

**Embassy of India
Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia)**

Brief on India-Mongolia Bilateral Relations

Brief Historic Background

For most Mongolians, India is a “spiritual neighbour”, a declared ‘third neighbor’, a ‘strategic partner’ and a center for pilgrimage. Of late, our relationship has expanded beyond cultural sphere into various facets of cooperation in economic and defence sectors. The 3 Ds Democracy, Dharma and Development Partnership have emerged as the pillars of India Mongolia relationship. Historically, our two nations have interacted through the vehicle of Buddhism that has developed, nurtured and promoted the friendship and spiritual connect. Some Indian & Mongolian historians have conjectured about migration of some tribes from Kangra kingdom to Mongolian territory 4300 years ago. Mangaldev, son of the King headed the migrants and majority of them returned to India after staying there for about 2000 years though there is no historical evidence yet to prove this. In 1924, the then Prime Minister of Mongolia Mr. A. Amar mentioned in his book – “Short History of Mongolia” that Mongolian forefathers came from backside of Himalayan Mountains. Another interesting thing often quoted, is about ‘Ganga Nuur’ lake which accordingly to many Mongolians derived its name after ‘Ganga River’ in India from where some Mongolian Lamas brought water and poured into the lake in Sukhbaatar Province and naming it so.

2. As for our strongest cultural bond, Buddhism appears to have traversed to Mongolian steppes through Tibet and Himalayan region. During the Hunnu State of 3rd century BC and later during the period of Great Mongol Empire Buddhist monks, several traders from India visited Mongolia. In 552 BC, a Lama Narendrayash from the State of Udayana (Northern India) with some others visited Nirun state. Since to most Mongols India is the land of Buddha, Lamas and students from Mongolia used to travel to Nalanda, once the largest residential University in India, to study Buddhism.

“India and Mongolia are ancient lands of the ancient people of Asia. The historic and cultural collaboration between India and Mongolia is most fascinating and unique and is as old as the history of the spread of Indian culture and ideas into Central Asia and Siberia. We in India consider the Mongol veneration of Sanskrit, a matter of special privilege. We hold the people of Mongolia in high esteem for preserving in translation as well as in manuscripts, the vast collection of our precious Sanskrit text on our philosophy, poetry, logic and astronomy lost by us over centuries. In modern times, too many Mongols visited India—the land of Buddhism” - Late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, former Prime Minister / EAM in 1978.

3. In modern times, Buddhism has been promoted by cultural and literary contacts between the people of India and Mongolia. Prof. Raghu Vira, founding member of International Academy of Indian Culture in Delhi discovered that Mongolia’s spiritual and literacy heritage was the golden light, the Altangerel, the Suvarna-Prabhasa-Sutra, or the irreducible diamond in the rock of Vajra-chedika. In recent times, Prof. Lokesh Chandra collaborated with his father Prof. Raghu Vira and completed the “New Tibeto-Mongol Pantheon” in 20 volumes and also edited 108 large volumes of the Mongolian Kanjur or Buddhist Canon. These accounts confirm that both India and Mongolia were in close direct contacts especially during 5-7 century AD and it seems that Buddhism in

Mongolia accelerated the process of further spread of Indian culture in Mongolia. The intellectual development of Mongolia is ostensibly influenced by the Mahayana school of Buddhism, its philosophy and philosophical treatises of Nagarjuna used in simplified expression and terminology. Mongolian Buddhism is predominantly the Yellow Hat sect of Buddhism practiced in Tibet and China but over the centuries, it has evolved into its own version, having incorporated the pre-Buddhist religion of 'Tangarism' as well as 'Shamanistic' influences.

4. Late Ambassador Bakula Rimpoche during his 10 years' tenure in Mongolia from 1990-2000 contributed immensely to consolidating this legacy of Buddhist connection with India and was instrumental in reviving 100s of Buddhist monasteries in Mongolia and setting up of revered Pethub Monastery in UB city. Likewise, several present day Mongolian scholars, 90+ year old Prof. Gandendarama through his translations of Indian epics like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Kalidasa and about 30 more books into Mongolian language and Dr Shrindev's translation of 8 volumes of 'Dhammapada' from Pali to Mongolian language have also highlighted close historical connect between the two countries and pitched in for furthering the bond of cultural heritage with Mongolia.

5. Holding of two important Buddhist international conferences – Asian Buddhist Conference on Peace (ABCP) and Samvaad-III Buddhism-Hindusim Global Dialogue in Gandan Monastery in May and Sept 2019 respectively - in which India plays an important role, have contributed to consolidating of this shared heritage in recent years. As a part of 65th diplomatic anniversary celebrations, in April 2020, our Ministry of Culture have started reprinting of about 100 sets of '108 volumes of Mongolian Kanjur' which is expected to be completed in 2022. Incidentally, 25 volume set was virtually handed over by EAM to the then Chief Cabinet Secretary Mr Oyun Erdene (now Prime Minister) during the 7th Joint Commission Meeting.

6. A paradigm shift and a strong momentum was brought in our bilateral relations in May 2015. The historic and first ever visit of Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Mongolia, paved the way for elevation of our partnership to 'Strategic' level. 13 G2G agreements and 4 B2B agreements signed to expand our economic cooperation in various areas have come to manifest India's image as a strong 'third neighbour' has taken strong roots in the minds of Mongolian public and government structure. India's gifting of 150,000 doses of Covid Vaccine on Feb 22, 2021 was billed as a "historic" moment by Mongolian Deputy Prime Minister, as it was the Mongolia's first vaccine came from India.

Diplomatic Relations

5. India established diplomatic relations with Mongolia on 24 December 1955 and year 2020 marked the 65th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations. In January 1956, we had first Mongolian Ambassador in New Delhi. Indian resident Mission in Ulaanbaatar was opened on 22 February 1971. Earlier, Indian Ambassador in Moscow (T.N. Kaul) was concurrently accredited. Mongolians appreciate Indian's support to its membership in United Nations in 1961 which was championed by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. In 1991, India supported Mongolia's membership to Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Mongolia along with India and Bhutan co-sponsored famous UN Resolution for the recognition of Bangladesh as an independent country in 1972.

6. First ever visit by PM Shri Narendra Modi to Mongolia in May 2015 to mark the 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Mongolia brought in a paradigm shift in our relationship. The momentum thus generated has been sustained by several high level exchanges in the last 4 years (Visit of Vice President, Speaker of the Lok Sabha in 2016 visits of Home Minister & EAM in 2018) and visit of Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas (Oct 2019) and by initiating of process of construction of first Oil Refinery in Mongolia under Exim Bank LoC of USD 1.236 Billion – the single largest project of assistance - capable of refining 1.5 million metric tonnes crude per year (equivalent to approximate 80% of Mongolian oil consumption) has further consolidated goodwill and friendship of India with Mongolia.

High Level Visits from India to Mongolia

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas (Oct 8-10, 2019)

Shri Kiren Rijju, MoS (Home), (3-6 July 2018)

Shri Rajnath Singh, Minister of Home Affairs (21-24 June 2018)

Smt Sushma Swaraj, EAM (24-26 April 2018)

Shri Hamid Ansari, Vice President (2016)

Smt Sumitra Mahajan, Lok Sabha Speaker (2016)

Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister (2015)

Smt Pratibha Devisingh Patil, President (2011)

Smt Meira Kumar, Lok Sabha Speaker (2010)

Shri GMC Balayogi, Lok Sabha Speaker (2001),

Shri Krishan Kant, Vice-President (1999)

Shri P.A. Sangma, Lok Sabh Speaker (1997)

Shri K. R. Narayanan, Vice-President (1996),

Shri Shivraj Patil, Lok Sabha Speaker (1995),

Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Vice-President (1992),

Shri R. Venkataraman, President (1988)

Dr. Balram Jharkhar, Lok Sabha Speaker (1985),

Dr. GS. Dhillon, Lok Sabha Speaker (1974),

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President (1957),

7. During the state visit of President Smt Pratibha Devi Singh Patil to Mongolia in July 2011, a line of credit of US\$20 million was announced for setting up of “Centre of Excellence for IT, Communication & Outsourcing” in Ulaanbaatar. Later, this Centre has since been named after former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee in May 2015. The construction work is likely to commence in mid-2020. India had also upgraded Rajiv Gandhi Polytechnic College for Production and Art and the Centre for Excellence in Information & Communication Technology Education. Both phases of this project of US\$2.84 million were successfully implemented in November 2016. During the visit, a bilateral Defence Cooperation Agreement, a MOU on Media Exchanges and a MOU on Cooperation between Planning Commission of India and National Development and Innovation Committee (NDIC) were also signed.

8. The first ever and historic visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Mongolia (16-18 May 2015) as a part of ‘Act East’ policy, has proven to be a watershed period for India Mongolia relations. The declaration of ‘Strategic Partnership’, signing of 22-point Joint Statement, announcement of USD 1 Billion LoC for development of Infrastructure in Mongolia – now being utilized for building 1st Oil Refinery - and 13 agreements

(Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Prisoners, Revised Air Services Agreement, Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Animal Health and Dairy, MOU on establishment of a Joint India-Mongolia Friendship School, MOU on cooperation in the area of Traditional Systems of Medicine, Cultural Exchange Program for 2015-18, MOU on Cooperation in the field of Border Patrolling & Surveillance, MOU on cooperation between National Security Councils, and MOU on gifting a Bhabatron-II Cancer Therapy Machine (implemented) to the National Cancer Centre in Ulaanbaatar) in diverse fields set the tone for the accelerated economic cooperation with Mongolia. PM was accorded with the privilege of addressing the Mongolian Parliament on a Sunday. Never before in the history, Mongolian Parliament convened on a holiday for any visiting foreign dignitary.

9. Subsequently, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi with Prime Minister J. Erdenebat met in the sidelines of St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (June 2017) and also met thrice with the current President Kh Battulga on the margins of Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit at Qingdao, China (June 2018) and Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) in Vladivostok (Sep 2019) before holding full bilateral meeting in New Delhi during his State Visit to India (Sept 2019). PMs meeting with Mongolian President was prominently noted in Mongolian media for enhancing bilateral relations.

10. External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, had a bilateral meeting with Mongolian Foreign Minister Mr D. Tsogtbaatar in Aug 2019 while attending the East Asia Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers Meeting at Bangkok. In May 2020, EAM also held a telephonic conversation with him. More recently, the 7th India-Mongolia Joint Cooperation Committee Meeting took place virtually on Dec 3, 2020 amidst Covid enforced environment that was co-chaired by EAM and Chief Cabinet Secretary, Mr Oyun Erdene who got elevated as the Prime Minister of Mongolia on Jan 27, 2021. Former FM Tsogtbaatar, who attended 2019 Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, had a close connection with former EAM Smt Sushma Swaraj and mostly addressed her as “Sister”, while she would address him as “Brother” even in official letters.

Listed below are the important visits of Mongolian dignitaries to India:

Mr Oyun Edene, Minister & Chief Cabinet Secretary (6-12 Jan 2020)
Mr. Kh Battulga, President of Mongolia (Sept 19-23, 2019)
Mr. B. Baatarzorig, Chairman of Civil Service Council (CSC) (2-6 July 2019)
Mr. L. Bold, Member of Parliament (Feb 2019) – for attending Kumbh
Mr. D. Sumiyabazar, Minister of Mining & Heavy Industry (10-12 Feb 2019) –
for attending Petrotech 2018 and signing of Contract with EIL and Mongol Refinery
Mr. D. Tsogtbaatar, Foreign Minister of Mongolia (8-10 January 2019)
– For Raisina Dialogue
Dr. Baymbasuren Lamjav, Vice Minister of Health (Sept-Oct 2018)
Mr. D. Sumiyabazar, Minister of Mining (June 2018)
Mr. D. Zagdjav, Deputy Minister of Mining & Heavy Industry (April 2018)
Mr. N. Enkhbold, Minister of Defence (Mar 2018)
Mr. Ts. Batbayar, Vice Minister, Ministry of Environment and Tourism (Mar 2018)
Mr. G Munkhbayar, Minister of Construction & Urban Development (Dec 2016)
Mr. U. Khurelsukh, Deputy Prime Minister (Nov 2016)
Mr. L. Purevsuren, Foreign Minister (April 2016)
Mr. T. Dulamdorj, Deputy Defence Minister (Dec 2016)
Mr. Ts. Elbegdorj, President (2009)

Mr. N. Enkhbayar, Prime Minister (2004)
Mr. Natsagiin Bagabandi, President (2001)
Mr. Natsagiin Bagabandi, Speaker of Parliament (1996)
Mr. Ochirbat, President (1994)
Mr Bathmunkh, Chairman of the Presidium (Mar 1989)
Mr. U. Tsendenbal, Prime Minister (1973)
Mr U. Tsendenbal, Chairman of the Presidium (1959)

11. Bilateral Cooperation Mechanism: India and Mongolia have ‘India-Mongolia Joint Committee on Cooperation (IMJCC)’ chaired at Ministerial level. **5th** meeting of IMJCC was held in New Delhi in April, 2016 under the Chair of MoS for EA Gen (Retd.) V.K. Singh and Mr. L. Purevsuren, Foreign Minister of Mongolia. The **6th** meeting of IMJCC was held in Ulaanbataar on 25 April, 2018 co-chaired by Smt Sushma Swaraj, External Affairs Minister and Mr. D. Tsogtbaatar, Foreign Minister of Mongolia. Owing to scheduling difficulties, the **7th** IMJCC was not held in 2019 and finally took place virtually due to Covid enforced environment on Dec 3, 2020 and co-chairmanship of Dr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister and Mr. L. Oyun-Erden, the then Chief Cabinet Secretary(Prime Minister since Jan 27, 2021).

12. Indo-Mongolian Foreign Office Consultations: The last round of FOCs was held on 23 December 2016 in Ulaanbaatar. JS (EA) in MEA led the Indian side. The Acting Director, Department of Asia, Africa & Pacific Regions Co-chaired the consultations from the Mongolian side. Though the Mongolian State Secretary of MFA visited India in the first week of November 2018 & held bilateral issues, it was not considered as FOC. The next round of FOCs is expected to be held in New Delhi at Secretary level depending on mutually convenient dates.

12. Cooperation in UN & International Organizations: Mongolia has been traditionally supporting India and Indian candidates in the United Nations and various other international forums. It has supported us for the non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for 2011-2012. **India and Mongolia agreed to support to each other for UNSC non-permanent seats respectively for terms 2021-22 and 2023-24.** Mongolia voted in favour of India’s proposal to Yoga’s inscription into the list of UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage. India also voted for registering Mongolian legacy on “Mongolian Traditional Custom to Worship Mountain and Ovoo” in the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Mongolia has publicly reiterated its support for India’s membership to the permanent seat of expanded UNSC. Since 2017, Mongolia supported Indian candidates to the:

- (i) International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)
- (ii) Executive Board of UNESCO for the term 2017-2021,
- (iii) World Custom Organization (WCO)
- (iv) Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in Category ‘B’ during the 30th session of the IMO Assembly in 2017,
- (v) Advisory Committee membership election for Human Rights Council during the 36th meeting of HRC in Geneva in 2017
- (vi) International Court of Justice [For ICJ Mongolia’s support was on reciprocal basis]
- (vii) Executive Board of the UNESCO at 39th General Conference for term 2017-2021
- (viii) 3rd group of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) during the 40th Assembly, 2019
- (ix) World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) for the term 2020-2022

- (x) Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in Category 'B' during the 31st session of the IMO Assembly in 2019
- (xi) World Custom Organisation (WCO)
- (xii) Asia Pacific Group seat of the UN Security Council for the term 2021-22,
- (xiii) Inter-governmental Committee for the Safeguard of Intangible Cultural Heritage
- (xiv) UN Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary (ACABQ) in November 2020

13. Defence Cooperation: In addition to IMJCC, a Joint Working Group for Defence cooperation also convened annually. Mr. N. Enkhbold, Minister of Defence visited India in March 2018 and held bilateral talks with RRM, RM, NSA and COAS. The 8th JWG met in New Delhi (13-14 December 2016) and the Mongolian delegation was led by Deputy Defence Minister. The 9th JWG held from 6-8 May 2019 in Ulaanbaatar headed by JS(Air) and Mongolian Deputy Minister of Defence.

Joint India-Mongolia exercise 'Nomadic Elephant' is held annually. Last year it was held at Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia) from 10-22 September 2018 and in 2019 it was held from 05-18 October 2019 at Bakloh (HP), India. During 2020, it could not be held due to Covid enforced environment and is now expected to be held in the last quarter of 2021.

Indian Armed Forces Observers regularly participate in the Annual multilateral peace keeping exercise 'Khan Quest' in Mongolia. For 2021 exercises scheduled to be held in July, invitation has been issued to our MoD. India also offers training both in civilian and defence courses under ITEC Programme.

14. Border Patrolling Cooperation: The BSF (MHA) of India and the Mongolian General Authority for Border Protection (GABP) have been closely cooperating on border patrolling and related subjects for over eight years. This cooperation has been formalized in the form of a MoU in May 2015 during PM's visit. A Joint Steering Committee (JSC) has been constituted for furthering this cooperation. The first meeting of the JSC was held on 21-23 Dec 2016 in Ulaanbaatar. The Indian delegation was led by Secretary (BM), MHA. A BSF delegation led by DG, BSF visited Mongolia from 28-30 October 2018 to discuss further cooperation. Several proposals on capacity building & technical assistance, including supply of integrated server to GABP by BSF are under consideration and likely to be completed by mid-2021 provided COVID-19 situation in both countries is eased.

15. Disaster Management Cooperation between National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) picked up pace in the recent years. In 2018, 25 officers of NEMA were trained in India under ITEC. During the visit of President of Mongolia to India in September, 2019, an MoU on cooperation in the field of Disaster Management and Disaster Risk Reduction was signed between NEMA of Mongolia and NDMA of India and an 'Action Plan' for 2021-2022 has also been negotiated between the two agencies in Feb 2021. However, some of the proposed activities in 2020-2021 could not be held due to Covid pandemic.

16. Energy Cooperation: A Working Group for cooperation in the field of nuclear energy has been set up between the respective agencies of the two countries i.e. the DAE and the Nuclear Energy Agency of Mongolia. The second meeting of this Working

Group was held in Mumbai from 10-12 December 2012. The 3rd JWG meeting was held in March 2017 in Ulaanbaatar. Another JWG was constituted for cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy but there has not been any progress by either side.

17. Commercial, Economic and Technical Cooperation

Since the transition of Mongolia from erstwhile Soviet satellite into democratic nation and free market economy, India and Mongolia signed 2 MoUs pertaining to the establishment of a Joint Trade Sub-Committee and Co-operation between the Planning Commission of India and the National Development Board of Mongolia were signed in 1994 during the visit of then Minister for Commerce Shri Pranab Mukherjee to expand bilateral economic trade. Subsequently, an Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation for MFN status to each other in respect of customs, duties and all other taxes on imports and exports and an MoU co-operation in the field of Geology and Mineral resources entered into force in Sept 1996. During the visit of President Bagabandiin in 2001, both sides signed an Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement which is currently under review. In Sept 2019, President Battulga paid an official visit to India accompanied by 40-member Mongolian Business delegation. During his visit to New Delhi, the 3 main Chambers of Commerce (CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM organized a 'Business Meeting' which was attended by our Minister of PNG, Shri Pradhan and 2 B2B agreements were also signed.

18. The mission regularly contributes to consolidating and strengthening our trade and bilateral relations, especially to highlight that Mongolia is beneficiary of India's single largest LoC for construction of USD 1.236 billion Oil Refinery Project in Dornogobi Province capable of producing 1.5 million MTA oil (roughly 3.4th of domestic consumption). In Dec 2018, the Embassy in collaboration with Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized commercial event 'Trade and Investment Opportunities in India' to promote Indian Pharmaceutical, Agriculture, Dairy, Spice, Tea, Coffee, Tourism and Educational sector in Mongolia. 1st India-Mongolia Joint Oil and Gas Exhibition that was followed by 1st ever India-Mongolia Oil and Gas Exhibition was jointly organized by the Embassy of India, Ministry of Mining and Heavy Industry, Mongol Refinery and Engineers India Ltd in the month of May, 2019 in which 32 reputed Indian companies, including TATA Projects, ASCONS, IGSEC and 3 Mongolian companies showcased their products and services. The mission also facilitated organizing of first India Education Fair in August, 2019 in which 5 Indian Universities participated and got good response. In November, 2019, 40 Indian MSME companies participated for the first time in Misheel Expo. As a part of 65th anniversary celebrations of India-Mongolia diplomatic relations, the mission along with Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) organized a day long business event titled India: Land of Business Opportunities" highlighting Make in India, Skill India, Digital India and other areas of core competence on Jan 20, 2020.

19. Mongolia like rest of the world was impacted badly during 2020 owing to Covid pandemic. However, using technological tools, the mission still organized 6-virtual 'Webinars' dedicated to Mining & Mineral Cooperation, Healthcare and Pharma sector, Smart Cities, IT and related technologies, Dairy, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry sectors during Oct 2020 to Feb 2021 and another Virtual Meeting by Policy Times of India on 'Unleashing India's potential' was organized in Feb 2021 to bridge asymmetry of information and promote bilateral trade and commerce between India and Mongolia

21. Notwithstanding our excellent relations, the volume of bilateral trade is modest in value & volumes. Main items of exports to Mongolia include medicines, mining machinery and auto parts, etc. Imports from Mongolia include raw cashmere wool. However, India-Mongolia bilateral trade has registered significant growth during the last five years (2016-2020) as evident from the table given below:

Amount (in USD Million) (Sources: MNCCI)

Trade	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Export	2.232	1.788	0.995	1.154	0.741
Import	24.757	35.878	51.752	37.143	34.608

Participation of Mongolian companies in commercial events during 2020-21

Sl. No.	Date & Month	Name Of Event	
1.	21 February 2020	India Soft 2020	Hyderabad
2.	24 December 2020	Online webinar (Zoom application) – on Agriculture	Mongolia
3.	05 January 2021	Online webinar (Zoom application) – on Dairy Product & Animal Husbandry	Mongolia
4.	07 January 2021	Online webinar (Zoom application) – on Smartcity and roll out of COVID Vaccine	Mongolia
5.	21 January 2021	Online webinar (Zoom application) – on export of coking coal to India	Mongolia
6.	04 February 2021	Online webinar (Zoom application) – on Oil Refinery Project	Mongolia
7.	10 February 2021	Online webinar (Zoom application) – on Coal organised by Coal Preparation Society of India	New Delhi

[Due to COVID-19 pandemic, Mongolian companies could not participate in commercial events physically from March 2020 to February, 2021]

22. ITEC Assistance: During Ex-President Elbegdorj's visit to India in 2009, 120 slots per annum were offered to Mongolia under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC). From 2011-12, the number of these slots for civilian training programme were increased to 150 per year. It has been further increased to 200 from 2015-16 during PM's visit in May 2015 however this was reduced to 150 per year after 2016. Since 2019-20, Ministry has approved 200 slots including 40 slots for group training of Mongolian professionals/engineers/technicians either employed or proposed to employed for the Mongol Refinery out of which 183 slots were utilized till Jan 2020. Of the 200 allocated slots for FY 2020-21, only 2 slots were utilized for online training by NCCD, Mongolia Doctors in May, 2020 and the remaining slots have not been unutilized due to COVID-19 situation in both the countries.

Prominent special capacity building Group Programmes that have been organized for Mongolian dignitaries & high government officials in recent years include

- (i) 26 Custom officials in 2015
- (ii) 29 Mongolian Teachers for Advanced English from Feb-Apr 2016
- (iii) 20 officials of NEMA in Nov 2017-Feb 2018
- (iv) 13 State Secretaries at IIPA New Delhi in March 2018
- (v) 25 Mongolian Diplomats and former Ambassadors attended a tailor made course at FSI, New Delhi Oct 2019
- (vi) 18 Provincial Governors and 7 high officials led by Chief Cabinet Secretary Mr Oyun Erdene attended a special course in Public Governance at IIM, Indore in Jan 2020.
- (vii) 20 Engineers/Technicians of Mongol Refinery for special group course in Refinery Operations and Maintenance completed in Feb 2020
- (viii) 10 NEMA officials for Training in English language in a special course for Mongolia, Myanmar and Laos in Feb 2021

23. ICCR scholarships: For the Academic Year 2019-20, Mongolia has been offered 50 slots (20 slots each under Aid to Mongolia and General Cultural Scholarship Scheme and 10 slots under Cultural Exchange Programme/Education. In addition, 10 slots have also been offered for special courses for Buddhist studies in Varanasi and Leh Institute with effect from 2020-2021. Though about 19 acceptances have been received by the mission, owing to Covid enforced travel restrictions and closure of institutions in India, Mongolian candidates have not moved to India for studies

24. Rajiv Gandhi Polytechnic College for Production & Art (RGPCPA): Prior to the announcement of LoC of USD 1.236 billion for construction of Oil Refinery, RGPCPA was cited as an 'excellent model of development cooperation from India. This prestigious polytechnic was approved in 1992 during the visit of Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Vice President in 1992. Since then, this Vocational Training Centre has helped Mongolia develop skill building and training facilities in 8 fields. Over the period of time, TGPCPA has become a centre of repute. After PM's visit to Mongolia, during 2015-16 six of the 8 faculties of vocational training in this prestigious institution were upgraded in 2 phases at a total grant of about US\$ 2.84 million from Gol.

25. Atal Bihari Vajpayee Centre for Excellence in ICT: An agreement was signed in September 2001 during the visit of Minister for IT Pramod Mahajan to Mongolia, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Centre of Excellence (ABVCE) in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Mongolia and 5 Community Information Centres (CICs) in 5 provinces (Khovsgol, Bulgan, Kharkhorin, Darkhan-Uuland Sukhbaatar). However, subsequently, at the request of Mongolian Ministry of Education (MMoE) it was decided that instead of 5 small centres, a full-fledged Centre of Excellence would be established using LoC of US\$ 20 million. PM Modi along with Mongolian PM laid the foundation stone of this center of this Centre within the campus of Mongolian University of Science and Technology (MUST) in May 2015. WAPCOS, India is providing the Project Management Consultancy (PMC) for construction of this institution. Notwithstanding Covid enforced environment in 2020, 2 separate contracts for civic construction and development of curriculum/supply of hardware/software have been awarded to M/s P K Saxena and Lovely International Trust, respectively and advances have also been

given. Actual construction of the Centre of Excellence is expected to start in the summer of 2021 after easing of COVID-19 situation.

26. Solar Energy: The first solar energy electrification project from India was executed by the Central Electronics Ltd. and formally inaugurated in April 2006 in Dadal Soum cost of project is approx. US\$ 100,000. Training of Mongolian experts on solar energy has been organized in India.

At the request of Mongolian Foreign Minister, former EAM approved a solarification project for the Mongolian Foreign Office in 2018 costing about USD 1/2 million. Towards this, detailed feasibility studies, cost estimates have already been shared with the Ministry which is processing the required approvals. The project is likely to commence towards sometime in the second half of 2021.

27. Humanitarian Assistancess:

Humanitarian assistance worth US\$ 20,000 in the form of beds, bedrolls, toys, etc for the children of herders in Sukhbaatar Aimag (severely affected by harsh winter 'Zud') was provided. Deputy Prime Minister and other senior officials from the Province were present during this donation ceremony. In the past years also, GoI provided considerable assistance on various occasions.

Humanitarian assistance worth US\$50,000 was provided by the Government of India to the flood affected Provinces (Bayan Ulgii, Arhangai and Huvsgul) of Mongolia in August 2018.

28. Medical Missions: A team of 17 Indian Rotarians doctors led by Mr. R.K. Saboo, Ex-President of Rotary International undertook the second medical mission to Mongolia in May 2019 and conducted about 300 surgeries and donated medical equipment/medicines worth USD 12000. The first medical mission was undertaken by them in August 2017 when Indian doctors conducted neurosurgery, microsurgery, anesthesiology, audiology, plastic surgery, etc. and trained the Mongolian doctors. Medical equipment worth of US\$ 30,000/- (approximately) donated to various Mongolian hospitals. Indian Rotarian have offered to treat 10 Mongolian poor children free of cost for their heart surgeries. The offer was reportedly utilized by Mongolian children in 2018 through the India-Mongolia Health Cooperation Centre.

29. Digital Connectivity Network: The Government of Mongolia sought India's assistance on expansion of network in rural areas and improvement of infrastructure of main ICT network. Proposal is under consideration.

30. Cultural Cooperation :

The India-Mongolian Agreement on Cultural Cooperation was first signed in 1961 and a CEP between the two countries has always remained in force. The Agreement envisages co-operation in the fields of education by way of scholarships, exchange of experts, participation in conferences etc. The CEP was renewed in 2003, 2005, 2009 and 2015 and most recently in Sept 2019 during the visit of Mongolian President until 2022.

A “Festival of India” was organized in 2015 by the mission to mark the 60 years of diplomatic relations with Mongolia was organized in November 2015. A dance troupe from Mongolia performed in various cities in India in January 2018 and a traditional Indian Dance Troupe performed in 3 cities in Mongolia including capital city Ulaanbaatar in March 2018. A special Laddakh Mask Dance troupe visited Mongolia to perform at the Asian Buddhist Conference on Peace (ABCP) in June 2019 and also performed in Darkhan Province. There are regular exchanges of cultural troupe and performances of Indian performing groups that are well appreciated in Mongolia.

It is pertinent to mention that **for the last 20 years, a pan-Mongolia Indian dance competition titled “Melody of Ganga” among school children** is being organized by the mission with the help from Indian Culture Centre at Children’s Palace. The 2019 edition attracted over 400 Mongolian children dancers from 13 provinces. The 2020 edition of this Dance competition could not be organised due to COVID-19 situation.

For the last 20 years the mission has been organizing **Hindi Language classes** in Mongolia and every year 4 students are granted scholarships to study Hindi language at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra annually. During the last 25 years, more than 200 Mongolian students have availed scholarship to learn Hindi at KHS, Agra and the Hindi classes are going on in UB City.

To commemorate 65th anniversary of the India-Mongolia diplomatic relations, a painting competition was organized by the mission with the help from Creativity Centre which attracted a record number of 976 entries from students in the age group 6-16. The mission is planning to print a ‘Book’ of the award winning paintings. The mission also organized several events despite Covid pandemic situation that include setting up of India-Mongolia Friendship Garden, Release of Gold/Silver coins minted by Central Bank of Mongolia on the 150th anniversary of Mahatma besides facilitating telecast of the Indian 55-episode TV serial of ‘Buddha” dubbed in Mongolian language between Association of Mongolian Buddhist Devotees, a part of Gandan monastery and Zee India.

During the visit of Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, the then Human Resources Development Minister to Mongolia in July 2002 an MOU on cooperation in the field of education was signed. Within framework of which a large number of Indian literary works including Panchtantra, Ramayana, Shakuntala, Ritu Samhara, Kamasutra, Godaan, Gabanand Kati Patang have been published in Mongolian language as also major Buddhist scriptures. During PM’s visit in May 2015, it was agreed to implement a new project for digitization of ancient manuscripts in Gandan Monastery with the assistance by CUTS (Varanasi) however, this project has not gone through due to various hurdles at National Library and monasteries end.

An International Conference on Chinggis Khaan, His Legacy and Indian Culture was organized by the ICCR in September 2016 in Ulaanbaatar. The second such Conference was held in JNU on 9 January 2018. Ehipassiko Mongolia conference was held at New Delhi on 15 March to support Mongolian language learners and to attract young researchers to the Mongolian study.

Hindi films are fairly popular in Mongolia. The serial Mahabharata, dubbed in Mongolian, has been telecast on Ulaanbaatar TV. A photographic exhibition entitled "Path of Compassion", another one titled 'Amrita Shergil Revisited' and an exhibition of 540 Indian paintings based on a private collection have been organized in Mongolia. In March 2018 Mongolian film festival was celebrated in Kolkata, where Mongolian films were shown. Similarly, the mission organized 'Indian Film festival' in Ulaanbaatar city from 27-29 March 2019 in which two Hindi movies, Neerja and Dangal, were screened.

In 2019, the mission has set up 5 special 'India-corners' at Rajeev Gandhi Polytechnic Institute, CITI University and at E-mart near National Park and donated more than 600 books.

ICCR has donated 14 sets of Kanjurs (Urga & Narthang) to various Mongolian Institutions and Buddhist Monasteries. The mission with the support of ICCR has got 21 volumes of Indian classic literature have been translated into Mongolian language by Dr. Gendendarm and were published with financial assistance from ICCR. This year (2019), Dr Shirendev, a Mongolian Indologist translated 8 volumes of 'Dhammpada' from Pali into Mongolian language.

The "Ayurveda Day" was celebrated for the first time in UB on 15 December 2017 by organizing an India-Mongolia Scientific Conference on Traditional Medicine and a special compilation of scientific papers presented in this event was published. The 3rd Ayurveda Day was celebrated on 5 November 2018 at Otoch Manramba University. The 5th Ayurveda Day planned to celebrated on Nov 13, 2020 could not be celebrated over sudden shut down of city and ban on hosting conferences, events and public gathering on detection of community spread of corona virus.

To mark the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev ji and 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the mission planted 700 plants in the National Park in Oct/Nov 2019 and created a special corner by installing commemorative plaques.

The mission, with the assistance of Prof O Nyamdavaa, former Ambassador of Mongolia to India and Director of Centre for Indian Studies in Mongolia, has organized two conferences and a photo exhibition highlighting cultural and historical similarities between India and Mongolia in 2020 in the Mongolian National University of Humanities and CITI University. In Sept, 2020, Prof Nyamdavaa's second book on 65 years of India-Mongolia relations was released and distributed.

While a commemorative stamp to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was issued by Mongol Post on Oct 2, 2019, last year on Oct 2, 2020, specially minted Gold & Silver coins on Gandhiji were released at impressive ceremonies in MFA. Also on Dec 3, 2020, EAM and Chief Cabinet Secretary (now PM) released a special commemorative stamp to mark 65th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

31. Indian Community

The Indian community in Mongolia is small, numbering about 200-250 according to Mongolian Immigration figures. Most Indians are either employed in organized sector or are self-employed such as operating Indian restaurants which are popular with the Mongolians and foreigners in Mongolia. Interestingly, presently 3 Indian nationals are

heading regional offices of International Organizations in Mongolia – Mr. Tapan Mishra, Coordinator of UN, Mr. Vinod Ahuja, Head of local office of FAO and Mr. Pavit Ramachandran, Head of ADB in Mongolia. There is a small number of Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) and likewise a small number of Mongolians are connected to India either by way of being married to Indians or been born and raised in India. Embassy regularly celebrates Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) and organizes get together at Diwali and other important festivals. The community is also invited to take part in Diplomatic Women's charity Bazar every year.

Recommended books and useful Resources:

1. Walking Home from Mongolia: 10 million Steps through by Rob Lilwal
2. Chinggis Khan, Making of the Modern World by Jack Weatherford
3. A Secret history of Mongol Queen by Jack Weatherford
4. Hearing Bird Fly by Louisa Waugh
5. Embassy of India, Ulaanbaatar website: <http://www.eoi.gov.in/ulaanbaatar/>
6. Embassy of India, Ulaanbaatar Facebook page:
7. Embassy of India, Ulaanbaatar Twitter account:

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