

Ministry of External Affairs
Policy Planning and Research Division

Overview of Major Achievements during the month of February 2021

I. Achievements pertaining to citizen-centric:

1. On 17 February 2021, Head of ISRO Dr. K. Sivan and Head of Australian Space Agency (ASA) Mr. Enrico Palermo had a virtual meeting, where the amendment to the MoU (2012) between the two countries on space cooperation in civil space science, technology and education was signed.
2. On 18 February 2021, Officiating Health Secretary of Bhutan and Dr. Tshokey, Member of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on *Covid-19*, represented Bhutan during the GoI organized Workshop on "COVID-19 Management: Experiences, Good Practices and Way Forward". The Health Secretary expressed his sincere gratitude to Prime Minister Modi and the people of India for the "precious gift of vaccines" as Bhutan was the first country to receive the vaccine under Ministry of External Affairs' "Vaccine Maitri" Initiative.
3. On 19 February 2021, MoS launched the Digilocker platform for availing passport related services. The launch of this new scheme will enable citizens to submit documents for availing passport services in a paperless mode.
4. On 28 February 2021, the Brazilian satellite Amazonia-1 was launched on board of PSLV as primary satellite and 18 co-passenger satellites from First Launch Pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre, SHAR, Sriharikota. The launch marks a high point in India-Brazil Strategic Partnership, and highlights the growing India-Brazil cooperation in the field of Space. The launch was witnessed by Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation of Brazil Mr. Marcos Pontes, who was in India on invitation from the Government of India.

II. Diplomatic Engagements and other Interactions:

1. PM and President of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani virtually participated in the signing ceremony of the MoU for the construction of the Lalandar [Shatoot] Dam in Afghanistan on 9 February. The MoU was signed by EAM and Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Hanif Atmar.
2. PM met with the COP26 President-designate, Alok Sharma on 16 February. They discussed India-UK cooperation on climate change agenda and COP26. Mr. Sharma also met with EAM and discussed India's Green Growth initiatives.
3. PM addressed a workshop on "Covid-19 Management: Experience, Good Practices and Way Forward". Health experts and officials of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and India participated in the event.
4. PM also addressed the India-Australia Circular Economy Hackathon Award Ceremony (I-ACE), along with his Australian counterpart on 19 February.

5. During the month, PM had telephonic conversations with his Israeli counterpart, Benjamin Netanyahu and with the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa. He also had significant phone calls with the US President Joe Biden, Canadian PM Justin Trudeau, Sultan of Oman, His Majesty Haitham Bin Tarik and Australian PM, Scott Morrison.
6. EAM joined Union Minister for Education, Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal and Ministers from ASEAN countries in the Prize Distribution Ceremony of ASEAN-India Hackathon on 4 February.
7. EAM met with Tajikistan's NSA Mahmudzoda Nasrullo Rahmatjon on 9 February. They agreed to accelerate the ongoing bilateral cooperation between the two countries. On 11 February, EAM addressed the Round Table on Rebooting Green Growth at the World Sustainable Development Summit.
8. On 15 February, EAM, along with Ambassador of Japan to India visited Assam to inspect the JICA-funded Guwahati water supply project. He also gave a lecture on Act East Policy and India-Japan cooperation in North East India with a special focus on Assam.
9. EAM held a virtual meeting with the Foreign Minister of Cyprus, Nikos Christodoulides on 16 February. Both the Ministers agreed to work closely in the forthcoming India-EU leaders summit proposed to be held in May 2021. On 17 February, EAM spoke at the UNSC Open Debate on Implementation of Resolution 2532 (2020).
10. EAM and the Foreign Minister-II of Brunei Darussalam, Dato Haji Erywan conducted a virtual bilateral relations review meeting on 18 February. Both the leaders took stock of the evolving bilateral relations. EAM also participated in the 3rd India-Australia-Japan-USA Quad Ministerial Meeting on 18 February 2021.
11. EAM met with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen in New Delhi on 19 February. He held wide-ranging discussions on bilateral, regional and global issues. The two Ministers jointly inaugurated the newly constructed Chancery building and Embassy residence of the Embassy of Ethiopia in New Delhi.
12. EAM visited Maldives on 20-21 February. During his visit, he called on the President of Maldives, H.E. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. He had substantive discussions with Maldives's Minister for Foreign Affairs and other officials.
13. EAM paid an official visit to Mauritius from 22-23 February 2021. During the visit, he called on the President, Prithvirajsing Roopun and PM, Pravind Jagnauth. He inaugurated the New Chancery-cum-Residential complex of our High Commission. The India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement was signed in the presence of the PM of Mauritius and our EAM.
14. EAM spoke at the High-Level Segment of the 46th Session of Human Rights Council on 23 February. He also participated at the Asia Economic Dialogue during the month.
15. On 25 February, EAM met with the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, Abdulaziz Kamilov in New Delhi. He also had discussions with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan on 26 February.

16. During the month, EAM had a series of telephone conversations with his counterparts from Mozambique, Latvia, USA, Australia, Rwanda, Indonesia and Armenia. He had an important phone call with China's State Councillor & Foreign Minister, Wang Yi on 25 February. They discussed the implementation of Moscow Agreement and reviewed the status of disengagement along the LAC in eastern Ladakh.
17. MoS for External Affairs spoke at the launch of International Affairs Policy and International Curriculum of ICAI on 08 February. On 17 February, he addressed the India-Ethiopia Business Forum in New Delhi. He invited the business communities to take advantage of the trade and investment opportunities present in both countries.
18. On 19 February, MOS launched the DigiLocker platform for availing passport related services. The launch of this new scheme will enable citizens to submit documents for availing passport services in a paperless mode.
19. Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change delivered India's statement at the UN Security Council Open (VTC) Debate on 'Maintenance of international peace and security: Addressing climate-related risks to international peace and security' on 23 February.
20. On 5 February, Foreign Secretary attended the inauguration of the third Bangladesh Film Festival in Kolkata, along with Bangladesh Minister of Information, Dr. Hasan Mahmud. Subsequently, He met with Dr. Benazir Ahmed, Inspector General of Police of Bangladesh, on 8 February.
21. Foreign Secretary met with the Ambassador of Algeria to India, H. E. Hamza Yahia Cherif in New Delhi on 9 February. They discussed the steps to augment cooperation in trade, energy, pharmaceuticals and fertilisers.
22. Foreign Secretary paid an official visit to Moscow from 17-18 February for the India-Russia Foreign Office Consultations. During his visit, he called on the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.
23. On 22 February, Foreign Secretary spoke at the High-Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament and gave a lecture at the Haryana Institute of Public Administration on 'Expectations from India in the Emerging World Order Post COVID-19'.
24. India commenced its term as BRICS Chair with an inaugural three-day Sherpas' meeting held on 24-26 February. India presented its priorities for the Chairship in 2021 under the theme -"BRICS@15: Intra BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus". Earlier, on 19 February, EAM launched the BRICS 2021 website at the BRICS Secretariat at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan.
25. Ministry's flagship geoeconomics conference, the Asia Economic Dialogue, took place on 26-28 February. The dialogue was organized virtually by the Pune International Centre. This edition of the conference saw a significant upgradation with the participation of Foreign Ministers of Australia, Japan, Bhutan, Maldives, and Mauritius. EAM addressed the inaugural session on 'Resilient Global Growth in a Post-Pandemic World' on 26 February. I participated in the session on 'India as a Global Partner' along with the Commerce Secretary on the concluding day.