

Ministry of External Affairs
Policy Planning and Research Division

Overview of Major Achievements during the month of December 2020

1. Ministry major focus in December has been Vande Bharat Mission and the repatriation of Indians stranded overseas. In December, the Vande Bharat Mission continues to repatriate stranded Indians and has so far brought around 7,208 Indian nationals' home from Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, Tel Aviv, Brunei, Port Moresby, Jakarta, Japan, and Fiji.
2. On 08 December 2020, the 6th Meeting of Joint Working Group under India-Japan ICT (information, communication and technology) Comprehensive Cooperation Framework was held virtually to discuss cooperation in the areas of 5G, Submarine optical fibre cable, Smart City Ecosystem, HAPS mobile, etc. Secretary (Telecom) inaugurated the meeting.
3. On 09 December 2020, Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of the Republic of India and Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology of the Republic of Austria on Technology Cooperation in the Road Infrastructure Sector was signed.
4. On 28 December 2020, a team of four Bhutanese space engineers from the Department of Information Technology and Telecom, under the Ministry of Information and Communications of Bhutan, reached India in order to undergo the first phase of training for development of a small satellite at the UR Rao Satellite Centre (URSC), Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in Bengaluru. Phase-I of the training which would be until 25 February 2021, will involve various theoretical and technical aspects of satellite building as well as visits to laboratories and test facilities. Subsequently, the Bhutanese team will work with ISRO to formulate the second phase of training, which will involve activities towards developing the small satellite for Bhutan, INS-2B.

5. President Donald Trump conferred the highest decoration, The Legion of Merit, Degree Chief Commander, to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 21 December 2020. The Legion of Merit is a prestigious award conferred by the US President, usually to Heads of State or Heads of Government. The award was received on behalf of PM by Ambassador Shri Taranjit Singh Sandhu.

Diplomatic Engagements and other Interactions:

6. On 03 December 2020, Prime Minister held a Virtual Meeting of PM with Mr. T.B. Pedersen, CEO of PensionDanmark.
7. On 11 December 2020, Prime Minister held a Virtual summit with Uzbekistan.
8. On 17 December 2020, Prime Minister held a Virtual summit with Bangladesh.
9. In December 2020, Hon'ble President, Hon'ble PM and Hon'ble EAM exchanged congratulatory letters with their respective counterparts on the occasion of 65th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Mongolia.
10. On 21 December 2020, Prime Minister held a Virtual Summit with H.E. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of Socialist Republic of Vietnam & reviewed ongoing bilateral cooperation initiatives, and also discussed regional and global issues. Both Leaders appreciated the completion of seven Development Projects with Indian 'Grant-in-Aid' Assistance of US\$ 1.5 million for the benefit of local community in Vietnam's Ninh Thuan province.
11. On 01 December 2020, EAM and the Australian Foreign Minister had a telecon.
12. On 02 December 2020, External Affairs Minister held a virtual meeting with Foreign Minister of Oman H.E. Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin HamoodAlbusaidi. The Ministers had extensive discussions on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues. EAM conveyed greetings on the occasion of 50th National Day of Oman's modern renaissance. He thanked Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr and Government of Oman for support to the Indian community and excellent cooperation during COVID-19. EAM appreciated Oman's gesture of establishing Oman-India Friendship Association.
13. On 03 December 2020, the 7th meeting of the India-Mongolia Joint Committee on Cooperation was held virtually and was co-Chaired by Hon'ble EAM and Mr. L. Oyun-Erdene, Minister and Chief Cabinet Secretary, Government of Mongolia.

14. On 07 December 2020, 16th round of India-Israel FOC was held via virtual mode.

15. On 09 December 2020, Ministry of External Affairs facilitated a virtual meeting of Union Minister of Education Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' with Mr. Hussain bin Ibrahim Al Hammadi, Minister of Education, the United Arab Emirates. During the meeting, our Minister of Education gave a briefing on India's New Education Policy. The UAE Minister appreciated the new Policy and mentioned that the education sector has the potential to take mutual cooperation to new heights and both the countries should work to increase long-term cooperation in the field of education.

16. On 16 December 2020, 3rd round of India-Jordan FOC was held via virtual mode.

17. From 17-18 December 2020, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar paid a two day stand-alone visit to Qatar. During the visit, he called on His Highnesses the Amir H.H. Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Father Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Prime Minister and Interior Minister of the State of Qatar H.E. Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz Al Thani. He held detailed discussions with the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister H.E. Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani on bilateral as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest.