

Ministry of External Affairs
Policy Planning and Research Division

Overview of Major Achievements during the month of November 2020

On 02 November 2020, GoI handed over the 8th consignment of medical supplies with 20,000 Covid-19 RT-PCR tests to the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB), to assist Bhutan in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic.

On 06 November 2020, the 4th Meeting of India-Philippines Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation was held virtually, co-chaired by EAM Dr. S Jaishankar and Secretary General of Foreign Affairs Teodoro Locsin Jr. The two sides reviewed the entire gamut of the bilateral relations including cooperation in maritime security, counter terrorism, agriculture, health and pharma, tourism, renewable energy, ICT and Science & Technology.

The 10th India-Japan Joint Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation was held virtually on 10 November 2020. It was co-chaired by Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

1st meeting of the Joint Working Group under MoU between India and Australia on cooperation in the field of Mining and Processing of Critical and Strategic Minerals was held on 26 November 2020.

An MoU for Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects in Kazakhstan was signed in Nur-Sultan (Kazakhstan) on 17 November 2020.

Foreign Secretary Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla paid an official visit to the Maldives on 09-10 November 2020. During the visit the following 4 MoUs were signed: 1. MoU between Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Maldives, High Commission of India, Male and Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure on Drug Detoxification Center at Addu City (Hulhudhoo); 2. MoU between Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Maldives, High Commission of India, Male and Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture on 'Enhancement of Agricultural support services and Community Linkages'; 3. MoU between Government of India and Government of Maldives on Implementation of Greater Male Connectivity project; 4. MoU between Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Republic of India and Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment, Republic of Maldives on cooperation in sports and Youth Affairs.

The 24th edition of the MALABAR naval exercise was held in two phases in November 2020 with participation of Indian Navy, United States Navy, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force, and Royal Australian Navy.

Diplomatic Engagements and other Interactions:

On 06 November, PM attended the India-Italy Virtual Summit and reviewed various aspects of India-Italy cooperation with his Italian counterpart. 15 MoUs/Agreements in various sectors such as energy, fisheries, ship building, design etc. were signed coinciding with the Summit.

On 19 November, PM held the India-Luxembourg Virtual Summit. This was the first stand-alone Summit meeting between the two countries in the past two decades. Discussions during the Summit focused on areas including financial technology, green financing, space applications, digital innovations and start-ups. The PM also invited Luxembourg to join the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

On 10 November, PM led the Indian delegation at the 20th Summit of the SCO Council of Heads of State chaired virtually by Russia. In his address, PM highlighted the need for a reformed multilateralism and India's plan to focus on this issue during our non-permanent membership of the UNSC; reiterated India's commitment towards strengthening connectivity in the region; and elaborated on how our vision of '*Atmanirbhar Bharat*' can act as a force multiplier for the global economy.

On 12 November, PM participated in the 17th ASEAN-India Summit. In his remarks, he underlined ASEAN's centrality in India's Act East Policy and its vision for the Indo-Pacific. On 17 November, PM attended the 12th BRICS Summit hosted virtually by Russia. His address during the Summit included outlining our approach to enhance intra-BRICS cooperation during our Presidency of the BRICS in 2021.

On 17 November, PM had telephonic conversations with US President-elect Joe Biden, UK Prime Minister and DG of WHO.

On 20 November, PM and the Prime Minister of Bhutan jointly inaugurated RuPay Card Phase-II in Bhutan via virtual platform. Phase-II of RuPay cards will allow Bhutanese card holders to access the RuPay network in India. Phase-I had enabled visitors from India to access ATMs and Point of Sale terminals across Bhutan. This is an important step forward in enhancing global acceptability of Indian Fintech products.

On 21-22 November, PM participated in the 15th G20 Summit convened by Saudi Arabia in virtual format. In his interventions during the Summit, he called for decisive action by G20, not limited to economic recovery, jobs and trade, but to focus on preserving Planet Earth noting that all of us are trustees of humanity's future.

On 06 November, EAM virtually co-chaired the 4th meeting of the India-Philippines Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation with Philippines' Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to a multifaceted partnership in line with India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and the ASEAN's Outlook on Indo-Pacific to achieve shared security, prosperity and growth for all in the region.

On 14 November, EAM represented India at the 15th East Asia Summit held on 14 November. In his remarks, EAM spoke of the importance of adhering to international law, respecting territorial integrity and sovereignty and promoting a rules-based global order.

On 23 November, EAM visited Bahrain, UAE and Seychelles this month. In Bahrain, EAM called on the Crown Prince and Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. He also held talks with Bahrain's Foreign Minister. EAM also interacted with leaders of the Indian community in Bahrain in virtual mode. In UAE, he called on the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, held talks with his counterpart, and met representatives of the Indian community. In Seychelles, EAM called on the President and met the Foreign Minister. He also conveyed an invitation to the President of Seychelles to visit India in 2021.

On 03 November, EAM virtually attended the India-GCC political dialogue. Discussions in the Dialogue included the review of India-GCC ties; the COVID-19 situation; return of Indian workers and professionals to GCC countries through sustainable travel bubble arrangements; and regional and international issues of mutual concern.

On 03 November, EAM attended a meeting of the Group of Foreign Ministers convened by Canada to exchange experiences on COVID related challenges. Apart from Canada and India, the meeting had participation from Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Singapore and UK.

On 11 November, EAM had telephonic conversations with Foreign Ministers from Uganda, Lithuania and Netherlands. He also held a virtual meeting with the Brazilian Foreign Minister.

On 17 November, EAM participated in track 1.5 dialogues with Canada, Japan and Portugal. The third India-Canada Track 1.5 Dialogue was held on 17 November. On 18 November, EAM addressed the sixth India-Japan Track 1.5 Dialogue and the third India-Japan Indo-Pacific Forum. EAM also spoke at the India-Europe Strategy Group, a track 1.5 dialogue which brought together key European and Indian stakeholders to share experiences and discuss the future of India-EU relations in a post-COVID world. He also participated in an event organized by the Centre for

European Policy Studies' on positioning India-EU Strategic Partnership in a post-Covid world.