

DEVELOP INDIA

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5th BRICS Summit

The 5th BRICS Summit was held in Durban on March 27, 2013. South Africa assumed the Chair of BRICS from India at the Durban Summit. BRICS nations said on Wednesday that significant risks remain and the performance of the global economy still falls behind their expectations. "Uncertainty about strength and durability of the recovery and the direction of policy in some major economies remains high," Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa said in a declaration released after the conclusion of the 5th BRICS Summit in Durban. BRICS nations said some of policy actions in Europe, the United States and Japan that are aimed at reducing tail-risks in the world economy "produce negative spillover effects on other economies of the world."

Central banks in advanced economies have responded with unconventional monetary policy actions which have increased global liquidity, the declaration said. Major central banks "should avoid the unintended consequences of these actions in the form of increased volatility of capital flows, currencies and commodity prices, which may have negative growth effects on other economies, in particular developing countries," the declaration said.

The BRICS nations reaffirmed their strong commitment to support growth and foster financial stability, and also underscored the need for appropriate action to be taken by advanced economies in order to rebuild confidence, foster growth and secure a strong recovery. In the declaration, the emerging economies expressed concerns over the slow pace of the reform of the International Monetary Fund. They called for the reform of international financial institutions to make them more representative and to reflect the growing weight of BRICS and other developing countries. The BRICS nations are also concerned with the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Syria, and reaffirmed their opposition to any further militarization of the conflict in the country. For the Iranian nuclear issue, they said there is no alternative to a negotiated solution. "We are concerned about threats of military action as well as unilateral sanctions." The five nations also are "gravely concerned with the deterioration in the current situation in the Central African Republic," and urged all parties to the conflict to immediately cease hostilities and return to negotiations.



BRICS summit ends as leaders agree to establish development bank

The 5th BRICS summit ended Wednesday with leaders agreeing to establish a development bank, while several agreements were signed to strengthen cooperation within the grouping and enhance engagement with other emerging and developing economies. New BRICS chairperson and South African President Jacob Zuma told a media briefing early Wednesday afternoon that following a report from the finance ministers, the leaders were satisfied that the establishment of the bank was feasible and viable. This was after the consideration that developing countries faced challenges of infrastructure development due to insufficient long-term financing and direct investment, especially in capital stock, and constrained aggregate demand.

As a result, there was need for BRICS cooperation towards more productive use of global financial resources to make a positive contribution to the process. "We have agreed to establish the new development bank. The initial capital contributions for the bank should be substantial and sufficient for the bank to be effective in financing infrastructure," he said. The development bank would be based on the needs of the BRICS countries which require about 4.5 trillion U.S. dollars over the next five years for infrastructural development, he said. Zuma added that BRICS leaders had also in June 2012 tasked finance ministers and central bank governors to explore the construction of a financial safety net leading to the creation of a Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) within BRICS countries.

Leaders agreed that the creation of the CRA with an initial size of 100 billion U.S. dollars was also viable subject to internal legal frameworks and appropriate safeguards. "We direct our finance ministers and central bank governors to continue working towards its establishment. We are grateful to our finance ministers and central bank governors for the work undertaken on the new development bank and contingent reserve arrangement. "We direct them to negotiate and conclude the agreement which will establish them. We will review progress made in these two initiatives at our net meeting in September 2013," he said.

Agreements signed during the summit included one on green economy cooperation co-financing and another on infrastructure co-financing for Africa. The leaders also launched the BRICS Business Council, which will provide business to business linkages within the grouping, while an agreement on the establishment of a BRICS Think-Tanks Council that was signed on March 11 was formally declared. They also recognized the 5th BRICS Academic Forum and the role of academics in fostering dialogue.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh urged BRICS nations to promote the forum by allowing academics to share their unique experiences, particularly in the areas of energy, food security, education, health care, sustainable development, information technology and public service. "Our roadmap of the future should focus on deepening of our existing cooperation."

The foremost challenge facing the BRICS nations was to respond to persistent weaknesses in the global economy, he said.

"Recognizing that BRICS countries will remain key drivers to global economic growth, we should further sustain our growth by harnessing opportunities and investment ties between ourselves," he said, adding that they should exploit their complementarities for their mutual benefit taking into consideration their unique resources and strengths.

Singh also highlighted the challenges of terrorism and piracy and said that it was incumbent upon the nations to use their collective voice and capacity to make an effective and meaningful contribution to these challenges and foster global peace and security.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said he hoped that BRICS nations would continue working on a professional level and called for the strengthening of technological and industrial markets while special attention should be given to expanding business ties.

He also encouraged the promotion of the green economy for sustainable development: "We will need to implement the highest environmental standards."

China's President Xi Jinping said the leaders of the five BRICS countries were full of confidence in the potential of the grouping saying that the countries shared broad common interests and that the establishment of the development bank would unlock the potential for BRICS cooperation. He called for greater balance to the global economy and greater democracy in international relations, pledged China's continued readiness to play a part in forging ahead BRICS ties and added that China had already established strategic partnerships with others. Besides the summit proper, BRICS nations also signed bilateral agreements among themselves as they sought to cement relations within the context of the transcontinental grouping. Addressing a plenary session earlier in the morning, Zuma said it was appropriate that the leaders celebrate BRICS achievements, including its further contributions to the strengthening of the global agenda to ensure a more equitable and prosperous world. "The BRICS Forum offers member states the opportunity of amplifying voices for political, financial, economic and social interests around common goals and development agenda based on shared values."

He said there was need to forge a paradigm shift in global relations and cooperation.

"BRICS countries continue to power, stabilize and support the global economy. We, however, should remain vigilant to underlying weaknesses and risks in the global economy." He said BRICS countries would continue to consider crisis situations in the world and would coordinate closely as they sought to achieve global peace and security in line with the United Nations Charter.

The shared vision of integration and industrialization would remain at the core of BRICS cooperation, he said.

There was need for emerging countries to enjoy the fruits of their resource endowments by shifting from primary to industrial development and thus beneficiate their goods.

Shifting to his country, he said South Africa was keen to learn from the experiences of others and wanted to upgrade about 3.2 million youths into formal employment while enhancing skills development.

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INDIA TO HOST 4TH CLEAN ENERGY MINISTERIAL MEETING IN APRIL

PM Manmohan Singh will inaugurate the 4th Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM) meeting on 17th April which among other things would assess the steps being undertaken by various countries to pursue green initiatives. Energy ministers from 23 countries, including US Energy Secretary Steven Chu, will come together in the national capital from April 16 to 18 to review the progress of clean energy initiatives, an official statement said in New Delhi.

Besides the ministerial meeting, the event will also host the Clean Energy Innovation Showcase, panel discussion on participation of woman in Clean Energy, Awards for the Super Efficient Appliances etc.

The ministerial meetings also provide an opportunity for high-level engagement with private-sector stakeholders in a variety of formats, ranging from public panel sessions to roundtable dialogues, co-chaired by ministers and chief executive officers, it added.

The CEM is currently the only regular meeting of energy ministers at which they exclusively discuss clean energy deployment issues. It also includes involvement from other ministries that play an important role in clean energy in governments. The CEM is a global forum to share best practices and promote policies and programs that encourage and facilitate the transition to a global clean energy economy. The CEM initiatives help reduce emissions, improve energy security, provide energy access, and sustain economic growth.

CEM participating economies account for 90 per cent of global clean energy investment and 80 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. International collaboration under CEM is action-oriented and flexible and there are no negotiated texts or binding agreements.

Moreover, there is no requirement that all governments that participate in the ministerial meetings also participate in each of the clean-energy-focused initiatives. The first Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM1) was hosted by US Secretary of Energy Steven Chu in Washington, DC, in July 2010. The United Arab Emirates hosted the second Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM2) in Abu Dhabi in April 2011. The United Kingdom hosted the third Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM3) in London in April 2012.



NORTH KOREA DECLARES 'STATE OF WAR' WITH SOUTH KOREA

North Korea said it had formally entered a "state of war" with South Korea and warned that any provocation would swiftly escalate into a nuclear conflict. "As of now, inter-Korea relations enter a state of war and all matters between the two Koreas will be handled according to wartime protocol," the North said

in a statement attributed to all government bodies and institutions. It

is the latest in a string of dire threats from Pyongyang that have been matched by tough warnings from South Korea and the United States, fuelling international concerns that

the situation is spiralling out of control. "The long-standing situation of the Korean peninsula being neither

at peace nor at war is finally over," said the statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

The two Koreas have always technically remained at war because the

1950-53 Korean War concluded with an armistice rather than a peace treaty.

The North had announced earlier this month that it was ripping up the armistice and other bilateral peace pacts signed with Seoul in protest against South Korea-US joint military exercises. "This is not really a new threat -- just part of a series of provocative threats," the South's Unification Ministry said in a statement. The defence ministry added that no particular troop movement had been observed along the border. Voiding the ceasefire theoretically opened the way to a resumption of hostilities, although observers noted it was far from the first time that North Korea had announced the demise of the armistice. The armistice was approved by the UN General Assembly, and both the United Nations and South Korea have repudiated the North's unilateral withdrawal. Saturday's statement warned that any military provocation near the North-South land or sea border would result "in a full-scale conflict and a nuclear war". Most observers still believe this will remain a rhetorical rather than a physical battle, but the situation has now become so volatile that any slight miscalculation carries the potential for rapid escalation. Both China and Russia asked for all sides to cooperate to prevent the situation worsening on Friday, with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov voicing particular concern.

The high-stakes standoff has its roots in North Korea's successful long-range rocket launch in December and the third nuclear test it carried out in February. Both events drew UN sanctions that incensed Pyongyang, which then switched the focus of its anger to the annual joint South Korea-US military drills.

As tensions escalated, Washington has maintained a notably assertive stance, publicising its use of nuclear-capable B-52s and B-2 stealth bombers in the war games.

The long-distance deployment of both sets of aircraft out of bases in Guam and the US mainland were intended as a clear signal of US commitment to defending South Korea against any act of aggression. While Hagel stressed that Washington was taking the threats from the North "very seriously," US military intelligence noted that Pyongyang's combative rhetoric has not, so far, been matched by any overtly provocative troop build-up. And analysts have underlined that the threats and counter-threats have increasingly stressed a conditional element of the other side acting first.

US takes new North Korean threat 'seriously'

The White House has said it took a new warning from North Korea that it was in a state of war with South Korea seriously, but said Pyongyang's threats were following a familiar pattern. "We've seen reports of a new and unconstructive statement from North Korea," said Caitlin Hayden, spokeswoman for the National Security Council. "We take these threats seriously and remain in close contact with our South Korean allies."

North Korea earlier delivered the latest in a string of dire threats that have drawn a tough response from Seoul and Washington, and sparked international concern that tensions on the peninsula could get out of control.

Pyongyang said it had formally entered a "state of war" with South Korea and warned that any provocation would swiftly escalate into a nuclear conflict.



India and Liechtenstein Sign Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA)

India and Liechtenstein have signed a Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) today at Bern, Switzerland. The Agreement was signed by Ms Chitra Narayanan, Indian Ambassador in Switzerland from Indian side and Madame Doris Frick, Ambassador of Liechtenstein in Switzerland on behalf of Liechtenstein.



Salient features of the agreement (TIEA) with Liechtenstein are:

- It is based on international standard of transparency and exchange of information.
- Information must be foreseeable relevant to the administration and enforcement of the domestic laws of the Contracting Parties concerning taxes covered by the agreement.
- There is a specific provision that the requested Party shall use its information gathering measures to obtain the requested information even though that Party may not need such information for its own tax purposes.
- There is a specific provision for providing banking and ownership information.
- It provides for the representatives of the competent authority of the requesting Party to enter the territory of the requested Party to interview individuals and examine records.
- The Agreement has specific provisions for protecting the confidentiality of the information obtained under the Agreement. Information is to be treated as secret and can be disclosed to only specified person or authorities, which are tax authorities or its oversight body. However, the information may be used for other purposes with the express consent of the Competent Authority of the supplying State.
- The Agreement shall enter into force one month from the later of the notification. On entering into force, information can be exchanged if it pertains to taxable periods beginning on or after 1st April, 2013.
- The Agreement provides for the exchange of documents or information created in or derived from a date preceding 1st April, 2013, that are foresee ably relevant to a request relating to tax years beginning on or after 1st April, 2013.

CCI push to projects worth Rs 74,000 cr hit by delays

Giving a major push to infrastructure and energy sector, the govt in the past two months has given nod to projects worth Rs 74,000 crore which were stuck for years due to lack of various clearances. The impetus came soon after the formation of the Cabinet Committee on Investment in January amid concerns in the government over the prolonged delays in projects ranging from oil exploration to building roads.



A key beneficiary of the CCI impetus has been the petroleum sector, where investments worth USD 13.42 billion for exploration and production activities in 40 oil blocks were held up because of objections raised by the Defence Ministry on account of security concerns. The CCI, at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on 20th March, approved the conditional clearance given to five blocks, where investments to the tune of Rs 52,921 crore have already been made. The CCI decision has paved the way for investments worth Rs 1,566 crore, an official statement said.

The processes of granting environment and forest clearances for mega projects have also been streamlined and made easier in cases such as renewal of mining leases.

"It has also been decided that no fresh Environment Clearance (EC) shall be required for a mining project at the time of renewal of mining lease, if EC was obtained under the EIA Notification of 2006," it said.

For one time capacity expansion of 25 percent or less, coal mining projects have now been exempted from public hearing provided that it had taken place at the time of obtaining the existing EC and the mining is confined to the existing lease area, the statement said.

The Environment Ministry has, through an office memorandum issued on 5th March, granted conditional exemption from getting the consent of Gram Sabha for linear projects like roads and transmission lines.

"A number of projects were getting delayed as obtaining consent of each Gram Sabha is time consuming. ... such (linear) projects are now exempt from obtaining the consent of Gram Sabha provided that the rights of the Primitive Tribal Groups/pre-agricultural communities are not affected and the state government has certified that all rights under the Forest Rights Act have been recognised and vested," it said.

The Environment Ministry has also done away with the need for obtaining a separate environment clearance for mining soil/earth from borrow areas of highway projects.

It has also extended the waiver from forest clearance for building critical infrastructure involving less than five hectares of land to 22 more districts.

Initially, the waiver was granted to 60 identified districts. "...this exemption has further been extended to all categories of roads and quarrying of materials used in construction of public roads," the statement said.

The Environment Ministry has also brought the environment clearance procedure for Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in line with the framework prescribed for national investment and manufacturing zones under the National Manufacturing Policy.

"This would allow the state governments to delegate powers to the State Pollution Control Boards and would exempt individual units from public hearing, if the SEZ, as a whole, has undergone public hearing," the statement said.

In the power sector, NTPC's proposed 1,980 MW project in Jharkhand's North Karanpura area, to be built at a cost of Rs 14,000 crore, pending for the past 13 years was cleared by the CCI.

NTPC and Coal India Limited were at loggerheads on the project with the latter claiming that it would lose six billion tonnes of coal underneath the project. NTPC had claimed that it has already invested Rs 500 crore in the project.

The CCI decided, in principle, to restore the original coal linkage granted to the plant with

certain stipulations.

The CCI has also cleared coal ministry's proposal to fast-track implementation of twelve projects stranded due to green clearances.

These projects would free 36.97 million tonne of coal annually and bring in investment of Rs 1347.63 crore.

India's external debt rise over \$376 bn as of Dec end last year

India's total external debt rose to 376.3 billion US Dollar as of December end last year, up by 8.9 per cent since March on account of long-term and short-term components.

An official statement said, increase in long-term debt, which accounted for 75.6 per cent of total external borrowings, was mainly on account of NRI deposits and commercial borrowings, while short-term debt stood higher due to trade related credits.

Govt sets up National Power Committee

Government has set up a National Power Committee to ensure strict discipline and resolve inter-state issues in utilisation of electricity grids in the country. The panel will address issues among Regional Power Committees that work towards improving operational performance of grids in a particular region.



The committee's role will be crucial in evolving a common approach to issues related to reliability and security of the power grid system in the country. Chairperson of the Central Electricity Authority, the apex planning body for the power sector, will be heading the 18-member committee. The panel is required to meet at least once in every six months and members can meet anytime to discuss any issue.

Nepal, World Bank to redouble efforts to improve performance of Bank financed projects

The Government of Nepal and the World Bank are to redouble their efforts to improve the performance of Bank financed projects in order to ensure that they meet their development objectives. This was agreed at a joint trimester portfolio review at the Ministry of Finance in Kathmandu yesterday.



According to the World Bank , the implementation of the Bank's financed projects has slowed down this fiscal year due to delays in the full budget and inadequate releases, compounded by weaknesses in procurement and financial management as well as frequent turnover of project staff. As a result, over fifty percent of the 1.3 billion dollars of ongoing project commitments is at risk of not meeting its intended results.

Five of the seventeen projects in the portfolio have not disbursed at all so far this fiscal year. Meanwhile, delays in the submission of audit reports have affected the preparation of new projects.

The Finance secretary Mr. Shanta Subedi said that the government has authorized an additional release of nine billion rupees for foreign aided projects to ensure speedy and efficient utilization with in the current fiscal year . The meeting reviewed the status of 12 projects and discussed the resolution of issues affecting their implementation.

Japan to set up force against cyber attack

Japan's National Police Agency will establish a force of special investigators to combat Internet cyber attacks. According to Kyodo News Agency reports, Japan will strengthen its defence capabilities against cyber attacks from government bodies and high tech enterprises. The special force will compromise of around 140 staff and will be affiliated to local police departments.



The special force will be in charge of supervising online posts which try to incite cyber attacks, analyzing the characteristic of cyber attacks and alerting government bodies and enterprises. The special force will also be allowed to cooperated with other countries to combat attacks.

The force will also establish an information sharing system with public services including electric power, gas and high tech companies.

ANNA HAZARE BEGINS JANATANTRA YATRA

Anti-corruption activist Anna Hazare today embarked on his 'Janatantra Yatra' (walk for democracy) here to rally support against the Congress-led UPA Government in the run up to the next general elections.

Accompanied by a small group of supporters, the 75-year-old activist paid obeisance at Durgiana Mandir and Golden Temple besides paying tribute to the martyrs at Jallianwala Bagh. Being a Sunday, the Golden Temple complex was teeming with visitors.

Addressing a group of people outside the Jallianwala Bagh, Hazare, who was flanked by former Army Chief VK Singh, said only a mass movement will bring change in the country. Hazare said after five months a big Jan-Sansad (public rally) will be organised at Ramlila Ground in the national capital "which will seal the fate of this corrupt government".

The public rallies are being held to press 25-point agenda under the banner of 'Janatantra Yatra' to garner people's support against the Congress-led UPA government ahead of next year's Lok Sabha polls and make people aware of its efforts to ditch the Jan Lokpal bill, he said.



Hazare had floated 'Janatantra Morcha' after the protests on Lokpal Bill fizzled out and Team Anna split, with a faction led by Arvind Kejriwal forming a political party. Hazare later left in a six-vehicle cavalcade and would pass through Rayya and Beas towns before leaving the city to reach Kapurthala and Jalandhar.

North Korea threatens to shut down Kaesong industrial complex

North Korea has threatened to shut down the inter-Korean industrial complex in Kaesong, located in the southwestern part of the country. The jointly-run industrial park is a symbol of cooperation between the 2 Koreas. Some 50,000 North Koreans work for South Korean firms operating in the complex. Officials in Pyongyang said that the country will close the industrial park without hesitation if South Korea undermines the North's dignity.

The officials were apparently referring to the South's joint military drills currently taking place with the United States.

The Kaesong complex is an important means for impoverished North Korea to earn foreign currency. The industrial park has operated normally even after the North severed a military hotline with the South on Wednesday.

The line was used for checking the entry of South Koreans to the special zone. Observers say, that the latest threat may be part of North Korea's tactics to rattle the South.

Kaesong Industrial Park

Kaesong Industrial Region is a special administrative industrial region of North Korea. It was formed in 2002 from part of Kaesong Directly Governed City. Kaesong Industrial Park is being operated in the region, as a collaborative economic development with South Korea. It is located ten kilometres (six miles) north of the Korean Demilitarized Zone with direct road and rail access to South Korea and an hour's drive from Seoul. Construction started in June 2003, and in August 2003 North and South Korea ratified four tax and accountancy agreements to support investment. Pilot phase construction was completed in June 2004, and the industrial park opened in December 2004.

This article is outdated. Please update this article to reflect recent events or newly available information. In the park's initial phase, 15 South Korean companies constructed manufacturing facilities. Three of the companies had started operations by March 2005. First phase plans envisaged participation by 250 South Korean companies from 2006, employing 100,000 people by 2007. The park was expected to be complete in 2012, covering 25 square miles (65 km²) employing 700,000 people. As of June 2010, 110 factories were employing approximately 42,000 DPRK workers and 800 ROK staff. Companies operating or under construction in the complex are seeking to hire an additional 26,000 North Korean workers. Construction of dormitories and other infrastructure for the additional workers is on hold as the Lee Myung-bak administration has prioritized movement on North Korean nuclear issues. Electrical power and telephone service is supplied from South Korea; 15 MW of power is being supplied in 2005, with plans for a 100MW supply by 2007.

The Kaesong industrial park is run by a South Korean committee that has a fifty-year lease which began in 2004. Hyundai Asan, a division of South Korean conglomerate Hyundai has been hired by Pyongyang to develop the land. The firms are taking advantage of cheap labour available in the North to compete with China to create low-end goods such as shoes, clothes, and watches.

Bank of Cyprus big depositors could lose up to 60%

Bank of Cyprus depositors with more than 100,000 euros (£84,300; \$128,200) could lose up to 60% of their savings as part of an EU-IMF bailout restructuring move, officials say.

The central bank says 37.5% of holdings over 100,000 euros will become shares. Up to 22.5% will go into a fund attracting no interest and may be subject to further write-offs. The other 40% will attract interest - but this will not be paid unless the bank performs well. It was known that the wealthiest savers at the Bank of Cyprus would take a large hit from the bailout deal - but not to this extent, the BBC's Mark Lowen reports.

Cypriot officials have also said that big depositors at Laiki - the country's second largest bank - could face an even tougher "haircut". However, no details have been released.

The officials say that Laiki will eventually be absorbed into the Bank of Cyprus. On Thursday, banks in Cyprus opened for the first time in nearly two weeks. Queues formed of people trying to access their money, but the mood was generally calm. By Friday, banks had returned to their normal working hours and there were no longer reports of big queues. In a separate development, Cyprus launched an investigation after Greek media published the names of politicians who allegedly had loans forgiven by three Cypriot banks at the height of the crisis. The Bank of Cyprus, Laiki and Hellenic Bank apparently wrote off loans of millions of euros to companies, local authorities, and politicians from some of the island's biggest parties. The list has now been handed to the ethics committee of the Cypriot parliament.



Cyprus capital controls

- Daily withdrawals limited to 300 euros
- Cashing of cheques banned
- Those travelling abroad can take no more than 1,000 euros out of the country
- Payments and/or transfers outside Cyprus via debit and or credit cards permitted up to 5,000 euros per month
- Businesses able to carry out transactions up to 5,000 euros per day
- Special committee to review commercial transactions between 5,000 and 200,000 euros and approve all those over 200,000 euros on a case-by-case basis
- No termination of fixed-term deposit accounts before maturity

Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW) February 2013

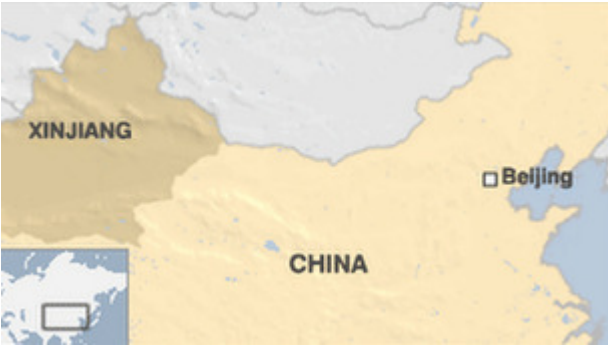
According to a press release issued today by the Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour & Employment the All-India CPI-IW for February, 2013 rose by 2 points and pegged at 223 (two hundred and twentythree). On 1-month percentage change, it increased by 0.90 per cent between January and February compared with 0.51 per cent between the same two months a year ago. The largest upward contribution to the change in current index came from Food group which increased by 1.28 per cent, contributing 1.40 percentage points to the total change. This was followed by Miscellaneous and Fuel & Light groups with 0.62 and 0.80 per cent increase respectively contributing 0.27 and 0.11 percentage points to the change. At item level, largest upward pressure came from Rice, Wheat & Wheat Atta, Fish Fresh, Goat Meat, Poultry (Chicken), Milk, Onion, Tea (Readymade), Electricity Charges, Rail Fare, Petrol, etc. However, this was compensated by Root Vegetables and Sugar, putting downward pressure on the index. The year-on-year inflation measured by monthly CPI-IW stood at 12.06 per cent for February, 2013 as compared to 11.62 per cent for the previous month and 7.57 per cent during the corresponding month of the previous year. Similarly, the Food inflation stood at 14.98 per cent against 14.08 per cent of the previous month and 5.08 per cent during the corresponding month of the previous year. At centre level, Belgaum and Munger-Jamalpur centres recorded the largest increase of 7 points each followed by Vijaywada, Tiruchirappally and Jharia (6 points each). Among others, 5 points rise was registered in 5 centres, 4 points in 6 centre, 3 points in 9 centres, 2 points in 14 centres and 1 point in 15 centres. On the contrary, 4 points decline was reported in Coimbatore, followed by Tirpura and Guwahati (3 points each) and 1 point in 7 centres. Rest of the 14 centres' indices remained stationary. The indices of 41 centres are above All-India Index and other 36 centres' indices are below national average. The index of Haldia centre was at par with all-India index. The next index of CPI-IW for the month of March, 2013 will be released on Tuesday, 30 April, 2013. The same will also be available on the office website www.labourbureau.nic.in.

Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana(RSBY)-Highlights

Shri Anil Swarup Additional Secretary and Director General (Labour Welfare) in the Ministry of Labour & Employment today had a presentation on the Flagship Programme- Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY). Shri Swarup was addressing the concluding session of the two day National Editor's conference here in New Delhi. Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) was launched by Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India in 2008 to provide health insurance cover to Below Poverty Line population and informal sector workers of India. The objective of the scheme is to protect these families from shocks related to catastrophic expenditures on health by improving access to health and reducing out of pocket expenditure. This is a Smart Card based cashless and paperless social health insurance scheme. It provides annual hospitalisation cover up to Rs. 30,000 for a family of five members through health insurance companies. Families pay only a registration fee of Rs. 30 and get a RSBY smart card which helps in accessing empaneled hospitals across the country for in-patient treatment. Transportation expenses up to Rs. 1,000 per year are provided in cash for travelling to the hospital. All pre-existing diseases are covered from day one. There is no age limit to enrol in the scheme. 75 % of the cost (premium) of the scheme is borne by Central Government (90% in case of Jammu & Kashmir and North-Eastern States) and the rest is borne out by respective State government. State Governments can top-up the coverage amount beyond Rs. 30,000.

China jails 20 on terror charges in Xinjiang

China has sentenced 20 men to jail terms of up to life imprisonment on charges of terrorism and inciting secession in Xinjiang, state media say. Some of the men, who are all thought to be members of the ethnic Uighur group who live in the region, were accused of plotting to assassinate local police. An exiled Uighur group described the sentences as "repressive". It said the men had been persecuted for listening to foreign radio broadcasts and forwarding video clips.



The men were convicted of a number of crimes, the local state-run news agency reported. These include circulating extremist religious material and attempting to promote ethnic separatism on the internet. It is not known whether the 20 accused men pleaded guilty or not. Regardless of their plea, acquittals in China's party-run court system are rare, says the BBC's John Sudworth in Shanghai. Xinjiang is home to about nine million mainly Muslim Uighurs. But as a result of inward migration over past decades, that number is now almost matched by residents from the Han Chinese majority, our correspondent adds. Tensions between the two groups have been high since riots in 2009, China's deadliest ethnic violence in decades. Exiled Uighur groups accuse the Chinese state of trying to crush their culture and religion. But the Beijing authorities say they are fighting only violent extremists who want to take over the region and form an independent Islamic state.

CAR rebel head Michel Djotodia 'suspends constitution'

The leader of rebels who have seized the capital of the Central African Republic says he is suspending the constitution and dissolving parliament. Michel Djotodia said there would be a transition period until "credible and transparent" elections, during which he would "legislate by decree". Introduction Civil servant in the government of Ange-Felix Patasse, overthrown by Francois Bozize in 2003. Appointed by Mr Bozize to a diplomatic post in Sudan Falls out with Mr Bozize and launches a rebellion in 2005 Arrested a year later in Benin, where he was exiled Released after promising to make peace with Mr Bozize, but re-launches rebellion Appointed defence minister in January 2013 under peace deal Quits government in March and seizes power



He added he would uphold a peace deal that promises elections in three years. Ousted CAR leader Francois Bozize has fled to neighbouring Cameroon, officials there have announced. Following the takeover, the African Union has suspended CAR and imposed sanctions on rebel leaders. About 5,000 Seleka fighters swept into the capital Bangui on Sunday after the collapse of a power-sharing deal - the Libreville Accord The deal collapsed when Seleka withdrew its members from the government. "I consider it necessary to suspend the November 27, 2004 constitution, to dissolve parliament as well as the government," Mr Djotodia said in a statement to reporters. The statement could not be broadcast due to power cuts, Reuters reported, and instead was recorded and issued to journalists. "During this transition period which will lead us to free, credible and transparent elections, I will legislate by decree." He added: "We will lead the people of Central African Republic during a three-year transition period, in accordance with the Libreville Accord." Earlier, South African President Jacob Zuma said at least 13 South African soldiers were killed in the battle against the rebels on Sunday. The troops had been stationed in Bangui to support government forces. It is the heaviest loss of life for South Africa in a single battle since it became a democracy in 1994. Looters and armed gangs are reported to be still roaming the streets of Bangui. The UN says tens of thousands of people have fled CAR into neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo and Cameroon. CAR has been unstable since its independence from France in 1960 and is one of the least-developed countries in the world.

Madagascar: UN Needs \$41 Million To End The Plague

About half of the island nation of Madagascar is infested with locusts. This has mysteriously happened during Passover, despite the fact that there are probably very few Jews in Madagascar (pop. 13 million, 41 percent of whom are Catholic, 7 percent Muslim, and the rest adherents of local traditional cults, on whom the Biblical reference may be lost). Without reference to the Ten Plagues of Egypt, The Food and Agriculture Organization issued a call Tuesday for \$41 million in pest control. The first installment of \$22 million is needed by June, the FAO said, and another \$19 million is needed for a three-year strategy. The FAO also said about two-thirds of the country will be infested by September of this year if nothing is done. The 226,658 square-mile (587,000 square-kilometer) island of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean has been in a state of "locust alert" since November 2012. A similar emergency appeal was made last summer. The national Locust Control Centre said they've treated 30,00 hectares (about 74,000 acres) of crop land, but there are still 100,000 hectares (250,000 acres) of land that need treatment. While locusts do not pose a direct danger to humans, an adult locust can consume about two grams of food per day. A swarm of locusts can eat the same amount in one day as 2,500 people, the FAO estimates. Typical locust food is anything vegetable and green. According to the U.N. statement, "The plague now threatens 60 per cent of the country's rice production, a staple crop in Madagascar, where 80 per cent of the population lives on less than \$1 per day. The locust swarms are also consuming green vegetation that might normally serve as pasture for livestock." Previously on Odyssey of the Locusts, we were in Egypt, where the Ministry of Agriculture was claiming no damage to crops had been done, despite the fact that this year's locust cloud was unusually big compared to previous years.

Kenya's Raila Odinga 'to continue struggle peacefully'

Defeated Kenyan presidential candidate Raila Odinga has said he will seek peaceful ways to end a row over poll results, which gave a narrow first round victory to rival Uhuru Kenyatta. He was speaking after Kenya's Supreme Court upheld Mr Kenyatta's victory, rejecting Mr

Odinga's challenges. He said he accepted the court verdict because he wanted to avoid bloodshed.



But two people died and 11 were hurt as Odinga supporters clashed with police in his western stronghold of Kisumu. There was an angry mood in the Nairobi slums of Kibera, says the BBC's Gabriel Gatehouse in the city, and police briefly used tear gas to chase away protesters outside the courthouse. Tensions were reported in another slum, Mathare. But our correspondent says that dire predictions of a return to the violence of five years ago has not yet come true, and any lingering questions over the conduct of the election have been subordinated to an overwhelming national imperative: peace. The violence that followed a disputed election in 2007 left more than 1,200 people dead. The presidential, legislative and municipal elections held on 4 March were the first since the 2007 poll. Official results said Mr Kenyatta beat Mr Odinga - who is currently prime minister - by 50.07% to 43.28%, avoiding a run-off by just 8,100 votes. Mr Kenyatta and his running mate, William Ruto, are expected to be sworn in as president and vice-president on 9 April. But they are facing trial on charges of crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court (ICC) for allegedly fuelling unrest after that election. They deny the charges. In a BBC interview, Mr Odinga said he wanted to avoid the kind of bloodshed that had occurred five years ago. "I am going to tell my people to look at peaceful ways of resolving this issue," he said. "The Supreme Court is just one step, there are many other avenues. "Wounds have not been healed, in fact they've been opened up by what's happened." He hinted that if nothing was done there could be a return to violence. "I fear that five years from now, there will be voter apathy. This will lead people to explore other means to resolve this issue," he said. Some of Mr Odinga's supporters were less diplomatic. Earlier the court, in a unanimous decision, declared the elections free and fair and said Mr Kenyatta had been "validly elected". Supporters of Mr Kenyatta took to the streets of central Nairobi after the verdict, tooting their horns, blowing on vuvuzelas and chanting. The president-elect made a televised victory speech hours after the announcement, vowing to work with and serve all Kenyans "without any discrimination whatsoever". Mr Odinga responded to the verdict with a speech expressing "dismay" at the conduct of the election but saying he fully respected the court's decision. Petitions had been filed to the court by the prime minister and by civil society groups, who claimed irregularities had affected the election result and called for fresh elections. However, much of their evidence was dismissed by the court. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) has insisted that the vote was credible, despite technical failures with an electronic voter ID system and the vote counting mechanism. International observers said the poll was largely free, fair and credible, and that the electoral commission had conducted its business in an open and transparent manner.

CAR president seeks refuge in Cameroon

Ousted Central African Republic president Francois Bozize, who fled after rebels took the capital Bangui, has taken refuge in Cameroon, the president's office in Yaounde has announced. "Following the recent events in the Central African Republic, president Francois Bozize sought refuge in Cameroon, where he currently is while awaiting his departure to another host country," a statement read out on Monday over national radio said. The latest developments over Bozize's whereabouts come as South Africa's President Jacob Zuma said that 13 South African troops were killed in clashes with the Seleka rebels on the outskirts of Bangui.



Zuma said on Monday that 27 South African soldiers were also injured and one soldier still unaccounted for, in intense fighting in the Central African Republic that has escalated since Saturday. "Accordingly, we are deeply saddened by the events and developments in that country over the past 72 hours which saw violence escalating and many innocent lives lost," Zuma said. The announcement raised questions about the future role of South Africa's 200-soldier contingent it sent to Central African Republic in January to support the government troops after the rebels launched an offensive in early December. Al Jazeera's Nazanine Moshiri, reporting from Nairobi, said that a curfew had now been implemented and that Salaka rebels were meeting at a local hotel in the capital. Late on Sunday, the leader of the rebels who took over the capital declared himself president and pledged to keep a power-sharing government in place in compliance with a January peace deal. A spokesperson for the Seleka rebels announced Michel Djotodia's claim a day after the rebels toppled the President Francois Bozize. "The current prime minister remains in place and the cabinet will be slightly reshuffled," said Eric Massi, the spokesperson. "Bangui is under our control and calm but we have things to do on the ground in terms of security. Looting must be stopped." The peace deal in January created a power-sharing government composed of rebels, civilian opposition and Bozize loyalists. The rebels, who have accused Bozize of breaking the peace agreement, raided Bangui on Thursday. Looting and gunfire had earlier been reported across many parts of Bangui after rebels seized the presidential palace there on Saturday. Witnesses said on Sunday that gunfire could be heard across many parts of the capital and that businesses were being looted. "The situation is rather precarious, most residents are in their homes [because] everything has pretty much been looted," said Amy Martin, the Bangui bureau chief for the United Nations Office of Humanitarian Affairs.

She added that the looting was done by "a combination of armed elements" as well as neighbourhood residents targeting houses in the diplomatic community. The office of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement on Monday, saying "he is deeply concerned by reports of serious violations of human rights", underscoring that those "responsible for committing such violations will be held accountable". He condemned the seizure, calling for "the swift restoration of constitutional order". "We have asked our citizens to remain at home. For the time being, there is nothing to be worried about," said the source. "There is no direct threat to our citizens at the moment." France, which already has about 250 soldiers stationed in the Central African Republic, sent in another company of 150 troops to secure Bangui's international airport, a diplomatic source said. On Sunday, the French presidency said they were determined to protect their citizens in the country and had decided to strengthen their military presence.

Japan, European Union Announce Free Trade Talks to Start April

Japan and the European Union announced they will start free trade talks in April, as Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pushes for deregulation in a bid to revive the world's third-largest economy.

Negotiations on an agreement covering free trade and political cooperation will begin in April, according to a joint Japan-EU statement issued by the European Council today. "I believe that today marks a historic event in the history between Japan and the European Union," EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht said in Tokyo after meeting Japanese Trade Minister Toshimitsu Motegi. "We are convinced that such an agreement would greatly contribute to the welfare of both peoples."

Today's move comes less than two weeks after Abe announced Japan would seek to join talks on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a U.S.-led regional trade agreement, in defiance of opposition by farmers. Buoyed by the popularity of his plans for bold monetary easing and fiscal stimulus, Abe is now pursuing growth strategies including free trade and regulatory reform as the third prong of his economic policy. Big manufacturers such as Nissan Motor Co. (7201) have long urged the Japanese government to catch up with South Korea, which already has free trade agreements with both the U.S. and the EU.

Japan is seeking the removal of EU tariffs on cars and other products, while Europe wants to scale back non-tariff barriers in the Japanese market for financial services as well as for goods. The two governments have agreed to unify car safety regulations, the Nikkei newspaper said on March 21. Japan posted its longest run of trade deficits in three decades last week, as February exports fell. The EU, Japan's third largest trading partner, applies a 10 percent tariff to Japanese cars, while there is no tariff on European cars imported to Japan. The agreement was cleared by EU governments last November, and De Gucht said at that time that the negotiations could easily last two to three years, and that it could take four to five years for any deal to be ratified. Japan will also start free trade talks with China and South Korea on March 26. Abe, EU President Herman Van Rompuy and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso held a phone conference today as a scheduled summit was postponed because the European leaders were involved with talks over Cyprus' bailout.

Afghan president and Qatari emir discuss opening of office for Taliban in Doha

Hamid Karzai, the Afghan president, is meeting with the emir of Qatar to discuss plans for the Taliban to open an office in the Gulf state. Karzai arrived in Doha on Saturday and met with Afghan and Arab officials and businessmen. The delegation traveling with the Afghan president includes Zalmai Rassoul, the foreign minister; Salahuddin Rabbani, the head of the High Peace Council; and Rangin Dadfar Spanta, a presidential advisor. "We will discuss the peace process, of course, and the opening of an office for the Taliban in Qatar," Aimal Faizi, a presidential spokesman, told the AFP news agency on Saturday before Karzai left Kabul.

Until earlier this year, Karzai was strongly opposed to the group having a meeting venue outside Afghanistan, but the US wanted the Taliban on the talking table as it prepared to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan in the next two years. "If we want to have talks to bring peace to Afghanistan, the main side must be the Afghan government's representatives - the High Peace Council, which has members from all the country's ethnic and political backgrounds," Faizi said. Kabul has repeatedly stressed that it would only start talks if the fighters broke all links with al-Qaeda and gave up violence. Faizi said any Taliban office in Qatar must be held to strict conditions. "It can only be an address where the armed opposition sit and talk to the Afghanistan government," he said. "This office can not be used for any other purposes." The UN this week welcomed Karzai's planned Qatar visit, and issued another call for the Taliban to come to the peace table. "You are Afghans, you care, I assume, about your country, you care about [a] peaceful stable future of the country," Jan Kubis, the UN envoy to Afghanistan, said. But the Qatar office could mean little if the Taliban refuse to negotiate with Karzai or the government-appointed High Peace Council.

The Taliban have refused to have direct contact with Karzai, saying he was a puppet of the United States, which has supported his rise to power after the military operation to oust the fighters in 2001. "The opening of the Taliban office in Qatar is not related to Karzai, it is a matter between the Taliban and the Qatar government," spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told AFP. "If Karzai visits, it is not our concern. Our representatives who are already in Qatar won't see or talk to him." In Afghanistan, an air strike by a NATO helicopter has killed one child and several suspected Taliban fighters in the southeast. The aircraft came to support Afghan troops who were attacked near the town of Ghazni. At least 13 people were wounded.

The role of governance and aid in Mali's crisis

Dominant media accounts about crisis in Mali, which focus on ethnic or religious factors at play in the country's North, ignore that the crisis of the state and governance were central grievances of both pro-putschists and pro-insurgent Malians countrywide. Indeed, when Captain Sanogo orchestrated the coup in March, President Amadou Toumani Toure (known as ATT) had already lost most of his support, in the context of degrading governance. In March 2012, putschists blamed the former president for his laissez-faire

policy in the Sahel, which allowed narco-traffick and Islamist groups to prosper. In Mali, democratisation has gone hand-in-hand with what scholars Jean-Francois Bayart, Stephen Ellis and Beatrice Hibou called "the criminalisation of the state" in a book published in 1999.



Under ATT, governments were accused of handing over thousands of acres of fertile land near the Office du Niger (irrigated agricultural area near Segou in south-central Mali) to international firms. After a Boeing 727 - carrying six tonnes of cocaine from Latin America - crashed near Gao in November 2009, the president and his "clan" were suspected of having connections with and protecting drug-traffickers. In this context, promises of moral purification and order, made by putschists and Islamists alike, appealed to some Malians in North and South. ATT's politics of "consensus", a coalition of all political parties and some civil society representatives, was partly responsible for that. This system was weakly structured from an ideological point of view. It was not based on a common vision, but on a fragile compromise between political forces willing to share power. A few years down the line, it appears that consensus has hindered efficient decision-making, boosted corruption and annihilated the political opposition. This is why political parties are deemed opportunistic and deeply discredited by their constituencies.

Crisis in Mali
The crisis in Mali is also a crisis of extraverted development and state-building, or what a Belgian aid worker based in Bamako once called "donor-driven ownership" - that is, international efforts to build a state committed to their definition of development and efficient management through foreign aid, conditionalities and daily contacts with African governments.

Given the country's dependence on foreign aid (between 1996 and 2005, aid represented three quarters of the special investment budget and 27.6 percent of the state's general budget) and close "partnership" with aid agencies, donors have undeniably played a role in - and thus bear responsibility for - the disastrous turn of events in the country. Here is how it happened in practice. On the one hand, donors marketed Mali as a model of democracy and treated it as a "donor darling" receiving more external funds than its poorer neighbours - Niger and Burkina Faso. External funds and recommendations, officially directed at reducing poverty, were appropriated by public actors in such a way that aid fuelled bad governance. In spite of their sophisticated monitoring tools and constant dialogue with the government, donors actually had little visibility and control over how aid funds were used, especially when provided through budget support, that is, directly through the national budget. Voluntarily or not, donors also nurtured ATT's strategy in Northern Mali, which promised a peaceful solution to the Northern issue - but was a key rationale for putschists in March 2012. As part of the US counterterrorism programmes, the country received millions of dollars from the Pan Sahel Initiative, the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership Operation, in military equipment and training.

UN warns of continued humanitarian need in Mali
The inability of the Malian army to resist insurgent attacks shed some doubt about the programme's efficiency. So did the fact that Captain Sanogo had participated in US-provided military training. And the corruption of high-rank generals - suspected of having "eaten" the money and constructing spectacular houses for themselves in Bamako - was a central grievance of putschists and their supporters in low or intermediary military ranks. People who have worked closely in development cooperation in Northern Mali over the past decade counter that development and aid money was poorly used and instrumentalised in local politics.

Since humanitarian aid started flowing in Mali after a drought in the 1970s, the central government in Bamako has systematically filtered and limited the allocation of aid to the north. Under ATT, aid was most probably provided through the networks of influence and clientelism tied with certain local leaders identified by International Crisis Group in a report called "Mali: Avoiding Escalation" published in July 2012. Daniele Roussellier, writer and staff of the French embassy in Bamako from 2007 and 2009, recently revealed that donors actively participated in corruption practices with political leaders on the grounds that "this is the way things work in Mali". On the other hand, specific donor recommendations and conditions have destabilised mali. For example, Nordic donors, the European Union and Canadian diplomats insisted on modernising Mali's Family Code to balance gender relations and improve women's rights. As a result, the National Assembly voted a new Family Code on July 3, 2009. The new Code introduced a minimum marriage age (18 years) for women, besides giving status and rights to children born outside of marriage. Moreover, the possibility of men getting several wives without the consent of the first spouse was compromised.

However, the adoption of new Code was considered as an external imposition and an attack on Malian tradition, religion and way of life. As many as 50,000 supporters of popular Wahhabist Imam Dicko gathered at the Modibo Keita Stadium in Bamako on July 8 and 9 to oppose this and the president had to pull back. In the process, some imams consolidated their power as legitimate spokespersons of average citizens against politicians and foreign influences in a broader context of "re-Islamisation" of Mali's society, as described by French anthropologist Gilles Holder. **Aid dependence**
Finally, aid dependence has helped the government to adopt a technocratic language to gain donor support and to closely associate aid agencies to policy-making, sometimes behind closed doors. This has widened the gap between Malian rulers and their constituencies, as illustrated in Bamako, a political fiction by Abderrahmane Sissako, setting the scene for an imaginary popular trial of international financial institutions. Interestingly, Malian political scientist Mahamadou Diawara observed re-politicisation of important fractions of society that had deserted conventional politics since the 2012 coup (less than 40 percent of registered voters had casted vote in the last presidential election in 2007).

EU SUSPENDS SANCTIONS AGAINST MOST ZIMBABWE OFFICIALS

The European Union has suspended sanctions against 81 officials and eight firms in Zimbabwe. The decision followed a "peaceful, successful and credible" referendum on a new constitution earlier this month, the EU said in a statement. However, sanctions will remain in force against 10 people - including Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe - and two firms, EU sources say. The EU imposed sanctions, including a travel ban, in 2002. It said it was in response to human rights abuses and political violence under Mr Mugabe's rule. Allies of Mr Mugabe have long argued that the sanctions should be unconditionally removed and that they have had a negative impact on Zimbabwe's economy. Mr Mugabe, 89, and his rival, Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, 61, have been sharing power since disputed elections marred by violence in 2008.



Zimbabweans overwhelmingly approved the new constitution - which expands civil liberties and has been endorsed by both Mr Mugabe and Mr Tsvangirai - in the 16 March referendum. Fresh elections are expected to be held some time this year. The 27-member European Union said it had agreed to "immediately suspend" restrictive measures against 81 individuals and eight entities. "The EU congratulates the people of Zimbabwe on a peaceful, successful and credible vote to approve a new constitution," the EU said in a statement, adding that it "represents a significant step" towards general elections. But it said "key decision makers" would remain subject to sanctions until peaceful, transparent and credible elections have been achieved. Lifting the sanctions on all but 10 individuals and two firms is clearly intended to encourage further political progress as well as demonstrate continuing concern, the BBC's world affairs correspondent Mike Wooldridge reports. The EU says it welcomes the repeated calls for reconciliation and peaceful political activity made by Zimbabwean political leaders, but is also concerned over the recent reports of intimidation and harassment against some political activists and civil society representatives, he adds.

Earlier on Monday, a court in Zimbabwe granted bail to prominent lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa, who was detained a day after the referendum. She was charged with obstructing justice after she intervened in a raid on the offices of Mr Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in which three computers are alleged to have gone missing. Four MDC members were also arrested during the raid. They all deny the charges and say they were compiling information on corruption. Allies of Morgan Tsvangirai say the arrests are a sign that critics of President Mugabe will face intimidation ahead of the elections. Both men - who have repeatedly called for a peaceful poll - are expected to be the main contenders in the presidential election.

Zimbabwe constitution: Key changes

- Presidents limited to two five-year terms
- Legislation can no longer be vetoed by the president
- Devolves power to 10 provinces
- Establishes peace and reconciliation commission
- Creates independent prosecuting authority, anti-corruption commission, and guarantees independent electoral commission
- Includes bill of rights which stipulates freedom of expression and a free media
- Allows dual citizenship
- Seizure of farms under the land reform programme can no longer be legally contested; president appoints land commission to carry out national audit

Opinion polls carried out by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Southern Mali in February 2013 showed that "citizens have high expectations from international community" - mostly to help refugees to return, to build national security and to conduct free and fair elections. But before that, a critical assessment of both ATT's regime and foreign aid must be completed. If Mali's ruling elite and donors' way of doing business do not significantly change, the same perverse political process will develop - with international support.

Jordan's king swears in new cabinet

Jordan's King Abdullah has sworn in a new government tasked with pushing through austerity measures required under a loan agreement with the International Monetary Fund. The cabinet lineup was confirmed on Saturday after nearly three weeks of consultations led by prime minister Abdullah Ensour, who himself was reappointed on March 9 after the king canvassed members of parliament.



OPINION - EDITORIAL

BRICS

[BRAZIL, RUSSIA, INDIA, CHINA AND SOUTH AFRICA]

C.S. Rajput

History

The BRIC [Brazil, Russia, India and China] idea was first conceived by economists of Goldman Sachs as part of an economic modeling exercise to forecast global economic trends over the next half century; the acronym BRIC was first used in 2001 by Goldman Sachs in their Global Economics Paper No. 66, "The World Needs Better Economic BRICs".

Expansion of BRIC into BRICS

BRIC Foreign Ministers at their meeting in New York on 21st September 2010 agreed that South Africa may be invited to join BRIC. Accordingly, China, as the host of 3rd BRICS Summit [in fact the 1st BRICS Summit as South Africa joined BRIC at this Summit], invited South African President to attend the Summit in Sanya on 14 April 2011 with the concurrence of other BRIC leaders.

First Summit, Yekaterinburg, Russia, June 2009

Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, attended the first BRIC Summit in Yekaterinburg on 16 June 2009. The Summit adopted Joint Statement of BRIC Leaders and a Joint Statement on Global Food Security. Second BRIC Summit, Brasilia, April 2010
Brazil hosted the second BRIC Summit in Brasilia on 15 April 2010; Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, led the Indian delegation which included Minister of Commerce and Industry. A Joint Statement was issued after the Summit. A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed among BRIC Development Banks (EXIM Bank from the Indian side). The First edition of the BRIC Statistical publication was also released.

Third BRIC (and first BRICS) Summit, Sanya, China, April 2011

The third BRICS Summit was held on 14 April 2011 at Sanya. Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, led the Indian delegation to the Summit. The theme of the Summit was "Broad Vision and Shared Prosperity". The Delhi Declaration was issued at the Summit.

Fourth BRICS Summit, Delhi, 29 March 2012
The 4th BRICS Summit was held in New Delhi on 29 March 2012. Under the broad rubric of "BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Security and Prosperity". The Delhi Declaration at the conclusion of the Summit was issued outlining shared positions of BRICS countries on global issues and giving a roadmap for further cooperation among BRICS countries.

Fifth Summit: Durban, South Africa, 27 March 2013

The 5th BRICS Summit, the last in the first cycle of Summits, will be hosted by South Africa on 27 March 2013. South Africa will assume the Chair of BRICS from India at the Durban Summit. The Summit will be preceded by a number of pre-Summit events: meeting of BRICS Academic Forum in Durban on 10–13 March 2013; BRICS Economic Forum on 25th March 2013; meeting of BRICS Trade Ministers on 26th March 2013; BRICS Business Forum on 26th March 2013.

The overarching theme of the Durban Summit is "'BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialisation'. 'BRICS – Africa Dialogue Forum' will be held in the afternoon of 27 March 2013 under the theme 'Unlocking Africa's potential: BRICS and Africa Cooperation on Infrastructure'.

Consultations of BRICS Leaders on the Margins of G-20 Summits

Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, chaired a meeting of BRICS Leaders in Los Cabos, Mexico, on 18 June 2012, on the sidelines of the G20 Summit for an exchange of views on the Summit agenda. BRICS Leaders also discussed swap arrangements among the national currencies as well as reserve pooling. A similar consultation meeting was held in Cannes, France on 3 November 2011, on the margins of the G20 Summit.



Foreign Ministers' Meetings

Foreign Ministers of BRICS have been meeting regularly in New York on the sidelines of UNGA since September 2006. India hosted the meeting of Foreign Ministers in New York on 23 September 2011. The last meeting was hosted by South Africa on 26 September 2012.

The first standalone meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia on 16 May 2009. A Joint Communiqué was issued at the Meeting.

Finance/Economic Ministers' Meetings

The first meeting of BRICS Economic/Finance Ministers was held in November 2008 in Sao Paulo, Brazil for consultations in the wake of the global economic and financial crisis. BRICS Economic/Finance Ministers meet regularly on the sidelines of G20 meetings and IMF/WB annual meetings; the last meeting of BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors was held in Tokyo on 11 October 2012.

High Representatives on National Security
Russia hosted the First meeting of BRICS High Representatives on National Security (National Security Advisors) in March 2009. The Second meeting was held prior to the Second Summit in Brasilia in April 2010. The Third meeting was hosted by Russia in Sochi, in October 2010. A meeting of BRICS NSAs was held on the margins of the third International Meeting of High-level Representatives on Security Issues in St Petersburg, Russia on 10-11 June 2012. The third Meeting of BRICS High Representatives on Security was held in New Delhi on 10-11 January 2013.

Agriculture Ministers' Meetings

Two meetings of BRICS Agriculture Ministers have taken place; the first in Moscow on 26 March 2010 and the second in Chengdu, China on 28 October – 1 November 2011. A Joint Declaration was issued at the meeting and Action Plan for 2012-2016 for Agricultural Cooperation among BRICS countries outlining priority areas was adopted. A Working Group on Agriculture has also been set up to deepen cooperation in Agriculture. In-

dia hosted the 2nd meeting of the Working Group on 27-28 August 2012 in New Delhi.

Trade Ministers' Meetings

BRICS Trade Ministers met in Sanya, China on 13 April 2011 on the sidelines of the third Summit as well as in Rio in April 2010 in the run-up to the second BRIC Summit. Trade Ministers also met on the sidelines of the 8th WTO Ministerial Conference in Geneva in December 2011. A standalone meeting of Trade Ministers was held on 28 March 2012 in New Delhi before the 4th Summit. BRICS Trade Ministers also met in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, on 19 April 2012 on the sidelines of the G20 Trade Ministers' Meeting.

Health Ministers' Meetings

The First meeting of BRICS Health Ministers was held in July 2011 in Beijing to explore areas of cooperation in the health sector. BRICS Health Ministers also met in Geneva on 22 May 2012. India hosted the third meeting of Health Ministers on 10-11 January 2013.

Science & Technology Senior Officials

The first meeting of Science & Technology Senior Officials was held on 14-16 September 2011 in Dalian, China. Indian delegation was led by MoS for S&T. The second meeting was hosted by South Africa in November 2012. The third meeting will be hosted by India in 2013.

Competition Authorities

The first meeting of BRIC Competition Authorities was held in Kazan, Russia on 1 September 2009. The second meeting was hosted by China in Beijing on 20-22 September 2011. India will host the next meeting in New Delhi on 20-22 November 2013.

BRICS Development Banks

The first meeting of Development Banks was hosted by Brazil in April 2010; EXIM Bank participated from India in this BRICS process. An MoU laying the foundation of BRICS Inter-Bank Cooperation Mechanism was signed at the Meeting. Following up on the MoU, BRICS Development Banks signed a Framework Agreement on 'Financial Cooperation within the BRICS Inter-bank Cooperation Mechanism. The Framework Agreement

envisaged grant of credits in local currencies and cooperation in capital markets and other financial services including access to capital and financial markets and treasury transactions in member countries and issuing local currency bonds in BRICS markets. Development Banks are now pursuing the cooperation further. A Technical Meeting was hosted by EXIM Bank in Kumarakoram, Kerala on 15-16 February 2012 to finalize texts of (i) Master Agreement on Extending Credit Facility in Local Currencies, and (ii) BRICS Multilateral Letter of Credit Confirmation Facility Agreement, which were signed at the Delhi Summit.

BRICS led New Development Bank

India mooted the idea of setting up of a BRICS-led South-South Development Bank, mainly funded and managed by BRICS countries to recycle surpluses into investment in developing countries for infrastructure and sustainable development project. The idea was discussed at the BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' meeting held on 25 February 2012 on the sidelines of G20 Finance Deputies, Central Bank Governors and Finance Ministers' meeting in Mexico City. The first meeting of experts to examine the feasibility and viability of this idea was held in New Delhi on 19 March 2012. The matter has been under discussion at technical level through a number of meetings; the last such meeting was held in Moscow on 15 February 2013 on the sidelines of G-20 meetings.

Statistical Organizations

BRICS National Statistical authorities have held four meetings; the last meeting in New Delhi on 6-8 February 2012. BRICS National Statistical Authorities bring out BRICS Statistical Publication; the first was issued at the second Summit in Brasilia in April 2010 and its revised edition after South Africa's joining of BRICS, was issued at the third Summit in Sanya. The last revised edition was released at the Delhi BRICS Summit on 29 March 2012. The next edition is expected to be released at the Durban Summit in March 2013.

EDITORIAL

DEVELOP INDIA

English Weekly Newspaper
Year 5, Vol. 1, Issue 242, 24-31 March, 2013

Cyprus will not leave the euro, says president

Cyprus has no intention of leaving the European single currency, the country's president says. President Nicos Anastasiades said: "In no way will we experiment with the future of our country." The Cyprus central bank says credit and debit card transactions are now free of any restrictions domestically. But a 5,000-euro (£4,223) monthly limit per person remains in place for card purchases abroad. Cash withdrawals are restricted under bank capital controls.



Mr Anastasiades said the financial situation was "contained" following the 10bn-euro bailout deal with the EU and IMF. Banks opened on Thursday for the first time in nearly two weeks amid severe new rules imposed as part of the bailout deal.

Queues formed of people trying to access their money, but the mood was generally calm. By Friday, banks had returned to their normal working hours and there were no longer reports of big queues. "We have averted the risk of bankruptcy," Mr Anastasiades said on Friday. "The situation, despite the tragedy of it all, is contained." He told a meeting of civil servants: "We have no intention of leaving the euro."

But he accused other members of the eurozone of making "unprecedented demands that forced Cyprus to become an experiment".

Cyprus needs to raise 5.8bn euros (\$7.4bn; £4.9bn) to qualify for the bailout, and has become the first eurozone member country to bring in capital controls to prevent a torrent of money leaving the island and credit institutions collapsing.

As well as a daily withdrawal limit of 300 euros, Cypriots may not cash cheques and those leaving the country will only be allowed to take 1,000 euros with them.

Depositors with more than 100,000 euros will see some of their savings exchanged for bank shares.

Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides said on Thursday that such controls could gradually be lifted over the course of the month. But many economists predict the controls could be in place for much longer.

Cyprus capital controls

- Daily withdrawals limited to 300 euros
- Cashing of cheques banned
- Those travelling abroad can take no more than 1,000 euros out of the country
- Payments and/or transfers outside Cyprus via debit and or credit cards permitted up to 5,000 euros per month
- Businesses able to carry out transactions up to 5,000 euros per day
- Special committee to review commercial transactions between 5,000 and 200,000 euros and approve all those over 200,000 euros on a case-by-case basis
- No termination of fixed-term deposit accounts before maturity

The Cypriot Government was reported requesting a bailout from the European Financial Stability Facility or the European Stability Mechanism on 25 June 2012, citing difficulties in supporting its banking sector from the exposure to the Greek debt. Representatives of the Troika (the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Central Bank) arrived to the island in July to investigate the country's financial problems, and submitted the terms of the bailout to the Cypriot government on 25 July. The Cypriot government expressed disagreement over the terms, and continued negotiation with Troika representatives concerning possible alterations to them throughout the following months.

On 20 November, the government handed its counter-proposals to the Troika on the terms of the bailout, with negotiations continuing. On 30 November it was reported that Troika and the Cypriot Government had agreed on the bailout terms with only the amount of money required for the bailout remaining to be agreed upon. The bailout terms were made public on 30 November. The austerity measures included cuts in civil service salaries, social benefits, allowances and pensions and increases in VAT, tobacco, alcohol and fuel taxes, taxes on lottery winnings, property, and higher public health care charges.

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The monarch's rare consultations follow constitutional changes devolving powers away from the palace - a response to calls for reform prompted by uprisings across the Arab world and smaller scale protests inside Jordan.

King Abdullah previously hand-picked his prime ministers without consulting parliament, and the 150-member assembly did not play a role in forming governments.

The cabinet announced on Saturday was the smallest in four decades, with 18 ministers.

The appointment of former central bank governor Umayya Toukan as finance minister signalled a desire by lawmakers to press ahead with unpopular reforms sought by the IMF in return for a \$2bn loan.

US-educated Toukan is a strong advocate of fiscal steps to reduce years of overspending by successive governments. The IMF pushed the kingdom to liberalise fuel prices last November, sparking several days of civil unrest, mainly across rural and tribal areas.

Ensour has faced down street protests, arguing a shift from broad subsidies towards targeted cash transfers to the poor was the only way to deal with a financial crisis that drove the deficit to over 12 percent of GDP and forced Jordan to seek IMF help.

The fund has urged the country to continue to overhaul its costly subsidy scheme and raise electricity tariffs, which officials say will be hiked in June.

The IMF this month completed its first review of last year's stand by arrangement with the Jordan and applauded Ensour's economic reforms, saying it saw some signs of economic recovery. It said on March 11 its executive board could consider Jordan's request for completion of the first review as early as April, making available the second tranche of about \$385m.

Jordan's financial crisis has been deepened by a drop in Gulf aid which traditionally tops up the country's coffers, and the economy has been strained by a flood of refugees from the two-year-old civil war in neighbouring Syria.

Ensour, untainted by corruption allegations, has held senior government posts in successive administrations.

He was appointed in October after the king dissolved parliament halfway through its four-year term to prepare for the country's first parliamentary elections since the Arab Spring uprisings of 2011.

The constitutional changes transferred some of the monarch's powers to parliament, which critics said had become sidelined, and restored to the government some executive powers which had shifted to the palace and security forces.

The future of religion in a post-secular world

About three decades ago in a conference held in Scandinavia, I heard a speaker passionately voicing a forecast made by some futurists.

These futurists, he said, were pretty much convinced that with the spread of secular political ideology and the increasing sharing of scientific technology, the influence and impact of the religions of the world will gradually subside and even that it is likely that these are to vanish from the face of this earth in due course of time.

I remembered that prophecy and how it has proven to be wrong with almost a sense of amusement, while providing a concept note for a significant international conference that was recently organised in order to celebrate 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. This conference 'On World Religions: Diversity, Not Dissension' that has been hosted by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations in New Delhi (7-9 March, 2013), brought a number of speakers from various parts of the globe. Apart from running the event, it also gave me the possibility of spending a whole session conversing with HH Dalai Lama, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Dr. Karan Singh and Reverend Mpho Tutu.

The fact is that a common sharing of advanced technology by facilitating travel and communication in an unprecedented manner has not only affected possibilities for cross cultural exchanges and interactions in a profound way, it has also in the process made our multi-religious situation more glaringly visible than ever. Thus, despite all on-going - undoubtedly pertinent - interpretations of the notion of secularism and secularisation in political and legal discourses, some social scientists have in the mean time begun to describe our time as a post-secular era.



By all counts, our world religions surely seem to be very much with us and continue to remain the principal and primary sources from which the largest aggregates of humanity receive guidance, draw their norms and values and derive a sense of collective identity. Thus, religious identity – as it is used in common parlance – is still the single most dominant criterion with the help of which we demarcate the largest human aggregates one from the other. This is why various issues and concerns associated with the presence of the plurality of world religions need to be prioritised today in an open public discourse in which academicians – the principal theory-makers - need to interact with practitioners and with people of various walks of life to avoid short-sightedness.

It is also now time to emphasise that when we study this religious dimension of our contemporary ‘interdependent’ world, we must be prepared to consider religious issues not only in terms of theology, liturgy, metaphysics, ethics, psychology or aesthetics - important as these are for understanding the distinctness of various traditions - but also to read their implications in socio-economic and political terms that reflect concerns various forms of social injustice including eradication of poverty, malnutrition etc.

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) was fully aware of this network of social realities while he observed: “Of all the forces that have worked and are still working to mould the destinies of the human race, none, certainly, is more potent than that, the manifestation of which we call religion.”

Recall that the question of religion has been perpetually present not only within the conceptual frames of a global history of ideas, it has also run throughout the history of human civilisation having extraordinarily great impact. These historical developments can be studied and explored both conceptually as well as empirically, especially with reference to various scenarios entailing peace and violence, protest and transformation and in diverse formations of social groupings marking segments of population as majority and minority in various national contexts.

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In any case, if we agree that we are not living in a post-religious era, we simply cannot underplay the importance of a meta-philosophy that can help emerge a multi-religious global community that flatly refuses to perceive the phenomenon of diversity of traditions as an inevitable cause for dissension. An authentic effort to understand the contemporary multi-religious situation in our time remains crucial also because it is with reference to these religions – rightly or wrongly - that we have to a large extent shaped our attitudes toward the ‘otherness’ of those who derive their sense of identity from sources other than our own. Today, unquestionably no less than before, the world religions are still treated as a divisive force rather than as a resource for ensuring greater harmony. We need to alter this scenario. This is what I describe as the unfinished project of Swami Vivekananda.

An open cross cultural conversation is needed in order to explore how the intricacies of geopolitics play havoc in the global scene, be that where one nation is composed of members of diverse religious identities (including denominations of the same tradition), or where diverse nations partake of the same religious identity. How do socio-political forces exploit these situations? We need to understand the mechanisms by means of which these identities are sustained, when and how these are endangered, what local and global institutional infrastructures are available to resist interventions of various sorts.

Today when secular world-views and ideologies seek to address anew the presence of diversity in the form of multiculturalism, globalisation, cosmopolitanism etc., the crucial question that repeatedly comes to the forefront is how do we construe a sense of a larger identity that does not demand homogenisation or does not lend support to dissension but can celebrate diversity? More importantly, can religions of the world help us to obtain this desired sense of a larger identity by annulling the ways we have understood and construed our differences so far? While meticulously taking note of differences as well as overlaps that are there among the religions of the world, is it still possible to re-assess the import of the universal awareness with regard to the religious dimension of our existence differently than we have done so far?

Tiger regains slice of past glory

Even before Tiger Woods nudged his final putt into the cup, caddie Joe LaCava stood on the fringe of the 18th green and removed the Arnold Palmer Invitational flag from its home. Then he rolled it up like a poster and stuck it in his right back pocket. "He gets the trophy," LaCava said, referring to Woods. "I get the flag."

Woods got more than that. He received a greenside victory handshake and neck grasp from a laughing Palmer. He got a check for \$1.116 million, an eighth blue blazer and pole-vaulted over Rory McIlroy to reclaim the world No. 1 ranking for the first time since Oct. 31, 2010. Congratulatory text messages -- about 30 in the few moments he had to check -- poured into his cell phone Monday afternoon. McIlroy hadn't checked in yet, but it was early.

"It feels good right now," said Woods. It should. Woods has gone from the planet's most dominating player, to a Jay Leno punch line, and back to a place that more than a few critics never thought he'd be again: No. 1 in the world.

This was his third victory of the year, his sixth in the past 53 weeks. And he's running out of hangers in his closet for the Palmer sportcoats.

So decisive was this latest win that Woods would have had to 4-putt from two inches to lose the rain-delayed tournament. He led by 2 to start the day and ended it with the same margin. There wasn't much drama, which is just like the old days. Woods would suck the blood out of the rest of the field and cruise home. He had the last-day lead at Bay Hill and earlier in the year at Torrey Pines and Doral -- and never lost it.

And just like the old days, Woods will arrive at Augusta National early next month as the guy most likely to succeed.

"Yeah, he's the favorite," said Justin Rose, who finished second at Bay Hill. "He's going to be hard to beat."

It isn't just that Woods is winning tournaments again, it's how he's winning them. Decisively. Confidently. Even boringly.

"I'm getting there," said Woods.

Those should be terrifying words for tournament fields everywhere. Because by his own calculations, Woods said it's been "years" since he's hit the ball this well and this consistently. Plus, ever since his buddy Steve Stricker gave him a putting lesson at Doral, the cup seems like it's the size of SeaWorld. And his short game is this close to the perfection zone.

"I've turned some of the weaknesses that I had last year into strengths," said Woods.

That's one way of saying it. Another way is how LaCava put it after Woods recorded his 77th career victory.

"If you're paying attention, you're going to look over your shoulder a little bit," LaCava said. "That makes sense, right? I'm not trying to be cocky, but you've got to figure he's the guy to beat." Players were looking over their shoulders Monday. Rose admitted that he couldn't afford to pick his spots to fire at pins, not with this 2013 version of Woods in the lead.

"I was trying to birdie every hole," Rose said. "He can force you into that."

Rickie Fowler trailed by two strokes as he stood in the middle of the fairway after his drive on the par-5 16th hole. Meanwhile, Woods was stuck in a fairway bunker.

"Seven iron," said Fowler. "Had a perfect club."

Instead, he went swimming with his second shot. Penalty stroke, then drop. Then he dunked another in the greenside pond. By the time he was finished, Fowler recorded an 8. Woods birdied the hole.



Narendra Modi inducted into BJP's Team 2014

After a six-year hiatus, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) reinducted Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi into the party's Parliamentary Board. Modi's selection is seen as a major boost to his prime ministerial ambitions. Also, the 62-year-old Modi is the only Chief Minister included in the new 76-member team of office bearers. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan has been ignored in the team.

Modi comes back to the party's top body after a gap of six years after having been removed from the Board by Singh during his previous tenure as party president, ending speculation over the Chief Minister's future role at the national level in BJP.

Modi, who has been projected by a section within BJP as the party's Prime Ministerial candidate, has also been included in BJP's Central Election Committee, headed by Singh. Singh's new team has 12 vice presidents, 10 general secretaries, 15 secretaries and seven spokespersons, besides a 12-member Central Parliamentary Board, a 19-member Central Election Committee and a five-member Central Disciplinary Committee.

BJP president Rajnath Singh, who met the party's patriarch LK Advani this morning ahead of the major announcement, named former Gujarat home minister Amit Shah, Pilibhit MP Varun Gandhi, Ram Lal, JP Nadda, Ananth Kumar, Dharmendra Pradhan, Muralidhar Rao, Rajiv Pratap Rudy, Thawarchand Gehlot, Tapir Gao as general secretaries of the party. Rajnath Singh (president), Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Lal Krishna Advani, Dr Murli Manohar Joshi, M Venkaiah Naidu, Nitin Gadkari, Sushma Swaraj, Arun Jaitley, Narendra Modi, Ananth Kumar, Thawar Chand Gehlot, Ram Lal now comprise BJP Central Parliamentary Board. Rajya Sabha MP from Gujarat Smriti Irani, ex-Karnataka CM Sadananda Gowda, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Prabhat Jha, Balbir Punj, Uma Bharti, Kiran Maheshwari, Dr CP Thakur, Jual Urao, SS Ahluwalia, Satpal Malik, Bijoy Chakravarti and Punjab's former health minister Laxmi Kanta Chawla have been named BJP vice presidents.

Durg MP Saroj Pandey has been made the new president of BJP Mahila Morcha, while Anurag Thakur continues as Yuva Morcha president in the new team.

Prakash Javadekar, Shah Nawaz Hussain, Nirmala Sitaraman, Vijay Sonkar Shashtri, Dr Sudhanshu Trivedi, Meenakshi Lekhi and Captain Abhimanyu have been made the party's spokespersons.

Party's senior leader and former finance minister Yashwant Sinha has not found a place in Singh's team.

Among those who have been dropped include Najma Heptulla, Hema Malini and Shanta Kumar as vice presidents and Vasundhara Raje as general secretary.

Ravi Shankar Prasad, who is BJP's deputy leader in Rajya Sabha, has been dropped as the chief spokesperson of the party.

Poonam Mahajan, the daughter of late party leader Pramod Mahajan, has found a place in Singh's team and has been made a secretary. The new BJP team, which has adequate representation of women, includes Luise Marandi from Jharkhand as secretary.

V Satish and Soudan Singh will be the new joint general secretaries (Organisation), while Shyam Jaju, Bhupendra Yadav, Krishan Das, Anil Jain, Vinod Pandey, Trivendra Rawat, Rameshwar Chaurasiya, Aarti Mehra, Renu Kushwaha, Sudha Yadav, Sudha Malaiya, Tamil Isai and Vani Tripathi are secretaries.

Sanjay Paswan has been made president of the BJP SC Morcha and Faggan Singh Kulaste president of the ST Morcha, Abdul Rashid will head the Minority Morcha and Om Prakash Dhankar will head the party's Kisan Morcha.

Rajya Sabha MP Piyush Goyal has been retained as Treasurer and OP Kohli as Headquarter Incharge, while former MP Ramkripal Sinha will be Office Secretary of Parliamentary Party and Shanmukhanathan as joint office secretary of the Parliamentary Party.

The party's Central Disciplinary Committee has Radha Mohan Singh as president, Jagdish Mukhi as secretary and L Ganesahn, Hari Babu and Shyam Nandan Singh as its members.

"After discussion with senior party leaders, this team has been announced. I think it is a perfect and balanced team," BJP vice president Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi told reporters.

He said the new team would help the BJP win the next Lok Sabha polls.

Notably, the parliamentary board is the highest decision-making body of the BJP and Modi's elevation is being viewed as a step to bring him to the forefront keeping in view the upcoming 2014 General Elections.

"The rejig was done by the new party president keeping in mind the General Elections of 2014. The party will announce the prime ministerial candidate when the time comes," BJP spokesperson Meenakshi Lekhi said.

On stopping short of announcing a prime ministerial candidate, BJP leader Nirmala Sitaraman said: "All groups and regions have been well represented in the new team. I don't think too much need to be read into (the holding back of an announcement of the prime minister candidate)."

"All sections have been adequately represented, according to their capacity, and there is young blood too in the team," she said.

Welcoming Modi's elevation, BJP leader Giriraj Singh said: "It is good news and will infuse more power and strength into the party."

On tainted people like Shah being inducted into key positions, BJP leader Prakash Javadekar said: "People don't come to the BJP from one family; they are inducted on merit. Unless a court verdict comes or the Supreme Court says something, we cannot prohibit him from occupying a position in the party."

"That's kind of the mistakes that you sometimes can be pressed into making," said Rose, who saw Fowler's triple-bogey on the board.

Woods knows how to count. He knows he's 37. He knows he's four wins short of tying Jack Nicklaus' major championship record. He knows he's five wins short of tying Sam Snead's record for PGA Tour victories.

The last time he won a major was in 2008. And the last time he won at Augusta National was in 2005. But how can we look at his body of work in the past 12-plus months and not think he's in a golf happy place? Everything points toward Bubba Watson helping Woods slip on a Masters green jacket.

This was his last tournament before the Masters. He's playing in the silly Tavistock Cup on Tuesday, then taking a few days off, then working on the specific shots he'll need at Augusta. Asked when he last felt this good about his game, Woods didn't hesitate.

Woods had a good day Monday. By the looks of it, he's going to have a lot more.

Keeping No. 1 Warm For Tiger	
There have been 124 weeks of Official World Golf Rankings since Tiger Woods was last No. 1 in late 2010. During that time, four golfers have held the top spot.	
Since Tiger was last No. 1	Weeks
Luke Donald	55*
Rory McIlroy	39*
Lee Westwood	22*
Martin Kaymer	8

5th BRICS Summit - eThekwinini Declaration and Action Plan

We, the leaders of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa, met in Durban, South Africa, on 27 March 2013 at the Fifth BRICS Summit. Our discussions took place under the overarching theme, "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialisation". The Fifth BRICS Summit concluded the first cycle of BRICS Summits and we reaffirmed our commitment to the promotion of international law, multilateralism and the central role of the United Nations (UN). Our discussions reflected our growing intra-BRICS solidarity as well as our shared goal to contribute positively to global peace, stability, development and cooperation. We also considered our role in the international system as based on an inclusive approach of shared solidarity and cooperation towards all nations and peoples.

We met at a time which requires that we consider issues of mutual interest and systemic importance in order to share concerns and to develop lasting solutions. We aim at progressively developing BRICS into a full-fledged mechanism of current and long-term coordination on a wide range of key issues of the world economy and politics. The prevailing global governance architecture is regulated by institutions which were conceived in circumstances when the international landscape in all its aspects was characterised by very different challenges and opportunities. As the global economy is being reshaped, we are committed to exploring new models and approaches towards more equitable development and inclusive global growth by emphasising complementarities and building on our respective economic strengths.

We are open to increasing our engagement and cooperation with non-BRICS countries, in particular Emerging Market and Developing Countries (EMDCs), and relevant international and regional organisations, as envisioned in the Sanya Declaration. We will hold a Retreat together with African leaders after this Summit, under the theme, "Unlocking Africa's potential: BRICS and Africa Cooperation on Infrastructure". The Retreat is an opportunity for BRICS and African leaders to discuss how to strengthen cooperation between the BRICS countries and the African Continent.

Recognising the importance of regional integration for Africa's sustainable growth, development and poverty eradication, we reaffirm our support for the Continent's integration processes. Within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), we support African countries in their industrialisation process through stimulating foreign direct investment, knowledge exchange, capacity-building and diversification of imports from Africa. We acknowledge that infrastructure development in Africa is important and recognise the strides made by the African Union to identify and address the continent's infrastructure challenges through the development of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), the AU NEPAD Africa Action Plan (2010-2015), the NEPAD Presidential Infrastructure Championing Initiative (PICI), as well as the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plans that have identified priority infrastructure development projects that are critical to promoting regional integration and industrialisation. We will seek to stimulate infrastructure investment on the basis of mutual benefit to support industrial development, job-creation, skills development, food and nutrition security and poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa. We therefore, reaffirm our support for sustainable infrastructure development in Africa.

We note policy actions in Europe, the US and Japan aimed at reducing tail-risks in the world economy. Some of these actions produce negative spillover effects on other economies of the world. Significant risks remain and the performance of the global economy still falls behind our expectations. As a result, uncertainty about strength and durability of the recovery and the direction of policy in some major economies remains high. In some key countries unemployment stays unusually elevated, while high levels of private and public indebtedness inhibit growth. In such circumstances, we reaffirm our strong commitment to support growth and foster financial stability. We also underscore the need for appropriate action to be taken by advanced economies in order to rebuild confidence, foster growth and secure a strong recovery.

Central Banks in advanced economies have responded with unconventional monetary policy actions which have increased global liquidity. While this may be consistent with domestic monetary policy mandates, major Central Banks should avoid the unintended consequences of these actions in the form of increased volatility of capital flows, currencies and commodity prices, which may have negative growth effects on other economies, in particular developing countries.

We welcome the core objectives of the Russian Presidency in the G20 in 2013, in particular the efforts to increased financing for investment and ensure public debt sustainability aimed

at ensuring strong, sustainable, inclusive and balanced growth and job creation around the world. We will also continue to prioritise the G20 development agenda as a vital element of global economic stability and long-term sustainable growth and job creation.

Developing countries face challenges of infrastructure development due to insufficient long-term financing and foreign direct investment, especially investment in capital stock. This constrains global aggregate demand. BRICS cooperation towards more productive use of global financial resources can make a positive contribution to addressing this problem. In March 2012 we directed our Finance Ministers to examine the feasibility and viability of setting up a New Development Bank for mobilising resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing countries, to supplement the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development. Following the report from our Finance Ministers, we are satisfied that the establishment of a New Development Bank is feasible and viable. We have agreed to establish the New Development Bank. The initial contribution to the Bank should be substantial and sufficient for the Bank to be effective in financing infrastructure. In June 2012, in our meeting in Los Cabos, we tasked our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to explore the construction of a financial safety net through the creation of a Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) amongst BRICS countries. They have concluded that the establishment of a self-managed contingent reserve arrangement would have a positive precautionary effect, help BRICS countries forestall short-term liquidity pressures, provide mutual support and further strengthen financial stability. It would also contribute to strengthening the global financial safety net and complement existing international arrangements as an additional line of defence. We are of the view that the establishment of the CRA with an initial size of US\$ 100 billion is feasible and desirable subject to internal legal frameworks and appropriate safeguards. We direct our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to continue working towards its establishment.

We are grateful to our Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors for the work undertaken on the New Development Bank and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement and direct them to negotiate and conclude the agreements which will establish them. We will review progress made in these two initiatives at our next meeting in September 2013.

We welcome the conclusion between our Export-Import Banks (EXIM) and Development Banks, of both the "Multilateral Agreement on Cooperation and Co-financing for Sustainable Development" and, given the steep growth trajectory of the African continent and the significant infrastructure funding requirements directly emanating from this growth path, the "Multilateral Agreement on Infrastructure Co-Financing for Africa".

We call for the reform of International Financial Institutions to make them more representative and to reflect the growing weight of BRICS and other developing countries. We remain concerned with the slow pace of the reform of the IMF. We see an urgent need to implement, as agreed, the 2010 International Monetary Fund (IMF) Governance and Quota Reform. We urge all members to take all necessary steps to achieve an agreement on the quota formula and complete the next general quota review by January 2014. The reform of the IMF should strengthen the voice and representation of the poorest members of the IMF, including Sub-Saharan Africa. All options should be explored, with an open mind, to achieve this. We support the reform and improvement of the international monetary system, with a broad-based international reserve currency system providing stability and certainty. We welcome the discussion about the role of the SDR in the existing international monetary system including the composition of SDR's basket of currencies. We support the IMF to make its surveillance framework more integrated and even-handed. The leadership selection of IFIs should be through an open, transparent and merit-based process and truly open to candidates from the emerging market economies and developing countries.

We emphasise the importance of ensuring steady, adequate and predictable access to long term finance for developing countries from a variety of sources. We would like to see concerted global effort towards infrastructure financing and investment through the instrumentality of adequately resourced Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and Regional Development Banks (RDBs). We urge all parties to work towards an ambitious International Development Association (IDA) 17 replenishment.

We reaffirm our support for an open, transparent and rules-based multilateral trading system. We will continue in our efforts for the successful conclusion of the Doha Round, based on the progress made and in keeping with its mandate, while upholding the principles of transparency, inclusiveness and multilateralism. We are committed to ensure that new proposals and approaches to the Doha Round negotiations will reinforce the core principles and the developmental mandate of the Doha Round. We look forward to significant and meaningful deliverables that are balanced and address key development concerns of the poorest and most vulnerable WTO members, at the ninth Ministerial Conference of the WTO in Bali.

We note that the process is underway for the selection of a new WTO Director-General in 2013. We concur that the WTO requires a new leader who demonstrates a commit-

ment to multilateralism and to enhancing the effectiveness of the WTO including through a commitment to support efforts that will lead to an expeditious conclusion of the DDA. We consider that the next Director-General of the WTO should be a representative of a developing country. We reaffirm the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) mandate as the focal point in the UN system dedicated to consider the interrelated issues of trade, investment, finance and technology from a development perspective. UNCTAD's mandate and work are unique and necessary to deal with the challenges of development and growth in the increasingly interdependent global economy. We also reaffirm the importance of strengthening UNCTAD's capacity to deliver on its programmes of consensus building, policy dialogue, research, technical cooperation and capacity building, so that it is better equipped to deliver on its development mandate.

We acknowledge the important role that State Owned Companies (SOCs) play in the economy and encourage our SOCs to explore ways of cooperation, exchange of information and best practices.

We recognise the fundamental role played by Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the economies of our countries. SMEs are major creators of jobs and wealth. In this regard, we will explore opportunities for cooperating in the field of SMEs and recognise the need for promoting dialogue among the respective Ministries and Agencies in charge of the theme, particularly with a view to promoting their international exchange and cooperation and fostering innovation, research and development.

We reiterate our strong commitment to the United Nations (UN) as the foremost multilateral forum entrusted with bringing about hope, peace, order and sustainable development to the world. The UN enjoys universal membership and is at the centre of global governance and multilateralism. In this regard, we reaffirm the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more representative, effective and efficient, so that it can be more responsive to global challenges. In this regard, China and Russia reiterate the importance they attach to the status of Brazil, India and South Africa in international affairs and support their aspiration to play a greater role in the UN.

We underscore our commitment to work together in the UN to continue our cooperation and strengthen multilateral approaches in international relations based on the rule of law and anchored in the Charter of the United Nations.

We are committed to building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity and reaffirm that the 21st century should be marked by peace, security, development, and cooperation. It is the overarching objective and strong shared desire for peace, security, development and cooperation that brought together BRICS countries.

We welcome the twentieth Anniversary of the World Conference on Human Rights and of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and agree to explore cooperation in the field of human rights.

We commend the efforts of the international community and acknowledge the central role of the African Union (AU) and its Peace and Security Council in conflict resolution in Africa. We call upon the UNSC to enhance cooperation with the African Union, and its Peace and Security Council, pursuant to UNSC resolutions in this regard. We express our deep concern with instability stretching from North Africa, in particular the Sahel, and the Gulf of Guinea. We also remain concerned about reports of deterioration in humanitarian conditions in some countries.

We welcome the appointment of the new Chairperson of the AU Commission as an affirmation of the leadership of women.

We express our deep concern with the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Syria and condemn the increasing violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law as a result of continued violence. We believe that the Joint Communiqué of the Geneva Action Group provides a basis for resolution of the Syrian crisis and reaffirm our opposition to any further militarization of the conflict. A Syrian-led political process leading to a transition can be achieved only through broad national dialogue that meets the legitimate aspirations of all sections of Syrian society and respect for Syrian independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty as expressed by the Geneva Joint Communiqué and appropriate UNSC resolutions. We support the efforts of the UN-League of Arab States Joint Special Representative. In view of the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria, we call upon all parties to allow and facilitate immediate, safe, full and unimpeded access to humanitarian organisations to all in need of assistance. We urge all parties to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers.

We welcome the admission of Palestine as an Observer State to the United Nations. We are concerned at the lack



of progress in the Middle East Peace Process and call on the international community to assist both Israel and Palestine to work towards a two-state solution with a contiguous and economicallyviable Palestinian state, existing side by side in peace with Israel, within inter-nationally recognized borders, based on those existing on 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital.We are deeply concerned about the construction of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which is a violation of international law and harmful to the peace process.In recalling the primary responsibility of the UNSC in maintaining interna-tional peace and security, we note the importance that the Quartet reports regularly to the Council about its efforts, which should contribute to concrete progress.

We believe there is no alternative to a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. We recognise Iran’s right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy consistent with its international obligations, and support resolution of the issues involved through political and diplomatic means and dialogue, including between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran and in accordance with the provisions of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and consistent with Iran’s obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We are concerned about threats of military action as well as unilateral sanctions. We note the recent talks held in Almaty and hope that all outstanding issues relating to Iran’s nuclear programme will be resolved through discussions and diplomatic means.

Afghanistan needs time, development assistance and cooperation, preferential access to world markets, foreign investment and a clear end-state strategy to attain lasting peace and stability. We support the global community’s commitment to Afghanistan, enunciated at the Bonn International Conference in December 2011, to remain engaged over the trans-formation decade from 2015-2024. We affirm our commitment to support Afghanistan’s emergence as a peaceful, stable and democratic state, free of terrorism and extremism, and underscore the need for more effective regional and international cooperation for the stabilisation of Afghanistan, including by combating terrorism. We extend support to the efforts aimed at combating illicit traffic in opiates originating in Afghanistan within the frame-work of the Paris Pact.

We commend the efforts of the AU, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Mali aimed at restoring sovereignty and territorial integrity of Mali. We sup-port the civilian efforts of the Malian Government and its international community part-ners in realising the transitional programme leading up to the presidential and legislative elections. We emphasise the importance of political inclusiveness and economic and social development in order for Mali to achieve sustainable peace and stability. We express con-cern about the reports of the deterioration in humanitarian conditions in Mali and call upon the international community to continue to cooperate with Mali and its neighbouring coun-tries in order to ensure humanitarian assistance to civilian population affected by the armed conflict.

We are gravely concerned with the deterioration in the current situation in the Central Afri-can Republic (CAR) and deplore the loss of life. We strongly condemn the abuses and acts of violence against the civilian population and urge all parties to the conflict to immediately cease hostilities and return to negotiations. We call upon all parties to allow safe and un-hindered humanitarian access. We are ready to work with the international community to assist in this endeavour and facilitate progress to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Bra-zil, Russia and China express their sympathy to the South African and Indian governments for the casualties that their citizens suffered in the CAR.

We are gravely concerned by the ongoing instability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). We welcome the signing in Addis Ababa on 24 February 2013 of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. We support its independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty. We support the efforts of the UN, AU and sub-regional organisations to bring about peace, security and stability in the country.

We reiterate our strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stress that there can be no justification, whatsoever, for any acts of terrorism. We believe that the UN has a central role in coordinating international action against terrorism within the framework of the UN Charter and in accordance with principles and norms of interna-tional law. In this context, we support the implementation of the UN General Assembly Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and are determined to strengthen cooperation in coun-tering this global threat. We also reiterate our call for concluding negotiations as soon as possible in the UN General Assembly on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and its adoption by all Member States and agreed to work together towards this objective.

We recognize the critical positive role the Internet plays globally in promoting economic, social and cultural development. We believe it’s important to contribute to and participate in a peaceful, secure, and open cyberspace and we emphasise that security in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) through universally accepted norms, standards and practices is of paramount importance.

We congratulate Brazil on hosting the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June 2012 and welcome the outcome as reflected in "The Future we Want”, in particular, the reaffirmation of the Rio Principles and political commitment made towards sustainable development and poverty eradication while creating opportunities for BRICS partners to engage and cooperate in the development of the future Sustainable Development Goals.

We congratulate India on the outcome of the 11th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Conference on Biological Diversity (CBD COP11) and the sixth meeting of the Con-ference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

While acknowledging that climate change is one of the greatest challenges and threats to-wards achieving sustainable development, we call on all partiesto build on the decisions adopted in COP18/CMP8 in Doha, with a view to reaching a successful conclusion by 2015, of negotiations on the development of a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties, guided by its prin-ciples and provisions.

We believe that the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) address the needs of developing countries, many of which con-tinue to face developmental challenges, including widespread poverty and inequality. Low Income Countries (LICs) continue to face challenges that threaten the impressive growth

performance of recent years. Volatility in food and other commodity prices have made food security an issue as well as constraining their sources of revenue. Progress in rebuilding macro-economic buffers has been relatively slow, partly due to measures adopted to miti-gate the social impact of exogenous shocks. Many LICs are currently in a weaker position to deal with exogenous shocks given the more limited fiscal buffers and the constrained aid envelopes, which will affect their ability to sustain progress towards achieving the MDGs. We reiterate that individual countries, especially in Africa and other developing countries of the South, cannot achieve the MDGs on their own and therefore the centrality of Goal 8 on Global Partnerships for Development to achieve the MDGs should remain at the core of the global development discourse for the UN System. Furthermore, this requires the honouring of all commitments made in the outcome documents of previous major interna-tional conferences.

We reiterate our commitment to work together for accelerated progress in attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the target date of 2015, and we call upon other members of the international community to work towards the same objective. In this re-gard, we stress that the development agenda beyond 2015 should build on the MDG frame-work, keeping the focus on poverty eradication and human development, while addressing emerging challenges of development taking into consideration individual national circum-stances of developing countries. In this regard the critical issue of the mobilization of means of implementation in assisting developing countries needs to be an overarching goal. It is important to ensure that any discussion on the UN development agenda, including the "Post 2015 Development Agenda” is an inclusive and transparent inter-Governmental process under a UN-wide process which is universal and broad based.

We welcome the establishment of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Develop-ment Goals (SDGs), in line with the Rio+20 Outcome Document which reaffirmed the Rio Principles of Sustainable Development as the basis for addressing new and emerging chal-lenges. We are fully committed to a coordinated inter-governmental process for the elabo-ration of the UN development agenda.

We note the following meetings held in the implementation of the Delhi Action Plan:

Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs on the margins of UNGA.

Meeting of National Security Advisors in New Delhi.

Meetings of Finance Ministers, and Central Bank Governors in Washington DC and Tokyo.

Meeting of Trade Ministers in Puerto Vallarta.

Meetings of Health Ministers in New Delhi and Geneva.

We welcome the establishment of the BRICS Think Tanks Council and the BRICS Business Council and take note ofthe following meetings which were held in preparation for this Summit:

Fifth Academic Forum

Fourth Business Forum

Third Financial Forum

We welcome the outcomes of the meeting of the BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors and endorse the Joint Communiqué of the Third Meeting of the BRICS Trade Ministers held in preparation for the Summit.

We are committed to forging a stronger partnership for common development. To this end, we adopt the eThekwini Action Plan.

We agree that the next summit cycles will, in principle, follow the sequence of Brazil, Rus-sia, India, China and South Africa.

Brazil, Russia, India and China extend their warm appreciation to the Government and people of South Africa for hosting the Fifth BRICS Summit in Durban.

Russia, India, China and South Africa convey their appreciation to Brazil for its offer to host the first Summit of the second cycle of BRICS Summits, i.e. the Sixth BRICS Summit in 2014 and convey their full support thereto.

eThekwini Action Plan:

Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs on the margins of UNGA.

Meeting of BRICS National Security Advisors.

Mid-term meeting of Sherpas and Sous-Sherpas.

Meetings of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in the margins of G20 meetings, WB/IMF meetings, as well as stand-alone meetings, as required.

Meetings of BRICS Trade Ministers on the margins of multilateral events, or stand-alone meetings, as required.

Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Agriculture and Agrarian Development, preceded by a pre-paratory meeting of experts on agro-products and food security issues and the Meeting of Agriculture Expert Working Group.

Meeting of BRICS Health Ministers and preparatory meetings.

Meeting of BRICS Officials responsible for population on the margins of relevant multilat-eral events.

Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Science and Technology and meeting of BRICS Senior Offi-cials on Science and Technology.

Meeting of BRICS Cooperatives.

Meetings of financial and fiscal authorities in the margins of WB/IMF meetings as well as stand-alone meetings, as required.

Meetings of the BRICS Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues (CGETI).

Meeting of the BRICS Friendship Cities and Local Governments Cooperation Forum.

Meeting of the BRICS Urbanisation Forum.

Meeting of BRICS Competition Authorities in 2013 in New Delhi.

5th Meeting of BRICS Heads of National Statistical Institutions.

Consultations amongst BRICS Permanent Missions and/or Embassies, as appropriate, in New York, Vienna, Rome, Paris, Washington, Nairobi and Geneva, where appropriate.

Consultative meeting of BRICS Senior Officials in the margins of relevant sustainable devel-opment, environment and climate related international fora, where appropriate.

New areas of cooperation to be explored

BRICS Public Diplomacy Forum.

BRICS Anti-Corruption Cooperation.

BRICS State Owned Companies / State Owned Enterprises.

National Agencies Responsible for Drug Control.

BRICS virtual secretariat.

BRICS Youth Policy Dialogue.

Tourism.

Energy.

Sports and Mega Sporting Events.

Prime Minister’s Statement at the Plenary Session of the 5th BRICS Summit

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen

Please allow me to begin by congratulating South Africa for hosting this important Summit. As India passes the baton of the Chairmanship of BRICS to South Africa, it does so with a sense of satisfaction at the distance that we have covered in the course of the past year. I wish to convey my profound gratitude to our BRICS partners and col-leagues for their unstinted support to India in dis- charging its duties as Chair. I am confident that Presi- dent Zuma’s wise leadership in the coming year will further strengthen intra-BRICS coop- eration and increase its global role and relevance.

Over the past year, our ministerial and official consultations have intensified across a broad range of areas. BRICS coordination and consultation has become an integral part of our participation in international forums, such as G-20. It has given us a stronger voice in articu- lating our shared concerns. It has enabled us to participate more effectively in addressing global challenges. We have also deepened our efforts to promote peace, stability and secu- rity through a meeting of National Security Advisers.

People to people contacts, exchanges amongst our think Tanks, and engagement between our business communities have strengthened. We have explored new areas of interaction, such as addressing the common challenges of urbanization and cooperating on customs and revenue issues. The BRICS Development Bank initiative has opened the doors to new possibilities of cooperation.

Today, we are completing the first cycle of BRICS Summits. It is my belief that, over the last five Summits, our forum has become more cohesive and more relevant. We derive as much value from our diversity as from our synergies; equally, we stand to benefit enormously from our convergence and collective strength.

As we look to the future, the progress over the past five years encourages us to set higher ambitions, seek new avenues and set new goals for our cooperation. However, our roadmap for the future should focus on consolidating and deepening our existing cooperation. We should also carefully prioritize existing and new areas, keeping in view our strengths, our resources and the difference we can make, both for our people and the world. I would like to make five suggestions in this regard.

First, our foremost challenge is to respond to the persisting weaknesses in the global economy, the financial crisis overhang and the inevitable long term structural changes in the post-2008 world. Recognizing that BRICS countries will remain key drivers of global economic growth, we should further sustain our growth by harnessing the vast opportuni- ties for expanding trade and investment ties between ourselves. Each of us has unique sets of resources and strengths and we should exploit our complementarities for mutual ben- efit. We should also seek increased cooperation in manufacturing and services sectors. The measures agreed upon today will help us meet these objectives.

Second, the external focus of our research and development cooperation tends to be on the developed world. It would be equally useful, though, to encourage collaboration between institutions in BRICS countries because our experiences and solutions will have relevance for each other, particularly in areas like energy, food security, education, healthcare, sus- tainable development and IT-enabled public services.

Third, we should individually and collectively work to make economic development more broad-based and inclusive. This is not only a moral imperative, but a pragmatic approach to make the global economy more sustainable and enhance political and social stability in vulnerable parts of the world.

Fourth, we should work more cohesively in international forums to advance the agenda of sustained global economy recovery and promote a balanced outcome on issues such as trade, sustainable development and climate change, in a manner that protects our shared interests and those of the entire developing world.

Finally, we should work for a reform of global institutions of political and economic gover- nance that reflects contemporary realities and equips them more effectively to deal with emerging challenges. In particular, reform of the United Nations Security Council and the IMF are urgently needed.

Our collective efforts in each of these areas would be of great benefit to Africa. However, BRICS should also directly support the process of development and change now underway in Africa. The overarching Summit theme of partnership between BRICS and Africa is, there- fore, very apt. The outcomes of this Summit reflect our shared commitment in this regard.

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,


The world today faces uncertainties, turbulence and transition on an unprecedented scale, leading to multiple economic and security challenges for us. Terrorism, piracy and the emerg- ing threats from cyber-space are important security concerns for us. It is incumbent upon us to use our collective voice and capacity and make an effective and meaningful contribu- tion to addressing these challenges and fostering global peace, stability and security.

In conclusion, let me once again reaffirm the importance that India attaches to BRICS, not only for the benefit of our people, but also for the world at large. My conviction comes not merely from our capacity, but also from the purposeful manner in which we have worked together. I am sure the forum will scale new heights in the years to come. I assure President Zuma of our full support as he leads this for- um over the coming year.

Thank you.

Durban

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