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Date : Jan 01, 1998

Volume No

1995

CHINA

Incident at the Chinese Embassy

Following is the text of a Statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jan 08, 1999 regarding illegal entry into the Chinese Embassy by some Tibetans:

In response to a query regarding the incident at the Chinese Embassy in Delhi on Jan 07, 1999, the Spokesman stated:

Government condemns the illegal entry into the Chinese Embassy by some Tibetans on pl, of . Such actions undermine law and order as well as the safety and security of diplomatic premises and personnel. Government of India fully upholds the principle of sanctity and inviolability of diplomatic premises.

CHINA INDIA

Date : Jan 07, 1999

Volume No

1995

GERMANY

G-15 Summit

Following is the text of a Statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jan 20, 1999 regarding Prime Minister's postponed visit to Germany:

In answer to a question the Spokesman said that due to scheduling and programming difficulties, Prime Minister would not be visiting Germany during his visit abroad in February, 1999 to attend the G-15 Summit in Jamaica. Possibilities would be explored subsequently to find convenient dates for such a visit.

GERMANY INDIA JAMAICA

Date : Jan 20, 1999

Volume No

1995

ISRAEL

Indo-Israel Bilateral Consultation Meeting

Following is the text of a Press Release issued at New Delhi on Jan 22, 1999 regarding Indo-Israeli bilateral consultations:

Pursuant to the Agreed Minutes between the Foreign Ministries of India and Israel signed in New Delhi on May 17, 1993, Indo-Israeli bilateral consultations were held in New Delhi on Jan 21, 1999, between officials of the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel. The delegations were led by Secretary (East), Shri Nareshwar Dayal, and Deputy Director General for Asia and the Pacific, Mr. Itzhak Shelev, respectively. The Israeli delegation was received by Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaswant Singh.

The discussions were held in a spirit of friendship and understanding and covered bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. Since the establishment of embassies in 1992, bilateral relations have progressed and diversified satisfactorily. The cooperation encompasses different areas. There has been rapid growth of our bilateral trade, as well as significant cooperation in key areas, such as, agriculture, science & technology, software, electronics, tourism and others. Cultural ties are also becoming stronger. Contacts have been expanded in the sphere of education, by promoting exchanges between academic and research centres and in other functional areas. People-to-people contacts have grown and contributed to mutual understanding.

ISRAEL INDIA USA

Date : Jan 21, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Prime Minister Statement on Communal harmony

Following is the text of a Press Release issued at New Delhi on Jan 10, 1999 regarding Communal harmony:

The Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee today reaffirmed his government's resolve to ensure communal harmony in the country and told the state governments in no uncertain terms that acts of violence against the minority communities wherever and in whatever form they occur must be dealt with sternly and exemplary punishment awarded to the perpetrators.

The secular character of our country has to be maintained at all costs and therefore the states should not tolerate any violence by any person or any organisation against any community. It is incumbent upon the state governments to take firm and determined action against those who indulge in such violence because prompt response and swift action are essential for maintenance of communal harmony, peace and law and order.

All the law enforcing agencies especially the law and order machinery of the state government have to remain vigilant and the Chief Ministers and others in charge of law and order should repeatedly emphasise this to their officers and also to the general public through Press and other media at all appropriate occasions.

The District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police may be made personally responsible to look into complaints of harassment of any citizen, irrespective of caste and creed, so that immediate action could be taken for providing the required protection and for taking immediate action for bringing the culprits to book.

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INDIA USA

Date : Jan 10, 1999

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LAOS

India-Lao Joint Commission Meeting

Following is the text of a Press Release issued at New Delhi on Jan 20, 1999 regarding Indo-Lao Joint Commission Meeting held in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 18-19 January, 1999:

The Second India-Lao Joint Commission Meeting was held in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 18-19 January, 1999. The Indian delegation was led by the Minister of State for External Affairs, H.E. Smt. Vasundhara Raje and the Lao delegation was led by the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. Phongsavath Boupha. During this visit, Smt.

Raje called on the President of Lao PDR, H.E. Mr. Khamtay Siphandone, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad and H.E. Mrs. Onechanh Thammavong, Vice President of National Assembly and President of Lao Women's Union.

The Joint Commission Meeting was held in a very cordial and friendly atmosphere, and the two sides expressed their willingness to take the traditional relationship of friendship and cooperation forward by intensifying their economic cooperation. The Government of India extended a US \$ 2 million credit on soft terms for import of capital goods, consumer goods and services. The Credit Agreement was signed by MOS from the Indian side and H.E. Mr. Yao Phonevantha, Vice-Minister of Finance from the Lao side. The Protocol for the extension of Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) was also signed between the two countries and it was decided to extend the CEP till 2001. During the Joint Commission Meeting, besides reviewing the existing cooperation, specific areas for further enhancement of bilateral cooperation, especially in the fields of trade, investment, education, training, agriculture, animal science, technical cooperation and science & technology, were identified. It was also agreed to sign a Trade Agreement and a Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement (BIPA) at an early date.

On the conclusion of the Joint Commission Meeting, both sides expressed their sincere hope and reaffirmed their keen desire to further strengthen their bilateral economic relation, commensurate with their existing excellent political relationship.

LAOS INDIA USA

Date : Jan 20, 1999

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1995

LAOS

Minister of State for External Affairs visit to Vientiane

Following is the text of a Press Release issued at New Delhi on Jan 20, 1999 regarding Minister of State Ms. Vasundhara Raje's visit to Vientiane, Laos:

The Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Ms. Vasundhara Raje, accompanied by Shri S. T. Devare Secretary (ER) and a four-member Indian delegation arrived in Vientiane on 17 January to attend the Second India Laos Joint Commission Meeting for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation which was held on January 18-19, 1999. The Hon'ble Minister of State was received at the airport by H.E. Mr. Bounkeut Sangsomsak, Permanent Secretary and other senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Lao PDR. The delegation then left for Luang Prabang, the cultural hub of Laos.

During the Second India Laos Joint Commission Meeting in Vientiane, the

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Indian and Lao Governments signed a Credit Agreement by which the Indian Government would extend a soft loan of US \$ 2 million to the Lao Government, and a Protocol to extend the Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 1999-2001. The first ever Cultural Exchange Programme (1996-98) signed between the two countries ended on 31st

December 1998.

LAOS INDIA USA

Date : Jan 20, 1999

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NEPAL

Visit of H.M. the King of Nepal to India

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jan 06, 1999 regarding visit of His Majesty Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal:

At the invitation of the President of India, His Majesty Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal, will be paying a State visit to India in the last week of January 1999. He will be the Chief Guest at the Republic Day celebrations on Jan 26, 1999.

NEPAL INDIA

Date : Jan 26, 1999

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PAKISTAN

India-Pakistan Agreement on Nuclear Installation

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jan 01, 1999 regarding Indo-Pak agreement on Prohibition of attack against nuclear installations and facilities:

For the Eighth Consecutive Year, India and Pakistan today (1 January 1999) exchanged, through Diplomatic Channels, and simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad the Lists of Nuclear installations and facilities covered under the agreement on the Prohibition of attack against nuclear installations and facilities between India and Pakistan. This agreement was signed on 31st December 1988, and entered into force on 27th January 1991.

Under the agreement, the two countries are to inform each other on 1 January of every calendar year of the nuclear installations and facilities to be covered by the agreement. The first such Exchange of lists took place on 1 January 1992.

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PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Jan 01, 1999

Volume No

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NEPAL

Pakistan National Assembly Resolution

Following is the text of a Statement issued by the Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Jan 05, 1999 regarding Resolution adopted by the Pakistan National Assembly on Muslim and Christian minorities in India:

We have seen reports of a Resolution adopted today by the National Assembly of Pakistan on Muslim and Christian minorities in India. The Resolution, which constitutes a gross interference in India's internal affairs, is entirely baseless and mischievous. It is particularly regrettable that an Assembly constituted on the basis of discriminatory communal electorates and representing an increasingly intolerant society should make such observations.

India is, has been, and shall remain fully committed to the democratic and secular way of life.

NEPAL PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Jan 05, 1999

Volume No

1995

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Indo-US Dialogue

Following is the text of a Press Release issued at New Delhi on Jan 31, 1999 regarding eighth round of Indo-US dialogue on security, disarmament and Non-Proliferation:

The eighth round of the U.S. - Indian dialogue on issues related to security, disarmament and non-proliferation has concluded. During the three days of talk, January 29-31, there were four plenary meetings of the two delegations as well as expert - level discussions and several more restricted sessions between the two heads of delegations, Mr. Strobe Talbott and Mr. Jaswant Singh. General Ralston held separate consultations with several

senior Indian military officials on a variety of issues of mutual concern, including resumption of bilateral co-operation in some areas.

Both delegations are satisfied with the outcome of the talks. As with earlier meetings, the security perspectives of the two sides were further elaborated and clarified and proposal for harmonizing these perspectives were explored. The delegations believe progress was made in several of the subjects under discussion and remain committed to achieving more progress in the weeks ahead.

In this regard, a workplan for the next steps in the U.S. - Indian dialogue was agreed. U.S. and Indian expert level teams will meet in March for follow-up talks on export controls. The U.S. and Indian delegations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva will endeavour to consult frequently on the status of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) and the possibility of other multilateral initiatives. Finally, Mr. Talbott and Mr. Singh will remain in close contact. While these contacts continue, both sides will endeavour to create a positive atmosphere for advancing their relations. A ninth round of the dialogue is envisioned towards the middle of the year, the dates and venue to be determined in consultation between the two capitals.

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The two delegations recognize that the length of the time devoted to these talks is unprecedented in U.S. - Indian relations. It is the view of both delegations that this is time well spent, laying the foundation for a new, broad-based relationship that has eluded the United States and India in the past which both sides are determined to achieve in the future.

USA INDIA SWITZERLAND

Date : Jan 31, 1999

Volume No

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VIETNAM

Indo-Vietnam Joint Commission Meeting

Following is the text of a Press Release issued at New Delhi on Jan 28, 1999 on the 9th Meeting of India-Vietnam Joint Commission:

H.E. Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, is scheduled to visit India from 30 January 1999 to 3 February 1999 to co-chair the 9th meeting of the India-Vietnam Joint Commission to be held in New Delhi on 1-2 February, 1999. On the Indian side, Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister for External Affairs, will co-chair the Joint Commission Meeting.

India and Vietnam enjoy friendly and cooperative relations which have expanded significantly over the years. The visit will enable a high level and wide-ranging review of this cooperation, and pave the way for its enhancement. The two sides are expected to also share their perceptions of regional and international developments.

Trade and economic relations between India and Vietnam have shown encouraging trends in the recent years. Several companies from India have established sugar plants in Vietnam. In the pharmaceutical sector also, a number

of Indian companies are active in Vietnam. ONGC has invested in a natural gas exploitation project in Southern Vietnam. Besides the officials, a 5-member business delegation would also be accompanying the Vietnamese dignitary.

VIETNAM INDIA USA

Date : Jan 28, 1999

February

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CHINA EGYPT ESTONIA INDIA USA PAKISTAN CUBA IRAN JORDAN LAOS VIETNAM JAMAICA MOROCCO

Date : Feb 01, 1999

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CHINA

Responding to Birthday Greeting from Zhu Zhenshou a Chinese middle school student

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 05, 1999 regarding Birthday Greeting from Zhu Zhenshou a Chinese middle school student:

Responding to a birthday greeting from Zhu Zhenshou a Chinese middle school student, the Prime Minister said in a letter that "India and China share a long tradition of cultural contacts spanning centuries. We must carry forward this tradition". The Prime Minister remarked that "contacts and exchanges between children and youth would promote friendship between our two countries and peoples".

CHINA INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC USA

Date : Feb 05, 1999

Volume No

1995

EGYPT

Joint Press Statement

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 23, 1999 regarding Indo-Egyptian Foreign Office Consultation meeting held in New Delhi on 22-23 February, 1999:

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding signed between India and Egypt in New Delhi on 9 April 1997, Indo-Egyptian Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on 22-23 February, 1999 between officials of Ministry of External Affairs of India and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Egypt. The delegations were led by Secretary (East), Shri Nareshwar Dayal and Assistant to the Minister for Foreign Affairs for Asian Affairs Ambassador Mohamed Nagi Al-Ghatriefi. The Egyptian delegation also called on Minister of State for External Affairs Smt. Vasundhara Raje.

The discussions were held in a spirit of friendship and understanding and covered bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. Ways and means to expand and diversify areas of mutually beneficial cooperation were discussed. Both sides agreed to further enhance the substance and content to their bilateral relations and agreed that economic, commercial and cultural relations should be strengthened and given high priority.

The interaction between India and Egypt has diversified and developed over a period of time. It covers areas such as trade, agriculture, economic cooperation, industrial collaboration, science & technology, cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts.

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EGYPT INDIA USA

Date : Feb 23, 1999

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ESTONIA

Visit of President of the Republic of Estonia

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 01, 1999 regarding visit of President of the Republic of Estonia from 3-10 February, 1999:

The President of the Republic of Estonia, His Excellency Mr. Lennart Meri, accompanied by Madam Helle Meri and a high level delegation, will be paying a State visit to India from 3-10 February 1999. During the visit, President Meri will have separate meetings in New Delhi with the President of India, the Vice-President of India, the Prime Minister of India as well as other Indian dignitaries.

2. Besides New Delhi, President Lennart Meri will also be visiting Agra, Jaipur and Mumbai.

ESTONIA INDIA

Date : Feb 01, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Prime Minister's visit to Lahore

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on Feb 11, 1999 regarding Prime Minister visit to Lahore on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore bus service:

Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee will be visiting Lahore on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore bus service on 20th February 1999. The Pakistan Foreign Secretary informed our High Commissioner in Islamabad that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif would welcome our Prime Minister at the border. The full programme of the Prime Minister's visit is being finalised.

We have agreed to the Pakistan Foreign Ministry's suggestion that in view of the Prime Minister's visit, the meetings of the Foreign Secretaries proposed to be held in New Delhi from 17th to 20th February, 1999 on the subjects assigned to them in the composite dialogue process be rescheduled.

INDIA USA PAKISTAN

Date : Feb 11, 1999

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1995

INDIA

Bus Service Agreement between India and Pakistan

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 18, 1999

regarding the bilateral Agreement between Government of India and Pakistan for the regulation of bus service between New Delhi and Lahore:

The bilateral Agreement between Governments of India and Pakistan for the regulation of bus service between New Delhi and Lahore and the Protocol relating to its operation were signed in Islamabad on 17.2.99 at 0845 hrs. in Islamabad. High Commissioner Shri Parthasarthy and Dr. M. Akram Sheikh, Secretary, Ministry of Communications signed the agreement on behalf of Governments of India and Pakistan respectively.

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2. The above Agreement would enter into force on t , cons and shall remain valid for a period of five years. The validity of this Agreement can be renewed for further periods of five years, at a time, by mutual consent with such modifications as may be considered necessary. Provisions exist in the Agreement for periodic consultations between the two countries to redress such problems as may be encountered during the course of its implementation.

3. The Protocol referred to above includes operational details. The bus service would be managed by Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) for Pakistan and Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) for India. PTDC and DTC would also act as ticketing agents of each other in their respective territories. The frequency of the service envisaged is four times a week - Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday simultaneously originating from both destinations - New Delhi and Lahore. The fare mentioned in the Protocol is Rs. 800 per passenger in Indian currency for the journey between New Delhi and Lahore and Rs. 950 per passenger in Pakistani currency for the journey between Lahore and New Delhi.

INDIA PAKISTAN USA

Date : Feb 17, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Prime Minister's visit to Pakistan

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 18, 1999 regarding Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee visit to Pakistan:

In response to the invitation of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee will ride on the inaugural Delhi-Lahore-Delhi bus service on Feb 20, 1999. An extensive programme has been arranged for this visit which will conclude on @@19990221@@.

We hold that this inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore bus service is a path-breaking event. It will be the first Prime Ministerial visit between the two countries in ten years. This initiative has received public acclaim not just in India and Pakistan, but in the entire South-Asian region. It has caught the imagination of the world by the symbolism that it holds. This journey has inherent in it a manifestation of the overwhelming desire of the peoples of our two countries to break from the confines of past contentions; those which have marred India-Pakistan ties, and to move their relationship to a brighter future.

In his meetings with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, and a cross section of people in Pakistan, Prime Minister will carry the message of the peace; of the desire of India for an enduring relationship of mutual confidence, peace, amity and multi-faceted cooperation between the two countries.

INDIA PAKISTAN USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Feb 20, 1999

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INDIA

India and Cuba cooperation in the field of sports

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Embassy of India Havana on Feb 19, 1999 signing of a protocol for cooperation in the field of sports for the year 1999 and 2000:

India and Cuba today, at Havana, signed a protocol for cooperation in the field of Sports for the years 1999 and 2000.

The protocol was signed on behalf of Cuba by Mr. Cristian Jimenez Molina, the Vice President of the National Institute of Sports and Recreation of Cuba and on behalf of India by the Indian Ambassador Mr. R. Rajagopalan.

The protocol, based on Indo-Cuba Cultural Agreement signed in New Delhi in July 1976, envisages, among other items, exchange of literature and information related to physical education and training; participation in bilateral and multilateral sports competitions; and, exchange of experts and trainees.

India and Cuba have had useful and mutually beneficial co-operation in the field of Sports. Cuban coaches have trained Indians in the fields of Boxing, Volley Ball and Basket Ball.

As recently as last year, an Indian boxing team was coached by a Cuban expert for the Bangkok Asian Games. As a part of training, the team had visited Cuba in May - June 1998 and participated in many important Championships including 'A' category AIBA ranking boxing tournament 'Giraldo Cordova Cardin'; V International Boxing Tournament winning 6 silver and 2 bronze getting second overall ranking; and, 'Guama Cup', winning one Gold and two bronze with overall second ranking.

In September 1998 the Cuban Women's Volleyball team had also visited India and participated in the World Grand Prix Volleyball Championship for Women held at Chennai.

INDIA CUBA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Feb 19, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Suo Moto statement of the External Affairs Minister in Parliament on Prime Minister visit to Pakistan

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 26, 1999 regarding Suo Moto statement of the External Affairs Minister in Parliament on 26-2-1999 on Prime Minister visit to Pakistan:

The Hon'ble Prime Minister visited Pakistan on the inaugural run of the Delhi Lahore Delhi bus service on February 20-21, 1999. This historic visit was the most significant engagement between India and Pakistan in over a quarter of a century. It was also the first visit undertaken by the Prime Minister of India to Pakistan in a decade.

2. Prime Minister Shri A. B. Vajpayee, conveyed to the people of Pakistan India's abiding desire for peace and amity with them. A group of eminent Indians from all walks of life, who accompanied the Prime Minister to Pakistan, conveyed by their very presence in Lahore that in the pursuit of its policy of promoting peace and friendship with Pakistan, the Government of India was acting in accord with the wishes of its people. This visit also provided the Prime Minister with an opportunity to emphasise that India and Pakistan must, together work to build a comprehensive structure of cooperation, resolve all outstanding issues through peaceful and direct bilateral discussions and negotiations, and, that the path of violence was futile and senseless. Let me emphasise the Government's resolve

to uphold the Constitution. The unity and territorial integrity of India will never be compromised. The perpetrators of violence must understand this simple truth.

3. The Prime Minister's bus journey captured the imagination of the people of India, of Pakistan, indeed, of the world. I wish to state here that seldom has a leader embarked on a journey with such support from his people and such goodwill for his success. His arrival at Wagah, with the Indian delegation, to be warmly received by the Pakistan Prime Minister was a defining moment in India-Pakistan relations.

4. During his stay in Pakistan, Prime Minister held discussions with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif; was accorded a civic reception by the people of Lahore; visited Gurudwara Dera Sahib; the Samadhi of Maharaja Ranjit Singh; the Mausoleum of Allama Iqbal and Minar-e-Pakistan. From the Minar-e-Pakistan he assured the Pakistani people that a secure, stable and prosperous Pakistan was in India's interest.

5. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif hosted a banquet for our Prime Minister at the historic Lahore Fort. The Prime Minister's discussions with the Pakistan Prime Minister were wide-ranging, covering the entire range of bilateral relations, regional cooperation within SAARC and issues of international concern. Prime Minister Vajpayee emphasised that the peoples of the two countries desire lasting peace and an environment where their security, progress and prosperity can be assured. For this purpose, he conveyed that it was essential that the forces of violence and terrorism were combated, and the hands of the advocates of harmony, balance and realism strengthened for the development of good neighbourly relations between the two countries.

6. Prime Minister Vajpayee and Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif signed the Lahore Declaration. This declaration is a landmark for the peace and security of the two nations. The two Prime Ministers have in the Lahore Declaration agreed that the two countries will intensify efforts to resolve all issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, through the composite dialogue process; refrain from intervention and interference in each other's internal affairs; combat the menace of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; protect human rights; take immediate steps to reduce the risk of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons and to discuss security concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence building in the

nuclear and conventional fields aimed at prevention of conflict. The two Prime Ministers also reaffirmed in the Lahore Declaration their commitment to the objectives of SAARC and to work towards the realisation of the SAARC vision for the year 2000 and beyond with a view to promoting the welfare of the peoples of their countries.

7. Pursuant to directives issued by the two Prime Ministers to identify measures aimed at promoting an environment of peace and security between the two countries, the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 21 February, 1999. Under this Memorandum, the two countries have agreed to abide by their respective unilateral moratorium on conducting further nuclear test explosions unless either side, in exercise of its national sovereignty, decides that extraordinary events have jeopardized its supreme national interest. The Foreign Secretaries agreed that the two countries would remain firmly committed to undertaking measures to reduce the risk of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons under their respective controls; India and Pakistan will provide each other with advance notification in respect of ballistic missile flight tests and conclude a bilateral agreement in this regard. Similarly the two countries will engage in discussions to conclude an agreement on the prevention of incidents at sea, in order to ensure safety of navigation by naval vessels, and by aircraft belonging to the two sides. The two countries would also periodically review the implementation of existing CBMs as well as the existing communication links at operational levels like the hotline between the Directors General of Military Operations, with a view to making these links fail-safe and secure. Further, the two countries would hold bilateral discussions on security, disarmament and non-proliferation issues, within the context of negotiations on these issues in multilateral form. In order to reach bilateral agreements, experts of the two countries would meet on mutually agreed dates before mid-1999.

8. The Prime Ministers also explored avenues and areas for meaningful cooperation. They agreed on the need to enhance people-to-people contact, address humanitarian issues and to cooperate in technological as well as in economic matters. They agreed that the two sides should undertake consultations on WTO issues with a view to coordinating respective positions, determine areas of cooperation in information technology, particularly for tackling problems of Y2K and also to hold discussions on the liberalisation of visa and travel regime. Prime Minister Vajpayee proposed the re-opening of the check post on the Rajasthan-Sindh border.

9. Given the urgent need to address humanitarian issues, the Prime Ministers agreed to appoint a two-member committee at the ministerial level to examine matters relating to civilian detainees and missing Prisoners of War. An official level delegation will hold prior consultations and will meet very soon in this regard.

10. In order to undertake an overall review of the bilateral relationship, the Prime Ministers directed me and my Pakistan counterpart to meet periodically to discuss all issues of mutual concern, including nuclear issues. We would like this meeting to be held soon.

11. Government's approaches to Pakistan are rooted in our national consensus. They derive their strength from our confidence as a mature nation dedicated to peace, democracy and freedom. To those that preach, practice and foment violence I would reiterate our Prime Minister's message; "Understand the simple truth of the path of peace and amity."

12. It is our earnest hope to build on the opportunities that are now available on account of the Prime Minister's historic initiative and his commitment to put behind past contentions and think of the welfare of our children and their children. We trust Pakistan will walk with us down this path.

INDIA PAKISTAN USA

Date : Feb 26, 1999

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IRAN

Visit of Iranian Foreign Minister to India

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 02, 1999 regarding visit of Iranian Foreign Minister to India from 23-26 February, 1999:

The Foreign Minister of Iran Dr. Kamal Kharrazi is visiting India from 23-26 February, 1999 for discussions with Indian leaders on bilateral and regional issues and to participate in the tenth meeting of the Indo-Iran Joint Commission Meeting in New Delhi on 23-24 February, 1999. The visit is a part of continued high-level interaction between the two countries in the last decade to further expand and diversify age-old friendly ties, which are based on civilizational and cultural links. The Foreign Minister of Iran had last visited Delhi in June, 1998 and President of Iran had met Prime Minister on the sidelines of NAM Summit in September, 1998. India has welcomed President Khatami's initiative of "Dialogues of Civilizations" as a timely initiative for reduction of tensions among nations and cultures.

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The tenth meeting of Indo-Iranian Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) is being co-Chaired by External Affairs Minister Mr. Jaswant Singh and Foreign Minister of Iran Dr. Kamal Kharrazi. The JCM is a forum for monitoring progress in the bilateral relations and for giving policy directives for enhancing cooperation in different sectors. The last JCM was held in Tehran in February, 1997. The JCM consists of six committees on Industry, Agricultural and Rural Development, Trade, Transport and Communication, Petroleum and Culture, Consular matters and Science and Technology.

The Iranian delegation is accompanied by a high powered 15-member business delegation, which will participate in the second meeting of the Joint Business Council (JBC) on 24 February, 1999. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Iranian Chambers of Commerce are the nodal agencies from the two countries in the JBC. The last meeting of JBC was held in May, 1998 in Tehran. The two countries intend to explore innovative mechanisms to strengthen the economic and commercial relations between the two countries. The two sides have underscored, in their opening statements, the need to atleast double the two-way trade from the current level of US \$ 750 million.

IRAN INDIA USA

Date : Feb 02, 1999

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IRAN

Visit of Foreign Minister of Iran

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 24, 1999 regarding visit of Foreign Minister of Iran to India:

H.E. Dr. Seyed Kamal Kharrazi, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, visited India on February 23-25, 1999. He was accompanied by Mr. M. Waezi, Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Relations; Mr. Abbas Keshawarz, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Head of Agriculture Research, Education and Promotion Organization, and other senior officials.

In New Delhi, Dr. Kharrazi was received by the President of India H.E. Mr. K. R. Narayanan, and the Prime Minister of India H.E. Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. He had detailed discussions with External Affairs Minister, H.E. Mr. Jaswant Singh; Minister of Commerce, H.E. Mr. Rama Krishna Hegde and the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, H.E. Mr. K. Ramamurthy. He also co-chaired the Tenth Meeting of the Indo-Iran Joint Commission and addressed the Second Meeting of the Indo-Iran Joint Business Council with the Indian Minister of External Affairs. He will be attending a meeting of industrialists in Mumbai organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry. During his meetings with the Indian leaders, bilateral regional and international issues of mutual interest were discussed. These discussions were held in a warm, cordial and friendly atmosphere which has traditionally characterised bilateral interaction.

Prime Minister of India, H.E. Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, referred to the age old and special ties between India and Iran and reiterated India's commitment to further expand and intensify them. H.E. Dr. Kharrazi reciprocated these sentiments and conveyed the greetings of President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister of India lauded the initiative on dialogue of civilizations proposed by President Khatami for the year 2001.

Both sides reviewed the progress in bilateral relations which have developed steadily during this decade. High level exchange of visits, such as the one by Dr. Kharrazi, has contributed to greater mutual understanding and trust. Both sides agreed that the momentum of such

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exchanges is required to be maintained. Both sides also agreed to closely coordinate their positions on issues of concern in the UN and Non-Aligned Movement as is being done presently.

H.E. Dr. Kharrazi and H.E. Mr. Jaswant Singh during the Joint Commission meeting surveyed the whole range of economic, technical and commercial cooperation between India and Iran. While expressing satisfaction at the progress achieved in some sectors of bilateral cooperation, the two Ministers agreed that more vigorous efforts were required to realise the full potential in commercial and economic areas. To overcome constraints in increasing bilateral trade, the Export-Import Bank of India has arranged a line of credit of US \$ 20 million for a period of one year to facilitate import of diverse products from India. Both sides expressed interest to expand cooperation in the field of Liquefied Natural Gas for which, facilities including pipelines are required to be set up jointly. New areas of bilateral cooperation were identified including electronics and information technology, joint development of telecom equipment, computer, software, astrophysics, biotechnology, solar energy, food processing and setting up of entrepreneurial parks.

Indo-Iran Agreement on Maritime Commercial Navigation signed earlier has come into force after instruments of ratification were exchanged on Feb 24, 1999. Necessary formalities were also completed to implement the provisions of the Tripartite Agreement on International Transit of Goods signed between India, Iran and Turkmenistan. These would give a further fillip to commercial exchanges between India, Iran and Central Asian Republics. A Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 1999-2001 covering bilateral exchanges in the fields of education, culture, science & technology, radio, television & films was also finalised during the visit.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by H.E. Dr. Kharrazi and H.E. Mr. Jaswant Singh which reviewed the already ongoing bilateral cooperation and identified new areas of cooperation between the two countries. It was

also agreed between the two sides to hold regular and structured foreign office consultations on bilateral relations and wide ranging regular and international issues of mutual interest.

IRAN INDIA USA MALI TURKMENISTAN

Date : Feb 24, 1999

Volume No

1995

JORDAN

Prime Minister's Condolence Message to Jordanian counterpart

Following is the text of a condolence message sent by the Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to his Jordanian counterpart H.E. Dr. Fayz Al Tarawnaeh on Feb 07, 1999 on demise of His Majesty King Hussein:

"Excellency,

I was shocked to learn of the demise of His Majesty King Hussein His immense contribution to peace and development in the region will always be remembered. The people of India regarded him as a friend, who enjoyed the respect and affection of our people.

His passing away marks the end of an era, and he will be greatly missed. The Government and people of India join me in conveying heartfelt condolences to the Royal Family and to the Government and to the people of Jordan.

(A.B. Vajpayee)"

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JORDAN USA INDIA

Date : Feb 07, 1999

Volume No

1995

LAOS

India-Lao Joint Commission Meeting

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 23, 1999 regarding second meeting of the India-Lao Joint Comsion held in Vientiane on 18-19 January, 1999:

The second meeting of the India-Lao Joint Commission was held in Vientiane on 18-19 January, 1999. The Indian delegation at the Joint Commission Meeting was led by Minister of State for External Affairs Smt. Vasundhara Raje. The Lao delegation was led by H.E. Mr. Phongsavath Boupha, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

During the Joint Commission Meeting, the leaders of the two sides reviewed the overall state of bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction at the close and cordial relations existing between the two countries. Both sides agreed to make concerted efforts to further strengthen and upgrade the economic and commercial relations, especially in the fields of trade, investment, education, training and agricultural and technical cooperation.

During the visit to Laos, Minister of State for External Affairs called on the President and the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Laos. An agreement for US \$ 2 million soft credit to Laos and a Protocol to renew the Cultural Exchange Programme for another three years (1999-2001) were signed during the visit.

LAOS INDIA USA

Date : Feb 23, 1999

Volume No

1995

MYANMAR

Foreign Secretary's Visit to Myanmar

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 26, 1999 regarding Foreign Secretary, Mr. K. Raghunath visit to Yangon February 25-28, 1999:

The Foreign Secretary, Mr. K. Raghunath arrived in Yangon on Thursday, in, ther, for foreign office consultations with Myanmar. He held officials talks with U Khin Maung Win, Deputy Foreign Minister and a delegation of senior representatives from several other Ministries. Both sides reviewed progress in the development of bilateral relations in some detail. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the arrangements that had been put in place for cooperation in border management and security and touched on the measures required to enhance them in the interests of facilitating border trade and, at a future date, cross-border projects. Both sides noted with satisfaction the increasing interaction taking place between the people of India and Myanmar in areas such as cultural exchanges, education and science and technology.

The Foreign Secretary called on Lt. Gen. Khin Nyuni, Secretary-I, State Peace

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and Development Council (SPDC), Brig. Gen. D. O. Abel, Minister in the Office of Chairman, SPDC, U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Col. Tin Hlaing, Minister for Home Affairs, U Thaung, Minister for Science & Technology, Maj. Gen. Saw Tun, Minister for Construction and Commodore Myo Tint, Deputy Minister of Commerce, during his stay in Yangon. The discussions took place in an atmosphere of friendship and understanding, reflecting the good relations between two neighbouring countries which share a border of over 1600 kms. and are linked by ancient ties of history and culture.

During his stay in Yangon Foreign Secretary visited the Bahadur Shah Zafar Memorial and paid his respects to the last Mughal Emperor. The Foreign Secretary also visited the Shwedagon Pagoda, one of the world's most revered Buddhist shrines and paid his respects.

INDIA BURMA USA

Date : Feb 25, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Joint statement

Following is the text of the joint statement issued at Lahore on Feb 21, 1999 regarding Prime Minister visit to Pakistan:

In response to an invitation by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Pakistan from 20-21 February, 1999, on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore bus service.

2. The Prime Minister of Pakistan received the Indian Prime Minister at the Wagah border on 20 February 1999. A banquet in honour of the Indian Prime Minister and his delegation was hosted by the Prime Minister of Pakistan at Lahore Fort, on the same evening. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Minar-e-Pakistan, Mausoleum of Allama Iqbal, Gurudawara Dera Sahib and Samadhi of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. On 21st February, a civic reception was held in honour of the visiting Prime Minister at the Governor's House.
3. The two leaders held discussions on the entire range of bilateral relations, regional cooperation within SAARC, and issues of international concern. They decided that.
 - a) The two Foreign Ministers will meet periodically to discuss all issues of mutual concern, including nuclear related issues.
 - b) The two sides shall undertake consultations on WTO related issues with a view to coordinating their respective positions.
 - c) The two sides shall determine areas of cooperation in Information Technology, in particular for tackling the problems of Y2K.
 - d) The two sides will hold consultations with a view to further liberalizing the visa and travel regime.
 - e) The two sides shall appoint a 2 member committee at ministerial level to examine humanitarian issues relating to Civilian detainees and missing POWs.
4. They expressed satisfaction on the commencement of a Bus Service between

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Lahore and New Delhi, the release of fishermen and civilian detainees and the renewal of contacts in the field of sports.

5. Pursuant to the directive given by the two Prime Ministers, the Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 21 February 1999, identifying measures aimed at promoting an environment of peace and security between the two countries.

6. The two Prime Ministers signed the Lahore Declaration embodying their shared vision of peace and stability between their countries and of progress and prosperity for their peoples.

7. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee extended an invitation to Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to visit India on mutually convenient dates.

8. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality extended to him and members of his delegation and for the excellent arrangements made for his visit.

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Feb 21, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Lahore Declaration

Following is the text of the Lahore Declaration signed by the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan in Lahore on Feb 21, 1999:

The Prime Ministers of the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:

SHARING a vision of peace and stability between their countries, and of progress and prosperity for their peoples;

CONVINCED that durable peace and development of harmonious relations and friendly cooperation will serve the vital interests of the peoples of the two countries, enabling them to devote their energies for a better future;

RECOGNIZING that the nuclear dimension of the security environment of the two countries adds to their responsibility for avoidance of conflict between the two countries;

COMMITTED to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and the universally accepted principles of peaceful co-existence;

REITERATING the determination of both countries to implementing the Simla Agreement in letter and spirit;

COMMITTED to the objectives of universal nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation;

CONVINCED of the importance of mutually agreed confidence building measures for improving the security environment;

RECALLING their agreement of 23 September, 1998, that an environment of peace and security is in the supreme national interest of both sides and that the resolution of all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, is essential for this purpose;

Have agreed that their respective Governments:

- shall intensify their efforts to resolve all issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.
- shall refrain from intervention and interference in each other's internal affairs.
- shall intensify their composite and integrated dialogue process for an early and positive outcome of the agreed bilateral agenda.

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- shall take immediate steps for reducing the risk of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and discuss concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at prevention of conflict.
- reaffirm their commitment to the goals and objectives of SAARC and to concert their efforts towards the realization of the SAARC vision for the year 2000 and beyond with a view to promoting the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life through accelerated economic growth, social progress and cultural development.
- reaffirm their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and their determination to combat this menace.
- shall promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Signed at Lahore on the 21st day of February 1999.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee
Prime Minister of the Republic of India

Muhammad Nawaz Sharif
Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Feb 21, 1999

Volume No

1995

Memorandum of Understanding

Following is the text of a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Indian Foreign Secretary and Pakistan Foreign Secretary at Lahore on Feb 21, 1999:

The Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan:

Reaffirming the continued commitment of their respective governments to the principles and purposes of the UN Charter;

Reiterating the determination of both countries to implementing the Simla Agreement in letter and spirit;

Guided by the agreement between their Prime Ministers of 23 September 1998 that an environment of peace and security is in the supreme national interest of both sides and that resolution of all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, is essential for this purpose;

Pursuant to the directive given by their respective Prime Ministers in Lahore, to adopt measures for promoting a stable environment of peace, and security between the two countries;

Have on this day, agreed to the following:

1. The two sides shall engage in bilateral consultations on security concepts, and nuclear doctrines, with a view to developing measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at avoidance of conflict.
2. The two sides undertake to provide each other with advance notification in respect of ballistic missile flight tests, and shall conclude a bilateral agreement in this regard.
3. The two sides are fully committed to undertaking national measures to reducing the risks of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons under their respective control. The two sides further undertake to notify each other immediately in the event of any accidental, unauthorised or unexplained incident that could create

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the risk of a fallout with adverse consequences for both sides, or an outbreak of a nuclear war between the two countries, as well as to adopt measures aimed at diminishing the possibility of such actions, or such incidents being misinterpreted by the other. The two sides shall identify/establish the appropriate communication mechanism for this purpose.

4. The two sides shall continue to abide by their respective unilateral moratorium on conducting further nuclear test explosions unless either side, in exercise of its national sovereignty decides that extraordinary events have jeopardized its supreme interests.
5. The two sides shall conclude an agreement on prevention of incidents at sea in order to ensure safety of navigation by naval vessels, and aircraft belonging to the two sides.
6. The two sides shall periodically review the implementation of existing Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and where necessary, set up appropriate consultative mechanisms to monitor and ensure effective implementation of these CBMs.

7. The two sides shall undertake a review of the existing communication links (e.g. between the respective Directors-General, Military Operations) with a view to upgrading and improving these links, and to provide for fail-safe and secure communications.

8. The two sides shall engage in bilateral consultations on security, disarmament and non-proliferation issues within the context of negotiations on these issues in multilateral fora.

Where required, the technical details of the above measures will be worked out by experts of the two sides in meetings to be held on mutually agreed dates, before mid 1999, with a view to reaching bilateral agreements.

Done at Lahore on 21 February 1999 in the presence of Prime Minister of India Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.

(K. Raghunath)
Foreign Secretary of the
Republic of India

(Shamshad Ahmad)
Foreign Secretary of the
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Feb 21, 1999

Volume No

1995

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

A Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and Trinidad & Tobago on avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of the Fiscal Evasion

Following is the text of a Press Release issued on a Convention between the Governments of the Republic of India and Trinidad & Tobago signed at Port of Spain on Feb 08, 1999:

A Convention between the Government of the Republic of India and Trinidad & Tobago for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income was signed at Port of Spain (T&T) on 8th February, 1999. The Convention was signed, on behalf of the Government of India, by Shri K. M. R. Janarthanan, Minister of State for Banking, Revenue & Insurance and by Mr. Brian Kuei Tung, Finance Minister on behalf of the Government of Trinidad & Tobago. India and Trinidad & Tobago are signing a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement for the first time.

2. The Convention will cover, in the case of India, Income-tax (including any surcharge).

3. The Convention seeks to provide a fresh impetus to the mutual flow of investment, technology, trade and services between the two countries.

4. The salient features of the Convention are as follows:

(i) The Convention largely provides for lower rates of taxation vis-a-vis the domestic rates in India in the case of interest, royalties and fees for technical services, as could be seen from the Chart below:

S. No.	Category of Receipts	Domestic Rates	Rates in the Convention
1.	Dividends	-	10%*
2.	Interest	20%	10%
3.	Royalties	20%	10%
4.	Fees for technical Services	20%	10%

* Under the Indian Income Tax law, dividend is not taxed in the hands of the shareholder. Consequently, non-residents of India/foreign companies will also not be taxable in respect of dividend income as the more beneficial domestic law would override the Treaty provisions.

(ii) The Articles on taxation of dividends, interest, royalties, fees for technical services and capital gains are similar to those recently concluded between India and other countries.

(iii) The incidence of double taxation shall be avoided by one country giving credit for taxes paid by its national in the other country.

(iv) The Convention also provides for "Collection Assistance", by which the two countries undertake to lend assistance to each other in the collection of taxes.

5. The Convention shall enter into force thirty days after the receipt of the later of the notifications by the two Governments regarding the completion of the procedures required by the respective laws for the bringing into force of this Convention.

INDIA SPAIN USA

Date : Feb 08, 1999

Volume No

1995

VIETNAM

Visit of the Vietnamese Dy. Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to India to Co-chair the Ninth Session of the India-Vietnam Joint Commission Meeting on 1-2 February, 1999 at New Delhi

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 02, 1999 regarding visit of H.E. Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to India:

H.E. Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, arrived in India on 30 January 1999 on a four day visit. He co-chaired the 9th meeting of the India-Vietnam Joint Commission held in New Delhi on 1 February 1999. From the Indian side, Shri Jaswant Singh, Minister of External Affairs, co-chaired the Joint Commission Meeting. H.E. Mr. Cam called on Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee yesterday and is scheduled to call on President, Shri K. R. Narayanan today evening.

India and Vietnam enjoy traditional, friendly and cooperative relationship which has continuously evolved and expanded over the years. During the Joint Commission Meeting, discussions were held on bilateral, regional and international matters of mutual interest and for reviewing the ongoing cooperation and identifying fresh areas with a view to enhancing bilateral interaction.

Besides the officials, a 5-member business delegation is also accompanying the Vietnamese dignitary for interaction with Indian businessmen. The Government of India has extended a credit of Rs. 47 crores to Vietnam. A Work Plan for 1999-2000 in the area of agriculture was signed during the visit. The two sides agreed to setting up a Working Group on coal for cooperation in the sector.

VIETNAM INDIA USA

Date : Feb 02, 1999

Volume No

1995

VIETNAM

Indo-Vietnam Joint Commission Meeting

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 01, 1999 regarding India-Vietnam Joint Commission meeting held in New Delhi:

India and Vietnam concluded their Joint Commission meeting in New Delhi today with the signing of the Agreed Minutes. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Vietnam H.E. Mr. Nguyen Manh Cam and External Affairs Minister Shri Jaswant Singh were the signatories. The focus of the Joint Commission meeting was on giving further impetus to the economic dimensions of bilateral relations. Both sides agreed to diversify their export commodities to enhance the quantum of trade beyond the current level of US \$ 120 million.

During the course of this visit, the Governments of Vietnam and India signed a work plan of cooperation in agriculture for the years 1999-2000. A five-member business delegation accompanied the Vietnamese dignitary to India and showed interest in the coal, software, construction and petroleum sectors. H.E. Mr. Cam was scheduled to meet with the Prime Minister and the President of India before concluding his visit.

VIETNAM INDIA USA

Date : Feb 01, 1999

Volume No

1995

VIETNAM

Seventh Asia-Pacific Workshop on Regional Cooperation for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, New Delhi, February 16-18, 1999

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 12, 1999 regarding Seventh Asia Pacific Workshop on Regional Cooperation for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights held at New Delhi from February 16-18, 1999:

The Seventh Asia-Pacific Workshop on Regional Cooperation for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights is being organized by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and hosted by the Government of India in New Delhi from 16 to 18 February 1999. The Opening Session will be addressed by Shri Jaswant Singh, External Affairs Minister and Mrs. Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN HCHR). Mrs. Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland, will be the guest of the Government of India and will have meetings with various Indian dignitaries.

2. The Office of UN HCHR have extended invitations to forty six Governments in the Asia Pacific region. National institutions and select non-governmental organisations active in the field of human rights have also been invited to attend as Observers.

3. One of the fundamental objectives of the United Nations is to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In order to promote regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region in the field of human rights, a series of inter-governmental meetings, in the form of Workshops, have been organised by the UN in different parts of the region. Six Workshops have been held so far, commencing with Manila in 1990. The previous (6th) Workshop was held in Tehran in 1998.

4. India has been in the forefront of countries advocating the promotion of human rights. Its commitment to human rights put it in the vanguard of struggle against racism and colonialism in the 1950s and 1960s. India has championed the indivisibility of civil and political liberties and economic, social and cultural rights. The 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR 1948) by the United Nations General Assembly was celebrated in India through a series of commemorative functions organised by the Government of India.

VIETNAM INDIA USA PHILIPPINES IRAN

Date : Feb 12, 1999

Volume No

1995

G-15 SUMMIT

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Feb 02, 1999 regarding Prime Minister's visit to Jamaica to attend G-15 Summit from 10-12 February, 1999:

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India will be representing India at the forthcoming Ninth G-15 Summit scheduled to be held at Montego Bay, Jamaica from 10-12 February, 1999.

Prior to the meeting at the level of Heads of State/Government, meetings of G-15 Foreign Ministers (8-10 February 1999) and Trade Ministers (6 February, 1999) will also be held at Jamaica. External Affairs Minister, Shri Jaswant Singh and Commerce Minister, Shri R. K. Hegde will be participating in these meetings. Concerned officials in the Government of India will be assisting Prime Minister and the two Ministers at the G-15 discussions.

A composite Indian business delegation from the apex Chambers of Commerce and Industry will be attending the G-15 business events being organised in Jamaica in parallel with the Summit. These include. (i) Meeting of the G-15 Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry on Feb 04, 1999; (ii) Business Investment Forum on s , usin; and (iii) Business Exhibition from February 9-14, 1999. As in the past, India is participating on a major scale in the G-15 Business Exhibition.

The Group of Fifteen (G-15) stands for the Summit Level Group of Developing Countries for South-South Consultation and Cooperation. The G-15's mandate includes both South-South Cooperation and North-South Dialogue.

The Ninth G-15 Summit at Jamaica is expected to focus on (i) the Current State of the World Economy (ii) Reform of the International Monetary and Financial System (iii) the Multilateral Trading System and (iv) Prospects of Trade and Economic Cooperation between Developing Countries. It is expected that the economic and financial crisis that has overtaken several of the emerging economies lately, will receive particular focus during the Summit discussions. It will also be an opportune moment to discuss the approach the developing countries can adopt in respect of the issues that are likely to come up at important international conferences such as the Third WTO Ministerial Meeting to be held in the United States later this year and UNCTAD-X to be held in the year 2000.

G-15 countries are characterised by many economic commonalities and complementarities. These could go a long way in fostering mutually useful South-South economic cooperation between member countries in the light of evolving paradigms and priorities pertaining to their economic development in the next century. India accordingly, assigns high priority to its participation in the G-15 process. We have participated in its various activities ever since the Grouping was established in 1989. At present, we are actively involved with some of the G-15 projects pertaining to Gene Banks for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Applications of Solar Energy including a pilot project for Solar energy lighting in Senegal, Computer Training for G-15 Trainees, Vocational Training at the Entrepreneur and Technical Development Centre (ETDC Dakar) besides small scale industries cooperation with Senegal, Zimbabwe and Nigeria. At the Summit, India will be proposing a new Strategic Sectors Initiative aimed at stepping up the scope and level of cooperation in some core technology areas such as telecom and IT, Biotechnology, Advanced Materials and also Infrastructure Development.

JAMAICA INDIA USA SENEGAL NIGER NIGERIA ZIMBABWE

Date : Feb 05, 1999

ANNEXURE I

Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for the Promotion and Protection of Investments

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco (hereinafter referred to as "Contracting Parties");

Bearing in mind the friendly and cooperative relations existing between the two countries and their peoples;

Desiring to create favourable conditions for greater economic cooperation between the Contracting Parties and in particular through investments by investors of one Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party;

Recognising the importance of the promotion and protection of investments and its contribution to stimulate inflows of capital and business initiative and to increase prosperity in both countries;

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Agreement.

1. The term "investment" shall mean any kind of asset invested by investors on one Contracting Party, in the territory of the other Contracting Party, in conformity with the laws and regulations of the latter, including, but not exclusively:

- a. movable and immovable property and any other property rights such as mortgages, pledges and liens;
- b. shares, stocks or any other form of participation in companies;
- c. claims to money or to any performance under contract having a financial value;
- d. intellectual property rights in accordance with the relevant laws of the respective Contracting Party;
- e. business concessions conferred by law or under contract, including concessions to search for, extract or exploit natural resources.

Any change of the legal form in which assets are invested or reinvested does not affect their character as investments in the meaning of this Agreement.

2. The term "investor" means in respect of each Contracting Party:

- a. any natural persons having Moroccan or Indian nationality under the law in force in the respective Contracting Parties;
- b. any legal person or entity constituted under the law in force in each of the Contracting Parties and having effective economic activity in the territory of that Contracting Party.

3. "Returns" means amounts after payment of tax yielded by such investments and in particular, though not exclusively includes profits, interest, capital gains, dividends, royalties or fees.

4. The term "Without delay" shall be deemed to be fulfilled if a transfer is made within such period as is normally required as per procedural requirement.

5. "Territory" means.

(a) in respect of India: the territory of the Republic of India including its territorial waters and the airspace above it and other maritime zones including the Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf over which the Republic of India has sovereignty, sovereign rights or exclusive jurisdiction in accordance with the laws in force, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and International Law.

(b) in respect of the Kingdom of Morocco: the territory of the Kingdom of Morocco, including any maritime area situated beyond the territorial waters of the Kingdom of Morocco and which has been or might in the future be designated by the laws of the Kingdom of Morocco in accordance with international law as an area within which the Kingdom of Morocco may exercise rights with regard to the sea-bed and subsoil and the natural resources.

ARTICLE 2

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF INVESTMENTS

1. Either Contracting Party shall encourage and create favourable conditions for investors of the other Contracting Party to invest in its territory, and shall admit such investments in accordance with its laws and regulations.

2. Investments of investors of each Contracting Party shall at all times be accorded fair and equitable treatment and shall enjoy adequate protection and security of the other Contracting Party.

3. Any alteration or change in the nature of an investment made according to the laws and regulations in force in the host country is considered as a new investment.

4. Returns on investments, in case of their reinvestment in accordance with the law in force in each of the Contracting Parties, shall enjoy the same protection accorded to the initial investment.

ARTICLE 3

TREATMENT OF INVESTMENTS

1. Each Contracting Party shall in its territory accord to investments of investors of the other Contracting Party treatment no less favourable than that it accords to investments of its own investors or investors of any third State, whichever is the most favourable.

2. Each Contracting Party shall in its territory accord to investors of the other Contracting Party, as regards to management, maintenance, use, enjoyment or disposal of their investments treatment no less favourable than that it accords to its own investors or investors of any third State, whichever is the most favourable.

3. The provisions in this Agreement relative to the grant of treatment no less favourable than that accorded to the investors of either Contracting Party or any third State shall not be construed so as to oblige one Contracting Party to extend to the investors of the other the benefit of any treatment, preference or privilege resulting from:

(a) any economic or customs union or a free trade area or a common market, or any similar international agreement or any form of regional economic organisation to which either of the Contracting Parties is or may become a party.

(b) matters relating wholly or mainly to taxation, which shall be governed by a separate bilateral Agreement on taxation issues.

ARTICLE 4

EXPROPRIATION AND COMPENSATION

1. Measures of nationalisation, expropriation or any other measure having an equivalent effect, hereinafter referred to as an expropriation, that might be taken by one of the Contracting Parties against investments of the investors of the other Contracting Party must be neither discriminatory nor taken other than for a public purpose.
2. The Contracting Party taking such measures shall give a fair and equitable compensation. Such compensation shall amount to the market value of the investment expropriated on the date of expropriation or when expropriation become public knowledge, whichever is earlier.
3. The amount of the said compensation shall be effectively realizable, and shall be paid without delay. In case of a late payment, interest at a normal commercial rate shall be calculated from the due date until the date of payment. Compensation shall be paid to investors in convertible currency and be freely transferable.

ARTICLE 5

COMPENSATION FOR LOSSES

Investors of one Contracting Party whose investments are affected by losses as a result of War or armed conflict, revolution, a State of national emergency, revolt, insurrection or other similar events in the territory of the other Contracting Party, shall receive treatment no less favourable than that which the latter Contracting Party accords to its own investors or to investors of any third State; whichever is more favourable treatment being adopted as regards restitution, indemnification, compensation or other settlement in respect of the said losses.

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ARTICLE 6

TRANSFERS

1. Each Contracting Party shall assure to investors of the other Contracting Party free transfer, after payment of tax, of their assets invested, in particular, though not exclusively:
 - a. capital invested and any additional amount used for maintenance or extension of the investment;
 - b. operating profits, dividends, interests, royalties or other current revenue;
 - c. amounts necessary to repay loans accorded in connection with investments;
 - d. proceeds from sale or liquidation of all or any part of an investment;
 - e. Compensation payable pursuant to Articles 4 and 5;
 - f. salaries, wages and other remunerations received by the nationals of one Contracting Party who have obtained in the territory of the other Contracting Party the corresponding work permits relative to an investment.
2. Transfers mentioned in paragraph 1 shall be effected without delay in convertible currency at the rate of exchange applicable on the date of transfer.

ARTICLE 7

SUBROGATION

1. Where one Contracting Party or an insurer has guaranteed any indemnity against non-commercial risks, in accordance with its laws, in respect of an investment by any of its investors in the territory of the other Contracting Party and has made payments to such investors in respect of their claims under this Agreement, the other Contracting Party or the insurer is entitled by virtue of subrogation to exercise the rights and to assert the claims of those investors. The subrogated rights or claims shall not exceed the original rights or claims of such investors.
2. In case of a dispute between one Contracting Party and the insurer of an investment of the other Contracting Party the provisions of the Article 8 of this Agreement shall apply.

ARTICLE 8

SETTLEMENT OF INVESTMENT DISPUTES

1. Disputes between a Contracting Party and an investor of the other Contracting Party, in connection with investment, shall be settled, as far as possible amicably, by consultations and negotiations between the parties to the dispute.
2. If these disputes cannot be settled in this way within six months following the date of a written notification, the dispute can be submitted, as the investor may choose:
 - a) either to a competent court, arbitral or administrative tribunal of the Contracting Party in whose territory the investment was made, as the investor may choose; or
 - b) (i) to arbitration to the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) set up by the Convention on Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States opened for signature at Washington on March 18th, 1965, when both Contracting Parties are party to the said Convention; or
 - b) (ii) as long as the above mentioned requirement is not fulfilled, to arbitration under the ICSID Additional Facility for the Administration of Conciliation, Arbitration and fact finding proceedings; or
 - b) (iii) to an ad-hoc arbitration tribunal by either party to the dispute in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, 1976, subject to that the arbitral tribunal shall state the basis of its decision and give reasons upon the request of either Party.
 - c) The recourse to the arbitration provided in (b) (i), (b) (ii) and (b) (iii) hereabove is subject to the mutual consent of the parties to the dispute.
 - d) Once a party to the dispute has submitted the dispute to a competent court of the Contracting Party in whose territory the investment was made or to international arbitration, that choice shall be final.
3. Neither Contracting Party to the dispute may raise as an objection at any stage of proceedings or enforcement of an arbitral award because the investor who is the other party to the dispute has received, an indemnity covering wholly or partially his losses under an insurance contract.
4. The arbitral tribunal shall base its decision on the national law of the Contracting Party involved in dispute in whose territory the investment was made, including the rules relative to conflicts of law, the provisions of this Agreement, the provisions of particular agreements between the investor and the Contracting Party relative to investment.
5. The arbitration award shall be final and binding on all parties to the dispute. Each Contracting Party commits

itself to execute the award according to its national law.

ARTICLE 9

SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

1. Disputes between the Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement should, if possible, be settled through diplomatic channels.
2. If a dispute between the Contracting Parties thus cannot be settled within 6 (six) months, it shall upon the request of either Contracting Party be submitted to an arbitral tribunal as agreed upon by the Contracting Parties.
3. Such an arbitral tribunal shall be constituted for each individual case in the following way:
 - (a) Within 2 (two) months of the receipt of the request for arbitration, each Contracting Party shall appoint one member of the tribunal.
 - (b) Those two members shall then select a national of third State who on approval by the two Contracting Parties shall be appointed as the Chairman of the tribunal.
 - (c) The Chairman shall be appointed within 2 (two) months from the date of the appointment of the other two members.
4. If within the period specified in Paragraph 3 of this Article the necessary appointment has not been made, either Contracting Party may, in the absence of any other agreement, invite the President of the International Court of Justice to make any necessary appointment. If the President is a national of either Contracting Party or if he is otherwise prevented from discharging the said function, the Vice - President shall be invited to make the necessary appointments. If the Vice - President is a national of either Contracting Party or if he too is prevented from discharging the said function, the member of the International Court of Justice next in seniority who is not a national of either Contracting Party shall be invited to make the necessary appointments.
5. The arbitral tribunal shall reach its decisions by a majority of votes. Such decision shall be final and binding on both Contracting Parties. Each Contracting Party shall bear the cost of its own member of the tribunal and of its representation in the arbitral proceedings; the cost of the Chairman and the remaining cost shall be borne in equal parts by the Contracting Parties. The tribunal may,

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however, in its decision direct that a higher proportion of costs shall be borne by one of the two Contracting Parties, and this award shall be binding on both Contracting Parties. The tribunal shall determine its own procedure.

ARTICLE 10

ENTRY AND SOJOURN OF PERSONNEL

A Contracting Party shall, subject to its laws applicable from time to time relating to the entry and sojourn of non-citizens, permit natural persons of the other Contracting Party and personnel employed by companies of the Contracting Party to enter and remain in its territory for the purpose of engaging in activities connected with investment.

ARTICLE 11

APPLICABLE LAWS

1. Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, all investments shall be governed by the laws in force in the territory of the Contracting Party in which such investments are made.

2. Nothing in this Agreement precludes the host Contracting Party from taking action strictly necessary for the maintenance of the public order, the protection of its essential security interests or in circumstances of extreme emergency, in accordance with its laws normally and reasonably applied on a non discriminatory basis.

ARTICLE 12

APPLICATION OF OTHER PROVISIONS

If the provision of law of either Contracting Party or obligations under international law existing at present or established hereafter between the Contracting Parties, in addition to the present Agreement contain rules, whether general or specific, entitling investments by investors of the other Contracting Party to a treatment more favourable than is provided for by the present Agreement, such rules shall, to the extent that they are more favourable, prevail over the present Agreement.

ARTICLE 13

APPLICABILITY OF THIS AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall also cover, concerning its future application, investments made in convertible currency, before its entry into force, by investors of either Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party in accordance with its laws and regulations. However, this Agreement shall not apply to a dispute that might arise before its entry into force.

ARTICLE 14

CONSULTATION AND AMENDMENT

1. Either Contracting Party may request that consultations be held on any matter concerning this Agreement. The other Party shall accord sympathetic consideration to the proposal and shall afford adequate opportunity for such consultations.

2. This Agreement may be amended at any time, if deemed necessary, by mutual consent.

ARTICLE 15

ENTRY INTO FORCE, DURATION AND TERMINATION

1. This Agreement shall be subject to ratification and shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of receipt of the latter notification by which the Contracting Parties have notified each other that their constitutional requirements for the entry into force of this Agreement have been fulfilled.

2. This Agreement shall remain in force for a period of ten (10) years and shall continue in force thereafter unless either Contracting Party notifies the other

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Contracting Party in writing of its intention to terminate this Agreement at least 12 months before its expiration.

3. With respect to investments made prior to the date of termination of this Agreement the provisions of this Agreement shall continue to be effective for a period of ten years (10) from the date of termination.

In witness where of, the undersigned representatives, duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement.

Done at Rabat this thirteenth day of February of 1999 in duplicate in Hindi, Arabic, English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence, the English text shall prevail.

Sd/-
For the Government of
the Republic of India

Sd/-
For the Government of
the Kingdom of Morocco
(AHMED LAHLIMI)
Minister Delegate in charge of
General Affairs

INDIA MOROCCO USA

Date : Feb 05, 1999

Volume No

1995

ANNEXURE II

Agreement on Tourism Cooperation between Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Kingdom of Morocco

The Government of the Republic of India and Government of the Kingdom of Morocco (hereinafter known as "the Parties").

Desirous of widening the existing links of friendship between the parties and fostering a deep understanding in the establishment of a wide cooperation in tourism between themselves.

Have agreed to the following:

ARTICLE I

The Parties shall encourage measures for promoting and increasing exchanges in tourism between themselves. With this aim each Party shall encourage the development of cooperation between the official tourism organizations in both countries as well as develop the tourism potential of each of the Parties.

ARTICLE II

Within the limits established by their internal legislation, the Parties shall favour the development of:

- (a) Tourism promotion and publicity;

- (b) Measures meant for simplifying, as far as possible, the formalities required for trips;
- (c) Exchanging information on tourism industries and tourism development projects;
- (d) Exploring opportunities for cooperation in any other area of mutual interest.

ARTICLE III

The parties shall facilitate the import and export of material and documents for publicity on tourism, free from customs duties, in accordance with the Additional Protocol done at New York on 4 June, 1954.

ARTICLE IV

The Parties, subject to their respective legislation, shall facilitate and encourage the activities of tourism related services, that may generate reciprocal tourism among both the countries, such as travel agencies, commercial tour operators, hotel chains, airlines and shipping companies, without prejudice to any other economic agent who could do so between both countries.

ARTICLE V

The Parties shall explore the possibilities of joint venture in their respective tourism sectors, in accordance with their internal legislation.

ARTICLE VI

The Parties shall exchange information on the tourism resources that they have; their experiences in the field of management of hotels or other types of tourist accommodation; the regulation and legislation that each party may have on tourism activities, as well as for the protection and preservation of the natural and cultural resources as sites for tourist attraction on measures of preventing adverse environmental impacts due to tourism activities and of the curriculum on tourism teaching, studies and research, with the aim of perfecting the training of its technical and specialized staff.

The Parties shall encourage the organisations dedicated to tourism to respect the historical and cultural reality of both countries in their tourism publicity.

ARTICLE VII

The Parties, considering the convenience of exchanging information on the volume and characteristics of the real potential of the tourism market of both countries, shall endeavour to improve the credibility of the statistics on tourism. The Parties agree that the parameters established by the World Tourism Organization for gathering and presenting statistics on domestic and international tourism shall be requisite for such purposes.

ARTICLE VIII

The Parties shall study the possibility of exchanging professionals for tourism training between the competent institutions or organisations in both countries.

ARTICLE IX

The Parties shall, as far as possible, encourage cooperation of travel companies with the markets of third countries, and will cooperate in promoting visits from third countries of mutual interest to the countries of the Parties.

ARTICLE X

The Parties shall facilitate and assist each other in the establishment and operation of official tourist offices in the Republic of India and in the Kingdom of Morocco.

ARTICLE XI

For the follow up of the implementation of this Agreement, promotion and evaluation of the results of the same, the Parties will form a Working Group made up of equal number of representatives of both Parties to which the members of the private tourism sector may also be nominated with the aim of helping in the achievement of the goals of this Agreement.

The Working Group will meet alternatively in Morocco and India. Meetings will be convened as required and at a venue and date agreed by the Parties.

ARTICLE XII

The form and cost for individual activities of cooperation under Article I of this Agreement shall be agreed upon by both

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Parties. Each project entered into by the Parties under this Agreement shall be governed by its own project document.

ARTICLE XIII

The Agreement shall enter into force on the date on which it is signed by the Parties.

This Agreement will be valid for a period of five years and will be automatically renewed for successive five years period, unless either of the parties express its desire to terminate it, through a written notification addressed to the other, through diplomatic channels, three months in advance.

This Agreement may be amended and supplemented at any time as decided and agreed by the Parties.

The termination of this Agreement will not affect the implementation of the programs and project that may have been formalized during its subsistence, unless the Parties agree otherwise.

In testimony of which the Parties signing below duly authorised by their respective Governments sign this Agreement in the city of Rabat on the Thirteenth day of month February of the year 1999 in two originals each in the Hindi, English and Arabic languages. In case of differences in interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

Sd/-

On behalf of the Government
of the Republic of India

Sd/-

On behalf of the Government
of Kingdom of Morocco
(HASSAN SEBBAR)
Minister of Tourism

INDIA MOROCCO USA MALI

Date : Feb 05, 1999

Volume No

1995

ANNEXURE III

Agreement between Maghreb Arabe Presse (MAP) and Press Trust of India (PTI) for mutual professional cooperation

The "Maghreb Arabe Presse", Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, referred to hereinafter as "MAP", and the Press Trust of India, Mumbai, Republic of India, referred to hereinafter as "PTI", being eager to promote their cooperation and professional interaction agree as follows:

Article 1

MAP and PTI grant each other the right to receive each other's English language news service and to distribute the same to the press, radio, television and other subscribers in each other's country.

Article 2

To facilitate the news exchange envisaged above, the two agencies will use E-mail, satellite or any other technical means.

Article 3

Both agencies reserve the right to select the items received from the other and to edit them to suit the needs of the respective media. However, they would ensure that the content and the meaning of the material exchanged are not altered.

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In the items used, either agency would give credit to the other for the news.

Article 4

Wherever possible, while covering India and Morocco, MAP and PTI shall grant priority to usage of each other's news copy.

Article 5

Each agency undertakes to extend on the basis of reciprocity all possible assistance to the correspondent of the other agency in his/her professional work.

Article 6

MAP and PTI will exchange visits at journalist, technical, computer and documentation levels. However, the terms and conditions of each such exchange shall be agreed upon separately.

Article 7

The two agencies will explore the possibility of enlarging the scope of their cooperation to include exchange of photos, features, graphics and other press material.

Article 8

Either agency may also request the other for any special material subject to payment of costs involved.

Article 9

Either agency may sell the entire news received from the other to a third party in India or Morocco for a subscription fee. MAP and PTI will evenly share the profits made from such sale.

Article 10

Either side will not supply the other's news service to Internet or any database system that distributes information to its clients on a commercial basis without the consent of the agency.

Article 11

MAP's news items received by PTI will be passed on to the Moroccan Embassy in New Delhi through the most suitable technical means. PTI's news items received by MAP will be passed to the Indian Embassy in Rabat likewise. The Embassy concerned will meet the local line/technical costs.

Article 12

Any question likely to affect the implementation of the provisions of his agreement will be resolved in a spirit of professional cooperation and mutual understanding.

Article 13

The agreement will be valid for one year from the date of its signature, and shall be automatically extended every year for a 12 month period unless either party notifies in writing of its desire to revise or terminate the agreement six months prior to its expiry date.

Article 14

This agreement is signed in two equally valid versions: Arabic and English.

Exchanged at Rabat on 13th February 1999.

For Press Trust of India

Sd/-
M.K. RAZDAN
General Manager

For Maghreb Arabe Presse

Sd/-
ABDELJALIL FENJIRO
Director General

INDIA USA MOROCCO

Date : Feb 05, 1999

March

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YEMEN

Date : Mar 01, 1999

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BAHRAIN

Condolence message from Prime Minister of India to Prime Minister of Bahrain on the passing away of the Amir of

Bahrain

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 08, 1999 regarding Prime Minister of India's message to Prime Minister of Bahrain on the passing away of the Amir of Bahrain:

"I have just learnt of the passing away of the Amir of Bahrain, His Highness Sheikh Isa bin Salman Al-Khalifa. His Highness Sheikh Isa was rightly known as the "Amir of the people" on account of the love and affection he felt for his people, and the deep sense of commitment he had for their welfare and prosperity.

We in India greatly appreciated his abiding desire to strengthen ties with this country. It was due in large measure to His Highness' regard for India that thousands of Indians found such a congenial home in Bahrain.

Please accept, Your Highness, MY deep condolences and those of the Government and people of India. We pray to God, to give strength to the bereaved family and peace to the departed soul."

BAHRAIN INDIA USA

Date : Mar 08, 1999

Volume No

1995

CHINA

Foreign Office Consultation meeting held in Beijing on February 25-26, 1999

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 01, 1999 regarding Foreign Office Consultations between India and China held in Beijing on February 25-26, 1999:

The first Foreign Office Consultations between India and China were held in Beijing on February 25-26, 1999, under the MoU on Co-operation between the two Foreign Ministries. The talks, held at the level of the Joint Secretary (East Asia) on the Indian side and the Director General, Asia Department on the Chinese side, covered bilateral, regional and international issues. Assistant Foreign Minister Wang Yi received the Indian delegation.

During the consultations, the approach of both sides was positive and forward-looking. The two sides agreed that the talks enhanced mutual understanding. They also agreed on continuation of the dialogue at various levels.

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CHINA INDIA USA

Date : Mar 01, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

International seminar on UN Peacekeeping

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 15, 1999 regarding international seminar on U. N Peacekeeping jointly hosted by Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Defence:

Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Defence are jointly hosting an international seminar on UN Peacekeeping at New Delhi on March 17-19, 1999. All Member States of the UN's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations have been invited to participate. The response so far has been extremely encouraging; participation by 130 delegates from more than 70 countries including all major troop contributing countries has been confirmed so far. All regions of the world-Asia, Africa, America, Latin America and the Caribbean, West Europe and East Europe - will be represented in the Seminar.

The participants include H.E. Tuliameni Kalomoh, the Namibian Deputy Foreign Minister. He has had a long association with India as SWAPO's Ambassador in New Delhi in the past. Other high level representatives include the Assistant Secretary-General of OAU, H.E. Ahmad Haggag, and Assistant Secretary-General, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Young-Jin Choi.

The UNIFIL Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Konrote is also participating. Among the former Force Commanders who would be attending the Seminar are Lt. Gen. Thapa, Lt. Gen. Satish Nambiar, Maj. Gen. Inderjit Rikhye and Lt. Gen. Dewan Prem Chand.

The Seminar is being inaugurated by Raksha Mantri Shri George Fernandes on 17th March. The Chief of Army Staff, Gen. V. P. Malik shall deliver the welcome address. The Assistant Secretary-General, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Young Jin Choi will also address the inaugural session. The Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra will give the concluding address on 19th March.

The programme includes a demonstration of Indian Army's peacekeeping training facilities at Rajputana Rifles Centre. There would also be a ceremony to honour veteran peacekeepers. The valedictory address will be given by Maj. Gen. Arjun Ray of Army Training command on 19th March.

The Seminar underlines India's commitment to UN peacekeeping and contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC NAMIBIA MALI

Date : Mar 15, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Official Spokesman's statement on Kosovo

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 25, 1999 on Kosovo crisis:

The Government of India expresses its serious concern over NATO air strikes on the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Such unilateral moves, even if taken as regional initiatives, but without due authorisation of the United Nations Security Council, seriously undermine the authority of the entire United Nations System. The Government holds that the air strikes are in violation of the UN Charter, also that they amount to interfering in the internal affairs of a country.

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The present crisis in Kosovo can only be resolved through peaceful means and a solution found within the framework of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Government of India also expresses its concern about the possibility of the conflict spreading. Besides, this demonstration of NATO's extra territorial engagement is 'a development that can only cause anxiety.

We would urge that all military actions be brought to a halt; that peace be given a chance; and that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a fellow member of the Non-Aligned, be enabled to resolve its internal issues internally.

INDIA USA YUGOSLAVIA

Date : Mar 25, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Indo-Russia Foreign Minister level talks on telephone

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 26, 1999 exchange of views between India & Russia on the situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia:

The Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh, received a telephone call from the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Mr. Igor Sergeivich Ivanov on Mar 26, 1999 for a detailed exchange of views on the situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The two Ministers reiterated their serious concern over recent developments, particularly the unilateral use of force by NATO. Shri Jaswant Singh said that the only solution to the crisis is a cessation of hostilities so as to give peace a chance. The two Ministers agreed that India and Russia will continue to consult with each other and coordinate their positions on this issue in the UN.

The Government of India is also in touch with the Non-Aligned Group in New York and with the NAM Chairman, South Africa.

INDIA RUSSIA USA YUGOSLAVIA SOUTH AFRICA

Date : Mar 26, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Official Spokesman's statement

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 24, 1999 regarding Developments in Kosovo:

The Government of India has closely been following developments in Kosovo. It recalls its statement of October 9, 1998 and reiterates that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the international border of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is inviolable. That must be fully respected by all states.

We are of the firm conviction that the resolution of this crisis can only be through peaceful means; through consultation and dialogue, and not through either confrontation or any military action, unilateral or otherwise. In this regard we wish to reaffirm commitments to the UN Charter, which clearly stipulates that no enforcement actions shall be undertaken under regional arrangements without the authorisation of the Security Council.

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INDIA USA YUGOSLAVIA

Date : Mar 24, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Prime Minister's Message to Commonwealth Secretary 'General on Occasion of Commonwealth Day

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 09, 1999 regarding Prime Minister's Message to Commonwealth Secretary General on the occasion of Commonwealth Day:

"We are happy to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the modern Commonwealth. We have always attached importance to our association with the Commonwealth. India in fact, played a catalytic role in the transformation of this organisation from a colonial institution to a cooperative association of free and sovereign nations, united by their mutual interests and common goals. It was this vision which resulted in the London Declaration of 1949 and a wholly new basis for membership.

The Commonwealth has come a long way in the last 50 years. It has grown to encompass 54 countries from all the continents and 1.7 billion people of every region, religion and race. It has made a mark on international affairs

through its championship of the causes of antiracism, democracy and sustainable economic development. Its tradition of noninterference in the bilateral disputes between its members has also contributed to its harmonious working.

India is mindful of its standing in the commonwealth above all as a country which epitomises its fundamental principles. India is also happy to be the largest provider among developing Commonwealth countries, of technical expertise and assistance for socioeconomic development.

We in India are confident that the Commonwealth will adapt to retain its importance for its member nations. We welcome the emphasis on addressing the issue of sustainable development by the organisation and look forward to working with other member countries in this context.

We look forward to the CHOGM Summit in South Africa in this Golden Anniversary Year of New Commonwealth. I, on behalf of the Government of India, convey our felicitations on the occasion of Commonwealth Day."

INDIA UNITED KINGDOM USA SOUTH AFRICA

Date : Mar 09, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

International Seminar on UN Peacekeeping

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 17, 1999 regarding International Seminar on UN Peacekeeping inaugurated by Smt. Vasundhara Raje Minister of State for External Affairs:

Minister of State for External Affairs, Smt. Vasundhara Raje inaugurated the International Seminar on UN Peacekeeping at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi today. Welcoming 130 delegates from 70 countries, she highlighted India's contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security through participation in UN peace-keeping operations. Smt. Raje underlined the universal objectives and abiding relevance of UN peacekeeping, based on principles of neutrality, impartiality, consent of the host state and minimum use of force. She also expressed concern over recent trends towards unilateral action, erosion of UN's authority as well as limitations on sovereignty of member states. The acute financial crisis faced by the UN and its adverse impact on peacekeeping activities were also highlighted by the Minister in her speech. Emphasising that peacekeeping must be seen as part of a broader UN framework and that purely military solutions cannot bring enduring

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peace, she underlined the necessity for development to remain central to UN's agenda.

Earlier, the Chief of Army staff Gen. V. P. Malik, while delivering the welcome address to the distinguished gathering of senior diplomats and Army commanders, highlighted the role of India in UN peacekeeping operations since inception. India has contributed 50,0~00 troops for 29 UN missions all over the world. Indian troops have

brought to their duties with the UN, a long tradition of commitment, professional excellence and discipline. Some of the complex operations in which the Indian troops have performed with distinction include those in Congo, Namibia, Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda and Lebanon. Reiterating India's commitment and readiness to participate in UN peacekeeping operations in the coming millennium, COAS added that the Indian Armed Forces possess a wide range of human and technological skills and are equipped with infrastructural support which can sustain long term deployment in peacekeeping missions.

The Assistant Secretary General of UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Young-Jin Choi delivered a special address on UN Peacekeeping Today. Tracing the historical evolution of peacekeeping operations and citing specific examples of Somalia, Bosnia and Rwanda, he highlighted the emerging trends in peacekeeping such as cooperation with regional organisations and advent of multi-dimensional operations. He complimented India as an enthusiastic supporter of peacekeeping and underlined the wide respect earned by Indian contingents for their professional excellence.

The Seminar, during its deliberations over three days (March 17-19, 1999), would deal with several central themes and emerging trends relating to UN peace-keeping, including international humanitarian law, multi-dimensional operations, regional arrangements and humanitarian assistance. A special session would be devoted to peacekeeping operations in Africa.

Several distinguished dignitaries from all over the world are participating in the Seminar. These include the, Deputy Foreign Minister of Namibia, Mr. Tuliameni Kalomoh, the Assistant Secretary General of UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Young-Jin Choi, the Assistant Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity, Mr. Ahmad Haggag, and several senior Force Commanders who have served in UN peacekeeping operations.

INDIA USA MALI CAMBODIA LEBANON NAMIBIA RWANDA SOMALIA

Date : Mar 17, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

International Seminar on U.N. Peacekeeping

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on the occasion of the conclusion of the International Seminar on U.N. Peacekeeping addressed by Raksha Mantri Shri George Fernandes and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and National Security Adviser Shri Brajesh Mishra:

The International Seminar on UN Peacekeeping hosted by MEA and MOD was addressed today by Raksha Mantri Shri George Fernandes and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and National Security Adviser Shri Brajesh Mishra.

Raksha Mantri in his address expressed concern at the trend towards unilateral military action, which unless checked in time, would marginalise the role of the UN Security Council. He referred to US and UK air strikes against Iraq in this connection. He added that civil violence and armed conflict is rooted in economic disparities. Global economic regime is further widening the gulf within and between the nations. Raksha Mantri stated that the

UN's structure is based on unequal power relations. He stressed the need, for democratising the UN, including the Security Council to make it more

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representative. India is committed to the cause of peace. It is in this spirit that the Prime Minister undertook his recent bus journey to Lahore. Raksha Mantri further stated that peace can only be established on the basis of disarmament.

Raksha Mantri also spent some time in following deliberations of the Seminar and meeting the Participants.

Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and National Security Adviser Shri Brajesh Mishra gave the concluding address at the Seminar. He mentioned that the UN peacekeeping operations represent the collective will of the international community. The principles of neutrality, impartiality and minimum use of force have abiding relevance for the UN peacekeeping. He added that concensual approach represents the most acceptable and successful model of peacekeeping. Peacekeeping must be seen as part of broader UN framework. Development must remain central to UN's agenda. He also stressed the need for financial reforms as well as Security Council restructuring.

The Principal Secretary mentioned that India is one of the largest troop contributors to UN's peacekeeping activities and has provided a total of 50,000 troops to 30 UN peacekeeping operations. India has participated in some of the most difficult operations such as UN operations in Egypt, Congo, Cambodia, Somalia and Rwanda. Through participation in UN peacekeeping operations, India has made a signal contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and shall continue to do so in the next millennium also.

The participants in the Seminar debated contemporary issues in peacekeeping including multi-dimensional operations, regional arrangements and humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping. The Seminar evoked lively interest amongst the participants. More than 70 countries and 130 delegates took part in the Seminar.

INDIA USA IRAQ UNITED KINGDOM CAMBODIA CONGO EGYPT RWANDA

Date : Mar 19, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Message conveyed by Mr. Nawaz Sharif Prime Minister of Pakistan to the Prime Minister of India while overflying India

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 01, 1999 regarding Pakistan Prime Minister's message while overflying India:

While overflying India on my way to Bangladesh I would like to convey MY sincere greetings and best wishes. I was delighted to welcome you to Pak and I hope you enjoyed your stay at Lahore. I take this opportunity to reiterate our earnest desire for tension free good neighbourly and cooperative relations between the two countries.

Please accept excellency the assurances of My highest consideration.

PAKISTAN INDIA BANGLADESH

Date : Mar 01, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Bilateral meeting during the 21st Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers in Sri Lanka

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on march 19, 1999 regarding meeting between Foreign Minister of Pakistan and Minister of External Affairs of India on the side lines of the 21st Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers in Sri Lanka:

The Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Sartaj Aziz and the Minister of External Affairs of India, Shri Jaswant Singh met today on the sidelines of the 21st Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers at Nuwara Eliya, Sri Lanka.

They reiterated the historic significance of the Lahore Declaration which embodies the vision of the Prime Ministers of the two countries for ending the legacy of tensions and conflicts of the past fifty years and for ushering a new era of peace, security and prosperity. They discussed ways and means to build on the Lahore Declaration which commits the two countries to build trust and confidence, develop mutually beneficial cooperation and intensify their efforts to resolve all outstanding issues including Jammu and Kashmir.

The two Foreign Ministers agreed on the urgency of taking concrete measures for implementation of the Lahore Declaration, the Memorandum of Understanding and the Joint Statement issued during the Lahore Summit. In this context, the Ministers agreed that the composite and integrated dialogue process must be intensified.

The Ministers agreed to the following:

(i) The meetings of Experts for implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding will be held over the next two months.

(ii) The next round of the composite and integrated dialogue process in accordance with the agreed agenda will commence in May 1999 in New Delhi and Islamabad and will be held over a period of six weeks.

(iii) They will meet shortly after the conclusion of the May-June Round of the composite and integrated dialogue process.

(iv) The Committee on humanitarian issues composed of Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and the Minister of State of External Affairs of India set up by the Prime Ministers at the Lahore Summit will meet in April 1999 to formalize the agreement on the issue of release of civilian Prisoners as well as to discuss other humanitarian issues.

(v) That both sides have agreed to relax the visa regime for several categories of visitors. The specific visa relaxation measures shall be announced by the two Governments shortly.

(vi) Delegations of experts from India shall visit Pakistan during April 1999 for identifying areas of cooperation in information technology, Y2K and WTO related issues.

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PAKISTAN SRI LANKA INDIA USA MALI

Date : Mar 19, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Easing Visa and Travel Restrictions for Pak Nationals

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 25, 1999 regarding easing of visa and travel restrictions for various categories of Pakistani Nationals.

Consistent with its policy to promote contacts between the peoples of India and Pakistan at all levels and in keeping with the understandings reached with Pakistan during the visit of prime minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Pakistan on February 20-21, 1999 and in the meeting of the External Affairs Minister, Shri Jaswant Singh with the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Sartaj Aziz at Nuwara Eliya on 12th Feb, 1999. The Government Of India has decided to ease visa and travel restrictions for the following categories of Pakistani Nationals.

- (I) Judges of the supreme court of Pakistan and of the various high courts,.
- (II) Attorney General, Solicitor General and Chairperson of the Supreme Court Bar Association.
- (III) Editors-in-Chief of national news. papers, and owners principal functionaries of national newspapers.
- (IV) Members of national cricket and hockey teams during their tours of India.
- (V) Members of the national assembly and the senate, leaders and deputy leaders of provincial assemblies and leaders and deputy leaders of opposition in provincial assemblies.
- (VI) Vice chancellors of recognised approved universities.
- (VII) Secretaries secretary rank officers of the federal government of Pakistan.
- (VIII) Spouse, dependent children, i.e. sons up to 18 years of age and unmarried daughters of persons in above mentioned. categories.

3. Visas-holders in the above mentioned categories would be exempt from police reporting. They will be entitled to multiple entry visas of upto one year duration. They will also be exempt from the restrictions of city-specific

visas and will be entitled to travel anywhere in India except certain specified areas for which prior permission would be required.

4. The relaxations would come into effect on Apr 02, 1999.

5. Some relaxations have also been made in the regime governing visits of tourist groups to India. Tour operators only will have to report the arrival of a group to the police at each destination within India, Individual members of a tourist group will not be required to do so. This relaxation will come into effect shortly.

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Apr 02, 1999

Volume No

1995

QATAR

Indo-Qatar Joint Committee meeting

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 11, 1999 regarding Indo-Qatar Joint Committee meeting for Economic and Technical Cooperation which met in New Delhi on March 10-11, 1999:

A six-member Qatari delegation visited India to participate in the third session of India-Qatar Joint Committee for Economic and Technical Cooperation which met in New Delhi on March 10-11, 1999. The Indian delegation was led by Shri Talmiz Ahmad, Joint Secretary in the Gulf Division in the Ministry of External Affairs, while the Qatari delegation was led by Mr. Ali Hassan Al-Khalaf, Director of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance, Economy and Commerce. The discussions between the two sides took place in an atmosphere of cordiality and mutual understanding.

Cooperation in the areas of trade, various Indian institutions. hydrocarbons, telecommunications, agriculture, civil aviation, science & technology and environment was discussed.

The energy sector has emerged as a new area for bilateral cooperation. An MoU was signed in January 1998 between India and Qatar for purchase by India from Qatar of 7.5 million tonnes of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) per year. At the same time, major Indian corporations such as Engineers India Ltd., Indian Oil Corporation, ONGC Videsh and Gas Authority of India Ltd., have offered to participate in hydrocarbon and other industrial projects in Qatar.

The Joint Committee urged enhancement of cooperation in the areas of education and culture. India suggested that Qatari scholars could pursue higher studies and research in India, taking advantage of valuable resource material available in various Indian institutions

The Joint Committee Meeting took place just a few weeks before the visit to India of the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani. During this visit, new area for bilateral cooperation. An agreements on double taxation avoidance, MoU was signed in January 1998 between bilateral investment protection, youth India and Qatar for purchase by India from affairs & sports and Foreign Office Consultation are expected to be signed.

QATAR INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Mar 11, 1999

Volume No

1995

SAUDI ARABIA

Visit of about 100,000 Indian Pilgrims to Makkah from Mina

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 31, 1999 regarding Haj Pilgrims:

About 100,000 Indian pilgrims have returned to Makkah from Mina after the completion of their Haj, one of the most sacred duties of Muslims. The return flights of the Indian pilgrims will begin from Saturday, 1st April. The Saudi Government has described this as the safest Haj in decades.

Indian pilgrims constitute one of the largest national groups performing Haj this year. Over 62,000 Indian pilgrims had proceeded for Haj through the Haj Committee, Mumbai, departing by air from five embarkation points in India, viz., Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Chennai and Bangalore, on 156 charter flights, while the balance went privately. This year, private pilgrims were required to go through tour operators registered with, the Saudi Embassy. The Ministry of External Affairs assisted the Saudi Embassy in the registration of 180 such tour operators from different parts of the country.

In order to extent assistance and welfare services to the Indian pilgrims, the Government has deputed 361 officials to Saudi Arabia, including 100 doctors, 120 para-medical staff and 141 administrative staff. State Governments have also sent about 100 Khuddam-ul-Hujjaj to assist pilgrims from their States. This year all Indian pilgrims were accommodated in fireproof tents.

The Government has sent a 30-mernber Haj Goodwill delegation to Saudi Arabia. It is led by Prof. A. M. Khusro, Chairman, Finance Commission; the Deputy Leader is Mr. K. M. Saifullah, MP. The other delegates include Mr. Arif Mohammad Khan, MP; Mr. Shariq Sharifuddin, MP; Mr. Roshan Baig, Minister Karnataka; Mrs. Zakiya, Minister, Rajasthan; and Mr. Rashid Dar Deputy Chairman, Upper House, J&K. Besides interacting with senior Saudi dignitaries and members Of other national delegations. The Goodwill delegation will also be meeting the Indian pilgrims to cheek on their welfare.

SAUDI ARABIA INDIA USA

Date : Mar 31, 1999

Volume No

1995

UGANDA

Visa requirement to visit Uganda

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 03, 1999 regarding requirement of visa to visit Uganda:

in the past, Ugandan visa could be obtained by anybody on the arrival at the Entebbe Airport. However, based on reciprocity and in view of Ugandan nationals regarding visa to enter India, Indian nationals would, henceforth, also need visa to enter Uganda.

The prospective Indian visitors to Uganda may, therefore ensure that they obtain visa from the Ugandan High Commission in New Delhi prior to their departure.

UGANDA INDIA

Date : Mar 03, 1999

Volume No

1995

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Indo-US Talks on Export Controls

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on Mar 30, 1999 regarding Indo-US talks on Export Controls:

A US Export Control Delegation led by Mr. Gregory Suchan visited Delhi and held talks with an Indian delegation led by Shri Alok Prasad, Joint Secretary (Americas), Ministry of External Affairs on 29-30 March, 1999. The talks were held in continuation of the first round of talks on export controls held on 9-10 November, 1998. The talks were useful and positive and hold the prospect of continued cooperation in this area.

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USA INDIA

Date : Mar 30, 1999

Volume No

1995

India-Yemen Foreign Office Consultations

Following is the text of a Joint Press Statement issued in New Delhi on Mar 05, 1999 regarding India-Yemen Foreign Office Consultations meeting held in New Delhi on 4-5 March, 1999:

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding signed between India and Yemen in Sana'a on 18th February, 1993, India-Yemen Foreign Office Consultations were held in New Delhi on 4-5 March, 1999, between officials of the Ministry of External Affairs of India and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Yemen. The delegations were led by Secretary (East), Shri Nareshwar Dayal, in the Ministry of External Affairs, and the Under Secretary for Political Affairs and Deputy Minister in Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs. H.E. Mr. Ghaleb Ali Jameel. H.E. Mr. Ghaleb Jameel called on Smt. Vasundhara Raje, Minister of State for External Affairs, during his visit.

The consultations were held in a spirit of friendship, understanding and cooperation, and covered bilateral, regional and international issues. Ways and means to expand and diversify areas of mutually beneficial cooperation in political and economic fields were discussed. Both sides agreed to further strengthen and diversify cooperation in various sectors, particularly in the areas of energy, power, small scale industry, water management, civil aviation and construction. It was also agreed that cooperation in scientific, technical, educational and cultural fields would be enhanced. The two countries agreed to closely consult with each other at the UN, the Indian Ocean Rim Association and other regional and multilateral fora.

YEMEN INDIA USA

Date : Mar 05, 1999

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Date : Apr 01, 1999

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CHINA

Indo-China Joint Working Group meeting

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 26, 1999 regarding Indo-China Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting held in Beijing:

The eleventh meeting of the India-China Joint Working Group (JWG) commenced on 26th April, 1999 in Beijing. The Indian delegation was led by Foreign Secretary Shri K. Raghunath; the Chinese delegation was led by Vice Foreign Minister Mr. Yang Wenchang.

Prior to the commencement of the JWG session, Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan received Foreign Secretary. During the one hour meeting, Foreign Minister Tang conveyed his greetings to the Minister for External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh, and said that he looked forward to a visit by him to China. He emphasized China's commitment to seeking good relations with India into the 21st century. This would contribute to peace, development and stability in Asia and the world. The two sides should approach the JWG meeting in a positive spirit on the basis of expanding on our common points to find solutions to issues on which the two sides have different views.

Foreign Secretary reiterated that India had a positive and forward looking approach to relations with China. India seeks friendly, good neighbourly, cooperative and mutually beneficial relations with China. We wish to develop trust and confidence on the basis of expanding understanding on issues of mutual concern which affect our bilateral relations.

During the sessions of the JWG, issues relating to bilateral relations as also recent developments in the region were discussed. The two sides also discussed issues relating to security and nuclear disarmament.

Foreign Secretary will be calling on Vice Premier and former Foreign Minister Qian Qichen. later this evening.

Discussions between the two sides will continue tomorrow.

CHINA INDIA USA

Date : Apr 26, 1999

Volume No

1995

CHINA

Indo-China Joint Working Group meeting - call on Vice Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Peoples Congress of China by the Foreign Secretary

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 27, 1999 regarding call by Foreign Secretary on Xu Dunxin, Vice Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Peoples Congress of China:

The eleventh meeting of the India-China Joint Working Group concluded on 27 April, 1999.

Foreign Secretary called on Mr. Xu Dunxin, Vice Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Peoples Congress of China and Mr. Ma Wenpu, Vice Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China separately. During the meeting, both sides emphasized the need for India and China to work together in developing friendly, good neighbourly relations. As two large countries and neighbours, India and China had important role to play in shaping the emerging new world order. The Panchsheel jointly initiated by India and China should form the basis for inter-state relations universally. Both sides felt that exchange of Parliamentarians and Parliamentary delegations as also political leaders and party delegations would enhance mutual understanding. There is considerable scope for developing and expanding our relations in various fields, including economic, commercial, cultural, human resources development, environment, etc.

Foreign Secretary also met heads of think tanks, research institutions, senior media representatives, indologists and scholars. Foreign Secretary made a presentation on and discussed with them India's perceptions on matters of mutual interests.

CHINA INDIA USA

Date : Apr 27, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Release of a Book "India Means Business - Perspectives" by the Minister of State for External Affairs Smt. Vasundhara Raje

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 22, 1999 regarding Release of a brochure "India Means Business Perspectives" by the Minister of State for External Affairs:

The Minister of State for External Affairs Smt. Vasundhara Raje released the updated edition of the brochure "INDIA MEANS BUSINESS - PERSPECTIVES" at a brief function held in New Delhi today which was attended by members of the diplomatic corps, corporate groups and the media.

This brochure has been brought out by the Ministry of External Affairs, in pursuance of its continuing effort towards bringing out investment promotion material in a user friendly manner. This latest edition explains the economic environment prevailing in India and focusses on the investment policy framework and opportunities in

infrastructure and other sectors including Power, Telecom, Roads, Ports, Oil & Natural Gas, Civil Aviation, Mining, Urban Infrastructure and Housing, Electronics & Information Technology, Drugs and Pharmaceuticals, Food Processing and Hotels & Tourism sectors. The brochure also contains separate chapters on Business Regulations and Procedures, Taxation and the Working environment in India.

The Ministry of External Affairs acknowledges the assistance received from M/s Arthur Andersen in the preparation of the brochure.

In the recent past, the Ministry of External Affairs has also brought out related publications including:

1. 'Opportunity India'.
2. 'India Means Business - Investment Opportunities in Infrastructure'.
3. 'India Means Business - Investment Related Websites'.
4. 'India Means Business - Investment Avenues for NRIs'.

The Ministry had also brought out a unique multi-media guide/CD ROM India: Priorities for the 21st Century'.

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INDIA USA

Date : Apr 22, 1999

Volume No

1995

KYRGYZSTAN

Visit of President of Kyrgyzstan to India from 12-14 April 1999

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 09, 1999 regarding visit of H.E. Mr. Askar Akaev, President of the Kyrgyz Republic to India from 12-14th April 1999:

At the invitation of President of India, H.E. Mr. Askar Akaev, President of the Kyrgyz Republic, accompanied by Madam Mairam Akaeva and a high level delegation, will pay a State visit to India from 12th - 14th April, 1999. This would be the second visit by the Kyrgyz; President to India, the first having been in March, 1992.

India's traditionally warm relations with Kyrgyzstan have witnessed forward movement since that country's independence seven years ago. The present visit is expected to provide a strong impulse to the strengthening of Indo-Kyrgyz cooperation, particularly in the economic and commercial spheres.

Apart from, meetings with the President, the visiting dignitary will meet the Vice President, Prime Minister and senior Ministers. He would address the first meeting of the Indo-Kyrgyz; Joint Business Council hosted by FICCI, and a meeting organized by CII to exclusively focus on the strong tourism potential of Kyrgyzstan. The dignitary would name a road in Delhi after the Kyrgyz; epic hero, Manas.

A number of agreements would be signed on the occasion.

KYRGYZSTAN INDIA USA

Date : Apr 09, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Attack on official of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 21, 1999 regarding attack on Shri P. Ravindranathan an official of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad in the premises of Gurdwara Dera Sahib:

Shri P. Ravindranathan, an official of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad, was in Lahore on 20 April, 1999 on liaison duty with a Jatha of Sikh yatrīs from India. As he emerged from the offices of the Waqf Board in the premises of the Gurdwara Dera Sahib yesterday evening, he was accosted and brutally beaten up by three persons. Shri Ravindranathan received serious cuts and bruises on his face necessitating his admission to a hospital for medical treatment.

A senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan conveyed deep regret at this incident and assured our High Commissioner that the matter would be thoroughly investigated.

The Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan in New Delhi was called this afternoon to the Ministry of External Affairs and a strong protest was lodged regarding this incident. The Deputy High Commissioner was told that while India took note of the regret expressed at this incident, we expected the Government of Pakistan to fulfill its responsibilities and obligations under the Vienna Convention and the bilateral Code of Conduct for treatment of diplomatic/consular personnel and provide necessary protection and security to all officials of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad. He was also urged to convey to his Government the need to apprehend the perpetrators of this criminal act and their associates and for appropriate legal action being taken against these perpetrators.

PAKISTAN INDIA USA AUSTRIA

Date : Apr 21, 1999

Volume No

1995

PALESTINE

Visit of President Yasser Arafat to India from 9-10 April 1999

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by, the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 10, 1999 regarding brief working visit of President Yasser Arafat to India on 9-10 April, 1999:

President Yasser Arafat paid a brief working visit to India on 9-10 April, 1999. He called on President K. R. Narayanan and held extensive discussions with Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee. Prime Minister hosted a lunch in honour of President Arafat and the accompanying delegation.

During the meetings, the Indian leaders underlined the country's consistent and unwavering support to the Palestinian cause and emphasized that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region can only be based on relevant UN resolutions and the principle of "Land for Peace". India supports the Palestinian people's legitimate and inalienable right to homeland, and was one of the first countries to recognize the State of Palestine in 1988. India also upholds the right of all States in the region, including Palestine and Israel, to coexist peacefully with secure and internationally recognized borders.

The two leaders also discussed broader prospects of Indo-Palestinian cooperation and agreed to intensify their bilateral ties in diverse fields. They also discussed regional and global issues, which once again affirmed their common approach to international issues. They noted, in particular, that the current world situation requires more active cooperation among Nonaligned countries.

INDIA USA ISRAEL

Date : Apr 10, 1999

Volume No

1995

QATAR

Visit of the Emir of Qatar to India

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 05, 1999 regarding visit of the Emir of Qatar to India from April 6-8, 1999:

At the invitation of the President of India, His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thane, Emir of the State of Qatar, will pay a State visit to India, on April 6-8, 1999. This will be the Emir's first visit to India. The Emir will be accompanied by a high level delegation consisting of several dignitaries including the Deputy Prime Minister, and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Energy & Industry and Health.

The visit of the Emir will add a new chapter in India-Qatar relations which have witnessed a multifaceted growth in the recent years. During the visit a number of agreements will be signed between India and Qatar, including the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement, the Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement, the MOU on Foreign Office Consultations and the MOU in the field of Youth and Sports.

During his visit, the Emir of Qatar will have meetings with the Indian President, and will receive the Vice President the Prime Minister, the Minister of External Affairs, the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, the Minister Of Commerce and the Minister of Industry.

QATAR INDIA USA

Date : Apr 05, 1999

Volume No

1995

SAARC

SAARC Conference on Intellectual Property Rights

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 15, 1999 regarding SAARC conference on Intellectual Property Rights held in New Delhi on 20-21 April 1999:

India is hosting the SAARC Conference on Intellectual Rights in New Delhi on 20-21 April, 1999. This conference would deliberate, inter alia, on the evolution of a common approach to issues relating to patents, bio-diversity, plant variety protection and copyright.

This Conference is being held in the backdrop of the recognition of the importance of harmonization of national regimes of Intellectual Property Rights by SAARC leaders as an effective instrument for facilitation and promotion of intra-regional trade and for attracting foreign investment. The Third Meeting of the SAARC Commerce Ministers held in Dhaka in February, 1999 had emphasized the need for consultation and coordination of national policies and legislation to protect the interests of the region in international meetings.

The recommendations of this Conference will be considered by the SAARC Commerce Secretaries Meeting to be held in May, 1999 to held a common approach at the WTO Ministerial Meeting.

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INDIA BANGLADESH

Date : Apr 15, 1999

Volume No

1995

SOUTH AFRICA

EAM's Meeting with South African Deputy President

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on Apr 02, 1999 regarding Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh transit meeting with South African Deputy President H.E. Mr. Thabo Mbeki during transit halt in Pretoria on @@19990401@@:

Minister for External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh, met the South African Deputy President, H.E. Mr. Thabo Mbeki, during a transit halt in Pretoria on April 1. The Minister was on his way back from Mozambique after attending the IOR-ARC Foreign Ministerial Meeting in Maputo.

The forty minutes meeting held at the Deputy President's residence, was also attended by South African Foreign Minister, Alfred Nzo. The Deputy President and External Affairs Minister (EAM) undertook a substantial review of bilateral relations. While acknowledging the achievements of the last four years, they agreed to work together to realise the unfulfilled potential. The two leaders outlined steps to flesh out the strategic partnership which in the words of the Deputy President is the "Premise of our bilateral relations". They reviewed the international situation including the situation in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on which South Africa and India share similar views. The international economic situation was discussed, including the possibility of India and South Africa playing a role in seeking to formulate, in a more coherent manner, the needs and requirements of the South, in the continuing dialogue with the North.

Earlier on March 31, Kader Asmal, the South African Minister for Water Affairs and Forestry, and Chairman of the National Commission on Arms Control called on Shri Jaswant Singh.

On April 1, 'EAM explained India's stand on the crisis in Kosovo during a live interview in the Current Affairs Programme of SABC Radio. Earlier in the day. EAM interacted with the press and academia. While in South Africa, EAM will also be meeting the India Heads of Mission from the Southern African countries on April 4.

Earlier during his bilateral visit to Mozambique, EAM called on President Chissano and Prime Minister Mocambi. He also had an indepth meeting with his counterpart, Foreign Minister Simao. EAM also met the Mozambican Agriculture Minister.

SOUTH AFRICA INDIA MOZAMBIQUE USA

Date : Apr 02, 1999

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Comment attributed to the U.S. State Department Spokesman

Following is the text of Official Spokesman statement issued in New Delhi on Apr 20, 1999 regarding comment attributed to the U.S. State Department Spokesman on "Non-Proliferation Demand":

In response to a question, the Official Spokesman stated the following:

We have seen the comment attribute(to the US State Department Spokesman We believe that it is not appropriate t, make such pronouncements in the course, of a process of democratic transition.

India has been engaged in an intensive dialogue with a number of countries including the United States on matters related' t6' disarmament and non-proliferation with a view to harmonizing our respective points of view. There is no question of so-called "non-proliferation demands". India does not accept any such "demands".

As regards India-Pakistan issues, there is a bilateral process underway, which will continue.

USA INDIA PAKISTAN

Date : Apr 20, 1999

Volume No

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ANNEXURE I

Memorandum of Understanding on Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar

To promote further the friendly relations between the Republic of India and the State of Qatar and to achieve the objectives of common interest of the two countries, and the desire to foster and improve relations between them, and need to lay a framework of cooperation and friendly exchanges at official level, the following is agreed upon.

1. High ranking officials from the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar will hold meetings periodically, the level and dates to be decided through diplomatic channels.
2. The officials of both sides will discuss, during their meetings, the bilateral relations between the two countries, exchange of views and means of fostering and improving relations, as well as regional and international issues of mutual concern.
3. They may also exchange information and experience in the field of studies, research, and training.
4. Both countries will seek to consult on issues of common interest when participating in international conferences and forums.
5. This understanding will be effective from the date of signing and will remain in force until terminated by either side.

Issued at New Delhi on ... 7th April, 1999 ... in English, Hindi and Arabic, all texts having equal validity. However, the English text will serve as basic reference.

Sd/-

(Jaswant Singh)
Minister of External Affairs
For the Republic of India

Sd/-

(Hamad Bin Jassem. Bin Jabr-Al-Thani)
Minister of Foreign Affairs
For the State of Qatar

INDIA QATAR USA

Date : Apr 20, 1999

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Date : May 31, 1999

Volume No

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CHINA

Embassy of People's Republic of China hit during NATO's aerial bombardment in Belgrade

Following is the text of a Press Release issued in New Delhi on May 8, 1999 regarding India's reaction to reports about the Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China hit during aerial bombardment in Belgrade:

In response to a question on India's reaction to reports about the Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China in Belgrade being hit during NATO's aerial bombardment on May 8, 1999, the Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh said that "any damage to a diplomatic establishment, intended or otherwise, is to be entirely deplored. This incident along with continuing loss of innocent civilian lives and other untoward consequences only confirms that the very fundamentals of NATO's new approach are wrong. The incident also starkly underlines that which we in India, along with a good part of the international community have been emphasising from the very beginning that a solution to the problems relating to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is to be found only in means other than the military.

Continuous aerial bombardment, in the name of humanitarian issues, resulting in the loss of innocent civilian lives is totally unacceptable. There is no alternative to the path of dialogue and a negotiated settlement. We also remain seriously concerned about the overall human tragedy that we continue to witness in the region. The world cannot ignore the increased resultant tension in the region, and the potential for greater consequential instability." May 08, 1999

CHINA YUGOSLAVIA INDIA USA

Date : May 08, 1999

Volume No

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INDIA

Expert Level Meeting of G-15 countries on Y2K in New Delhi

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 15, 1999 regarding inauguration of an Expert Level Meeting of G-15 countries on Y2K by the Minister of External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh held in New Delhi from 17 to 21 May 1999:

The Minister for External Affairs Shri Jaswant Singh will be inaugurating an Expert Level Meeting of G-15 countries on Y2K that is being hosted by India from May 17 to 21, 1999 in New Delhi. The expert level meeting is being held in pursuance of the offer made by India to hold such a meeting at the IX G-15 Summit meetings held in Montego Bay in February this year.

More than ten countries from G-15 member states are participating in the

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Expert group , meeting including Chile, Mexico, Jamaica, Egypt, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. In several cases, the participants are senior functionaries responsible for national Y2K coordination in their respective countries. The meeting is expected to provide a unique opportunity for G-15 member countries to have a useful exchange of views on their Y2K preparedness and compliance and to share their respective national experiences in tackling this time bound issue which is posing a serious challenge worldwide. The five day programme covers the study of Y2K issues in a whole range of sectors apart from undertaking some case studies and interacting with solution providers.

India has undertaken a number of activities to promote South-South cooperation under the G-15 umbrella in the IT sector itself. Apart from providing training in computer applications for participants from G-15 countries, India has also offered to set up an IT training centre for African countries in Harare, Zimbabwe for which the modalities are being finalized. The expert group meeting on Y2K is yet another initiative in this regard which is also in line with the new strategic sector approach to South-South cooperation focussing on certain core technologies, an idea which was proposed by India and was welcomed at the IX G-15 Summit held in Montego Bay in February, 1999. May 15, 1999

INDIA CHILE EGYPT JAMAICA MEXICO SENEGAL INDONESIA KENYA MALAYSIA SRI LANKA
USA ZIMBABWE

Date : May 15, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Development along the Line of Control in the Kargil

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 21, 1999 regarding development along the Line of Control in the Kargil sector in Jammu & Kashmir:

We have seen the statement made yesterday by an Official Spokesman of the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign

Affairs on recent developments along the Line of Control in the Kargil sector in Jammu & Kashmir. "We have also seen reports of comments made by a Pakistan Military Spokesman on these developments. These constitute a brazen attempt by the Pakistan government to obfuscate the truth and camouflage their true intentions, while projecting an air of injured innocence.

The facts are that Pakistan has, since early this month, under the cover of intense artillery shelling, pushed into Indian territory across the LOC in the Kargil sector, a large number of armed intruders. Evidently, Pakistan hoped that these armed intruders would succeed in consolidating their positions, so that they could pose a continuing threat to peace and security in Jammu & Kashmir. However, the Army has through effective and timely movement surrounded most of these infiltrating groups. All necessary action will be taken by the Armed Forces to complete their task of putting an end to this intrusion. Pakistan should be aware from its own experience that such foolhardy ventures against India can never succeed.

This is Yet another instance of Pakistan's persistent efforts to infiltrate terrorists across the LOC, in pursuit of its designs on Jammu & Kashmir. We call upon ~ Pakistan to observe its obligations under the Simla Agreement, in particular, to desist from violating the international

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boundary and the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir. We reiterate that Pakistan must abandon its sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir, and elsewhere in India, its continuing firing, including artillery shelling across the international boundary and the LOC in Jammu & Kashmir, often targeting the civilian population, as well as its vicious propaganda against India. We must once again make it clear that there cannot be a resolution of complex issues, or the building of a stable bilateral relationship as long as Pakistan continues to engage in these confrontational and hostile activities.

Our desire for good neighbourly relations with Pakistan was once again made amply clear in the historic initiative of Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee to visit Lahore in February this year. We call upon Pakistan to join us in following up on the Lahore Declaration, which commits the two countries to work purposefully in building confidence and trust, put in place a stable structure of cooperation and resolve all outstanding issues through peaceful bilateral discussions.

May 21, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : May 21, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Regarding violation of LoC by our aircraft

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman's statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 27, 1999 regarding rejection of Pakistan's protest on alleged violation of LoC by Indian aircraft:

Our Acting High Commissioner in Islamabad has categorically rejected the "protest" and the untenable allegations made this evening by an official of the Pakistan Foreign Ministry. It was pointed out to the Pakistan Foreign Ministry that there has been no violation whatsoever of the LoC by India. Our aircraft were flying on our

side of the LoC. The spokesman of our Ministry of Defence has already provided all the facts. Pakistan's action is hostile and provocative, and represents an escalation. In this context, it is we who lodge a strong protest.

It is shameless of Pakistan to speak of violation of the Simla Agreement, considering that Pakistan has been systematically flouting the Simla Agreement all these years, through its continuous and active sponsorship of cross-border terrorism and artillery shelling and vicious propoganda. Now, this has been seriously compounded by Pakistan's pushing across the LoC in the Kargil Sector, of a large number of armed intruders, fully supported by the Pakistan armed forces. These intrusions are qualitatively different from the earlier ones. As made clear in our statement of May 21, and by our Prime Minister in his talk with his Pakistan counterpart, such activity is totally unacceptable. All necessary action will be taken by our armed forces to put an end to this intrusion. We are resolute in our determination to complete this task. Pakistan will be responsible for any escalation. Pakistan should realise that such foolhardy ventures against India cannot succeed. Regarding the reference to the DGMO's conversation, we are waiting for the Pakistan DGMO to respond to suggestions made by his Indian counterpart.

The present situation has been created entirely because of Pakistan's provocative activities. It is Pakistan which needs to exercise restraint. We remain committed to the Lahore Declaration. Pakistan must realise that there cannot be stable relations in the face of its provocations.

May 27, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : May 27, 1999

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1995

PAKISTAN

Death of Indian TAF Squadron Leader Ajay Ahuja

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 30, 1999 regarding protest note on shooting of IAF Squadron Leader Ajay Ahuja:

The Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan was summoned to South Block today. A strong protest was lodged about the brutal shooting of IAF Squadron Leader Ajay Ahuja by his captors, as evident from the post-mortem report.

It was conveyed that Government of India strongly condemns this act of cowardice and savagery and expects that those who are guilty of shooting Squadron Leader Ahuja in cold blood will be prosecuted by the Government of Pakistan for murder and punished.

May 30, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA

Date : May 30, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Pakistan Foreign Minister visit to India

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman's statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 31, 1999 regarding visit of Pakistani Foreign Minister to India:

Prime Minister has considered and accepted the offer of Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to send Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz to India. The dates for the Pakistan Foreign Minister's visit will be worked out through diplomatic channels.

Our armed forces will continue with the operations that have been launched until their objective of putting an end to the armed intrusion in the entire Kargil sector and the restoration of the Status Quo Ante is attained.
May 31, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : May 31, 1999

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1995

RUSSIA

Visit of Mr. Sergei Eduardovich Prikhodko to India from May 15-17, 1999

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in 'New Delhi on May 15, 1999 regarding visit of Mr. Sergei Eduardovich Prikhodko Deputy Head of the Administration of the Russian President from May 15-17, 1999:

With a view to exchanging views on key international issues, particularly the problems related to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and to review all aspects of bilateral relations the Deputy Head of the Administration of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Sergei Eduardovich Prikhodko is visiting India from May 15-17, 1999 as Special Envoy of the President of the Russian Federation. Mr. Sergei Eduardovich Prikhodko called on Prime Minister, and the Minister of External Affairs and had wide-ranging discussions with Principal Secretary to PM and Foreign Secretary. This visit is

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in keeping with the long-standing tradition of close bilateral contacts between India and Russia at all levels. Mr. Prikhodko also handed over to Prime Minister a letter from President Boris Yeltsin.

2. Mr. Sergei Eduardovich Prikhodko's meetings in India reaffirmed that relations between the two countries have traditionally been characterised by continuity, trust and mutual understanding and constitute a strategic partnership. Both countries attach high importance to this relationship and share a common vision of a multi-polar world. It was

also reaffirmed during the discussions that there is a national consensus in both countries on further developing and strengthening this relationship. It was agreed that all efforts would be made to enhance trade and other economic and related exchanges. Bilateral interaction between the two countries will be further sustained during the forthcoming high-level visit of the Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaswant Singh to Russia from May 24-25, 1999. During the discussions mention was also made of the planned bilateral summit level visit.

3. It was noted during the discussions that India and Russia have a shared perspective on key international and regional issues. There exists a strong convergence in the views of the two countries On developments related to Kosovo. Both sides believe that the solution to the problems related to Kosovo have to be found in means other than the military. They would continue to remain in contact with each other and other like-minded countries and coordinate their positions to contribute towards efforts to find a peaceful negotiated solution to the problem under UN auspices which 'would uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Both sides called for an immediate cessation of military action by NATO which is unjustified and welcomed efforts at a negotiated settlement of the problem in the UN framework. This would allow the people of the region to return to their homes in safety and dignity. Mr. Prikhodko briefed the Indian side of Russia's recent Contacts with other countries on this issue.

4. It was noted that recent developments have particularly underscored the need for a reform of the UN. Mr. Prikhodko reiterated that in Russia's view India is a strong candidate for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Russia was against any hasty steps in the context of UN reforms.

5. All the meetings were held in an atmosphere of friendship understanding and trust.

May 15, 1999

RUSSIA USA INDIA YUGOSLAVIA

Date : May 15, 1999

Volume No

1995

YUGOSLAVIA

New Strategic Concept of NATO

Following is the text of a Official Spokes-man's response to a question issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 11, 1999 regarding new strategic concept of NA TO:

The Government of India is concerned over the Defence Capabilities Initiative of the new strategic concept of NATO that permits operations beyond the Euro-Atlantic region and outside the territory of the Alliance. Such action, if undertaken, would contravene international law, norms of peaceful co-existence between nations and the UN Charter. Government finds unacceptable

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the increasing tendency of NATO to usurp the power and function of the UN Security Council. NATO is an alliance of a few countries and cannot seek to disregard the universal organization which is the United Nations. The propensity of NATO to extend its areas of operation is a source of concern to all countries, big and small.

May 11, 1999

YUGOSLAVIA INDIA USA

Date : May 11, 1999

Volume No

1995

YUGOSLAVIA

India continues to watch and monitor development relating to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman's statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 11, 1999 regarding NATO military action against Yugoslavia:

Government of India continue to watch and monitor developments relating to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. As the NATO military action against that country enters the 49th day, we again express our serious concern over its increasingly untoward and tragic consequences.

The call made by India and a number of other countries for an immediate end to all hostilities has regrettably remained unheeded, and there is mounting human and material devastation. We note with particular concern the effects of the continuing and intense aerial bombardment by NATO forces which has not spared important cities and towns including Belgrade. Hospitals and other civilian establishments as well as diplomatic premises. have become targets causing considerable loss of innocent civilian lives and destruction of human habitation. We are also witnessing far-reaching ecological and environmental damage. India remains seriously concerned over the large scale displacement of people out of Kosovo and the unremitting hardship and suffering that they are undergoing.

These incidents only confirm that the very fundamentals of NATO's approach are wrong. This all round human tragedy has led to rising tensions and has created instability in the region. The danger of the conflict spreading remains. These developments starkly underline what we in India, together with a good part of the international community have all along been emphasizing - that a solution to the problems relating to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia cannot be found through military means. Government of India had even as early as October 1998 urged that the problem should be resolved through consultation and dialogue and not by confrontation. This approach was reiterated through its statements of March 24 and 25, 1999. We also recall statements made by our representatives on these developments in UN fora, including the UN Commission for Human Rights.

Hostilities and disintegration along ethnic and religious lines must be brought to an end in the Balkans. This alone Will end the instability in the region. We therefore once again call for an immediate end to NATO operations and a dialogue between the parties involved. This would allow the refugees to return to their homes safely and people to rebuild their lives. Any solution so arrived at must ensure the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Government's attention has been drawn to proposals for a diplomatic, negotiated solution. We welcome any move in this regard, and call upon NATO to show responsibility and respond positively.
May 11, 1999

YUGOSLAVIA INDIA USA

Date : May 11, 1999

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1995

YUGOSLAVIA

NATO Airstrikes on Belgrade

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on May 21, 1999 regarding functioning of Indian Embassy in Belgrade despite NA TO airstrikes:

The Embassy of India in Belgrade has continued to function normally despite NATO action entering its 59th day. The City of Belgrade has been the target of repeated airstrikes. External Affairs Minister had written to our Ambassador on April 28, 1999 to compliment the Embassy staff on the way they had admirably shouldered their responsibilities despite the serious physical and psychological pressure the bombing had placed them in. Being fully cognizant of the welfare of its members, the External Affairs Ministry had deputed one of its senior officers to visit Belgrade. The Officer was in Belgrade on May 17-19. He individually met with the Ambassador, the members of the Embassy and their families to convey best wishes on behalf of the Government of India and to boost their morale. All our Embassy members are safe and have warmly welcomed this initiative of the Ministry of External Affairs. May 21, 1999

YUGOSLAVIA INDIA USA

Date : May 21, 1999

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Jun 30, 1999

INDIA USA PAKISTAN SWITZERLAND RUSSIA BANGLADESH

Date : Jun 30, 1999

Volume No

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INDIA

Joint Meeting of the National Security Council, the Strategic Policy Group and the National Security Advisory Board

Following is the text of a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on June 8, 1999 in New Delhi regarding Joint Meeting of the National Security Council, the Strategic Policy Group and the National Security Advisory Board chaired by the Prime Minister:

The Prime Minister chaired a joint meeting of the National Security Council, the Strategic Policy Group and the National Security advisory Board earlier today. Home Minister, Raksha Mantri, External Affairs Minister, Finance Minister and Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission were present. The three Service chiefs were in attendance as members of the Strategic Policy Group. The main focus of the discussion was the situation in Kargil, the broader question of India Pakistan relations.

The meeting undertook an in-depth and wide-ranging analysis of the motivations and politico-strategic objectives of the current Pakistani intrusion, in both the short term and long term perspective. A clear understanding of Pakistan's aims emerged from the discussion. Pakistan's recent official pronouncements reveal an inclination towards adventurism, the consequences of which shall be entirely Pakistan's responsibility.

The discussions revealed complete unanimity that the combined Army-Air Force operations in Kargil were the right response to the Pakistani armed incursion across the LoC. All necessary means required to reverse this should be used. There was also complete agreement that Pakistani attempts to question the Line of Control, and to violate the Shimla Agreement were completely unacceptable.

It was also agreed -that India should remain committed to the composite dialogue with Pakistan on issues that have been agreed between the two sides. The Lahore process should be sustained in the search for a comprehensive improvement in relations with Pakistan. At the same time, India must be prepared for all eventualities in the fluid situation prevailing today. This requires a sustained effort based on national will and political consensus.

The meeting also noted that the international community had shown greater understanding of India's concerns. The situation called for more intensive diplomacy so as to neutralise Pakistan's efforts to mislead and disinform public opinion.

Special attention at the meeting was paid to information-related aspects. India has been the target of a ten year terrorist campaign in J&K and other parts of India. It should make more active efforts at educating public opinion both in India and abroad. It should also highlight the forbearance it has shown so far, in the face of grave provocation.

Prime Minister decided that this process of combined consultations will be continued.

Jun 08, 1999

INDIA USA PAKISTAN

Date : Jun 08, 1999

Volume No

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INDIA

Haj Committee

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on June 16, 1999 regarding newly constituted Haj Committee:

The newly constituted Haj Committee, Mumbai, today elected Shri Tanveer Ahmed as its Chairman, The Committee also elected Shri Gul Mohammed and Nasir Jamal Sheikh as Vice-Chairmen.

The new Haj Committee was constituted by Ministry of External Affairs in January, 1999 but it could not take office on account of Supreme Court directive which provided that the Old Committee should continue till 15th May, 1999 as arrangements relating to Haj 1999 were at its Advance stage.

In May, the take over of the New Haj Committee was further delayed on account of litigation in the Supreme Court and four other High Courts (Delhi, Calcutta Allahabad and Jammu & Kashmir) which attempted to give a continued lease of life to the old Committee. The matter was finally settled by the Supreme Court yesterday which vacated an earlier stay order of the Calcutta High Court and directed that no other High Court should entertain petitions seeking to delay the Constitution of the Haj Committee.

At its meeting in Mumbai, before electing the Chairman and two other Vice Chairmen, the New Haj Committee coopted Three Members S/Sh. Shahzada Qaide Joher Bhai Saheb, Mirza Taqi Raza and Sohail Lokhand wala.
Jun 16, 1999

INDIA

Date : Jun 16, 1999

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INDIA

Statement issued by the G-8 Countries

Following is the text of the Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on June 20, 1999 welcoming the

statement issued by the G-8 countries calling on Pakistan to undo its armed intrusion and respect the Line of Control:

We welcome the statement issued by the G-8 countries, calling on Pakistan to undo its armed intrusion and fully respect the Line of Control. We expect that Pakistan will heed this call and act to immediately put an end to its irresponsible conduct and fully restore the status quo ante on the Line of Control. Until that happens the action of our armed forces will continue.

Pakistan must abide by the Lahore Declaration which includes a commitment to the Simla Agreement, and also reaffirm its complete respect for the sanctity of the Line of Control, without reservations. On our part, we remain committed to the Lahore process and the resumption of the composite dialogue with Pakistan.
Jun 20, 1999

INDIA PAKISTAN USA

Date : Jun 20, 1999

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INDIA

Passport application form facilities at MEA Patiala House

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on June 22, 1999 regarding in addition to existing facilities, it has been decided that passport application forms will also now be available at the office of the MEA Patiala House:

In addition to existing facilities, it has been decided that passport application

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forms will also now be available at the office of the Ministry of External Affairs located at Patiala House Annexe, Tilak Marg, New Delhi with effect from 22nd June 1999.

The counter will be open for the public from 9.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. on all working days (Monday to Friday).

Each applicant will be issued only one application form, which can be photocopied and used if more forms are required.

Complete application forms will continue to be submitted at PRO, Delhi located in Trikoot-H building, Bikaji Cama Place, R. K. Puram, New Delhi for applicants from the Delhi region.

Jun 22, 1999

INDIA USA

Date : Jun 22, 1999

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INDIA

Exchange of message between Prime Minister and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman statement issued in New Delhi on June 28, 1999 regarding exchange of message between Prime Minister and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the Kargil situation:

In response to a question, the Official Spokesman said that messages Were exchanged between Prime Minister and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the Kargil situation. These messages were in continuation of their telephonic discussions of the past few weeks. In this context, Mr. NIA Nail visited India.

In these exchanges, our Prime Minister has emphasised that Pakistan must withdraw its forces and extremist elements from our side of the Line of Control and reaffirm the sanctity of the Line of Control. Prime Minister also conveyed our continuing interest in resuming the Lahore process once this happens.

Jun 28, 1999

INDIA USA PAKISTAN

Date : Jun 28, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Pakistan Foreign Minister Comments on LoC

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman's statement issued on June 4, 1999 in New Delhi on reported Comments of Pakistan Foreign Minister Sartaz Aziz regarding the Line of Control in the state of Jammu & Kashmir:

We have seen the reported comments of Pakistan Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz regarding the Line of Control in the State of Jammu & Kashmir. These comments confirm Pakistan's intention to justify its armed intrusion and aggression, thereby seeking to alter the well-defined Line of Control.

Pakistan Foreign Minister's suggestion is untenable. It represents an irresponsible and dubious doctrine which undermines established principles and can have extremely dangerous repercussions on the maintenance of peace and security. India has scrupulously respected the Line of Control despite the continued forcible and illegal occupation of a large part of the state of Jammu & Kashmir which, in its entirety, is an integral part of India.

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The delineation of the Line of Control, throughout its entire length, was undertaken by the military authorities of

India and Pakistan in accordance with paragraph 4(ii) of the Simla Agreement. The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan gave their approval to the delineation on 11th December, 1972. Adjustments of ground positions to conform to the Line of Control, were also completed subsequently.

Neither the disposition of ground forces nor of control of territory flowing from the delineation of the Line of Control has ever been questioned by either country and the interpretation of the Line of Control has never been an issue. It is significant that such fundamental issues are being raised in the wake of Pakistan's armed intrusion and aggression in the Kargil sector. The comments of the Pakistan Foreign Minister are, evidently a demonstration of their designs to manufacture a rationale for aggression and to gain for it an ex-post facto respectability. This is a futile effort to obfuscate and to divert attention from the central issue which is Pakistan's armed intrusion and aggression.

The Line of Control is well-defined and fully settled. We would like to make it clear that the comments relating to the Line of Control made by Pakistan Foreign Minister cannot be the subject for discussion. We call upon Pakistan to respect the sanctity of the Line of Control, give up its desperate and foolhardy attempts to change it, and to stop its cross-border terrorism against India. A meaningful dialogue can only take place if Pakistan begins to act accordingly.

We reiterate that we are firmly resolved to evict Pakistan's armed intrusion and to repel the aggression launched against us.

Jun 04, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA RUSSIA

Date : Jun 04, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Proposal for the visit of Pakistan Foreign Minister

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement issued on June 5, 1999 in New Delhi regarding visit of Pakistan Foreign Minister to New Delhi:

The armed forces of India are continuing with their successful operation in pushing back the intrusion that has taken place into our side of the Line of Control in the Kargil sector. These operations will continue until the aggression committed against India is vacated. It is an objective that we will pursue unwaveringly and with the fullest determination.

As we have intimated earlier, we had received a proposal to schedule the visit of Pakistan Foreign Minister Mr. Sartaj Aziz to India on June 7, 1999. The Ministry of External Affairs has today informed the High Commission of Pakistan in New Delhi that the date is not convenient and we will revert shortly to the Government of Pakistan with alternative dates.

Jun 05, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Jun 05, 1999

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1995

PAKISTAN

Proposal for visit of Pakistan Foreign Minister to India

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman's statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on June 8, 1999 regarding visit of Pakistan Foreign Minister to India on June 12, 1999:

...In response to the Pakistani proposal to send Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz to India, the Ministry of External Affairs conveyed today to the Pakistani High Commission that the Pakistan Foreign Minister may visit India on Saturday, June 12, 1999.

Jun 08, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA

Date : Jun 08, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Breach of Geneva Conventions by the Pak armed forces

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs on June 15, 1999 in New Delhi, regarding summon to Pak Dy. High Commissioner to Foreign Office and conveyance to him of breaches of the Geneva Conventions on the Indian Army Official during armed conflict in Kargil:

The Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan was summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs today. The following was conveyed to him:

"Members of the Pakistan armed forces and armed personnel under Pakistani control have committed grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 in the course of the military operations currently, underway on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LoC). These included the torture, inhuman treatment, and wilful killing of the Indian Air Force pilot at (i) below whose plane was shot down on 27th May, 1999 and the six officials of the Indian Army at (ii) to (vii) below who were captured while patrolling on the Indian side of the LoC on 14th May, 1999 and whose bodies were handed over by the Pakistan Army authorities on 9th June, 1999.

(1) Squadron Leader Ajay Ahuja(ii) Lieutenant S. Kalia(iii) Sepoy Mula Ram(iv) Sepoy Banwari Lal(v) Sepoy

Bheeka Ram(vi) Sepoy Arjun Ram Baswana(vii) Sepoy Naresh Singh

The captured members of the Indian armed forces were entitled to the full protection of the Geneva Conventions. Both India and Pakistan are Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions.

In respect of grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, the parties to the Convention are required to take effective penal sanctions against persons committing or ordering to have them committed. Grave breaches include: wilful killing, torture, inhuman treatment, causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, to which the captured members of the Indian armed forces were subjected. Each Contracting Party is also under the obligation to search for persons alleged to have committed, or to have ordered to have committed such grave breaches, and to bring such persons, regardless of their nationality, before their courts for prosecution. No High Contracting Party is allowed to absolve itself of any liability in respect of such grave breaches of the Convention.

The Government of India demands that the persons responsible for grave breach of the Geneva Conventions by torture, inhuman treatment and wilful killing of the captured members of the Indian armed force personnel are identified and brought to justice without delay. It is further requested that a full account of the date, place and circumstance of capture, period of detention and particulars concerning the wounds and cause of death are communicated to the Government of India immediately."

Jun 15, 1999

PAKISTAN SWITZERLAND INDIA USA

Date : Jun 15, 1999

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PAKISTAN

Mr. Dil Fayyaz's withdrawal from India

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on June 28, 1999 regarding Mr. Dil Fayyaz indulging in activities incompatible and his withdrawal from India:

The Deputy High Commissioner of Pakistan was summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs this evening. He was informed that Mr. Dil Fayyaz, staff member of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi had been indulging in activities incompatible with his official status. The Government of India have, accordingly, sought Mr. Fayyaz's withdrawal from India by July 5, 1999.

Jun 28, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Jun 28, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Abduction of Shri Doraiswamy

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on June 29, 1999 regarding abduction of Shri Doraiswamy staff member of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad :

At 7.45 A.M. today, Shri N. R. Doraiswamy, a staff member of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad was pulled out of the staff car of the High Commission from in front of his house by about 10 Pakistani intelligence operatives. The driver of the car and the Security Guard of the Mission, who were also in the car tried to prevent the abduction of Shri Doraiswamy. They were, however, manhandled and pushed aside by the intelligence operatives.

The Pakistan High Commissioner was asked this morning by Shri Nareshwar Dayal, Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs to ensure the immediate and safe return of Shri Doraiswamy, and told that his well being was the responsibility of Pakistan. Shri Doraiswamy was released shortly before noon today. He had been badly beaten and was severely bruised.

The abduction of Shri Doraiswamy was a pre-planned act, in complete violation of the Vienna Convention and the bilateral India-Pakistan Code of Conduct for treatment of diplomatic / consular personnel.

The Government of India has protested to the Government of Pakistan against this brutal act. This is not the first act of physical assault of our Mission personnel. The Government of India demands that Pakistan adheres to the Vienna Convention and the bilateral understandings on the subject of treatment of diplomatic and consular personnel in either country.

Jun 29, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC USA AUSTRIA

Date : Jun 29, 1999

Volume No

1995

RUSSIA

Signing of agreement on mutual cooperation

Following is the text of an agreement signed by Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Moscow on June 10, 1999 on mutual cooperation:

The Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi and the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow signed an agreement on mutual cooperation today. The agreement was signed by Shri Dalip Mehta, Dean, Foreign Service Institute and Mr. Yuri B. Kashlev, Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation. Under the agreement, the two institutes shall cooperate in the areas of diplomacy and international relations; research and development; exchange of faculty and students; conducting joint research and seminars, and, holding conferences. It would also include an information exchange programme, exchange of publications, and scientific research on subjects of mutual interest.

Jun 10, 1999

RUSSIA USA INDIA

Date : Jun 10, 1999

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SAARC

Meeting of the SAARC Standing Group on Standards Quality Control, Measurement and Hazardous Products

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on June 25, 1999 regarding meeting of the SAARC Standing Group on Standards, Quality Control, Measurement and Hazardous Products from 29-30 June, 1999:

The First Meeting of the SAARC Standing Group on Standards, Quality Control, Measurement and Hazardous Products is being held at Hotel Maurya Sheraton, New Delhi from June 29-30. The Keynote address will be delivered by Shri P. P. Prabhu, Commerce Secretary, Government of India at 0930 hrs on 29th June at the inauguration of the Meeting.

Cooperation in core areas of economic cooperation under the aegis of SAARC started with the operationalisation of the South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) in December 1995. Since then several measures have been taken to liberalise trade in the region like downward revision of rules of origin, increase in preferential tariff concessions on a large number of items, harmonisation of customs procedures. Similarly, it has been agreed to conclude the Fourth Round of trade negotiations in August, 1999. The negotiations on a SAFTA treaty are also likely to begin in July and the treaty is likely to be concluded by 2001 whereafter implementation would begin.

Harmonisation of Standards in the region with International Standards and amongst the SAARC countries is an imperative if intra-regional trade or the share of the region's trade with the world is to rise. Transparent standards evoke confidence in trade circles and lend certainty to the transactions. Regional cooperation in this field has been regularly emphasised by SAARC Leaders. In this direction, a SAARC Workshop on Regional Approach to Standardisation and Quality Control was held at New Delhi In December, 1997. The Second Commerce Minister's Meeting at Islamabad (April 1998) recommended that a SAARC Standing Group on Standards should be constituted. This has been constituted and the first Meeting is taking place in Delhi.

....Among the major issues that will come up for deliberation are: Harmonisation of regional Standards, Conformity Assessment and Accreditation, Testing, Measurement and Callbration, HRD and Information Systems.

Jun 25, 1999

USA INDIA PAKISTAN

Date : Jun 25, 1999

Volume No

1995

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Visit of Mr. Gibson Lanpher to India

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on June 27, 1999 regarding offer of the US government to brief us about the discussions held by a senior US military delegation with the Pakistani leadership:

We had announced a few days ago that we had accepted with appreciation

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the offer of the US government to brief us about the discussions held by a senior US military delegation with the Pakistani leadership. Pursuant to this understanding, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Gibson Lanpher, who was part of the US delegation in Pakistan, held talks in New Delhi today with officials of the Ministry of External Affairs. Mr. Lanpher also called on the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

The Indian and US delegations held talks for about two hours. Mr. Lanpher briefed the Indian side about the discussions held by General Zinni in Islamabad.

It is imperative that Pakistan heed the advice of the international community and take immediate steps to withdraw the armed intruders from the Indian side of the Line of Control and ensure that such violations do not recur in the future. Once the armed intruders are withdrawn, it is possible to take steps to resume the composite dialogue process that responds to the wishes of the people of both India and Pakistan to live in peace and amity.
Jun 27, 1999

USA INDIA PAKISTAN

Date : Jun 27, 1999

Volume No

1995

ANNEXURE I

Prime Minister's speech in Dhaka while receiving Calcutta-Dhaka inaugural bus

"I am delighted to join your excellency and the distinguished guests present here in welcoming to Dhaka all those who have travelled from India to Bangladesh on the occasion of the inaugural run of the bus service between Calcutta and Dhaka. This is indeed a joyous occasion for people in both countries. This is a service that we have long planned for and today we see it as a reality. For those of you who have made this landmark journey, I am sure it was a memorable experience. Think for a moment of what your trip today represents!

Every year a few lakh people cross the border check-points between our two countries. Their travel is expensive. The absence of a direct service has meant the travellers have had to walk across the border with their luggage. Today's inaugural run is, I hope, only the beginning of many more such facilities for people in both our countries.

Our travellers include students in large numbers, medical patients, business people, pilgrims, tourists and people who have lived once on other side of our common border, causing them

to travel between Bangladesh and India to enjoy the company and affection of their families and friends. It is my earnest hope that in the years ahead, with the cooperation of Government of Bangladesh similar facilities can be put in place for the many people who wish to travel between other destinations in our two countries. While it is befitting that we have begun the service between Calcutta and Dhaka, there is a lot more that we would love to do to promote road links between our two countries.

The start of the service represents one more stage in the active agenda between India and Bangladesh. At the governmental level we deal with many issues big and small which affect the wellbeing of the people in both our countries. We promote culture, we discuss trade, we exchange ideas on how to improve border management. We hold meetings and conduct studies on the best ways to handle the rivers that we share. We also discuss problems dealing with narcotic drugs, crimes across the border, law and order and insurgency. I would like you to know

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that when we speak of good relations between our two countries, the Government of India derives great encouragement from the tremendous amount of interaction that takes place between the peoples of India and Bangladesh.

Many of our problems are similar and much of our heritage is common. Language, literature, music and art, at the same time, we are two separate, sovereign independent countries who enjoy the kind of goodwill and understanding by which we are able to settle complex problems through bilateral dialogues. It was this approach that led to the signing of the historic treaty on the sharing of the Ganga waters. It is our conviction that the same approach of goodwill and friendship will continue to govern the relations between our two countries.

Our travellers have spent much of today driving through the Bangladesh countryside. In the month of 'Ashad' which brings the monsoon, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore sang wonderfully of how shadows of the clouds of 'Ashad' play around the 'Kadamba' groves, while the 'Piyal' trees swing in the wind and seem to dance; and I quote -

Perhaps in coming years we also see more routes and even rail services available to the general public. Whatever the future holds in the areas of these transport linkages, the people of India and Bangladesh will always look back to today's journey and to today's travellers as the ones who started the process. After an early start this morning I know that you will be tired and keen to rest. I am grateful to Her Excellency, the Prime Minister and the Government of Bangladesh for inviting me to Dhaka to join in this wonderful celebration.

Thank you. Namaskar".

(Speech as recorded from direct telecast)
Jun 30, 1999

BANGLADESH INDIA USA

Date : Jun 30, 1999

Volume No

1995

ANNEXUREII

Credit Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

The Government of the Republic of India, hereinafter referred to as the Government of India, and the Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, hereinafter referred to as the Government of Bangladesh, mutually desirous of further strengthening economic relations between the two countries, agree to enter into a Credit Agreement whereby the Government of India will make available to the Government of Bangladesh a line of Credit of Indian Rupees 200 crore (Rupees Two Hundred crore) spread over the period up to March 2002 as per the following annual allocation.

up to March 2000 Rs. 50 crore April 2000 March 2001 Rs. 75 crore April 2001 March 2002 Rs. 75 crore

ARTICLE - 1

The Credit of Indian Rupees 200 crore shall be available to the Government

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of Bangladesh for importing from India goods of Indian manufacture as listed in Annex I to this Agreement. The list may be modified, by way of additions, deletions or substitutions, from time to time, by mutual agreement between the two Governments. The Credit will not cover third country imports.

ARTICLE - 2

The export of goods from India and their import into Bangladesh shall take place through normal commercial channels subject to the laws and regulations in force in both countries. Price and other terms and conditions shall be settled between the exporters in India and importers in Bangladesh.

ARTICLE - 3

The credit will cover 100% of the f.o.b. value of the goods listed in Annex I which shall be expressed in Indian rupees. Letters of Credit shall specify that 100% f.o.b. value shall be financed from the Credit.

ARTICLE - 4

The Credit Agreement shall come into force immediately on signing of this Agreement. Contracts to be financed under this Agreement for items in Annex I shall be signed and letters of credit established by 31st March 2001 and the amount drawn by March 2003. If the full amount of the loan for these items is not drawn by this date, the balance will be cancelled and the final instalments of the repayment to be made by the Government of Bangladesh shall be reduced accordingly except as may otherwise be mutually agreed to between the two Governments.

ARTICLE - 5

The State Bank of India shall maintain an account designated as "Credit to Bangladesh Account IV" and make disbursements therefrom in accordance with the procedure indicated in Annex II to this Agree-

ARTICLE - 6

(i) The Government of Bangladesh shall pay interest at the rate of 5% per annum on outstanding Credit amount. Interest shall be charged from the dates on which disbursements are effected by the State Bank of India to the dates on which repayments are received by them.

(ii) Interest charges shall be payable every six months on the first day of January and July of each year.

ARTICLE - 7

(i) The Government of Bangladesh shall repay the principal of the loan in 24 semi annual instalments repayable on the first day of January and July of each year commencing from the 1st July 2002 in accordance with the amortisation schedule set forth in Annex III subject to actual utilisation of credit till the due date for repayment.

(ii) The Government of Bangladesh shall also be entitled to repay in advance of the due date one or more instalments of the principal along with interest accrued.

ARTICLE - 8

All repayments of principal and payment of interest shall be made in Indian Rupees acquired through the sale of convertible foreign currencies to banks authorised to deal in foreign exchange in India.

ARTICLE - 9

(i) In the event of default by the Government of Bangladesh in the payments of instalment of principal or of any interest for a period of five months beyond the due date, the Government of India may declare that all the principal amount then outstanding alongwith interest thereon has become due and payable immediately, and upon such declaration the same shall become due and payable immediately.

(ii) For all overdue payments, the Government of Bangladesh shall pay to

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the Government of India interest on the overdue principal and or interest at 1% over the rate mentioned in Article 6 of this Agreement. The interest shall be computed from the due date to the date immediately preceding the date of actual payment thereof, both inclusive.

ARTICLE - 10

Claims or disputes relating to any of the contracts financed under this Credit shall not exempt the Government of Bangladesh from any obligation by way of interest or repayment of principal arising out of payments made by the State Bank of India by debit to the Account referred to in Article 5.

ARTICLE - 11

So long as the Credit remains outstanding, each Government shall, at the request of the other, furnish such reports and information as may be reasonably and specifically asked for regarding the implementation or administration of this Credit Agreement.

ARTICLE - 12

All payments due to be effected by the Government of Bangladesh under this Agreement shall be made without any deductions for taxes, fees, duties and any other charges. These exemptions will not include normal banking charges as specified in Annexure - II.

In witness whereof, the undersigned being duly authorised by their respective Governments have hereto' signed this agreement and affixed thereto their seals.

Done at Dhaka on the 20th day of June, 1999 in two originals in the English language, both texts being equally authentic.

Sd.1-For the Government of the Republic of India (Deb Mukharji) High Commissioner of India

Sd.1-For the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh(Dr. A.K.M. Mas1hur Rahman)
Secretary,Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance
Jun 30, 1999

INDIA BANGLADESH USA RUSSIA UNITED KINGDOM

Date : Jun 30, 1999

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Date : Jul 01, 1999

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INDIA

VI World Hindi Conference

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on July 1, 1999 regarding organising of VI World Hindi Conference in London from 14 to 18th September 1999:

Hindi Samiti, U.K., in association with Geetanjali, Ahinsam Bhartiya and Bhartiya Bhasha Sangh and with the support of Government of India organising the VI World Hindi Conference in London from 14 to 18th September, 1999. World Hindi Conferences have so far been organised in India, Mauritius and Trinidad & Tobago. Organising the VI World Hindi Conference in London in the Golden Jubilee Year of the Official Language Hindi has special significance.

2. Like other countries of the World in Britain also large number of Indians are living. Besides the Hindi, people speaking other Indian languages as Punjabi, Gujrati, Marathi, Bangla, Tamil etc. are also living here in large number and they are propagating Indian culture and language by organising national and religious functions collectively. Various Hindi organisations located in different parts of U.K. are rendering commendable service in

propagation of Hindi. Not only this, many European Hindi Scholars like Max Muller, Silva Levi, Slegan, A. V. Keith, Kamil Bulke have studied and taught Indian Language, literature and played an important role in its propagation. Hindi enjoys a good position as a link language amongst the Non Resident Indians of Britain. Hindi is encouragingly used as a link language in marriages and religious functions, social and cultural programmes of Indians. Hindi is being studied and taught in the Hindi Departments of various universities of Britain.

3. After Chinese, Hindi is the second largest spoken language in the world Geographically, Hindi speaking people are scattered all over the world. Very shortly, we would be entering in the 21st Century. With a view to get Hindi its rightful place as an international language in 21st Century, the main theme of the Conference would be "Hindi and the Future Generations".

4. The Scholars who wish to read their articles in the Conference are requested to send the extracts of their articles to Prof. Mahendra Verma, Department of Language and Linguistic Science, University of York, York YO 10, 5DD, UK (E-Mail mkvi @ york. ac. uk) Fax: 01904 432673 London or to the Deputy Secretary (Hindi), Ministry of External Affairs, South Block. Room No. 235 N New Delhi-110011 (Fax No. 3010889/3793002) by post or Fax. For further details, kindly contact Hindi Samiti, UK, 10 Bell Meadow Dulwish Wood Avenue, London, SE 19, IHP, UK. Fax No. 44 (O) 181 4880458, E-mail hindi samiti @ hot mail. com or the Deputy Secretary (Hindi), Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi-110011. Telephone No. 3013889.

Jul 01, 1999

INDIA UNITED KINGDOM MAURITIUS USA

Date : Jul 01, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Withdrawal of Pakistan Forces from Kargil

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on July 5, 1999 regarding US-Pakistan Joint statement issued in Washington on withdrawal by Pakistan of their forces from our side of the Line of Control:

We have seen the US-Pakistan Joint Statement issued in Washington yesterday. Our US interlocutors have informed us that "concrete steps" referred to in the Statement means withdrawal by Pakistan of their forces from our side of the Line of Control in the Kargil sector. We have also noted the sequencing of steps agreed to in the statement, that only after withdrawal is completed will other contemplated steps be initiated. We hope Pakistan will heed this call immediately. We will be watching developments on the ground.

We reaffirm that Pakistan's armed intrusion and aggression has to be vacated. Our military action in the Kargil sector, which has been initiated for this purpose, is making steady progress. It will continue with full force until the aggressors are cleared out, and the status quo ante on the Line of Control fully restored.

One word about the Lahore process. It is direct and bilateral. In this process, there is no place whatsoever for any third party involvement. The same is true for any other aspect of India-Pakistan relations.

Jul 05, 1999

INDIA PAKISTAN USA

Date : Jul 05, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Volunteered contribution of one day's salary to the 'National Defence Fund'

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on July 13, 1999 regarding donation of one day's salary to the National Defence Fund by the Passport Offices:

As a gesture of support to the valiant efforts being made by our armed forces all the officials and staff of the Central Passport Organisation at 28 Passport Offices spread throughout the country have volunteered to contribute their one day's salary to the 'National Defence Fund'.

The contributions already received from 22 Passport Offices amounting to Rs. 2,54,890/- were presented to Smt. Vasundhara Raje, Minister of State for External Affairs by the Chief Passport Officer and the representatives of All India Passport Employees Association. Foreign Secretary was also present on the occasion.

Thanking the employees of the Passport Offices for their enthusiasm and support, the Minister of State said that all of us were serving the nation in different capacities. The need of the hour is that all countrymen work efficiently and beyond the call of duty in whatever our vacation may be. She appealed to the officials and staff of the Passport Offices to work with re-doubled efforts so that the Passport Offices become a model of prompt, efficient and courteous services.

Jul 13, 1999

INDIA USA

Date : Jul 13, 1999

Volume No

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INDIA

Update on the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on July 28, 1999 regarding death of 47 year old Yatri from Nasik Ms. Nisha Prabhudesai Rajaram near Rangti Nullah between Dharchula and Tawaghat:

According to the State Government of Uttar Pradesh, heavy rains have damaged road and other infrastructure at some places on the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra route that traverses through the Pithoragarh District of Uttar Pradesh.

On 26th July 1999, a 47-year old Yatri from Nasik, Ms. Nisha Prabhudesai Rajaram, who was part of the 9th batch of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra was hit by a falling boulder near Rangti Nullah between Dharchula and Tawaghat. The doctor accompanying the batch attended to the Yatri and a message was sent to Dharchula for an ambulance. Ms. Prabhudesai however passed away shortly after the accident.

The other 36 yatris of the 9th batch are safe and have since returned to Dharchula, where they are being looked after by the Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam. They may resume the Yatra whenever local weather and road conditions permit.

The first five batches have all completed the Yatra and have returned back safely. The 5th batch returned on 23rd July 1999. Batch No. 6 which crossed over on 24th July, 1999 after completing the Yatra on the Chinese side, is presently at Budhi and is expected to remain there until a damaged bridge between Malpa and Lakhanpur is repaired. According to the District Magistrate of Pithoragarh, this may take a few days. All Yatris of the 6th batch are reported to be safe. The 7th batch is presently in Tibet and is scheduled to cross into India on 30th July 1999. All Yatris of the 7th batch are reported to be safe. The 8th batch entered Tibet on 24th July 1999 and after completing the Parikrama of Kailash and Mansarovar will cross into India on 5th August 1999. All Yatris of the 8th batch are reported to be safe.

The scheduled departure from New Delhi of the batch No. 10 has been postponed and will proceed on the Yatra only when local weather and road/track conditions permit. Applicants selected for batches 11 to 14 are requested to contact the Ministry of External Affairs at telephone number 3014104.

Jul 28, 1999

INDIA USA

Date : Jul 28, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Update on Kailash Mansarovar Yatra

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on July 30, 1999 regarding reopen of Yatra Route which was earlier cancelled:

Since July 26, 1999, the Kailash Mansarovar route had been affected by inclement weather and poor road/track conditions. As a result the departure of the 10th batch was cancelled. According to the District Magistrate of Pithoragarh, Uttar Pradesh, the Yatra route is now open.

The Yatris selected for the Eleventh batch may report at Ministry of External Affairs on 3rd August, 1999. The eleventh batch is expected to depart, as per the original schedule, on 5th August, 1999.

Batch No. 6, which was earlier detained at Budhi has reached Dharchula on 30th July, 1999. All yatris of the 6th batch are reported to be safe. The 7th batch crossed into India on 30th July 1999. All yatris of the 7th batch are

reported to be safe. The 8th batch entered Tibet on 24th July 1999 and after completing the

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Parikrama of Kailash and Mansarovar will cross into India on 5th August 1999. All Yatris of the 8th batch are reported to be safe.

Applicants selected for batches 12 onwards are requested to maintain contact with the Ministry of External Affairs at telephone number - 301-4104.

Jul 30, 1999

INDIA USA

Date : Jul 30, 1999

Volume No

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IRAQ

Credit of US \$ 25 million to Iraq

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on July 30, 1999 regarding India credit of US \$ 25 million to Iraq for the supply of humanitarian goods within the frame work of relevant UN resolutions:

In response to a question, the Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs said that India has traditionally had good relations with Iraq based on long standing people-to-people contacts. While we remain concerned at the suffering of the Iraqi people, we strictly adhere to all relevant UN resolutions regarding Iraq. During his visit to Iraq for the second meeting of the Indo-Iraqi Joint Commission, the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri V. K. Ramamurthy reiterated that India adheres to UN resolutions on Iraq and its cooperation with Iraq would be in accordance with these resolutions.

India has extended a credit line of US \$ 25 million to Iraq for the supply of humanitarian goods within the framework of relevant UN resolutions. Each supply under the credit is subject to prior approval of the Sanctions Committee in accordance with prescribed procedures of the UN. It is understood that this line of credit is no different from similar agreements signed by several other countries with Iraq.

Jul 30, 1999

IRAQ USA INDIA

Date : Jul 30, 1999

Volume No

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NORTH KOREA

Regarding docking of North Korean vessel loaded with missiles parts at Kandla port

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman statement issued in New Delhi on July 10, 1999 regarding North Korean vessel M. V. Kuwolsan docked at Kandla port found containing missiles equipment:

On 25th June, 1999, a North Korean vessel M. V. Kuwolsan docked at Kandla port to discharge a cargo of sugar.

During examination of the cargo on board it was found to contain 148 boxes, declared as Machines and Water Refining equipment. Subsequent examination of these boxes established that the equipment was, in fact, for production of tactical surface-to-surface missiles with a range in

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excess of 300 kms. It included special materials and equipment, components for guidance system, blue prints, drawings and instruction manuals for production of such missiles.

The investigations in the matter are continuing. In response to our request, the DPRK authorities have agreed to cooperate in facilitating enquiries and completing the investigation.

Jul 10, 1999

KOREA NORTH KOREA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Jul 10, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Operation Vijay

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman statement issued in New Delhi on July 12, 1999 regarding success of Operation Vijay and restoration of Line of Control in the Kargil:

Operation Vijay has been a resounding success. Pakistani forces have been defeated on the ground and status quo ante on the Line of Control in the Kargil sector is being restored. Almost the entire subsector Batalik and the sub-sector Dras have been cleared of Pakistani aggression in the last 48 hours. Pakistani armed intruders comprising overwhelmingly of their regular troops and some extremist elements under their command and control have been evicted. The pressure of our decisive military action in the other two subsectors of Mushkoh valley and Kaksar was also proving unbearable for the Pakistani army.

Pakistan being faced with the inevitable, their DGMO called his Indian counterpart on the evening of 9th July. He sought an early meeting. Our DGMO suggested that the meeting be held at the Border Security Force Reception Hall, on our side of the Joint Check Post, at Attari on Amritsar-Lahore Road on the 11th afternoon. Our DGMO also informed him that we expected Pakistan would begin withdrawing its troops from the Kaksar Sub-sector even before this meeting, and that this withdrawal will be completed by 12th morning.

During his meeting with the Pakistani DGMO yesterday our DGMO informed him that Pakistani forces must withdraw well north of the Line of Control by the morning of the 16th of July. The Pakistani DGMO said that Pakistan would comply with this schedule.

Our DGMO also informed the Pakistani DGMO that any Pakistani intruder, thereafter found within our side of the Line of Control, would be treated as hostile and would be dealt with accordingly.

The withdrawal of Pakistani forces from Kaksar appears to already have taken place. Our troops are proceeding to verify this withdrawal. We have information that the withdrawal of Pakistani forces in Mushkoh valley is also under way.

This withdrawal of Pakistani forces has been brought about by the skill, determination and valour of our armed forces, who rolled back Pakistan's aggression from Kargil, even while conforming to government's direction that the sanctity of the Line of Control be maintained.

Our forces have not de-escalated their action, nor has any disengagement taken place. The Indian army is not impeding by fire the retreat of Pakistani forces. After this withdrawal has been completed, we expect that Pakistan will reaffirm the inviolability and sanctity of the Line of

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Control. The continuance of cross border terrorism in the State of Jammu & Kashmir is a clear violation of the Line of Control and must be abandoned by Pakistan.

Pakistan has persisted with its claim that those who occupied the Kargil heights were "Mujahideen". It is abundantly clear by now that the overwhelming majority of those who crossed over from Pakistan in the Kargil sector were Pakistani troops in pursuit of a misadventure, fully planned and conducted by the Pakistan authorities.

The presence of Pakistani regulars is borne out by the evidence that our forces have collected in the form of identity cards of regular troops, official army documents, personal letters and photographs and the nature of Pakistani weaponry in the posts recaptured by our troops.

It is also tragic that the Pakistan army has refused to accept the bodies of their regular troops who died in action against our forces in the Kargil sector. Our forces have buried the Pakistani dead in accordance with military custom.

Jul 12, 1999

PAKISTAN USA INDIA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Jul 12, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Indo-Pakistan dialogue process

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on July 13, 1999 regarding initiation of the composite dialogue process:

In response to a question regarding Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's call for dialogue, the official spokesman recalled that India was the initiator of the composite dialogue process, aimed at transforming India-Pakistan bilateral relations through building trust and confidence, putting in place a comprehensive structure of cooperation and addressing all outstanding issues. The official spokesman also said that the Prime Minister's historic initiative to visit Lahore was a manifestation of India's deep desire to take India-Pakistan relations in a positive and constructive direction. That is how Pakistan's armed intrusion and aggression in the Kargil sector was a betrayal of trust. It also revealed abiding hostility. It would therefore be idle to pretend that this experience has not set back India-Pakistan relations. This damage has been compounded by Pakistan's continuing fiction that its regular troops were not involved in Kargil. This is an entirely untenable assertion, which flies in the face of facts.

Our future dealings with Pakistan will be governed by the sequence of steps already spelt out. The first essential step is a total clearing up of remnants of armed intrusion and aggression. We expect that this shall be cleared by first light 16th July. Till this is not completed to our satisfaction, no other steps will be taken. After complete withdrawal, Pakistan would then need to reaffirm the inviolability and sanctity of the Line of Control. In this regard we hold that the sponsorship of cross-border terrorism is a violation of the Line of Control. The gruesome incident this morning in Bandipur Jammu & Kashmir is yet another reminder of Pakistan's brazen and continuing sponsorship of terrorism. Pakistan will have to abandon this path of encouraging and abetting terrorism and dismantle the entire network set up in Pakistan territory for the purpose.

Our commitment to the Lahore process and the composite dialogue remains. India would like to renew the dialogue process and expects that Pakistan will take the needed steps for that to become possible.

Jul 13, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Jul 13, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Involving of Pakistan Forces in the misadventure in Kargil

Following is the text of a Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on July 15, 1999 regarding involvement of Pakistan forces in misadventure in Kargil:

The Pakistan authorities have adamantly refused to acknowledge the involvement of Pakistan Army regulars in the misadventure in Kargil. The callousness and inhumanity with which they are persisting in this fiction is demonstrated in the current matter concerning the bodies of two officers of the Pakistan Army who had died in action on the Indian side of the Line of Control in Kargil. The body of Capt. Imtiaz Malik of 165 Mortar Regiment was found at Point 4875 in the Mushkoh sub-sector. The body of Capt. Karnal Sher of 12 Northern Light Infantry was found on Tiger Hill in the Drass subsector. The identities of these two officers were established by correspondence found on their person. Both bodies are in possession of the Indian Army authorities.

The above information was conveyed to the Pakistan government on July 12. We informed the Pakistani authorities that we would like to hand over the bodies to them. We did not receive any response. Subsequently, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) approached Government of India on July 13, stating that Pakistan

government had requested them to contact the Government of India for handing over the bodies of the two officers about which they had heard. The Pakistani request did not specify the names and identities of the two officers, despite the information being available to them. The reason is obvious. The Pakistan authorities realised that if they conceded the identities of these two officers, it would demolish the myth that Pakistan army was not involved in Kargil. We provided ICRC with this information, along with the photographs of the bodies and copies of correspondence found on their person which identify them as above.

The Pakistan Government conveyed through ICRC that the material we had furnished was "insufficient" to establish the identities of the officers, and that they would like the bodies to be handed over and taken to Islamabad for verification. It is clear that this was again an attempt to obscure and evade the fact that these were bodies of officers of the Pakistan Army involved in the Kargil operation. We offered to the Pakistan authorities through the ICRC that we would be ready to receive in India persons, including their family members, deputed by the Government of Pakistan to come to India and verify the identity of the officers and take over the bodies. We had pointed out that it is unprecedented and unheard of for bodies to be sent abroad in this fashion for the purpose of identification, even before their nationality and military identity are established. If Pakistan doubts them, it is for their representatives to come and see the bodies. We have not yet received a response from Pakistan through the ICRC.

It is clear that Pakistan is fully aware of the identities of these bodies but they do not wish to acknowledge this fact as it would immediately expose their army's involvement in Kargil. Hence, their reluctance to have the bodies identified in the usual manner, in this persistent and callous refusal to do so, they are doing great disservice to the families of their soldiers and to the traditions of armed forces everywhere.

The Government of India had conveyed to the ICRC that because of the weather conditions, the condition of bodies is deteriorating and the ICRC should come back with the response from Pakistan by 1100 hrs. IST on July 15. Pakistan has not conveyed their response. In view of the humanitarian nature of the problem, the Indian Army authorities will wait as long as it is possible, to get a response from Pakistan authorities through the ICRC.
Jul 15, 1999

PAKISTAN USA INDIA MALI

Date : Jul 15, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Pakistan armed intrusion and aggression in the Kargil sector

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on July 27, 1999 regarding alleged preparations of India to enlarge the theatre of operations in response to Pakistan armed intrusion and aggression in the Kargil sector:

In response to a question, the Spokesman said that in the context of Pakistan's armed intrusion and aggression in the Kargil sector of the State of Jammu & Kashmir, we have seen reports in sections of the US media about alleged preparations of India to enlarge the theatre of operations. These reports are ill-conceived and unfounded.

The Pakistan army had assumed an aggressive posture all along the Line of Control and the International Border

with India. It was necessary for our forces to have taken the required defensive measures including remaining in a state of alert. This, however, was a purely defensive activity.

Throughout the period of Pakistan's aggression, India acted with exemplary restraint, and that restraint has been universally acknowledged and appreciated.

Jul 27, 1999

PAKISTAN USA INDIA

Date : Jul 27, 1999

Volume No

1995

RUSSIA

Visit of the First Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation and Co-chairman of the IRIGC, Dr. Viktor Khristenko from July 28 to 31

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on July 27, 1999 regarding visit of First Deputy Chairman of the IRIGC, Dr. Viktor Khristenko from July 28 to 31, 1999 at the invitation of Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Finance of India and co-chairman of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific Technological Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC):

At the invitation of Shri Yashwant Sinha, Minister of Finance of India and Co-Chairman of the Indo-Russian InterGovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC), the First Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation and Co-Chairman of the IRIGC, Dr. Viktor Khristenko, will be visiting India from July 28 to 31, 1999. He will be accompanied by a high level delegation, including Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, Mr. Vladimir Karastin.

The Co-Chairmen of the IRIGC will use the opportunity of the visit for the traditional inter-session review of the directives of its last (5th) session held in Moscow in November, 1998.

The IRIGC has established itself as an important and effective mechanism in the promotion of our bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas. There are eleven Working Groups in the IGC dealing with Trade and Economic Cooperation; Pharmaceuticals; Power and Non-Conventional Energy Sources; Coal, Petroleum; Ferrous and Non-Ferrous Metallurgy;

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Science & Technology; Information Technology; Environment & Natural Resources; Culture; and Cooperation between Regions. There are ten sub-groups-3 under the WG on Trade and Economic (viz. Transport, Banking and Financial Matters and Agriculture); and 7 under the WG on Science & Technology (viz. Agriculture; Standardisation, Metrology & Certification; Building Materials; Metereology; Oceanology; Medical Sciences; and Biotechnology).

Five sessions of the IRIGC have been held so far. The next 6th session will be held in New Delhi later this year.
Jul 27, 1999

RUSSIA USA INDIA

Date : Jul 27, 1999

Volume No

1995

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Joint India-US Communique on the Exchange of the Instruments of Ratification of the Indo-US Extradition Treaty

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on July 21, 1999 regarding exchange of instruments of ratification for the bilateral Extradition Treaty which was signed by both countries in June 1997:

The Governments of India and the United States today exchanged instruments of ratification for the bilateral Extradition Treaty which was signed by both countries in June 1997. The exchange has brought this treaty into force from today.

The new extradition treaty has replaced the 1931 Extradition Treaty between the United States and the United Kingdom which was, till date, also in force between the United States and India.

The treaty is an important step in India-US law enforcement cooperation and cooperation in the area of counter-terrorism. This exchange constitutes yet another milestone in the continuing cooperation between our two democracies to promote the continued growth of our contacts and exchanges in different areas on the basis of mutual benefit and goodwill.

Jul 21, 1999

USA INDIA

Date : Jul 21, 1999

Volume No

1995

YEMEN

India-Yemen Joint Commission to meet in Sana'a

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on July 16, 1999 regarding Third Session of the India-Yemen Joint Commission will take place in Sana'a between 18-20, July:

The Third Session of the India-Yemen Joint Commission will take place in Sana'a between 18-20 July. The Indian team will be led by Shri Nareshwar Dayal, Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, while the

Yemeni side will be led by Mr. Abdul Rehman Tarmoum, Vice Minister for Planning and Development.

The Joint Commission will review bilateral economic relations and will identify

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new areas for cooperation, particularly in the energy sector, following the discovery of substantial gas reserves in Yemen in the last few years. Other areas to be discussed will include promotion of trade and India's participation in Yemen's infrastructure projects, particularly in the areas of airports, highways, water management and irrigation. Technical cooperation in the fields of agriculture, public health and education will also be examined.

During the Joint Commission, a Cultural Agreement and the Air Service Agreement will be signed.
Jul 16, 1999

YEMEN INDIA USA LATVIA

Date : Jul 16, 1999

August

Volume No

1995

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USA AFGHANISTAN BANGLADESH INDIA ISRAEL KYRGYZSTAN MONGOLIA PAKISTAN RUSSIA
TURKEY

Date : Aug 31, 1999

Volume No

1995

AFGHANISTAN

Prime Minister's letter to the President of the Islamic state of Afghanistan

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 25, 1999 regarding Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's letter sent to the President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan on brutality by Taliban in Afghanistan:

Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee in a letter sent to the President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan condemned the brutal massacre of innocent people, torching of houses, use of incendiary bombs, destruction of crops and deliberate displacement of women and children perpetrated by the Taliban forces backed by Pakistan on the people of Shomali plains in Afghanistan earlier this month. He also assured that India will continue to extend humanitarian assistance to these unfortunate people and to all Afghans.

Prime Minister reiterated India's support for the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan and its earnest desire that peace and stability be re-established in Afghanistan at the earliest and conviction that this would be possible only when Pakistan ceases its interference in Afghan affairs.

A copy of Prime Minister's letter is attached.

Excellency,

I have received your letter of August 14th, 1999. I am immensely sad to learn of the atrocities committed by the Taliban forces backed by Pakistan on the people of the Shomali plains. The brutal massacre of innocent people, the torching of houses, the use of incendiary bombs, the deliberate displacement of women and children, and the destruction of crops, constitute crimes against humanity. While condemning these, I am struck by the fact that they are totally contrary to Afghan traditions and reveal the doings of the foreign mentor of the Taliban. On our part we will continue to extend humanitarian assistance to these unfortunate people and to all Afghans.

India and Afghanistan share historicities and close bonds of friendship, based on civilisational and cultural affinities. It is in keeping with this traditional relationship that India has always stood by the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan. It is our earnest desire that peace and stability be re-established in Afghanistan. That will be possible only when Pakistan ceases its interference in Afghan Affairs.

I would like to assure you, Excellency of India's continued support to your Government.

(A. B. Vajpayee)

His Excellency Prof. Burhanuddin Rabbani
President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan
Kabul.
Aug 25, 1999

AFGHANISTAN INDIA USA MALI PAKISTAN

Date : Aug 25, 1999

Volume No

1995

BANGLADESH

Relations between India and Bangladesh

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on August 13, 1999 regarding statement attributed to Begum Khaleda Zia:

In response to a question regarding statements attributed to Begum Khaleda Zia, the Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs said that relations between India and Bangladesh are close and friendly. These relations have been developing steadily in all aspects in recent years based on the principles of mutual benefit, mutual respect and sovereign equality. During his lifetime, President Zia-ur-Rahman had consistently professed a desire to strengthen and deepen these relations between these two neighbouring countries. From time to time, former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia herself has been addressing cordial messages of friendship and greetings to the leadership of India.

If the recent statements reported in the press are true, it is a matter of regret and disappointment that such false and outrageous statements have been made.
Aug 13, 1999

BANGLADESH INDIA USA

Date : Aug 13, 1999

Volume No

1995

BANGLADESH

Firing on Indo-Bangladesh Border

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on August 27, 1999 regarding firing at Indo Bangladesh border:

After a flag meeting on Wednesday, August 25, 1999 followed by a joint ground inspection, an amicable solution has been found to the situation in the Tripura sector on the India-Bangladesh border. It was also agreed that in future situations neither side would resort to firing. If a problem could not be solved at the local commanders' level, it would be brought to the attention of higher authorities for resolution.

The settlement is reflective of the mutual understanding that exists between India and Bangladesh. It had been agreed earlier at the diplomatic level that there was a need for an early end to the firing and to hold a local flag meeting to defuse the situation. Both governments cooperated in ensuring that their respective border agencies, namely, the BSF and BDR, met without delay to work out a mutually acceptable solution.

The approach of the Government of India has been to work together with the Government of Bangladesh in defusing the situation in a spirit of mutual cooperation to ensure a peaceful atmosphere on the border.

Aug 27, 1999

BANGLADESH USA INDIA

Date : Aug 27, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 6, 1999 regarding cabinet approval on signing and ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings:

The Union Cabinet approved on 5.8.1999 signing and ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. The Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1997. Under the Convention unlawfully and intentionally delivering, placing, discharging or detonating an explosive device with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury or major economic loss is an offence.

2. An important feature of the Convention is that it does not allow any political exception. The Convention requires each State party to ensure that criminal acts where they are intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature and are punished by penalties consistent with their grave nature.

3. The Convention is based on the principle of Prosecute or Extradite. It would help strengthen international cooperation in combating terrorist bombings, which have claimed countless lives in different parts of the world. India is already party to seven important UN Conventions against Terrorism, in addition to two regional Conventions adopted by the SAARC countries. In addition, accession to some other UN Conventions against Terrorism is also under active consideration. India has also proposed a comprehensive international convention against terrorism.

Aug 06, 1999

INDIA USA

Date : Aug 06, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

Nuclear Doctrine

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 20, 1999 clarifying that Shri Brajesh Mishra had made no such statement which referred to a threat of nuclear blackmail from China:

In response to a question, the Spokesman said:

Our attention has been drawn to press reports alleging that National Security Adviser, Shri Brajesh Mishra had referred to a threat of nuclear blackmail from China during his press conference at the release of the Draft Nuclear Doctrine. This issue was also raised by a correspondent during a regular briefing at the US State Department.

It is clarified that Shri Brajesh Mishra made no such statement during the press briefing or on any other occasion. Nor does this reflect the thinking of the Government of India. As for the remarks of the State Department Spokesman, greater professionalism would have counselled against pronouncing on an issue that had no substance. Aug 20, 1999

INDIA USA CHINA

Date : Aug 20, 1999

Volume No

1995

INDIA

VI World Hindi Conference '99

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 30, 1999 regarding VI World Hindi Conference being held in London from 14 to 18 September 1999:

Hindi is the second largest spoken language in the world following Chinese, which is the first. Geographically, people who speak Hindi are scattered all over the world and the aptly titled 'Hindi Evam Bhaavi Peerhi' (Hindi and the Future Generations) Conference aims to keep the language flowing well into the 21st century.

The VI World Hindi Conference is being held in London from 14th to 18th September, 99. It has been organised by Hindi Samiti UK, Gitanjali Bahubhashiya Sahityik Samudaya (Birmingham) and Bhartiya Bhasha Sangam (York) in association with Nehru Centre (London), Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan (London) and SAMPAD (Birmingham).

14th September, 1999 is the 50th anniversary of 'Hindi' becoming the 'official language of the Union of India', in the Constitution. We are at the threshold of the next millenium, which will see further technological development, instant global communication and increased mobility of people. These developments are bound to have immense impact on the nature and scope of the Hindi language, both at national and international level. This Conference aims to explore the depth, capacity and potential of Hindi and its application in various literary forms. It will also address issues surrounding the transference of the language to future generations.

There will be a grand inaugural ceremony marking the 50th year of India's 'Rajbhasha' - Hindi, on Tuesday, 14th September, 1999 at the VI World Hindi Conference. Mrs. Vasundhara Raje, Minister of State for External Affairs

of India and H.E. Mr. Lalit Man Singh, High Commissioner for India to the United Kingdom will both address the guests on this auspicious occasion.

A plethora of distinguished guests and senior dignitaries from countries including Mauritius, Nepal, Trinidad & Tobago, are expected to attend the ceremony along with eminent personalities, including Hindi authors, writers and poets from across the globe.

The launch will include renowned Kathak dancer Shovana Narayan from India and a spectacular dance show by young artists from the UK choreographed by Gauri Sharma Tripathi. Gazal and geet maestro, Shri Jagjit Singh, is the guest artist for the evening. The event will start at 7.00 p.m.

The Conference also marks the 600th anniversary of Sant Kabir, whose writing has influenced the development of Hindi as a poetic language. A limited edition, silver coin featuring his image will be issued to commemorate the anniversary. A quarterly brought out by ICCR, 'Gagananchal' as well as the UK-based quarterly 'Purvai' are bringing out special issues on the occasion.

The academic conference will be held on Wednesday 15th, Thursday 16th and Friday 17th September, 1999 at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London. Over 300 delegates are expected to take part.

Tomio Mizokami of Osaka University, Japan, will direct 'Kayakalp', a Hindi play, which will be performed by some of his Japanese students. They will be touring UK on the following dates:

London Thursday 16th September Manchester Saturday 18th September

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Glasgow Sunday 19th September Birmingham Friday 24th September A galaxy of Hindi poets will also be touring in a unique event of Hindi poetry, 'Virat Kavi Sammelan'.

London Friday 17th September York Saturday 18th September

Birmingham Sunday 19th September Manchester Monday 20th September

Shovana Narayan will also perform in Manchester on Friday 17th September.

More information about the Conference is available at the internet address www.welcome.to/hindisammelan.
Aug 30, 1999

INDIA USA UNITED KINGDOM MAURITIUS NEPAL JAPAN

Date : Aug 30, 1999

Volume No

1995

ISRAEL

Cooperation between India and Israel

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 25, 1999 regarding clarification on Nuclear cooperation between India and Israel:

In response to questions, the Spokesman said:

Government's attention has been drawn to media reports about the statement made by Deputy Secretary General of the Arab League Mohammed Zakaria on nuclear cooperation between India and Israel.

We would like to emphasize that while we have good relations with Israel, there is no nuclear cooperation between the two countries.

India's relations with the Arab world are historic, and are based on close people-to-people contacts, and cooperation in the political and economic fields. Support to the Arab and Palestinian causes continues unchanged. India's relations with Israel will never be pursued at the cost of our multi-faceted relations with the Arab countries.
Aug 25, 1999

ISRAEL INDIA USA

Date : Aug 25, 1999

Volume No

1995

KYRGYZSTAN

Vice-President's visit to Kyrgyzstan

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 24, 1999 regarding visit of Vice President of India to Kyrgyzstan from August 29-31, 1999:

At the invitation of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, H.E. Mr. Askar Akaev, Vice President Shri Krishan Kant, accompanied by Smt. Suman Krishan Kant and an official delegaton, would pay an official visit to the Kyrgyz Republic from August 29-31, 1999.

Vice-President Krishan Kant would be the Chief Guest at the celebrations of the

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8th anniversary of independence of the Kyrgyz Republic.

During his visit, Vice President will be received by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic and have discussions with Prime Minister H.E. Mr. A. M. Muraliev, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly H.E. Mr. Usup Mukambaev and the Chairman of the People's Representatives Assembly, H.E. Mr. A. Erkebaev.

The Vice President will inaugurate the Delhi Dairy Kyrgyzstan Plant at Bishkek, equipment for which have been gifted by India under the ITEC Programme. He would also pay a brief visit to Cholpon Ata, Issyk Kul.
Aug 24, 1999

KYRGYZSTAN INDIA USA UNITED KINGDOM

Date : Aug 24, 1999

Volume No

1995

MONGOLIA

Visit of Vice President to Mongolia

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 13, 1999 regarding visit of Hon'ble Vice President Shri Krishan Kant to Republic of Mongolia from August 25-29, 1999:

Hon'ble Vice President Shri Krishan Kant will be visiting the Republic of Mongolia from August 25-29, 1999, at the invitation of President N. Bagabandi. The last State-level visit from India was that of Shri K. R. Narayanan, the then Vice President of India, in September 1996. From the Mongolian side, the then President P. Ochirbaat visited India in February 1994. Mongolian President N. Bagabandi himself visited India in his capacity as Chairman of the State Great Hural (Parliament).

Hon'ble Vice President Shri Krishan Kant's visit to Mongolia is aimed at strengthening the traditional friendship between the two countries. The visit will also enhance bilateral co-operation and understanding. During his visit to Mongolia, the Hon'ble Vice President will inaugurate the Pethup Monastery. He will also inaugurate two new Faculties at the Rajiv Gandhi Vocational Training Centre which was set up in 1996 under the ITEC Programme. India currently provides thirty slots to Mongolia under the ITEC Programme in diverse fields. Bilateral cooperation includes the "Friendship Farm", an experimental agricultural project aimed at increasing cold-resistant crop yields, set up with Indian assistance in 1996.

Aug 13, 1999

MONGOLIA INDIA USA

Date : Aug 13, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Indo-Pak Dialogue

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 3, 1999 regarding composite dialogue between India and Pakistan:

In response to a question, the official spokesman recalled recent statements of the Prime Minister and the

Minister of External Affairs about bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan. Reiterating Government's policy, the spokesman noted that we have always desired a relationship of good neighbourliness, friendship and co

<p-89>

operation with Pakistan and it was at India's initiative that a composite dialogue process was put in place last year. The composite dialogue process sought to move the bilateral relationship forward in a broad based manner by building trust and confidence, promoting mutually beneficial cooperation and addressing all outstanding issues through peaceful bilateral means. The first round of the composite dialogue was held in October and November, 1998. India had looked forward to it being continued in a constructive manner.

The Official spokesman recalled the Prime Minister's historic initiative to visit Lahore and the understandings that emerged from that visit. India had wished to proceed ahead on the path of amity with Pakistan and of carrying forward the dialogue process. This was in keeping with the expectations and aspirations of the peoples of the two countries.

Pakistan's armed intrusion and aggression in Kargil was a blatant transgression of the Line of Control. It compounded Pakistan's aiding and abetment, over the years, of cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. It was also a betrayal of trust which has done great damage to the Lahore process. The aggression in Kargil, as also the sponsorship of terrorism make clear the lack of sincerity of Pakistan authorities in the matter of dialogue. Pakistan has thus continued on its path of confrontation and hostility against India.

The onus is now on Pakistan to repair the damage it has done to the Lahore process. The Indian armed forces have restored the sanctity of the Line of Control in the Kargil sector by evicting the armed intrusion and vacating the aggression. It is now expected that Pakistan will move towards restoring trust and confidence by reaffirming the sanctity and the inviolability of the entire Line of Control. The sponsorship and instigation of cross-border terrorism in other sectors of Jammu & Kashmir is also a violation of the Line of Control. It is, therefore, incumbent upon Pakistan to cease this activity. This will facilitate the creation of a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of the Lahore process and a resumption of the composite dialogue. We urge Pakistan to take necessary steps for this purpose. We look forward to a resumption of the composite dialogue process.

Aug 03, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Aug 03, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Intruding Pak Aircraft shot down

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 10, 1999 regarding shot down of intruding Pak Aircraft:

At 1115 hrs this morning, a Pakistani Naval Anti-Submarine Warfare and maritime reconnaissance aircraft, called Atlantique intruded 10 Km into Indian territory in the Area of KORI CREEK. A Mig-21 of the IAF intercepted and shot down the Pak aircraft.

The intruding Pakistani aircraft was detected by IAF ground radars and was intercepted 10 Km South of the international border. When the IAF fighter closed in to identify and signal the intruding Pakistani aircraft to force it to land at an Indian base, the Pakistani aircraft acted in a hostile manner by turning into our fighter. At that stage the Atlantique was shot down by an air-to-air missile which hit the aircraft on the port engine which caught fire.

The wreckage has been found by IAF helicopters, 2 Km on the Indian side of the IB.

The Pakistani aircraft have been intruding in to Indian airspace in the same sector in the past too. From May to July there have been 8 such intrusions.
Aug 10, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Aug 10, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Shooting down of Pakistani Military combat aircraft

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on August 11, 1999 regarding a deep intrusion into Indian airspace by the Pakistani Military combat aircraft and its shooting down:

Group Capt. Ganesh has given you a detailed account of the facts and nature of the incident in which a Pakistani military combat aircraft had intruded deep into Indian airspace and had to be engaged. This provocative action by the Pakistani military aircraft was in line with a pattern of such hostile surveillance activities in this sensitive area.

The Atlantique aircraft had intruded 10 kms. into Indian airspace. As the Information Minister of Pakistan said this aircraft was on a surveillance mission. Surveillance activity by a military aircraft in another country's airspace is a hostile activity. It is a well-known fact that apart from its primary capability of reconnaissance and surveillance, such an aircraft is capable of carrying an array of lethal weapons and stores including air to surface missiles and bombs. It clearly falls under the definition of combat aircraft in the context of the Indo-Pakistan agreement on prevention of airspace violations signed in 1991. According to the agreement such an aircraft is not to fly within 10 kms. of each other's airspace.

In a clear violation of this agreement and norms of conduct between sovereign countries, the Pakistani military aircraft had intruded deep into Indian airspace. Every opportunity was given to the intruding aircraft to correct its course and land. It disregarded all warnings and signals to land. Thereafter, the Indian Air Force, under well-known operating procedures, was constrained to engage this aircraft and shoot it down. The responsibility for what happened and any loss of life rests squarely with Pakistan. The aircraft was engaged 10 kms. inside Indian airspace and the wreckage is located in Indian territory clearly on our side of the international border.

India has been making consistent efforts to improve relations with Pakistan so that the two countries can live in amity and peace. Provocative activity of this kind is not conducive to the normalisation and improvement of all-round relations between the two countries. We urge Pakistan to desist from such activities and to adhere in letter and spirit to all bilateral agreements with India and internationally recognised norms of conduct in respect of relations between two sovereign countries.

Aug 11, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC MALI

Date : Aug 11, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Release of eight Pak POWs

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 13, 1999 regarding release of Pakistani Soldiers who were taken POW:

Tomorrow, August 14, 1999, is Pakistan's Independence Day. On this occasion, Government of India have decided to offer for release eight (8) Pakistani soldiers who were taken prisoners of war during Pakistan's recent armed intrusion and aggerssion in the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir. The modalities in this regard are being worked out and will be finalised shortly.

The list of the 8 Pakistani soldiers is given below:

S.N. No.	Rank Name	Unit	1. 2837712	NK Inayat Ali	5 NLI	2. 3446518	Sep
Fazal Aman	24 SIND	3. 2844160	Sep Hunar Shah	5 NLI			

<p-91>

4. 2846468	Sep Mohd Ayaz	4 NLI (att with 5 NLI)	5. 2850366	Sep Sher Baz Khan	5		
NLI (att)	6. 3334090	Sep Ahmed Khan	33 FF	7. 3342494	Sep Salikh Khan	33 FF	8.
3345441	Sep Ashraf	19 POK Bn					

Aug 13, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA

Date : Aug 13, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Release of Pak POWs

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on August 20, 1999 regarding Indian readiness to hand over the 8 Pakistani Prisoners of War:

As a gesture of goodwill, we announced on the eve of the Independence Day of Pakistan (August 13) our readiness to hand over the 8 Pakistani Prisoners of War (POWs) taken in our custody during Pakistan's recent armed intrusion and aggression in Kargil. The Indian authorities have, as required under the Geneva Conventions, approached the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with full particulars of the POWs, to repatriate them to Pakistan. The ICRC is currently engaged in working out the modalities for their handing over.

Pakistan has not yet acknowledged their POWs. Consequently, their repatriation has not taken place so far. We hope Pakistan will acknowledge their POWs, so that they can return to their families without delay. We also hope that Pakistan will not procrastinate as they did earlier in the case of the return of the dead bodies of their soldiers who died on the Indian side of the Line of Control during Pakistan's intrusion in Kargil.

These soldiers are being well-cared for in the highest traditions of the Indian Army.
Aug 20, 1999

PAKISTAN INDIA USA SWITZERLAND CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Date : Aug 20, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Return of the Prisoners of War

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on August 25, 1999 regarding release of Pakistani POWs who were captured during the recent armed intrusion and aggression by Pakistan in the Kargil sector:

In response to a question regarding the latest situation on the return of the Prisoners of War belonging to the personnel of the Pakistan army who were captured during the recent armed intrusion and aggression by Pakistan in the Kargil sector of the Line of Control, the Official Spokesman provided the following clarifications:

These Pakistani POWs were part of Pakistani troops who had intruded into the Indian side of the Line of Control in the Kargil sector of Jammu & Kashmir during Pakistan's recent armed intrusion and aggression in this area. They were captured by our troops during the course of our operations to evict the intrusion.

These POWs were not in uniform and nor did they have on their person the customary identifications tags or discs. In spite of this blatant breach of military custom and international convention, India has in a gesture of goodwill, treated them as Prisoners of War and approached the ICRC for their repatriation to Pakistan.

<p-92>

These soldiers, who have declared themselves to be soldiers of the Pakistan army, are currently in our custody. Their names and identification as declared by them has been made known. We have made all these available facts and information known to the Pakistan Government.

We have reiterated India's keen desire to repatriate the eight Pakistani Prisoners of War in the custody of our forces. The offer to repatriate these soldiers was conveyed to Pakistan on August 13. Thereafter, in keeping with

international practice, India approached the ICRC to effect the repatriation of these POWs. It is reprehensible on the part of Pakistan to create complications for the repatriation of their own soldiers.

We have conveyed, as per normal practice relating to Prisoners of War and as is obligatory under the Geneva Conventions, that we are ready to hand over the POWs to the ICRC for their repatriation. It is the universal practice for the identity of the POWs to be acknowledged and confirmed by the receiving country before the handing over takes place. Pakistan is refusing to do this insisting on describing the POWs generally as 'soldiers in Indian custody'.

Pakistan has adamantly refused to acknowledge the involvement of their troops in the Kargil misadventure, despite conferring awards on many of its soldiers and honouring them for their involvement in Kargil. It hopes that by continuing to refuse to accept the status of these eight soldiers as Prisoners of War, they can continue to perpetrate the myth of non-involvement of their regular troops in Kargil. It is this obsession with falsehood which is preventing the return of their POWs.

It is clarified that under the Geneva Convention, all soldiers of one State taken into custody by the troops of another State during an armed conflict are termed as Prisoners of War. No formal declaration of war is necessary. Pakistan is deliberately attempting to obfuscate this reality.

We are in contact with the ICRC and hope that Pakistan would enable the early repatriation of their POWs.
Aug 25, 1999

PAKISTAN USA INDIA SWITZERLAND

Date : Aug 25, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Release of Pakistan POWs

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement issued in New Delhi on August 27, 1999 regarding release of 8 Pakistani POWs:

India had announced on August 13, 1999 on the eve of the Independence Day of Pakistan that, as a gesture of goodwill, we were ready to hand over the 8 Pakistani Prisoners of War captured in action on the Indian side of the Line of Control in the Kargil sector of the state of Jammu & Kashmir, during the operations in order to evict the recent intrusion and armed aggression by Pakistan. At that time, it had also been announced that the modalities were being worked out through the ICRC.

The 8 Pakistani Prisoners of War were released and handed over to the ICRC today, for repatriation to Pakistan. Prior to this, the Pakistani authorities had verified and confirmed the identities of 8 Prisoners of War as belonging to the regular armed forces of Pakistan. The ICRC has intimated that the 8 Pakistani POWs will be repatriated to Pakistan today itself.

Aug 27, 1999

PAKISTAN USA INDIA

Date : Aug 27, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Pakistan's claim for compensation on the Pakistan Navy's Military combat-cum-surveillance Aircraft

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement in response to a question on Pakistani claim for compensation for the shooting down of the Pakistan Navy's Military combat-cum-surveillance aircraft on August 10, 1999 is totally untenable:

In response to a question, the Official Spokesman said:

Pakistan's claim for compensation for the shooting down of the Pakistan Navy's military combat-cum-surveillance aircraft on August 10, 1999 is totally untenable and absurd. The facts of this matter are clear and well known. The Pakistani military aircraft was on a hostile military mission and was involved in espionage activity. It had brazenly violated Indian air-space, as well as the 1991 agreement between India and Pakistan on prevention of air-space violations, as well as internationally accepted rules of engagement in such situations.

In keeping with these rules of engagement, intercepting Indian aircraft had conveyed clear signal to the intruding Pakistani military aircraft asking it to correct its course and land. The intruder disregarded all these signals and warnings. Subsequent actions taken by the Indian Air Force were in keeping with these internationally accepted as well as standard operating procedures. The Pakistani military aircraft was well within Indian air-space when it was shot down. Pakistan is fully responsible for the outcome and the consequence of its actions in contravention of the norms of conduct of bilateral relations as well as a specific agreement and rules of engagement pertaining to air-space violations.

Pakistan's claims, which have already been rejected by the Acting High Commissioner for India in Islamabad, are meant only for propaganda purposes. An internationally isolated Pakistan is desperately trying to divert attention from its irresponsible conduct, best illustrated by the failure of its armed intrusion and aggression in Kargil, and subsequently by its willful violation of Indian air-space.

Aug 10, 1999

PAKISTAN USA INDIA

Date : Aug 10, 1999

Volume No

1995

PAKISTAN

Developments in the Republic of Dagestan of the Russian Federation

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 16, 1999 regarding Indian concern over the developments in the Republic of Dagestan of the Russian Federation:

The Government of India is concerned over the developments in the Republic of Dagestan of the Russian Federation. Separatists and extremists are spreading terror there. We have seen reports of external assistance and involvement. India has consistently opposed the use of terrorism and extremism to achieve political ends, both nationally and internationally.

India supports the unity and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. In this context, we recall the Moscow Declaration on the Protection of the Interests of Pluralistic States signed between India and the Russian Federation in June 1994.

Aug 16, 1999

PAKISTAN RUSSIA USA INDIA

Date : Aug 16, 1999

Volume No

1995

RUSSIA

Welfare of Indian students in Dagestan

Following is the text of an Official Spokesman's statement in response to a question about any complaints or incidents involving foreign student including Indians in Dagestan, Russia:

There are 283 Indian students studying medicine at the Dagestan State Medical Academy, Makhachkala. The Embassy of India in Moscow has been in touch with the Academy authorities. They have confirmed that there have been no complaints or incidents involving foreign students, including Indians. Round the clock security posts are functioning near the two hostels meant for foreign students.

The Embassy has also been in touch with the leader of the Indian students community at Makhachkala. He has conveyed that all Indian students are safe.

The Embassy of India will be in constant touch with both the Academy authorities and the Indian students community in Makhachkala, Republic of Dagestan of the Russian Federation to ensure the safety and welfare of all Indian nationals.

Aug 31, 1999

RUSSIA USA INDIA

Date : Aug 31, 1999

Volume No

1995

TURKEY

Relief Assistance to Turkey

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 25, 1999 regarding Relief Assistance for the people affected by the recent earthquake in Turkey:

The first consignment of Government of India's relief assistance for the people affected by the recent earthquake in Turkey, consisting of surgical items, medicines, mainly antibiotics, and tea, weighing 9.5 tonnes, is being airlifted tomorrow.

A second consignment of medicines and medical equipment of immediate necessity is being put together in consultation with the Turkish authorities and would be sent shortly.

Indian Red Cross Society has collected 20,000 woolen blankets and 5,500 tarpaulins, weighing approximately 60 tonnes. These materials are being airlifted by the Government.

Earlier, in messages to Turkish leaders, our President, Vice-President, Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister conveyed their deep distress and condolences over the unprecedented damages and loss of lives caused by the earthquake.

Aug 25, 1999

TURKEY INDIA USA

Date : Aug 25, 1999

Volume No

1995

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In response to questions, the Spokesman said

Following is the text of a Press Release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi on August 19, 1999 regarding letter from the President of the USA to the Prime Minister of India:

In response to questions, the Spokesman said:

The Prime Minister has received a letter from the President of the USA. This is part of a regular correspondence between the Prime Minister and President Clinton. A reply will be sent shortly.

The focus of the correspondence has been on strengthening Indo-US relations and on acquiring a better

understanding of each other's Perspectives. Both leaders have expressed the hope that bilateral relations will be raised to a qualitatively new level.

In the course of this correspondence, as well as during the broader dialogue that we have with the USA, both sides have clarified their medium-term policies and their approach to issues of common concern. These have included bilateral relations, including the projected visit of President Clinton, and the removal of the hurdles in the way of a more dynamic economic relationship. Our discussions have also addressed questions related to the global nuclear architecture, as well as terrorism, of which India has been a victim for close to two decades. We look forward to establishing closer understanding with the USA on these and other issues.

India is a responsible country and acts accordingly.
Aug 19, 1999

USA INDIA

Date : Aug 19, 1999