

An initiative for Diplomats **imprint**

*Magazine on Foreign Affairs and International Relations.
A monthly on the Art and Practice of Diplomacy*

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UK Deputy High Commission opened in Hyderabad

A PTI report informs that UK has recently opened a Deputy High Commission in Hyderabad on May 31, 2012. The Deputy High Commission was inaugurated at the Taj Hotel at Banjara Hills. Simon Fraser, Permanent Undersecretary and Head of diplomatic services, said on this occasion that UK is going to open another office in Chandigarh. This has brought the number of Deputy High Commissions in India to seven.

Simon Fraser told reporters that British Diplomacy is significantly engaged in a shift towards the power of Asia, with India as a centerpiece. A new office in Hyderabad was a top priority. Partnership with



AP offers immense opportunity to expand trade and investment between UK and this important part of India.

On this occasion, he told that the trade between the two countries was pegged at US\$ 13 Billion in 2010 and is targeted to be doubled by the year 2015.

Yemen to open an Honorary Consulate in Hyderabad

India and Arab nation of Yemen share historical ties. These ties are going to be further strengthened in the present with Yemen planning to open a Honorary Consulate in Hyderabad. As per an ANI report, Ausaf Sayeed, Indian Ambassador to Yemen said, "Persons of Yemeni origin in Hyderabad asked for a full fledged Yemeni Consulate in Hyderabad but Yemeni authorities were considering setting up of only a Honorary Consulate.

According to the report, an eminent person of Yemeni origin will be appointed as Honorary Consul." Hyderabad has 150,000 people of Yemeni origin in Hyderabad. Opening of a Honorary Consulate will cater to these. Later, according to the report, this facility will be upgraded to a fully fledged one. This facility will help people to obtain visas from Hyderabad instead of travelling to New Delhi.

New Delhi rekindles its strong ties with Myanmar

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visits Myanmar

A media release informs that the Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh visited Myanmar from May 27 to 29. In Myanmar, the Indian Prime Minister held various meetings including meeting with the President of Myanmar, U Thein Sein.

This latest visit of the Indian Prime Minister to Myanmar is historical as it is an Indian Prime Minister's visit after 25 years. Indian External Affairs Minister, SM Krishna; National Security Advisor, S Menon. Principal Secretary to the PM Pulok Chatterji, Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai accompanied the Prime Minister to Myanmar.

During the meeting with the President of Myanmar, the two leaders completely reviewed the bilateral multifaceted relationship and took stock of development since the visit of President U Thein Sein to India in October 2011. The two leaders expressed satisfaction at the various level of cooperation between the two countries. As per

the release, the two leaders agreed to cooperate in the areas such as border area development, transportation, connectivity, agriculture, trade and investment, promotion of friendly exchanges, and human resource development. The two leaders also stressed on the need to effectively harness their respective resources for the betterment of the people of the two countries.

The prime Minister of India lauded the Government of Myanmar on the ongoing efforts at political economic and social reforms, which include negotiation of preliminary peace agreements with several ethnic groups as well as dialogue with various democratic parties including the National democratic party lead by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

According to the Press Release, Manmohan Singh reiterated India's readiness to extend all possible assistance in accelerating the country's transition and developing the capacity of democratic institutions such as Parliament, National Human Rights

Institution and the Media. The Memorandum of Understanding which was signed during this visit were a MoU on US\$ 500 million line of credit; an Air Service Agreement between the two countries; a MoU on India Myanmar Border area development; MoU on Establishment of Joint Trade and Investment Forum; a MoU on establishment of an Advance Centre For Agriculture Research and Education; MoU on establishment of Rice Bio Park at the Department of Agriculture Research in Nay Pyi Taw; MoU on setting up of Myanmar Institute of Information Technology; MoU on cooperation between Dagon University and Calcutta University; MoU on Cooperation between Myanmar Institute of Strategic Studies and Indian Council of World Affairs; Agreement of Cooperation between Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies and Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis.

India will do its best to support Bhutan: Envoy Pawan Varma

A report published in a leading Bhutanese Publication, has quoted the Indian Ambassador to Bhutan, Pawan Kumar Varma that, the Indian Government is trying to do everything possible within its resources to support Bhutan in the wake of Rupee crunch.

Indian Ambassador to Bhutan has said, "Where the request involves more than doubling the standby credit, certain negotiations happen between sovereign countries as in your country as in mine."

"Often negotiations take time. India, as you may be aware, is facing an unprecedented fiscal deficit.

The finance bill has not been passed. Parliament is in the session and negotiations could take some

time." Ambassador said, "I feel, the current round of talks that were held in Delhi or that will happen in the Bhutan is part of that process. Every Rupee that is allocated for every purpose has to be accounted for reasons provided." He further said, "Essentially,

I will assure you that within circumstances prevailing in the country, India will do its best to provide any support that is useful for Bhutan." As said in the report, due to the Rupee crunch, Bhutan had requested India to increase the standby credit facility from Rupee 300 crores to Rs 1000 crores.

However, there was some delay in processing the request. Indian officials say, it was caused because initially Bhutan had asked for Rs 600 crores, which was processed, later Bhutan asked for 1000 crores which had to be processed. Pawan Kumar Varma also said that India considered privileged to be Bhutan's leading development partner and largest trading partner. He also said, "We are trying to see whether India's industry and business leaders can invest in Bhutan and we have had several very high level delegations visiting Bhutan in recent times."

Indian businessmen concerned over US Visa curbs says Indian Envoy

Indo- US ties have a strong economic aspect which cannot be ignored at any cost. Indian businessmen visit US very often. Recently, there have been reports of curb on business visas offered to Indian businessmen. In this regards, Indian Ambassador to US Nirupama Rao has expressed her displeasure on this. According to an IANS report, the Indian Ambassador, recently voiced Indian Businessmen's concern over the US restrictions on H 1-b and L1 Visas. According to the report, New Delhi has expressed the hope that this trend will not continue keeping

in view the 'logic and rationale' of India- US partnership. The stringent visa regulations are creating hassles for Indian businessmen. The main back bone of India- US ties is the High Technology sector. This will reel under stress due to these new visa regulations. The Indian IT Industry contributes \$ 15 billion in taxes in the US over the last five years. The Indian Ambassador said, "Ironically, the same industry is subjected to new visa restrictions imposed on H1 B and L1 Visa." She further added, "We also hope as our investment flows further increase, it would also become easier for Indian financial

institutions to increase their operations in the US," while addressing a US Based think tank. Nirupama Rao further said that as India and the US look at ways and means to expand our trade and investment, we are also working together to find solutions to the challenges of clean energy, food security, health and education through various initiatives. The Indian Ambassador made an important remark that as we upgrade our infrastructure to improve the livelihood of our population, there will be tremendous opportunities for the US Businessmen in India.

We are reaching the limits of patience with Pak: US Defence Sec

US Defence Secretary during his visit to Afghanistan said on June 6, 2012 that US is losing its patience with Pak. As per a Reuters report, the reason is, it is

providing safe heavens to insurgents in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Speaking in Kabul, he said "It is difficult to achieve peace in Afghanistan as long as there is safe haven for terrorists in Afghanistan." He further said "It is very important for Pakistan to take steps. It

is an increasing concern, and we are reaching the limits of our patience."

According to Pakistan's Ambassador to the US, the comments of Mr Panetta would make it further harder for the two countries to narrow their differences.

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Decolonization, Development and Diaspora: The Afro-Indian Experience

Decolonization, Development and Diaspora: The Afro- Indian Experience was the topic of the Conference which was organized by the Indian Council of World Affairs and the Goa Government, in association with University. Speaking on the sidelines of this conference, a former Ugandan diplomat, Badru Kateregga said that aggressive and sustained promotion of India's ancient medical science Ayurveda in Africa could help promote, the 54 nation continent's holistic development.

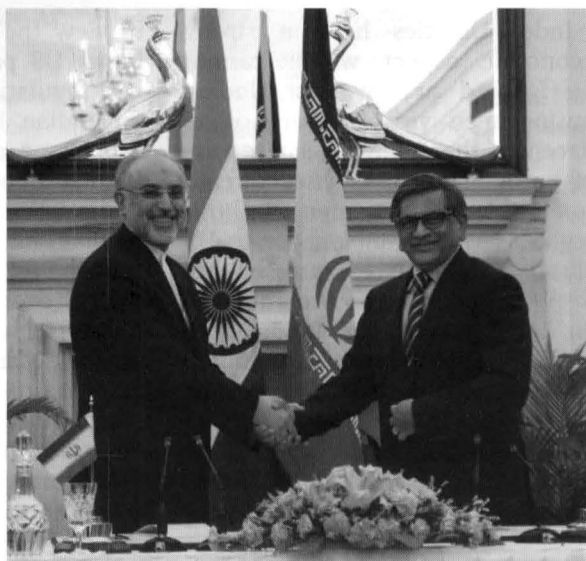
The former diplomat said as per the IANS report, "There is a need for more economic partnership in sectors such as manufacturing, agro-processing, mining, agriculture, hospitality and other sectors." Kateregga according to the report, "There is a need to identify our intellectual properties to be exchanged with the Asian counterparts, in order to

increase their individual and group intellectual capacity such that when they return home, they can contribute to the holistic development of Africa." The former diplomat also stated that according to a WHO report, around 70 to 90 percent population in Africa still relies on traditional medicine to meet their health needs, so Ayurveda has an immense scope in Africa.

The former diplomat said that there is a need for intellectual capicitisation between India and Africa. He also stresses on the historical ties between India and the African subcontinents. He said that many words from Indian languages such as Gujrati, Punjabi, Konkani and Urdu are used in local African languages. He also said that many towns and cities in Africa resembled the architectural patterns of India.



Vice President of India, Hamid Ansari with Salman Bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Kingdom of Bahrain in New Delhi on May 31, 2012.



Indian Foreign Minister S M Krishna with the Foreign Minister of Iran, Dr. Ali Akbar Salehi on May 31, 2012.



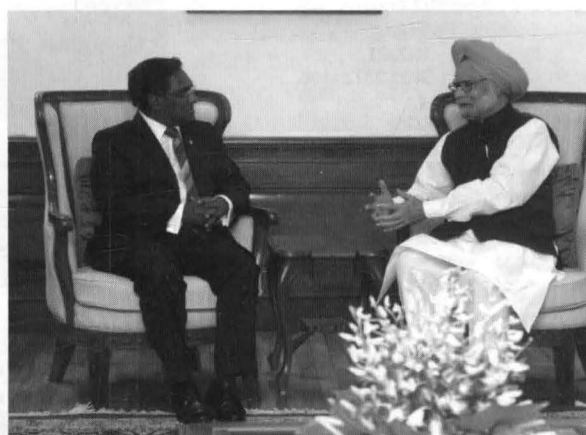
Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh with the President of Paraguay Fernando Armindo Lugo Mendez in New Delhi.



E Ahamed with Foreign Minister of Yemen, Dr Abu Bakar Abdullah al Qirb on the sidelines of Friends of Yemen meeting in Riyadh on May 23, 2012.



Ahamed with Abdirahman Mohamud Farole, President of Puntland State of Somalia in New Delhi on May 16, 2012.



Manmohan Singh with the President of Maldives, Dr. Mohamed Waheed in New Delhi on May 12, 2012.



Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, E Ahamed addressing the XVII NAM Ministerial Meeting in Sharm El Sheikh on May 9, 2012.



Indian Foreign Minister S M Krishna with K Shanmugam, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Law of Singapore in New Delhi on May 8, 2012.



Prime Minister Manmohan Singh offers his prayers at the Mazar of the last Mughal Emperor of India, Bahadur Shah Zafar in Yangon on May 29, 2012.

Estonia to open an Embassy in New Delhi

According to a press release issued by Estonian Ministry of External Affairs, there is going to be a leap in India-Estonia relations. Estonia is soon going to open an Embassy in New Delhi. Initially, a charge d' affaires is scheduled to be sent to India, who will be later replaced by an Ambassador.

Estonia's Foreign Minister Umras Paet stated that in the spring of this year a charge d'affaires will be sent to India, who will make preparations for the opening of an

Embassy in the fall of this year.

"On account of India's important and growing role in the world and Estonians' increasing interest in travelling to India, the plan to open an Estonian representation in India has been on the agenda for quite some time. From September 2005 to July 2008 an Estonian consular diplomat was working in the Finnish Embassy in New Delhi," said Paet. According to the press release, India recognised the independence of Estonia on Sep-

tember 9, 1991. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on December 2, 1991. At the time, a British colony, India recognised Estonia for the first time on September 22, 1921 when Estonia became a member of the League of Nations. At present, Estonia's Non-resident Ambassador to India in Tallinn is Peep Jahilo. Estonia also has two honorary consuls in India- namely Anil Vig in New Delhi and Sunil Khanna in Mumbai.

More cities in India to have Bangladeshi Consulates

Reports in the Indian media inform that Bangladesh is going to establish more consulates in the North- Eastern states of India. This decision has been taken in order to improve people to people contact, trade and cultural relations between the two countries. There is an ever increasing presence of Bangladeshi nationals in this

North- Eastern part of India. At present, Bangladesh has a consulate in Agartala, which is the capital of Tripura. Excellent job opportunities in India and hope for a better standard of living lure Bangladeshi nationals to India. Often these nationals come to India via proper visa by bribing rangers at the border. Once these immigrants reach any Indian metro,

they mingle into the vast ocean of unskilled workers in India and never return to Bangladesh. There is a continuous influx of these Bangladeshi nationals in India and more so in the North-Eastern part of India. At present India needs to tackle this influx as not only is it a major security threat but also puts pressure on the resources.

New Swiss Visa application centres in India

Swiss Embassy in India has planned to open 10 new Swiss Visa Application centres in India. Swiss Embassy has partnered with a corporate company for the same. In addition to the existing centres in New Delhi and Mumbai, the new visa application centres will be established in Chandigarh, Kolkata,

Jalandhar, Cochin, Chennai, Pondicherry, Bangaluru, Ahmedabad, Pune and Hyderabad. Open of these new centers will make it easier for Indian citizens to undertake visa applications process, which will ultimately help in increasing the flow of Indian citizens to Switzerland.

According to the reports in

the Indian media, this project will be completed in three phases. During the first and the second phase Chandigarh, Kolkata, Jalandhar, Cochin, Chennai, Pondicherry and Bangaluru will get these centers by the month of March and Pune and Ahmedabad will get these centers by mid of 2012.

Will China be able to open a new Consulate in India?

China has proposed to open a new Consulate in Chennai. Now speculations are on, whether it will be able to open a Consulate in this city or not. According to a CNN report, the Minister of state for External affairs Preneet Kaur, in a written reply to Rajya Sabha informed that there are three proposals pending for the

opening of new Consulates in India, which include a Chinese proposal to open a Consulate in India. As per the report, China had first sought permission last year to open a Consulate in Chennai. Decision regarding this issue is yet to be taken. Usually the decision in such matters is based on reciprocity where both the countries

have equal number of consulates in the other country. Chennai was chosen over other cities due to its presence as a port city. China is one of the countries which have the highest number of consulates in India. Due to security reasons, India should think twice before allowing China to open a consulate in Chennai.

China, a key priority to Indian Foreign Policy

Nirupama Rao Indian Ambassador to US Nirupama Rao has stated that China is an important part of Indian Foreign Policy. In her address to the Hudson Institute on "Indian Foreign Policy in 21st century: Challenges and Opportunities," Nirupama Rao said, "China as immediate neighbour, is a key priority to Indian Foreign Policy. We attempt to establish a strategic and cooperative partnership with China.

In her address, the Indian Ambassador stated, "The maintenance of peace and tranquillity on our borders with China, and the quest for a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the outstanding boundary question are of crucial importance in our bilateral relationship." Ambassador said, "Naturally, as between any two large countries, there are areas of convergence as well as areas of divergence between our nations. We

will maintain dialogue with China with the objective of minimising such differences or bridging them." Nirupama Rao further said that the Indian Foreign Policy's foremost task is to enable the domestic transformation of India. She also stated that our foreign policy seeks security and support from international community as we build and transform our society and economy.

Diplomat Mehta not to be recalled from Nepal

Indian Embassy in Nepal, said in a statement, issued in the last week of May that media reports attributing certain remarks to S D Mehta, a junior Indian diplomat posted with Indian Consulate General in Birgunj, Nepal are misleading and factually incorrect. The statement said, "Such attributions seek to detract friendly relations between India and Nepal."

Nepalese media had reported that in a cocktail party at Hotel Vishuwa in Birgunj, SD Mehta, the consular at the Consulate General of India, tried persuading leaders

of the NC, UML and the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum Nepal representing Parsa and Bara districts to take to the streets for the sake of Madhes, the leaders said. Indian Embassy has said that India remains committed to supporting the constitution making process for the establishment of a stable, democratic and prosperous Nepal and we will help in a manner determined exclusively by the people and leadership of Nepal.

Earlier Nepal's Foreign Secretary D.P. Bhattarai had summoned the Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Jayanta Prasad to lodge a protest

against this recent issue and there were talks about the recall of S D Mehta. According to a media report, Nepalese Government has reacted positively to the clarification made by the Indian authorities.

With the release of this statement, the controversy in Nepal over the conduct of the junior Indian diplomat seems to have mellowed down. Indian authorities have denied this media report which said that the Indian official had tried to incite Madhesi leaders to launch a campaign against an agreement for restructuring of states.

Indian diplomat Mahalingam enters into a spat in Srilanka

Reports in the Srilankan media state that in the month of May, Indian diplomat in Jaffna, V Mahalingam, who as per the Srilankan media choose to insult the Eezham Tamils bereaving a particular genocide by participating at the victory celebrations of Sinhala military at the Palaali camp in Jaffna was in turn insulted by occupying military and its commander Maj. Gen. Hathurusinghe. Reports in the Srilankan media inform that the Consul at the

Deputy High Commission in Jaffna was neither offered a place on the stage nor was a seat reserved for him in this event.

The reporting media also states that Mahalingam was reportedly ignored by the military officials and later an argument was also observed. However later, a seat was offered to the Indian diplomat in the frontline row.

This spat was reported in the Srilankan media along with images. However, looking at the sensitive

nature of India-Sri Lanka relationship, there is a need to downplay such incidents, as the need to maintain peace in the region is much more important than the ego of persons who are representing their country.

Srilankan media reports that India diplomat Mahalingam insists on 'visiting' every function in the North and the Sinhala military and administration are irritated over this 'super-colonial' nature of the Indian diplomat.

Handle telecom crisis or it'll strain diplomatic relations

A leading Indian daily has reported that the 2G telecom crisis is having a negative impact on India's diplomatic relations. The report states, "As these crises drag on, they are beginning to have fallout on India's diplomatic relations with these countries with implications ranging from minor to the significant."

2G crisis is bound to strain India's relations with Norway because Telenor, involved in the 2G scam is not only a telecom company but also has received heavy investments from the Norway Government pension fund, which is as per the reports, world's largest sovereign funds and provides

pension to all Novergiens. India's leading daily writes, 'If Telenor is forced to exit from India, the status of India- Norway relations can be imagined very well.'

The report states that however hard, Indian politicians try to gloss over the matter. India's decision regarding Vodafone is definitely going to impact our ties with UK.

On the other side, the 2G crisis has also affect Etisalat and this is going to have an impact on India's relations with United Arab Emirates. Reports inform that the Foreign Minister of UAE, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan is frequently meeting Indian leaders in this regards. It also states that UAE

is India's largest trading partner and almost 1.7 million Indians live in UAE. Indian government is also hoping to attract billions of dollars in investment from their sovereign wealth fund and as per the report, one can imagine the impact, the crisis is going to have on India- UAE relations.

The same report also informs that India's economic decisions are being taken without keeping foreign policy goals in mind, which is a serious charge. Indian leaders and decision makers must take a note of this otherwise, this government, which is headed by an economist will seriously bruise, India's ties with these nations.

India needs to develop good relations with Pakistan reports Dawn

Pakistan's leading newspaper, Dawn reports that India's former diplomat and a Cabinet Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar recently spoke at a talk entitled 'Pakistan- India Peace: Can it happen? This talk was held at the FC College in Lahore on May 24, 2012. In his talk, Mani Shankar said that New Delhi needs good relations with Pakistan. He argued that India will get the coveted seat in

the UN Security council, only if it resolves major issues with Pakistan. Report states, according to Mani Shankar, India and Pakistan are 'Siamese twins' and the only way for better relations is to keep talking. He said that the process of continuous talks would inevitably improve relations. Mr. Aiyar said, "Pakistan need to emerge from it's, 'We are not Indian mentality' and develop into a self assured

country. Pakistan should also stop being frontline state for other countries, and look after its own interests." Answering a question, Mani Shankar said that both countries need to move beyond the issue of the past. As 90 percent of the population of both the countries was born after the partition of 1947, therefore both countries should leave the baggage of the past and look towards the future.

US energy diplomat 'Misquoted!'

A US Energy diplomat was misquoted by News agency Reuters in suggesting that he was "not too impressed" in India's efforts to cut its oil imports from the sanctions hit Iran. What he actually said was, 'I am not doing press today,' not 'I am not impressed.' State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland told reporters

on May 15, 2012, when she was asked about the reported remark of Carlos Pascual, the State Department's special envoy for International Energy issue.

Pascual was in Delhi, with his team in the month of May to talk about the whole complex issue of energy with India. When asked if the US was "impressed" or "unimpressed" with what the

Indians have done in reducing their dependence on Iranian oil, Nuland said, what Hillary Clinton had said during her visit, "We are making progress; there is more progress to be made."

India has meanwhile announced that it is cutting its oil imports from Iran by 11 percent.

India MEA declassifies files

Indian Ministry of External Affairs is in the process of declassifying its old records according to a Press Release issued on June 4, 2012. 70,000 files have already been declassified and 22,000 are going to be done soon. The Press Release states that old files of the Ministry of

External Affairs are an important source of material for research and reference purposes. Report states that Ministry of External Affairs has been making steady progress in declassifying old records and making this accessible to the academic community. These seventy thousand files have been

declassified and transferred to the National Archives of India. In collaboration with the National Archive of India, these files have now been catalogued in a user friendly searchable format and the title and file numbers have been uploaded on the public diplomacy site.

Indian Minister of state for External Affairs visits Ukraine

Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, Eshwar Ahamed, led a Inter-ministerial delegation to Ukraine for the fourth session of the Indo- Ukrainian Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Cultural, Industrial and Technological cooperation. As per the release, this meeting was held in Kyiv on May 31 and June 1, 2012 after a gap of nine years.

This official delegation included representatives from the Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Fertilizers and Department of Pharmaceuticals. Eshwar Ahamed was also accompanied by a 20 member delegation from CII(Confederation of Indian Industries). Ukrainian delegation was led by their Minister of Economic Development and Trade, Petro Oleksiyovych Poroshenko.

During his visit, on May 31,



Image for News 18 Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar with Sigward Haage, President of Rotary Club Sigtuna.

2012, Eshwar Ahamed called on the President of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich. The Foreign Minister of Ukraine, Kostyantyn Gryshchenko was also present on the occasion. Issues of mutual interest, along with the proposed visit of the President of India were also discussed in this meeting. Kostyantyn Gryshchenko had earlier visited India in November 2011. Petro Oleksiyovych Poroshenko and Eshwar Ahamed, on June 1, 2012 signed the Protocol of the Fourth Session of

the Indo Ukrainian Inter- Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological, Industrial and Cultural Cooperation. As per the Press Release, at the Fourth Session, the two sides reviewed the current status and future prospects of co-operation in trade and investment, heavy engineering,

fertilizers, pharmaceuticals, mining and metallurgy, science and technology, power generation, transportation, agriculture, education, culture and tourism. According to the release, the major decisions taken during the visit were, setting up of Joint Working Groups in mining and metallurgy, pharmaceutical and healthcare, and fertilizers. The two sides reportedly expressed satisfaction at the ongoing multi-sectoral bilateral cooperation.

Bangladesh High Commissioners discuss trade

The Bangladeshi High Commissioner to India and the Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, visited Tripura on June 5, 2012. This visit was to review the trade related issues. The Bangladeshi High Commissioner to India, Tariq A Karim and the Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Pankaj Saran visited Agartala to talk about the progress over the construction of a bridge over river Feni at Sabroom, which is a town in South Tripura, which would connect with Ramgarh in Chittagong District in Bangladesh, says PTI. This information was given by Tripura Commerce and Industries Minister Jitendra Chow-

dhary. The two diplomats, as per the reports also discussed the matters regarding opening up of border hats at four places of the states which have already been sanctioned by the two countries. Report tells that the two diplomats also discussed the condition of Land Custom Stations (LCS). Earlier in 1996, the Land Custom Station at Sabroom was withdrawn but the Central Government has approved the opening of a LCS for trade. After this latest visit of High Commissioners, another high level delegation of both the countries would arrive in Agartala to discuss and solve other issues related to trade. According to the

PTI report, the four border hats would be set up at Srinagar in Sabroom, Kashba in Siphaijhala, Kamalpur in Dhalai and Raghna in North Tripura District.

During this visit, the Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Pankaj Saran told the media that India's cooperation in terms of trade, tourism and mutual agreement on security related matters with neighbouring Bangladesh has proved to be mutually beneficial for both Bangladesh and India. Saran further said that the two nations are having cooperation in all sectors including militancy and anti-insurgency operations.

President of Maldives visit India

President of Maldives, Dr. Mohamed Waheed was in India in the mid of May. On 12 May he met with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. According to a report by the Maldives High Commission in India, in this meeting Dr. Waheed said that India and the Maldives had close bilateral relations and noted the importance given by the Prime Minister in strengthening relations between the two countries. Mohamed Wa-

heed also expressed his gratitude to the Indian Prime Minister for the Invitation to India. President Waheed thanked Indian Government for the confidence placed in him following assumption of office in the month of February. President of Maldives briefed the Indian Prime Minister about the current economic situation in Maldives and steps taken to improve it. The President of Maldives thanked India for its support in housing projects, and its

assistance in capacity building of the security services, including the joint coast guard exercise "Dosti." On this occasion, the Indian Prime Minister said that Maldives was a close neighbor and hence peace and stability in the Maldives was of great importance to India. As per the report, the Indian Prime Minister also spoke on the importance of all stake holders sitting together to find a way out of the political situation peacefully.

Syria has labeled 17 diplomats "Persona non Grata"

According to a report in a leading Indian daily, Syria has labeled 17 diplomats, most of them American or European as "Persona Non Grata" in response to a mass expulsion of Syrian Envoys by Western capitals.

However the Foreign Ministry has said, the government was still open to re-establishing ties with the diplomats, almost all of whom have already been recalled by their country. Ac-

cording to the report, among those listed are diplomats from former ally Turkey, which has become an outspoken critic of Assad's crackdown and has given haven to army defectors. The foreign ministry said, as per the report, the ambassador and all the staff at Turkey's embassy in Damascus are unwelcome.

As per the report, the US, France, Britain, Canada, Germany, Italy, Spain, Australia

and Bulgaria and Switzerland coordinated a move to expel Syrian diplomats in a response to a massacre of 108 people in the city of Houla. Reports say that half of those killed were children. A Syrian News channel quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Maqdad that the government's decision aimed to encourage those countries to "correct" their position, says the media report.

Ambassador of India to Bhutan

Pawan K. Varma

"We believe that Hydropower production in Bhutan, in cooperation with GIO will go a long way, mitigating the current transient crisis and will ultimately contribute to the prosperity and well being of Bhutan."

Russia and China strengthen bond!!

President of Russia Vladimir Putin and President of China Hu Jintao met in China on June 5, 2012. The two leaders met on the sidelines of G20 Summit. CNN reports that the two countries have laid down a strategic plan to tie their country into a closer economic and strategic partnership.

The report states that both Beijing and Russia seek to use each other to balance their relationship with the US.

The report states that the two Presidents set a goal of increasing the bilateral trade from \$83.5 billion to \$200 billion in 2020, Hu Jintao, China's President said, after talks with Vladimir Putin.

As per the report, Hu Jintao, said that through closer cooperation, China and Russia would, "set

the global political and economic order in a more fair and rational direction." Chinese media reportedly fettered Putin, it also praised the growing bilateral cooperation and consultation of the two nations on the world stage.

"Without the participation of Russia and China, without considering Russia and China's interests, no international matter or issue can be discussed or implemented," said the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin during his visit to China.

However the report states that the two countries are still a far away from an alliance. The reason is that there is a basic lack of trust between the two countries and none of them wants a true alliance.

Dimitri Tenin, Director of Carnegie Moscow Centre quoted in the media

report, "The reason the Chinese media are hyping the visit like this is that a significant portion of Chinese leadership, including the military hopes to build Russia into an ally to help push back against the US. But for Vladimir Putin the focus is mainly on strengthening the economic relationship." Chinese international experts say that since after the financial crisis, the world order is being realigned, and the economic centre is shifting from Europe to Pacific, therefore Russia wants to lean towards Asia for its economic development.

During this meeting, Russia and China announced more than a dozen cooperation agreements which include an agreement for developing long range civil aircrafts.

Indian Air Force chief visits France

Chief of Indian Air Force, Air Marshal NAK Browne visited France in the month of May. He was in France from 22 to 25, 2012. Reports inform that on his arrival at the French Air Force Headquarter,

the Chief of Air Staff was welcomed by General Jean- Paul Palomeros, the French Airforce Chief of the Air Staff and a Guard of Honour was presented to him. In France, Air Marshal Browne held meetings with the French Defence Minister

Jean- Yves Le Drian and the French Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Edouard Guillaud. The Indian Air Force Chief also visited the St- Dizier Air Force base where he flew the Rafale

Envoy Ashok Sajjanhar talks on India's position in the world

Indian Ambassador to Sweden and Latvia, Ashok Sajjanhar was invited by the Rotary Club, Sigtuna the oldest town in Sweden to talk about 'India's position in the world today and future prospects of India- Sweden relations.

India, Sweden Embassy site states that in his presentation, Indian Ambassador focused on India's Democratic tradition and ethos of Indian polity. He emphasized the spirit of tolerance and the presence of immense diversity including linguistic, ethnic, cultural etc. in a

country which has provided it with remarkable strength and resilience. Deep rooted traditions of democracy and respect for diversity has provided it with remarkable strength to the Indian economy.

Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar dealt extensively with the demographic dividend that India will continue to enjoy in the future. He said that "demography is the destiny." He asserted that India's youth is well educated, skilled, ambitious and would continue to produce more, save more, consume more and in-

vest more in the future thereby it will make India continue to grow in the future decade. Ambassador Sajjanhar also threw light on rapidly expanding and diversifying bilateral relations between India and Sweden in political, economic, scientific, cultural and technological spheres.

According to the report, the presentation and discussion was highly appreciated by the audience and helped to promote understanding about the rapid and robust growth of India.

India - Vietnam celebrate 40 years of Diplomatic ties

Chairman of the National Assembly of Vietnam, Nguyen Sinh Hung received Indian Ambassador to Vietnam, Ranjit Rai in Hanoi, says a VoV report. The Chairman of the National Assembly said Vietnam homes more and

more Indian companies will invest in Vietnam. He said as per the report, Vietnam is ready to create favourable conditions for foreign investors in the country. The Indian Ambassador said, India wants to cooperate with Viet-

nam in forest, mining, finance and banking. India continues to strongly support Vietnam's human resource development particularly in IT. This is the 40th year of establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Ambassador MK Lokesh holds open house

Many times, Indian in Saudi are arrested due to mistaken identity. Now this problem is going to be resolved.

According to a Gulf media report, a new mechanism has been developed by India and UAE. Now onwards Indian citizen, who get detained by the

UAE authorities on mistaken identity should immediately report the matter to Indian Embassy as they can get prompt relief.

Indian Ambassador to UAE, M K Lokesh said, "Sometimes Indian citizens are detained or even arrested by Saudi authorities for having similar names of the accused in criminal

cases in the UAE." But the new mechanism in the UAE is helping the Embassy to take up such complaints to the UAE authorities and sort them out immediately.

The Ambassador told an open house in the Embassy in Abu Dhabi. The open house was held on June 3, 2012

US Envoy to Pak quits

US Ambassador to Pak Cameron Munter put down his papers in the month of May. Envoy Munter resigned on May 7, 2012. Reports say that he resigned saying he was not fit with the Pakistani Govern-

ment. Normally Ambassadors serve three year term but Cameron Munter resigned after less than two years term. There are speculations which say that the US Envoy resigned due to his differences with Obama adminis-

tration, a charge which Munter strongly deny. Washington Post has reported that Munter was probably not a proper fit with Pakistani Government as well as Obama administration.

Envoy Debnath Shaw met President of Azerbaijan

Indian Ambassador to Azerbaijan, Debnath Shaw completed his tenure in Azerbaijan. President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev received the Ambassador of India at the end of his diplo-

matic Mission in the country. The President pointed to the good prospects for the development of bilateral relations between India and Azerbaijan. President of Azerbaijan expressed his gratitude

to the outgoing Indian Ambassador for his contribution to the expansion of relations between the two countries. President of Azerbaijan, Ilham wished him success in his future activities.

Interactive session organized by Australian Consulate

Australian Consulate General in association with the Kerala Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized an interactive session with the Australian High Commissioner Peter Hall, on June 11, 2012. This

interactive session was held at Chamber Hall, reports The Hindu. David Holly, Australian Consul General South India was also present on this occasion. The Australian Trade Commission look forward to forg-

ing strong business ties in Kerala said a Press Release. The session provided all the participants with details of various trade and investment opportunities with Australian SMEs, informed the Press Release.

Diplomatic Quotes

"We enjoy good cooperation with Bangladesh and this is something that is being useful for both the countries."

Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh,
Pankaj Saran

"I look upon bilateral relationship not as a framework of dependency. I look at them as a framework of mutual benefit."

Indian Ambassador to Bhutan, Pavan Kumar Varma

"India has scrupulously adhered to the military sanctions against Iran as mandated by the United Nations. We are also cognizant to US concerns, and have remained closely engaged on the Iranian issue."

Ambassador Nirupama Rao

"Without the participation of Russia and China, without considering Russia and China's interests, no international matter or issue can be discussed or implemented."

President of Russia, Vladimir Putin during his visit to China

"Somehow there has been, very sorry to say, some attempt, I don't know for whatsoever reason, to paint India in very negative colours."

Indian Ambassador to US, Nirupama Rao

"It is a signal of profound displeasure."

Italy's Deputy Foreign Minister, Staffan di Mistrura on the recall of Italian Envoy to India

FOREIGN EMBASSIES IN INDIA

In this section information is given about the Foreign Embassies in India according to the Ministry of External Affairs of India. In this issue we provide our readers, a list of West Asian Embassies in India and their addresses.

WEST ASIA FACT FILE

| COUNTRY | ADDRESS OF THE EMBASSY/ HIGH COMMISSION |
|-------------|--|
| Afghanistan | Embassy of Afghanistan 5/50 Shantipath, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi |
| Iran | Embassy of Islamic Republic of Iran 5, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi, |
| Iraq | Embassy of the Republic of Iraq L ½ Hauz Khas, New Delhi |
| Kuwait | Embassy of the State of Kuwait, 5A, Shantipath, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi |
| Qatar | Embassy of the State of Qatar, 2EPM 31 A, Chandragupta Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi |

New Appointments

- May 15: Ajay K. Sharma appointed as the Ambassador to Korea(DPRK)
- May 15: Nagma Mohamed Mallick appointed as the Ambassador to Tunisia
- May 17: Amrendra Khatua, appointed as Ambassador to Argentina
- May 21: A.K. Pandey appointed as the High Commissioner to New Zealand
- May 25: Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa appointed as the Ambassador to Japan
- May 25: Sanjiv Arora appointed as the next Ambassador to Qatar
- May 28: Banasri Bose Harrison appointed as India's Ambassador to Sweden
- May 28: Sri Rajasekhar appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Cuba
- June 8: L. T. Muana appointed as the next Ambassador to Croatia
- June 8: Pratap Singh appointed as the next Ambassador to Jamaica
- June 11: Gurjit Singh concurrently accredited as the Ambassador to Timor- Leste

Sri Lankan High Commissioner visits Goa

High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to India, Prasad Kariawasam visited the state of Goa on May 29 to 31, 2012. There he met the Governor of Goa and Chief Minister of Goa, says a Press Release issued by the Sri Lankan High Commissioner to India. According to the Press Release, during this visit, the High Commissioner spoke on the topic "Quest for promotion of tourism between Goa and Sri Lanka."

This talk was held at the International centre of Goa. This event was organized by the Goa Chamber of Com-

merce and Industry and the Travel and Tourism Association of Goa. During his speech, the Sri- Lankan High Commissioner spoke about the historical commonalities between then Portuguese colony, Goa and Galle, a Portuguese colony in Sri Lanka.

He stressed on the fact that intra-regional tourism promotion is an important precursor to promote the region for international visitors.

The Sri Lankan High Commissioner spoke about several possibilities of cooperation, which among others include undertaking joint venture to develop in-

frastructure and tourism service sector; Joint initiatives by both governments and private sector level to enhance thematic tour circuits; Cruise operations that connect Goa with ports of Sri Lanka; Publishing an events annual diary; Commencing a twinning of cities programme; Sharing of expertise and best practices; Taking joint steps for eco-friendly and green tourism and signing of MoU between Sri Lanka Tourism Promoting Bureau and Goa Tourism which includes initiatives for visits by media personnels from India to Sri Lanka and vice versa.

India appoints a new High Commissioner in Guyana

Puran Mal Meena is the new High Commissioner of India Guyana. The new High Commissioner presented his credentials to the President of Guyana, Donald Ramotar on May 30, 2012. Envoy Ramotar replaced his predecessor, Shubit Kumar Mandal. On this occasion, President Ramotar said, "I am confident that your appointment as the new High Commissioner of India to Guyana will serve as a mechanism for the future

enhancement of this programme of cooperation and for strengthening of relations between the two countries," says Guyana chronicle.

In November 2011, India had approved a soft loan to fund the construction of a state of art speciality hospital. The exchange of technical expertise between India and Guyana has been made possible through the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation programme which also provides scholarships to

Guyanese. ITEC was initiated in September 1964 as a bilateral programme. The Guyana National Stadium at providence was also constructed with the help of aid from India. As per Guyana Chronical, President Ramotar said that the two countries have also collaborated on many global issues of mutual concern at the level of United Nations, and the Commonwealth among which is the call for reform in the UN and the Security Council.

India- Cuba strengthen Economic ties

Indian External Affairs Minister S M Krishna visited Cuba in June. This visit has boosted India's ties with Cuba as Indian External Affairs Minister, during his visit stated that India wants to strengthen its economic ties with Cuba. An AFP news states that in Havana, the Indian External Affairs Minister met the speaker of Cuba National Assembly, Ricardo Alcaro. The two leaders discussed economic relations between the two nations.

S M Krishna also appreciated the reforms by the President of Cuba, Raul Castro. According to MEA, India- Cuba relations have traditionally been extremely cordial and friendly. India was amongst the first countries to give recognition to Cuba after the revolution of 1959. Both countries have maintained close contacts with each other in various international platforms such as UN, NAM, WTO etc. Both have supported each other's candidatures to various UN bodies.

India has been supporting Cuba against US supported resolution at UN Human Rights Council and also consistently voted in favour of Cuban sponsored resolution in the UN General Assembly calling for lifting of sanctions against Cuba.

The AFP news report quoted Krishna, "The purpose of my visit to Cuba is to promote economic relations between the two countries."

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Checklist of Visitors

Dr. Ali Akhbar Salehi
Foreign Minister of Iran
May 31- June 1

Salman Bin Hamad Al
Crown Prince of Bahrain
May 30-31

Fernando Lugo Mendez
President of Paragay
May, 23-25

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan
Foreign Minister of UAE
May 17-18

Hillary Rohdam Clinton
US Secretary of State
May 6-8

K Shanmugham
Foreign Minister of Singapore
May 6-10

Dipu Moni
Foreign Minister of Bangladesh
May 6-10

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