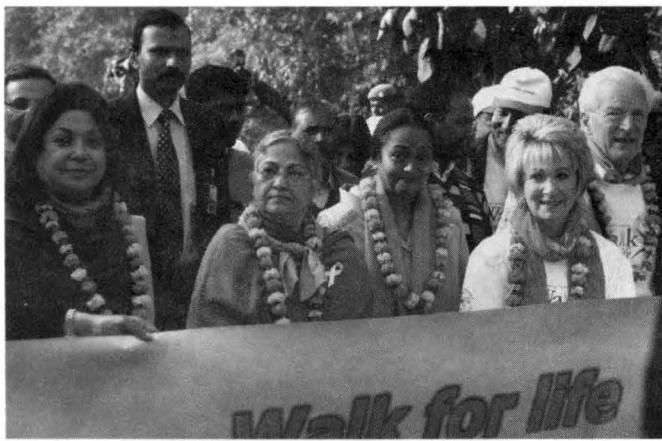
the bi-lateral agreements between India and France, it began in the end of January, on the occasion of the State visit in India of the President of the French Republic Nicolas Sarkozy. This large-scale series of events will last till December 2008. The IPN'08 platform is based on a concept by independent photographer Alain Willaume (co-curator, Rencontres d'Arles 2007) and stems from the success of the Indian programme of Rencontres internationales de la photographie d'Arles 2007 and the publication of

the 'book India Now, New Visions in Photography, (Textuel/Thames and Hudson, 2007), both supported

by the Embassy of France in India. Seven exhibitions shown at IPN'08 has come from France.



French Ambassador to India, Jerome Bonnafont with other members at IPN'08



Mrs. Jeanie Mulford and Mrs. Gurusharan Kaur at the 'Walk for life' event organized in Delhi on February 10, 2008 to create awareness on Breast cancer. Around 5,000 persons participated in the event.



Shahid Mallik with Hamid Ansari: The High Commissioner of Pakistan Mr. Shahid Malik calls on the Vice President, Mohammad Hamid Ansari, in New Delhi on February 14, 2008



The Foreign Minister of Turkey, Ali Babacan with the Vice President, Mohammad Hamid Ansari, in New Delhi on February 8, 2008



The Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh presenting the Sustainable Development Leadership Award to the President of Maldives, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, in New Delhi on February 7, 2008



The Union Minister of Tourism and Culture, Ambika Soni meeting with the Dy Prime Minister and Minister of Republic of Tatarstan, in New Delhi on February 13, 2008



The Prime Minister of Finland, Matti Vanhanen, calling on the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in New Delhi on February 7, 2008

Diplomatic Quotes

“The India-US civil nuclear initiative, which has attracted a lot of media attention, is the most outstanding symbol of the new relationship between the two countries as well as of India's new standing in the world,”

Ronnen Sen, India's Ambassador to US

“To fulfill these common aspirations, we are committed to developing and strengthening the Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity between the two countries,”

Zhang Yang, China's Ambassador to India

“Alliance is not the right word. Because India's policies, in philosophy, are such that it will remain as it is. It will have strong relationship around the world. Among them the US is also there,”

David Mulford, US Ambassador to India

“It is unlikely that this deal will be offered again to India,”

David Mulford, US Ambassador to India

“India, Japan and the United States cooperate closely in the Community of Democracies. All three countries also recognise that democracy and development are not only compatible, but inextricably linked, and that free markets are most sustainable in free societies,”

Ronnen Sen, India's Ambassador to US

“Tourism between China and India will “develop at an amazing speed,”

Nirupama Rao, Indian Ambassador to China

“We are taking a comprehensive and consensual approach to the minimum wage limit issue in consultation with the local and Indian authorities,” India's Ambassador to UAE Talmiz Ahmad said from Abu Dhabi on Tuesday,

Talmiz Ahmad, Indian Ambassador to UAE

“Iran holds out major opportunities for us.”

Manbir Singh, Indian Ambassador to Iran

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Indian Ambassadors posted abroad

Feb 06: Yogesh Kumar Gupta to be Ambassador to Denmark

Feb 12: Azad Singh Toor to be next Ambassador to Madagascar

Feb 21: Biren Nanda to be Ambassador to Indonesia

Feb 21: Asit Kumar Nag to be High Commissioner to Seychelles

Feb 21: Mahesh Kumar Sachdev to be High Commissioner to Nigeria

Feb 21: Biren Nanda to be Ambassador to Indonesia

Feb 21: Asit Kumar Nag to be High Commissioner to Seychelles

Feb 21: Biren Nanda to be Ambassador to Indonesia

Feb 25: M. Manimekalai concurrently accredited as High Commissioner to Malta

Feb 25: Ruchi Ghanashyam to be High Commissioner to Ghana

Feb 26: Ratakonda Dayakar to be Ambassador to Sweden

Feb 28: Arif Shahid Khan to be Ambassador to Italy

Feb 28: B.B. Tyagi to be Ambassador to Morocco

Digital Diplomacy

Internet changes the dynamics of diplomacy



Until recently an Ambassador's role was to uphold his majesty's honour at a foreign court, aided by no more than his wit, courage and eloquence, the "technologies" available at the time were nothing more than quill, pens and paper. However, things are different now. This is a period of Digital Diplomacy.

Digital diplomacy in simple words is to use computer for the collection and analysis of the information needed to inform and carry out the new diplomatic objectives by the diplomats. In other word Digital Diplomacy is diplomacy conducted in the virtual world.

Internet an indispensable tool for Digital Diplomacy

Internet has become an indispensable working tool in Digital Diplomacy. This novel communication tool has had a revolutionary impact on Diplomacy. It has changed the way governments interact with each other in international sphere. Internationally, the dynamics of traditional diplomatic negotiations has been changed. The rapid transmission of knowledge directly from the source to the target allows the messenger to bypass all the diplomatic channels and requires much quicker, perhaps less considered response by government officials. External Affairs Ministry of all the countries have their websites and diplomats can now

be contacted via e-mails which is much more convenient and quicker than sending a letter via post. Who would have thought 50 years back that diplomacy would be conducted at the click of a button.

Internet has made a tremendous impact on diplomacy as this tool allows anyone to express and produce message rather than just being a passive receiver. Now a days, if the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office needs a resolution that has been passed by the UN Security Council, it does not have to ask the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations to find the resolution and send it to London. The resolution can be found on the UN's web pages. Similarly most of the agreements signed between any two countries are easily available on the internet. Now let us analyse the benefits of this tool for diplomats.

Diplomats can conduct in depth analysis

A major aspect of diplomatic work is the need to be informed, at any time, not only about developments in your own country but also about international developments. Information is considered to be power, and information gathering is one of the major diplomatic functions. The Internet provides this function to diplomats quickly and at almost zero cost. Quick and easy access

information through the Internet, provide diplomats with a unique opportunity to be up to date at any time. All this available information provides the diplomat with sufficient resources for better and more in depth analysis in a shorter time; he can be in a position to discuss any issue that may be raised. Therefore, the Internet can be characterized as a major information tool for diplomats.

A lot of time is saved

Diplomats can now accomplish a significant amount of diplomatic work including administrative and consular work in a very less time. Now a days most of the consular information is already available on the websites of various Embassies. Major consular work such as granting of Visas is also being outsourced, most of the Embassies have on their websites, Visa forms, which can be downloaded. As internet has becomes useful and indispensable tool for fulfilling consular and administrative tasks, diplomats save a lot of time from diplomatic work of minor importance in order to have time for more high level diplomatic tasks.

An excellent propaganda tool

Digital diplomacy helps governments to not only advertise their position on various issues, but also ➤

• promote or propagate their ideas worldwide. Such a function if used in a correct way helps the Embassy and as a result, the country that it represents, to create a positive image in the country.

Cybercampaigns can be used to influence political and economic decisions throughout the world. Diplomats now have an excellent propaganda opportunity which they can use irrespective of their geographic location at almost no cost. Who would not like to take an advantage of such a medium!

An economic tool

Digital diplomacy reduces the cost of operation of an Embassy as it improves efficiency and reduces the cost of internal support operations.

Collaboration and polarization is easier

Digital diplomacy allows the involvement of multiplied and diversified factors in international relations. It has created new forms of collaboration and alliance, but also it is a factor of polarisation, for people and organizations are

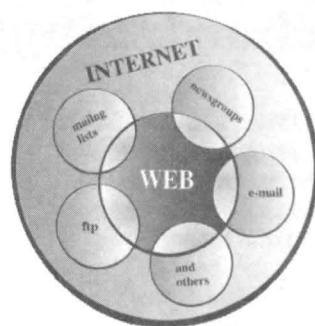
more and more seeking their information and allies among those that share their views. So Internet makes collaborating and polarising easier and faster.

Need to filter information

For there is still the question of trust, that is, the Internet does not guarantee the communication of trustable information, in other words, it expands quantitatively the information available, but not qualitatively. Experts are of the view that today there has not been a serious development of mechanisms to transmit trusted information on the Net. This is extremely relevant for diplomacy and international relations in general, where information changes fast, is scarce and comes from many sources. There is still a great need of filtering and analysis of information done mainly by diplomats. In brief, the development of Digital Diplomacy means that "diplomats need to become masters of the Internet". Diplomats have traditionally been suspicious of new technologies.

Need to train diplomats

The revolution in information and communications technology has led to changes in both diplomatic practice and diplomatic training. For example, virtual teams of diplomats increasingly meet electronically to discuss and amend draft texts. Pre-negotiations are carried out more and more online. Most of the traffic between ministry and post is direct from desk to Embassy desktop. The same is true of communication between ministries and to an increasing

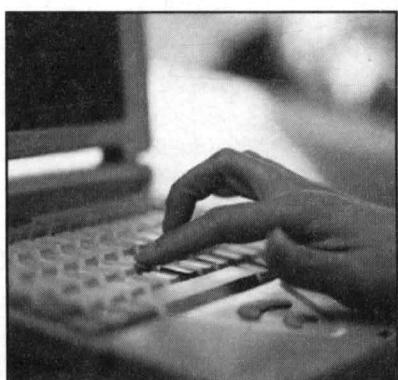


extent between governments, with obvious implications for traditional hierarchies. The skills involved in performing these arts are going to have to be taught to enable diplomats to be as effective in cyberspace as in person, to ensure a common ministry standard, and to safeguard the vital bureaucratic processes of filing, retrieval, and archiving.

Dealing with the rapid inflow of information

Speed is an important characteristic of Digital diplomacy. In the information age, diplomats have to deal with a rapid inflow of information. It also requires rapid analysis of, rapid reactions and rapid operations in real time. Diplomats will have to make use of tremendous intellectual energy to keep up with the increase inflow of information.

Thus Digital Diplomacy is an excellent platform for communication and mutual interaction for diplomats as well as for their interaction with the officials of other countries. If sensibly used this new method of conducting diplomacy called Digital Diplomacy would clear all the ambiguity and would help in resolving many of the present conflicts.



FOREIGN POLICY ON THE WEB

This section provides information about websites which give political information. We hope our readers would find this information useful. Do send us your feedback.

1. www.amnesty.org - It is the website of Amnesty International.
2. www.gen.ecovillage.org - It is the website of Creative Community Responses to Peak Oil and Climate Change.
3. www.epfltd.org - It is the website of the European Policy Forum.
4. www.g7.utoronto.ca - It is the website of the G8 information centre.
5. www.globalisation.eu - It is the website of the Globalization Institute.

Richard Stagg speaks about biofuels

BRITISH High Commissioner to India, Sir Richard Stagg, gave a special address at the inaugural function of a biofuel project in New Delhi on 7 February, 2008. This project was inaugurated by Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, Union Minister for Rural Development, Government of India.

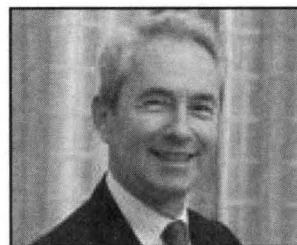
A press release issued by the British High Commission informs that the project funded by the UK Government's Global Opportunities Fund (GOF) is changing the lives of rural villagers in India. Win-

rock International India (WII) has implemented a unique village electrification project in the remote tribal village of Ranidehra, district Kawardha in the state of Chhattisgarh by setting up a stand-alone power plant which runs on straight vegetable oil extracted from seeds of Jatropha curcas plants.

On this occasion the British High Commissioner, Richard Stagg said, "The UK firmly believes that bio-fuels can make an important contribution to the reduction of greenhouse

gas (GHG) emissions. This village electrification project based on Jatropha oil has brought visible change to the lives of the villagers and raised their overall quality of living."

This unique project assumes great significance against a background of addressing energy security in a country like India. We hope this project inspires other villages to emulate its success and thus contributes to providing electricity to those living in rural India without adding to Greenhouse Gases.



Richard Stagg

"Our Global Opportunities Fund is actively engaged in supporting projects on climate change, renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy security in India and we are committed to take this forward." Said the British High Commissioner.

Steven J White inaugurates the US pavilion at DefExpo 2008

US EMBASSY Charge d'Affaires Steven J White inaugurated the US pavilion at DefExpo 2008 in New Delhi on 16 February, 2008. The US had 46 exhibitors, including Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Honeywell, General Electric, Northrop Grumman and Raytheon.

US Embassy says that the US presence at the 4-day Def Expo, the largest of any foreign country participat-



US Embassy Charge d'Affaires Steven J White inaugurates the US pavilion at DefExpo 2008 in New Delhi

ing, is a reflection of the growing commitment of

US industry to the Indian defense market.

New Danish-India Action Plan

IN relation with the Danish Prime Minister's ongoing state visit to India, Anders Fogh Rasmussen in the month of February launched the Government's new India Action Plan.

The purpose of the action plan is to further strengthen relations between India and Denmark.

It focuses on six specific

areas:

1. Political dialogue,
2. Trade and investments,
3. Research, science and technology,
4. Energy, environment and climate,
5. Education and intercultural relations, and
6. Recruitment of skilled labourers.

The India Action Plan is a follow-up on the Danish



Government's Asia strategy, which was launched in June 2007.

CHECKLIST OF STATE VISITORS

The Prime Minister of Denmark

Anders Fogh Rasmussen

February 4-8, 2008

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic

Ednan Karabaev

February 4-6, 2008

Prime Minister of the Russian Federation

Viktor A. Zubkov

February 12-13 2008

President of the Republic of Maldives

Maumoon Abdul Gayoom

February 6-12, 2008

Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia

Saud Al-Faisal

February 27-28

Sri Lankan Navy urges cooperation with India

SRI Lankan Navy has expressed a desire to cooperate with India. Reports inform that, Sri Lanka Navy Chief Vice Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda has called for enhanced cooperation among the other naval units of the region. He also appreciated the greater vigilance and effective measures taken by India to curtail LTTE activities in Indian

waters.

Media reports inform that while appreciating the great vigilance and effective measures taken by the Government of India to curtail LTTE activities in Indian waters, "The LTTE is a huge threat to the island nation and if it is not stopped now, it can be a threat to other countries as well," the Navy Chief said on

February 14 to reporters on the sidelines of the Indian Naval Symposium (IONS).

He also said that such a joint mechanism is essential to curb LTTE activities in the Indian Ocean. "Co-operation with India has been extremely successful in countering the LTTE," he pointed out, adding that Sri Lanka is monitoring its seas to check activities

like terrorism, smuggling, piracy, and human trafficking, while India carries out similar exercises in their waters.



Indian's fishing in troubled waters says Deputy High Commissioner P M Amza

DEPUTY High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in Chennai P M Amza, has stated that 161 Tamil Nadu fishermen have poached into the High Security Zone of Sri Lanka during the past one and half years. "The Indian fishermen are poaching in High Security Area, which is even banned for the Sri Lankan fishermen," the Deputy High Commissioner added.

Also Sri Lanka Navy (SLN), in a media statement issued on February 11, 2008 denied the allegations made by certain sections of the media of involvement in the killing of an Indian fisherman on February 9, 2008.

Sri Lanka Navy's media statement read, "Sri Lanka Navy exercises utmost care not to cross the International Maritime Boundary Line between Sri Lankan and Indian territorial waters while conducting patrolling and maritime surveillance to prevent LTTE arms smug-

gling and infiltration across the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Bay."

The statement also drew attention to the recent incident where the Sri Lankan Navy did not open retaliatory fire when the persons yet to be identified on board two Indian fishing trawlers fired on one of SLN fibre glass boats in the seas off Talaimannar on the February 4,

2008. Then SLN boats did not retaliate in order to avoid other Indian fishing boats being hit in the cross fire.

"This was only one occasion of many where Sri Lanka Navy exercised utmost restraint not to fall prey to the LTTE's ploy of



P M Amza

using Indian fishing boats in creating a rift between the two countries," the SLN statement said.

60th Anniversary of Sri Lanka's Independence Celebrated at the Deputy High Commission in Chennai

THE 60th anniversary of Sri Lanka's Independence was celebrated in Chennai on February 4, 2007.

On this occasion the Deputy High Commissioner hoisted the Sri Lankan national flag. After unfurling the flag, the Deputy High Commissioner P M Amza said, "It is also appropriate at this momentous moment to remember and record our appreciation and grati-

tude to the contributions and sacrifices made by our forefathers and many of our leaders during the pre-Independence era, who have made possible what we enjoy today."

The Deputy High Commissioner further said that Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa was confident that the recently unveiled interim proposals by the All Party Parliamentary Committee would be

the first step in the right direction in heralding permanent peace to the Island home. Mr Amza added. "I am also pleased to record our gratitude to the Government of India, which was among the first to welcome the interim proposals."

Mr Amza pointed out. It was our duty to ensure that the country (Sri Lanka) marched forward
(Continued on pg 23)

Fifth DefExpo-2008

This four days land and naval system exhibition called Fifth DefExpo2008, held in New Delhi from 16-20 February saw the participation of around 273 companies from more than 30 countries. A number of new defence related products were also launched in this exhibition



Fifth DefExpo-2008 was held in New Delhi on February 16, 2008. Defence Minister A K Antony inaugurated the DefExpo-2008 in New Delhi on February 16, 2008.

This four-day land and naval system exhibition saw the participation of around 273 companies from more than 30 countries.

Media reports inform this biggest defence show in New Delhi, attracted the world's major armament makers who are now too keen to bag contracts in the lucrative \$30 billion Indian Defence market. Russia had 43 exhibitors, Israel had 26 and France came with 24 exhibitors in the four-day show,

As per the reports, artillery guns, tanks, missiles, armoured carriers and battle-networking gadgets from 30 countries were on display at the Defence Expo-08.

Defence Minister's from six countries

Defence Minister from six countries Afghanistan, Belarus, Namibia, Nigeria, Kazakhstan and Qatar lead their countries delegations. Besides, these countries, 41 other nations also sent their official delegations. A defence industry summit was also held in conjunction with the expo.

India's presence

Around 202 companies from India also displayed their products at the expo which was held at Pragati Maidan in Delhi. Defence PSU's like

HAL, BEML, BEL, Ordnance factories and upcoming defence private players like TATA Sons, Larsen and Tubro, Mahindra, Ashok Leyland and others were also present at the Expo.

On show at the fair were Air Defence systems, missile components, helicopters, infantry equipment, Naval attack systems and bigger weapons like armoured vehicles and tanks.

US enthusiasm

The US, has recently bagged first major military contract for sale of C-130J aircraft. This country, as per some media reports showed the maximum enthusiasm with 47 firms showcasing their arms and equipment, outshining India's traditional weapons supplier Russia.

American companies at the show range from aviation majors Lockheed Martin, Boeing, radar company Raytheon to naval firms like General Dynamics and Northrop Grumman.

Showcasing their weapon systems at the Defence Expo, top executives of two US companies said the military ties between the two countries were set to grow and the fate of civil nuclear deal will have no impact on this.

For the first time, telecom and IT companies were invited to the biennial event to showcase their product and services. There were 24 exhibitors from France.

Russian showcase

At present, Russia is India's main weapons supplier followed by Israel

which last year registered weapons sales to New Delhi worth over \$5 billion. A Brahmos missile was on display at the inaugural ceremony of the international DefExpo 2008. The Brahmos missile is a product of an Indo-Russian joint venture known by the same. Russia's ambassador to India said Tuesday that the Defexpo 2008 exhibition is a good opportunity for Russia to broaden its military and technical cooperation with India and Asia Pacific countries.

Russia was one of the largest exhibitor in this Exhibition. "Russia is showcasing its latest achievements in the arms industry and military-technical sciences. We are hoping to interest the Indian Armed Forces and the authorities generally," Russian Ambassador Vyacheslav Trubnikov said on this occasion.

Russia's state-run arms exporter Rosoboronexport is showcasing advanced Kalashnikov AK-101, AK-102 (5.56 mm), AK-103 and AK-104 (7.62 mm) assault rifles, the AN-94 Abakan machine-gun, the Bizon-20-1 (9 mm) pistol, the OSV-96 sniper rifle, and night vision devices.

"The current arms exhibition in many ways influences sales prospects for Russian military equipment in the Asia Pacific region," Trubnikov said.

Nikolai Dimiduk, who heads Rosoboronexport's delegation, said that over 200 military specialists from various regions had visited the Russian stands.

Significance of the Expo

Reports inform that India is planning to spend more than Rs 1, 20,000 crore on arms and equipment in the next five years. That's why arms manufacturers from all over the world were out in full force to woo the Indian defence establishment.

New Delhi is in the midst of finalising a 40,000 crore fighter jet deal. Boeing, Lockheed Martin and the European firm, EADS are amongst the six bidders. For them, this show provided an opportunity to get familiar with the ways of the Indian defence establishment in an informal setting.

Reports inform that on this occasion, CEO-Military Air System, EADS informed that India is a big market for both land and naval system and EADS is very keen to get a major share.

India wants best equipments

Government of India has recently

cancelled a deal for 197 eurocopters, fresh offers will be invited for the deal."All companies, big, small, will be treated on merit, we want the best equipment at reasonable price," said A K Antony, Defence Minister.

UK's display

British Aerospace systems put the world's lightest 155MM Howitzer on display at the upcoming Defence Expo. Weighing less than 4218 kg, the M777 light weight 155MM Howitzers are now in service with the US Marine Corps and the US army as their next generation medium force weapon. The M777 is a .39 calibre gun and the Army is seeking to buy such lightweight towed artillery systems to replace its ageing 105mm mountain guns."The guns are made with innovative use of titanium and aluminium alloy and can be deployed rapidly," BAE officials said.

The Army has floated new global

tenders to acquire much-needed 325 artillery guns comprising upgraded 155MM heavy and ultralight Howitzers in a deal that could run upto Rs5,500 crore.

Presence of Communication and IT companies

The show for the first time has also attracted communication and IT companies.

Reports inform that The Defexpo India exhibition was conceptualized in 1998 to promote defense exports from India and exhibit the capabilities of Indian defence R&D and production. The exhibition, which began in 1999 with 197 exhibitors, has now grown into one of the most recognized international defense exhibitions in the world.

International seminars, especially the India Defense Industry Summit, held as part of the exhibition have evolved into the biannual International Defense Industry Forum.

Defence connection

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates visits India

THE US Secretary of Defence, Dr. Robert Gates arrived in New Delhi on February, 26 2008 on a two day visit to India. This was Dr. Gates first visit to India since assuming office on 18th December, 2006. Secretary Gates' visit took place in the last of the eight year of Bush Presidency that witnessed unprecedented acceleration in India-US engagement and qualitative transformation in the relationship, in particular in Defence.

The Defence Secretary led a 50 member defence cum business delegation to India. The main aim of US Defence Secretary's visit to India was to pursue closer strategic ties with India.

During his stay, Secretary Gates met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh External Affairs Minister Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, the Defence Minister Mr. AK Antony, the National Security Advisor MK Narayanan and other Indian leaders.

US Defence Secretary appeared to

be extremely positive towards the Indo-US Nuclear deal "I think the civil nuclear initiative is a very good deal for both countries both India and the United States. I am here to see how we can expand the military to military relationship independent of the Civil Nuclear Agreement," Gates told reporters.

Robert Gates arrived in India, the same day on which India conducted its first test of a submarine-based ballistic missile named the K-15, which has a top range of 700 kilometres (438 miles). The missile was reportedly launched from an undersea platform.

When asked to comment on India's



The US Secretary of Defence, Dr. Robert Gates with Prime Minister manmohan Singh

undersea missile launch Gates said, "We have to deal with the world as we find it. India is the world's largest democracy. It is in our interest to develop this relationship, just as it is in India's interest. I do not think there is any risk, particularly from our standpoint in doing that. I think we have a lot of opportunities for interaction with the Indians," He further added.

India eager to invest in Mongolian mining sector



The Indian Ambassador to Mongolia, Yogeshwar Varma

INDIA is usually referred as the spiritual neighbour of Mongolia.

Indian Ambassador to Mongolia, Yogeshwar Varma has stated that India is eager to invest in the mining industry of Mongolia. Indian companies are interested in investing in Mongolia's mining sector, India's envoy to Mongolia said on February 15, 2007.

Indian Ambassador to Mongolia, Yogeshwar Var-

ma said at a meeting with Mongolian President Nambaryn Enkhbayar that Indian companies would be law-abiding in their cooperation with Mongolia, according to the press office of the president.

Nambaryn Enkhbayar said India was an important partner for Mongolia and Mongolia would like to boost economic cooperation with its partnership countries.

Envoy Balakrishna Shetty meets members of Mangalorean community

A MEDIA report informs that Balakrishna Shetty, the Indian Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain and his wife spared a few moments out of their busy schedule to meet up with the members from the Mangalorean community at the Copper Chimney Restaurant, Muscat in Oman.

Media reports inform that the introductory preface was well delivered by Shankar T. Shetty, who welcomed the Indian Envoy on behalf of one and

all present there. Floral bouquets were presented to the Ambassador and his wife by Sudhakar Shetty and J S Shetty. Balakrishna Shetty, spoke at length lauding the skills and talents of Indians and hailed profoundly the qualities of competence and entrepreneurship embedded in them.

In another statement, Ambassador Shetty has said that India cannot be blamed for the ongoing strike of around 1,800

overseas workers of a Bahraini construction com-

pany who are demanding better wages.



The Indian Ambassador to Bahrain, Balakrishna Shetty (l) with members of Mangalorean community in Muscat, Oman

Indian aid to Pokhara school

THE Embassy of India has extended grant assistance of over Rs.77 million for the infrastructure development of Nepal Bharat Maitri Vidyalaya at Pokhara of Kaski district as a fourth educational project undertaken by the government of India.

The government of India and Nepal had signed an agreement on August 24, 2006 for setting up a higher secondary school affiliated to Central Board

of Secondary Education of India to ensure quality consistency in education pattern for the children of Nepalese ex-servicemen on their return from India to Nepal. There are over 1,22,000 ex-servicemen in Nepal, the Embassy press statement said.

Pranay Verma, on behalf of the Ambassador of India, Counselor (Economic Cooperation), Embassy of India laid the foundation stone of a new building

in the complex of Pension Paying Office of Embassy of India at Pokhara.

Conveying the message from the Ambassador of India, counselor Verma said that the new building of the school was a token of gratitude from the government of India for the invaluable services provided by the ex-servicemen.

He transferred the word of hope that the school would significantly con-

tribute to the educational needs of their children as also of other Nepalese students.

He further reiterated India's commitment to extend all possible assistance to the people and government of Nepal in their endeavor to seek lasting peace and development. "Various health and educational projects being executed under India-Nepal Economic Cooperation

(Continued on pg 23)

In this issue, we present you information on West Asian and Central Asian diplomatic missions in India, their addresses and representatives heading these Missions. Photographs of the Ambassadors and information about the Embassies and High Commissions is being gathered and would be published in the future issues of Imprint.

WEST ASIA FACT FILE

Country	Diplomat	Address	Information
Georgia	Kuldip Singh Dhingra	Honorary Consul Honorary Consulate of Georgia 19 DDA Community Centre, Zamrudpur, Kailash Colony Ext. New Delhi-110048 Ph No: +91-11-26431015 Fax: +91-11-26447864 E-mail: ksdhingra@rajdootpaints.com	Working Hours: Monday To Friday: 10.00 A.M. to 5.00PM
Turkey	Halil Akinci	Ambassador Embassy of the Republic of Turkey N 50, Nyaya Marg Chanakyapuri New Delhi-110021 Ph No: +91-11-2410 1921, 2688 9053, 2688 9054 Fax: +91-11-2688 1409 E-mail: tembdelhi@mantraonline.com	Working Hours: Monday To Friday: 9.30 A.M. to 5.30 PM.

CENTRAL ASIA FACT FILE

Kazakhstan	Kairat Umarov	Ambassador Embassy of Kazakhstan 61 Poorvi Marg Vasant Vihar, New Delhi Ph No: 46007722/00 Fax: 46007701 Mob: 9818030147 Web: www.kazind.com E-mail: nurgali@kazind.com	Working Hours: Monday To Friday: 9.00 A.M. to 3.00 PM. 9.00 A.M. to 12.00 Noon
Kyrgyzstan	Irina A. Orolbaeva	Ambassador Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic C 93, Anand Niketan New Delhi-110021 Ph No: +91-11-2411 8008, 2688 1903 Fax: +91-11-2411 8009 E-mail: alatoo@starith.net	Working Hours: Monday To Friday: 9.00 A.M. to 1.00 PM. 3.00 PM. to 6.00 PM

Serbia recalls its Ambassador to US

SERBIA recalled its ambassador to the US in the month of February, after Washington officially recognized the former Serbian province of Kosovo as an independent state.

Serbia is also threatening to recall its envoys from other countries that establish diplomatic ties with Kosovo, but it says relations with those countries will not be completely cut off.

As we all know, Kosovo province was part of Serbia, but one administered by the United Nations and NATO since 1999. NATO air strikes helped end the presence of Serbia's military in Kosovo. Former Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic, now deceased, had been cracking down on militant ethnic Albanian separatists.

About 10,000 died in the conflict.

A UN envoy recommended in April 2007 that Kosovo be granted internationally supervised independence. Serbia was willing to offer autonomy, but Kosovo wanted full statehood.

"The (UN) plan is our blueprint forward," US President Bush said. "We'll watch to see how the events unfold today."

Kosovo sent out 192 letters to the world's nations, seeking formal recognition for its nationhood.

The European Union also met to discuss the issue. Some members like Spain, which has been battling a violent Basque separatist movement say they won't endorse Kosovo's move. However, Britain, Germany

and France have followed the U.S. lead in recognizing Kosovo.

"Most of the Western countries will end up recognizing Kosovo, but the issue is the people on the ground," retired Lt.-Gen. Michel Maisonneuve, who served in Kosovo, informed the media.

Serbs have had a presence in Kosovo for more than 1,000 years and see it as the cradle of their Orthodox Christian church. The Albanian majority are mostly moderate Muslims.

Serbia said that it would work to block Kosovo from UN membership and other forms of diplomatic recognition.

"The so-called Kosovo state will never be a member of the United Nations," Serbian Foreign Minister



Vuk Jeremic said.

At present, Russia, a close ally of Serbia, is also lobbying against recognition of Kosovo's declaration. It sees the move as setting a dangerous precedence for separatist regions worldwide. Parts of Russia and Georgia are agitating for independence.

On Monday, Russia's Interfax news agency reported that Russia wants UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon to follow an earlier UN Security Council resolution that recognizes Kosovo as part of Serbia.

Mahdi Nabizadeh inaugurates First Indian Ocean Rim Nations Film Festival

IRANIAN Ambassador to India, Mahdi Nabizadeh inaugurated the First Indian Ocean Rim nations film festival in New Delhi. In his inaugural address to the IOR film festival

Mahdi Nabizadeh lauded it as 'common platform' for projecting Indian Ocean region's arts and culture.

Media reports inform, Nabizadeh was inaugurating the festival in the ca-

pacity of Islamic Republic of Iran's envoy to India. At present Iran is head of IOR federation.

In his address Nabizadeh said, "Arts and culture are means of expression and

different branches like music, films, theatre and dance particularly need an accurate direction."

He regretted some films produced are not appropriate. He requested and wished the federation would correct or put checks to such productions.

India-Iran to adopt euro for transactions

INDIAN Ambassador to Iran, Manbir Singh in a meeting with Iran's Interior Minister, Mostafa Pourmohammadi, in Tehran on February 20, 2007 informed that India and Iran will adopt euro in addition to the US dollar in future transactions between the two

countries.

The Indian Ambassador also informed that India is also interested in investing in Iran's industries and energy sectors.

The Indian envoy also said that a delegation of Indian industrial and energy officials will visit Tehran over the next

two weeks to discuss economic ties.

Indian envoy, Manbir Singh also said that, "The economic officials from the two countries will hold a new round of talks which will hopefully enhance the economic ties between Iran and India."

Diplomatic Countdown

Embassies in India - 96

High Commissions in India - 29

Consulates in India

Mumbai - 30

Delhi - 16

Chennai - 7

Calcutta - 6

Pondicherry - 1

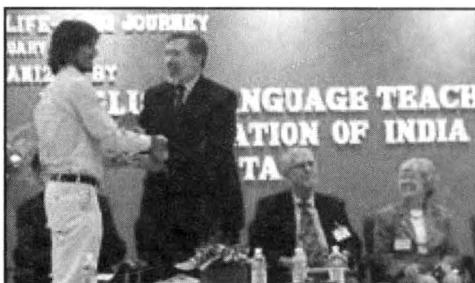
Hyderabad - 1

Goa - 1

David Hopper highlights US Support for English Language Teaching

US CONSUL General David Hopper Highlights Government Support for English Language Teaching at Annual ELTAI Conference. Consul General David T Hopper, US Consulate Chennai attended the inauguration of an international conference on "Learning to Teach: A Lifelong Journey" at Sathyabama University in Chennai. The three-day 3rd International and 39th Annual conference was organized by the English Language

Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI) with support from the Regional English Language Office (RELO) of the US Embassy in New Delhi and the British Council. In his address, Consul General Hopper highlighted the US government's support for promoting quality English language teaching in India through several programs: the English Language Fellow program for teacher training, the Access Micro-scholarship program for underprivileged students



US Consul General David Hopper at the third Annual Eltai Conference in Chennai

and the resources available at American Libraries and Corners. Consul General Hopper said that "English is the key to a much more empowered

job market. With the possible exception of the mass media, jobs in all modern sectors favor candidates with good knowledge of English."

Ambassador M Ganapathi attends KKMA Seminar

INDIAN Ambassador to Kuwait M Ganapathi recently inaugurated a seminar on February 1 to pay tribute to late Yousef Saleh Alyan. The Seminar was organized by the Kuwait Kerala Muslim Association.

The seminar was held to pay tribute to late Yousef Saleh Alyan, the founder, publisher and former Editor-in-Chief of the Kuwait Times. The memorial seminar was focused generally on the role late Alyan played in the field of journalism in the region and the contribution he made to the evolution

and growth of the media in the Middle East.

Media reports inform that the memorial/seminar was the second of its kind hosted by the KKMA.

Ambassador M Ganapathi, on his part, was thankful to have known the man who was not just a friend to Indians and other communities, but a man with a clear vision and a focused mind.

He recalled his first encounter with Alyan. "I found him as not just a man with wisdom, but a person who has the ability to discuss almost all issues. He also had the

ability to guide diplomats in the society. He was always there to discuss subjects of anything and everything with clarity. The role of this man to

Kuwait's media industry cannot be ignored. I pay tribute to one of the most wonderful men I have ever known, Yousef Alyan" he concluded.

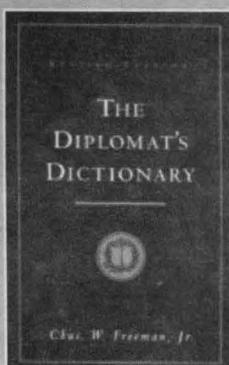
Book review

In this section every month a diplomacy related book will be reviewed

The Diplomats Dictionary

Author - Charles W Jr. Freeman

This book is an informative collection of quotations and observations. It is a compilation of the lore of the statecraft and diplomacy. This book is an extremely valuable addition to any foreign policy and diplomacy collection. The Diplomat's dictionary provides prudent and clear advice for foreign policy officials. The utility of this mail extends to academics as well as diplomats. The writer has created an interesting compilation of classic clips of wisdom, cautionary advice and moving commentary on numerous cultures and eras. The Diplomats Dictionary provides an interesting insight into the complex and challenging world of cross-cultural negotiations.



List Price \$ 14.95



Indian Ambassador to Kuwait M Ganapathi speaking at the inaugural function of a seminar on to pay tribute to late Yousef Saleh Alyan.

Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan, Ednan Karabaev visits India

MEDIA reports inform that the Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan, Ednan Karabaev visited India from February 4-6, 2008. The Kyrgyz Foreign Minister conducted meetings in India with a number of political leaders, including the Indian Human Resource Minister, Arjun Singh.

The MEA Press Release informs that the talks were held in an atmosphere of friendship, warmth and mutual understanding. The two sides expressed satisfaction with the ongoing bilateral institutional mechanism of Inter Governmental Commission, Foreign Office Consultations and mutually beneficial cooperation and partnership between India and the Kyrgyz Republic encompassing political exchanges, economic, defence, scientific and technological cooperation, and cultural & educational exchanges.

Programme of Cooperation

The Press Release further says that a Programme of Cooperation was also signed between the two



Foreign Affairs Minister of Kyrgyz, Ednan Karabaev meeting with the Union Minister of Tourism and Culture, Ambika Soni, in New Delhi on February 06, 2008.

Foreign Ministries which lays down the roadmap for dialogue and cooperation between the two Ministries.

The Kyrgyz Foreign Minister expressed appreciation for commissioned and ongoing Indian assisted projects in the Kyrgyz Republic. An India-Kyrgyz Centre of Information Technology was inaugurated on 15th August 2007 at Bishkek. Setting up of Potato Processing Plant and Mountain Medical Research Centre with Indian assistance in the Kyrgyz Republic is in

advanced stage of planning and is to be implemented shortly.

Humanitarian relief

The External Affairs Minister announced humanitarian relief assistance of US\$ 100,000 for the victims of an earthquake that hit southern Kyrgyzstan on 3 January 2008.

Stressing the need for greater people-to-people interaction, particularly through academic and cultural exchanges, the two sides stressed the need for early conclusion of the Cultural Exchange Agreement.

Pranab Mukherjee visit Brazil

INDIAN External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee visited Brazil in the month of February. Media reports inform that he was in Brazil from February 16-18, 2008.

The Indian External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee met the Foreign Minister of Brazil, Celso Amorim. Media reports also inform that it was the first visit of an Indian External Affairs Minister to Brazil in last five years. Media reports inform that the Indian External Affairs Minister called on President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva as well as the President of the Chamber of Deputies, the Lower House of the Brazilian Congress. Trade and investment, science technology, education and culture were some of the topics discussed in this meeting. Three MoU's were signed during this visit, these were on Infrastructure, Combating Hunger and Poverty Alleviation.

Ambassador Anil Wadhwa inaugurates 'India Show'

ON February 15, 2008, the Indian Ambassador to Oman, Anil Wadhwa and Industry Under-secretary Ahmed bin Hassan Al Dheeb jointly inaugurated the 'India Show', an exclusive Indian pavilion at the Muscat International Fair. On this occasion the Indian Ambassador to

the Sultanate Anil Wadhwa said that a second joint venture fertiliser plant between India and Oman is under the active consideration of the two governments. The second unit would involve a similar capital outlay as the first and have the same capacity.

The first, the Oman India Fertiliser Company (Omfico), set up at a cost of \$968 million, began operations in March 2005 in Qalhat, near Sur in Oman's southern Sharqiya region. The entire output, 1.652 million tonnes of granulated urea and 0.248 million tonnes of surplus

ammonia, is exported to India under a buy-back deal.

Ambassador Anil Wadhwa said that the new plant could either be an extension of the existing plant or located in another area depending on gas availability, he added.

Victor Zubkov's visit gives life to the six decade long Indo-Russian cooperation

THE Russian Prime Minister, Victor Zubkov visited India in the month of February for three days. He arrived in India on February 11, 2008. This was a maiden visit of the Russian Prime Minister to India. Reports inform that a large business delegation accompanied the Russian Prime Minister.

Meeting with Manmohan Singh

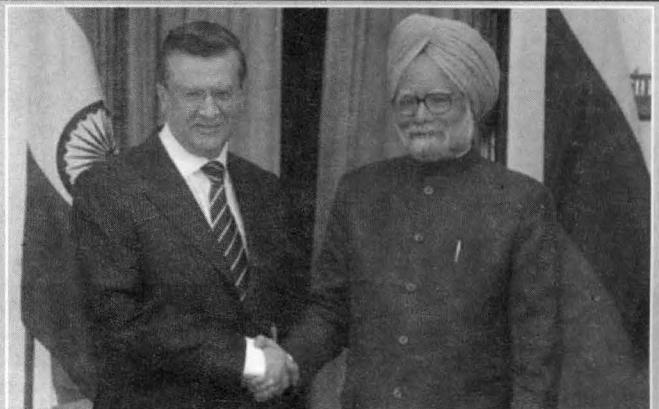
Media reports inform that the Indian Prime Minister had a comprehensive discussion with the Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh. The Indian Prime Minister conveyed in his Press Release that in his meeting with Victor Zubkov he expressed to the visiting dignitary the importance India attaches

to his participation in the meeting of the Indo-Russia Forum on Trade and Investment and the "Year of Russia" in India.

The "Year of Russia" was formally inaugurated by the Russian Prime Minister in the presence of Manmohan Singh. A number of important things were discussed in the meeting between the two leaders, it included a discussion on the diversification of the trade basket.

Exploring cooperation possibilities

The two sides also decided to expand their cooperation in the minerals, diamonds, transport and infrastructure, investment and services, and high technology sectors. Possibility of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation



The Russian Prime Minister Victor Zubkov with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh

Agreement was discussed during this meeting. Possibility of cooperation in the Hydrocarbon sector was also explored in a meeting between the two leaders.

Manmohan Singh expressed satisfaction at the present level of ongoing cooperation in the field of

science and technology, space and civil nuclear cooperation. The Press release quotes Manmohan Singh's statement, "We reaffirmed our commitment to build upon our defence relations which is an important pillar of our Strategic Partnership."

Palau: Rajeet Mitter presents credentials

MEDIA reports inform that the new Indian Ambassador to Palau, Rajeet Mitter has presented his credentials to President Remengesau. President accepted Mitter's credentials at the capital in Ngerulmud on Feb. 22.

Palau first established diplomatic relationship

with India in April of 1995 and Mitter is the third Indian ambassador to be appointed to Palau. President Remengesau said he is looking forward to working with India especially on matters of global warming and climate change.

Indian Ambassador on the other hand, thanked

the President for a warm welcome and said that he is looking forward to working with Palau.

The Indian envoy said that he was impressed with Palau's development and high standard of living as compared to other Pacific Island countries.

As per media reports,



Rajeet Mitter

Vice President Elias Camsek Chinn then proposed a toast thanking India for all its support through medical and technical means.

India and South Africa sign diplomatic accords

A MEDIA report informs that India and South Africa have recently signed three agreements on travel and cooperation in Pretoria, at the end of a two-day joint commission meet-

ing. The agreements dealt with the diplomatic and official passports, and cooperation in science and technology as well as cooperation in customs issues, the Sapa news agency reported.

The signing followed a Joint Ministerial Commission led by South African Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and India's External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukerjee.

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India reiterates, Arunanchal an integral part of India

INDIAN Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Arunanchal Pradesh on January 31. This was the first visit of a Prime Minister to the state in a decade. Manmohan Singh received an extremely warm welcome in Arunanchal Pradesh. During this visit the Indian prime Minister made a statement, "Arunanchal Pradesh is the easternmost state of our country, and the sun kisses the country here first, it is our land of the rising sun." He also announced development projects worth 10,000 crores for the state.

This statement probably did not go down very well with our neighbour and it turned into a diplomatic



Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Dorjee Khandu presenting a statuette of Buddha to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, JJ Singh, and Minister of State for Railways J Rathwa (left) look on during a public rally in Itanagar

row. The Chinese side immediately protested against Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's reference to Arunanchal Pradesh as "our

land of rising sun.

This elicited an immediate response from India which reiterated that Arunanchal remains a part

of India.

China verbally protested against Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's reference to Arunanchal Pradesh as "our land of rising sun." The verbal protest brought forth an immediate response from India which reiterated that Arunanchal remains India's integral part.

Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said that Arunanchal is an integral part of our country. We have elected representatives of Arunachal Pradesh in our Parliament. Media reports inform that the latest statement clearly shows a hardening of India's position on the border issue.

Additional \$1.2 million US aid to Indian flood victims

A PRESS release issued by the US Consulate in Mumbai informs that US is going to provide an additional \$ 1.2 million to Indian flood victims.

US Charge d'Affaires, Steven J White made an announcement on February 12, 2008 that the United States will provide an additional \$1.2 million

(Rs. 4.7 crores) for victims of last year's floods in Bihar. This support is in addition to the \$1.05 million (Rs. 4.1 crores) the United States provided in September 2007.

As per the report, the funds will be used to help flood victims in four flood-affected Districts of Bihar rebuild

their livelihoods through agriculture and economic reconstruction efforts. The funds will also provide support for water and sanitation work, disaster preparedness training, and malaria control. As per the report, 967 people perished in Bihar and 24.6 million people from the state were affected by

the floods in 2007.

The US Agency for International Development will partner with non-governmental organizations Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), Project Concern International and Catholic Relief Services to implement the flood emergency recovery activities.

Michael S Owen inaugurates a medical camp

A PRESS Release informs that on January 8, 2008, Consul General Michael S Owen inaugurated a medical camp run by the Shree Bidada Sarvodaya Trust in Bidada village, Kutch.

30,000 patients to be treated

The Press Release in-

forms that 2008 marked the eighteenth year that the US Consul General in Mumbai inaugurated the yearly, three-week camp that treats more than 30,000 patients free-of-charge.

In addition to presiding over the inauguration, the Consul General and his wife toured the camp

and worked alongside other volunteers. The Consul General was as impressed with the camp at this year's inauguration as he was when he first observed its operations in January 2005.

"The dedication and spirit of the volunteers is amazing. I have personally witnessed the

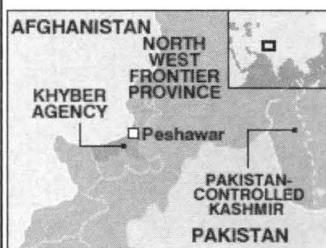
tremendous impact that the camp and its skilled doctors and personnel have on the lives of the patients. I have seen lives dramatically improved by the medical attention received at this camp. It is living proof of the transformative effect of volunteerism," Owen said.

Pak Ambassador to Afghanistan goes missing

ON February 12, media reports informed that Pakistan's ambassador to Afghanistan Tariq Azizuddin has gone missing just before he was due to cross into Afghanistan from Pakistan. There were speculations that Azizuddin was kidnapped in the Khyber tribal agency close to the Afghan border. Media reports inform that many areas in the border regions between Afghanistan and Pakistan are strongholds of

pro-Taliban militants. Azizuddin was going to Kabul from Peshawar by road when he disappeared.

This route is supposed to be the shortest and quickest way between Peshawar, the Pakistani border city in North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Kabul. Being the main trade route, the Khyber agency road is busy in daylight hours, and is a major route supplying reinforcements and supplies to the



US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. Media reports inform that the Public Administration had no clue or prior information about the visit.

PM of Fiji visits India



Commodore Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama

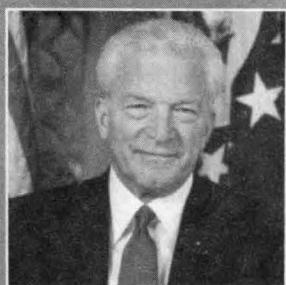
A FIJI Government Press release informs that The Prime Minister of Fiji, Commodore Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama made a brief visit to India. The visit commenced on February 13, 2008. It was a ten day visit.

Purpose of the visit

Reports inform that the primary purpose of his visit was to tour and inspect facilities at Batra Hospital in New Delhi, which now

is the preferred provider of critical care services to patients from Republic of Fiji Military Forces sent under the Military's insurance scheme for overseas treatment. Commodore Bainimarama also made courtesy calls on relevant dignitaries in New Delhi and meet selected business people. Commodore Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama returned to Fiji on February 22.

Ambassador speaks



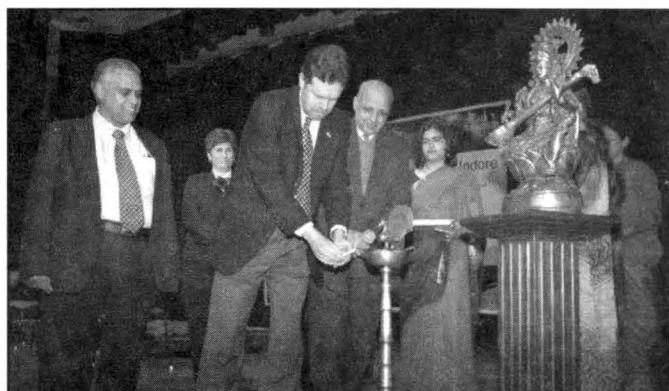
**David Mulford,
Ambassador of US
to India**

"First of all, the United States would like to see India continue to grow and emerge as a major player in Asia. Secondly, we would like to see India pursue cleaner energy policies and a key part of that is civilian nuclear development. Finally, we think it is very, very important that the global architecture for non-proliferation should include India, which has been outside that system for 35 years. In other words the President believes it was not sensible to leave one-sixth of humanity outside of the system for the indefinite future."

Michael S Owen inaugurates "America Days" in Indore

A PRESS Release informs that US Consul General Michael S Owen inaugurated "America Days"—a three-day event highlighting United States culture, traditions, politics, and education, at the Devi Ahilya University, Indore Auditorium on February 4, 2008. America Days is a joint initiative of the American Center, the educational, cultural and media branch of the US Consulate General, Mum-

bai, together with Devi Ahilya University and Holkar Science College, the event showcased a number of programs and resources for dialogue, mutual understanding and educational and cultural exchange, with the aim of developing a long and productive association with Indore. America Days is a three-day event highlighting United States culture, traditions, politics, and education.



US Consul General Michael S Owen inaugurates "America Days" a three-day event at the Devi Ahilya University, Indore

India-Turkey take a fresh look at relations

THE Foreign Minister of Turkey, Ali Babacan visited India in the month of February. He was in India from February 5 to 10. Ali Babacan first arrived in Mumbai then Hyderabad and later reached Delhi on 7 February.

This visit of Ali Babacan holds a lot of significance as it was the first visit of a Turkish Foreign Minister to India in last 30 years. Reports inform that during this visit, civil nuclear cooperation was discussed.

Ali Babacan reportedly had a meeting with the Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee.



The Foreign Minister of Turkey, Ali Babacan with Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee in New Delhi

jee. Reports inform that there were discussions on bilateral, regional and multilateral matters of mutual cooperation.

During his stay in Delhi,

Ali Babacan said that "Turkey and India are taking a fresh look at their relations. You can say we are starting a new era." He further said, "We are going to push

for much closer political dialogue with India."

"We find a lot of economic synergies with India so we have proposed a free trade agreement with India."

He also informed that Turkey has offered a five year multiple entry visas to Indian Businessmen within 24 hours. A MEA Press Release informs that An Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Turkey concerning the Mutual Abolition of Visas for Holders of Diplomatic Passports was also signed during the visit.

US Embassy in Belgrade set on fire

US EMBASSY in Belgrade was set ablaze on February 20, 2008. This incident happened when around 150,000 people took to the streets to show opposition to Kosovo's declaration of independence. A charred body was reportedly found inside a section of the Embassy that was set on fire. By next day, the fire was extinguished and Belgrade's streets were relatively calm but the looting continued as per the media reports.

Some masked attackers who entered the Embassy broke away from the main demonstration in Serbia's Capital and reportedly attacked the Americans in response to United States's recent recognition of Kosovo's independence. Reports inform that usually the American Embassy in the Serbian Capital is guarded by around eight Serbian guards carrying assault rifles. However on the day of the attack the Embassy was closed.

Reportedly, the Croatian Embassy was also damaged but the Canadian Embassy remained unharmed. Some people have criticized the Serbian police to allow such a damage to occur.

At the time of the attack, the US Ambassador to Serbia was in his house and in contact with US officials. Serbia has "a responsibility now to devote the adequate resources to ensure that that facility is protected," he said.

Government rethinks: Ronnen may get extension

RECENTLY there were rumours that Indian Ambassador to USA Ronnen Sen was going to return back to India. However, apparently the Government is not too keen on replacing Ronen Sen at this moment when the nuclear deal is at such a crucial stage. A PTI report informs that Government is also contemplating giving an extension to India's permanent envoy to the United Nations.

Agreements signed during Anders Fogh Rasmussen's visit to India



PM of Denmark, Anders Fogh Rasmussen with the Indian PM Manmohan Singh in New Delhi

A PRESS Release issued by the MEA informs that following agreements were signed during the Prime Minister of Denmark Anders Fogh Rasmussen's visit, to India

- i. Agreement for establishment of bilateral Joint Commission for Cooperation
- ii. MOU for cooperation in New and Renewable Energy:
- iii. Arrangement on Gainful Employment for Family Members of the Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post



Ronnen Sen

Ambassador Sohail Amin on Nepal-Pak relations

PAKISTAN'S Ambassador to Nepal Sohail Amin on February 5, 2008 delivered a speech at a programme held in Kathmandu. In his speech at the function, The Pak Ambassador as usual spoke about Kashmir. In his speech, Sohail Amin said that Pakistan's relations with Nepal will always flourish.

The Pak Ambassador also said that the rela-

tions between Pakistan and Nepal are ages old. He also added that Pakistan highly values its relationship with Nepal. He also added that there is a shared desire to expand cooperation between the two countries in all the walks of life, at the political level, bilateral consultations at the level of the Foreign Secretaries. The Pak envoy also said



Sohail Amin

that there is a need to focus on the economic relations between the two countries.

US ambassador to Nepal meets Indian MEA officials

MEDIA reports inform that US ambassador to Nepal Nancy J. Powell has recently met the senior officials of Indian Ministry of External Affairs. In this meeting, Ms Powell discussed the current political situation in Nepal with senior officials of India's External Affairs Ministry.

Powell met the External Affairs Ministry officials recently to understand India's position on the situation in

Nepal as well as to 'the response of the US and India to the developments there, reports said.

Reports also inform that the US envoy also interacted with border management division officials of the India's Ministry of Home Affairs. The uneasy situation in the Terai region was also discussed.

Assembly election in Nepal and activities of the Maoist youth wing, the Young Communist League,



Nancy J. Powell

also figured during the meeting. US ambassador's visit was considered as "routine but significant".

Nepal capable to resolve its problems

A LATEST media report informs that the Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Shiv Shankar Mukherjee has made a statement that people and leaders of Nepal themselves are capable of resolving the problems seen in Terai region.

Shiv Shankar Mukherjee made this statement on the 59th Republic Day of India. The Indian Ambassador said that Indian government is willing to extend all kinds of help to Nepal government

in this regard. "Of the entire problem Nepal is facing as a whole, Terai is a part of it," he said, adding that the problem will be solved by the leaders and people of Nepal as per the "process owned and operated by the people of Nepal." "We are there to help," Mukherjee added, "as per the request of Nepal."

Mukherjee also said that 99 percent of border issues between Nepal and India have already been sorted

out. "There is no border conflict across the 1900 km, which is the underpinning of the unique relation of our countries in the world," he said. Meanwhile, on the occasion of the 59th Republic Day of India, the Indian government gifted 30 ambulances, 12 trolleys mounted 40 KVA portable diesel generators and 14 sets of books to various organizations in different parts of Nepal quote media sources.

60th Anniversary of Sri Lanka's...

(Continued from pg 11) on all fronts. It was the bounden duty of everyone to make this possible. "We have to work hard together, to make our hopes and expectations a reality.

While peace is said to be indivisible, so is freedom and prosperity, so let us come together and make Sri Lanka's future a better and a brighter one," Mr Amza said.

Sri Lanka and India have close links. These included cultural, linguistic religious and food habits. Students of Devi Balika Vidyalaya, Colombo recited Jayamangala Gatha, on the occasion

Indian aid to...

(Continued from pg 14) Programme would make a significant contribution in the business, he forwarded.

The government of India has appointed a consultant and would appoint a contractor for implementation of the project. A project monitoring committee will be constituted for monitoring the progress of construction to ensure its timely and effective implementation, the press statement said.

The government of India in Kaski district is currently implementing more than 265 large and small projects under the India-Nepal Economic Cooperation Programme in the sector of education, health, community development and infrastructure.

