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## INDIA ATTENDS G-8 SUMMIT AND MEETING OF O-5 IN GERMANY



Prime Minister of India with the leaders of G-8 and O-5 countries at the G-8 Summit, Germany, on June 8.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh participated in the G-8 Outreach Summit held at Heiligendamm in Germany from June 6 to 8.

While in Heiligendamm, the Prime Minister also had bilateral discussions with U.S. President George Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, Chinese President Hu Jintao and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the host of the summit.

Speaking at the G-8 Outreach Summit on June 8, the Prime Minister made a strong pitch for burden sharing among all countries in the global efforts to control climate changes. "The process of burden sharing must be fair," he said. "It should take into account where the primary responsibility for the present levels of GHG (green house gas) concentration rests and not perpetuate poverty among the developing countries. No strategy should foreclose for them the possibilities of accelerated social and economic development," he added, mentioning that India's GHG emissions are among the lowest in per-capita terms.

The influential G-8 comprises U.S.,

Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia, while the five Outreach Countries are, besides India, Brazil, China, Mexico and South Africa.

Prior to the meeting with leaders of the G-8, the President of Mexico hosted a meeting of leaders of the Outreach countries in Berlin on June 7, where the leaders discussed their positions on global issues that are of special relevance to the developing world.

The meeting was held on June 7 in Berlin. Addressing the meeting, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said developing countries must be treated as "partners and not petitioners" in the changed global scenario, especially while dealing with key geopolitical issues. He further said it was essential that rich nations took the views of developing countries seriously and treated them as stakeholders. The meeting, ahead of the outreach summit with the G-8, also discussed how the five countries could push South-South cooperation in various issues of global importance.

Climate change, the Doha Development Round of global trade talks and inclusive growth were among the issues discussed by

the five leaders.

Later, speaking to the media on the board the aircraft bringing him back to India, the Prime Minister said, "As far as substance is concerned, the discussions with the outreach countries centered on the global economy and issues relating to management of global climate changes. As far as the issues relating to the global economy are concerned, there is a general feeling that the world economy is doing quite well, certainly the people talk about the global economy, they talk of the dynamic role played by China, Brazil and India."

Singh added: "This is a new reality which the developed countries respect and they recognise there could be no meaningful management of the global issues in which India, China and other emerging countries... are not involved."

Following this year's summit, the G-8 and the five outreach allies pledged to continue their dialogue on key issues, including investment and energy efficiency in a more structured manner under what is being called the Heiligendamm Process.

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# India attends G-8 Summit and meeting of O-5 in Germany

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Under the Heiligendamm Process, proposed by Chancellor Merkel, the outreach partners will continue to discuss and review progress in four key areas till the 2009 summit in Italy — cross-border investment, research, development and energy efficiency.

In a joint statement issued after the G-8 Outreach Summit, the two sides said: "We commit to embark on a high-level dialogue on specific challenges as proposed by the G-8 as a follow-up to continue discussions in a more structured manner for a period of two years until the G-8 Summit in 2009."

The engagement between G-8 and the outreach partners has been more informal in nature which some of the members now want to institutionalise.

In energy, the two sides said they would not only promote cost-effective use of fossil fuels and clean coal technology, but also increase the use of renewable energy sources.

They also committed themselves to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and said they would also follow the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Coming to global governance, the five outreach countries reiterated the need to make the structures of global governance more democratic, representative and legitimate by increasing the participation of developing countries in the decision-making bodies of multilateral institutions. ■



Prime Minister Manmohan Singh addressing a meeting with the leaders of Outreach Countries (O-5) during the G-8 Summit at Berlin in Germany on June 7.

## 'G-5' leaders propose a separate summit

**B**razilian President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva has proposed that the group of outreach Ballies (G-5) — India, Brazil, China, Mexico and South Africa — get together again at a forum other than that of the G-8 so that its own meetings are no longer incidental to the meetings and agenda of the eight most industrialised countries. Welcoming the proposal, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, quoting Jawaharlal Nehru, said that developing countries were partners and not petitioners before the chanceries of the world. The five agreed to instruct their foreign ministers to meet this autumn on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly to "coordinate their positions" on issues of common interest. The idea is not to stop engaging with the G8 but to explore the full range of issues that the G5 can work on itself. ■

## PM's Intervention on Climate Change at Heiligendamm Meeting of G8 plus 5, June 8, 2007

**Madam Chancellor, Dear Colleagues,**

I must thank you for raising this issue, of such significance for us and our future generations. We all have a vested interest in making our planet secure for our children and grandchildren. India's GHG emissions are among the lowest in per-capita terms. Moreover, being only around 4% of the world's emissions, action by us will have a marginal effect on overall emissions. Nonetheless we recognize wholeheartedly our responsibilities as a developing country. We wish to engage constructively and productively with the international community and to add our weight to global efforts to preserve and protect the environment.

We are determined that India's per capita GHG emissions are not going to exceed those of developed countries even while pursuing policies of development and economic growth.

We must work together to find pragmatic, practical solutions, which are for the benefit of entire humankind. These should include mitigation and adaptation strategies with fair burden sharing and measures to realize sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

The process of burden sharing must be fair. It should take into account where the primary responsibility for the present levels of GHG concentration rests and not perpetuate poverty among the developing countries. No strategy should foreclose for them the possibilities of accelerated social and economic development.

The principle of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capability is very important.

The time is not ripe for developing countries to take quantitative targets as these would be counter-productive on their devel-

opment processes.

Adaptation is the key for developing countries. It needs to be adequately resourced without detracting funds meant for development, which, in any case, is the best form of adaptation.

The determination of any particular stabilization goal and the time-frame in which it should be achieved needs to be made at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

This should be preceded by a scientific consensus on impacts at different levels of GHG going beyond the current IPCC findings, which still document many uncertainties.

It is important that critical and promising clean technologies are made affordable for developing countries, where there is large reliance on fossil fuels.

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# Joint Statement by the G-8, G-5 countries in Germany

Today's purposeful discussions between the G8 and Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa mark an important step towards an equal and enduring partnership for building the framework conditions of a globalized and competitive world economy.

In a globalizing world, we have to look beyond national and regional boundaries and work together.

Towards this endeavour, we commit to cooperate in the following fields:

— Promoting Cross Border Investment to our Mutual Benefit:

We recognize that cross-border direct investment is a major factor shaping the world's economy.

Such inflows can make a major positive contribution to economic growth and sustainable development.

We share a common interest in promoting investment and to safeguard and further develop a sound global investment environment.

To this end, we shall work together to promote more favourable conditions in our countries for investment, both domestic and foreign, with the aim of fostering economic growth and sustainable development.

This may also include the encouragement of responsible business conduct.

## Promoting Research and Innovation

Strategies to encourage and support research and innovation are key elements for future sustainable development of our economies.

In this context, we underline the importance of integrating the promotion and protection of innovation in our national policies and legislation.

We encourage a positive exchange of views on international experiences related to the crucial role and economic value of intellectual property rights (IPR) protection and implementation of agreed international IPR protection standards.

In this exchange we also need to consider the protection of IPRs in conjunction with common good of human kind for the purposes of protecting the environment and supporting public health.

In this regard, we recall the Doha Declaration on the TRIPs Agreement and public health.

We affirm our commitment for further cooperation in capacity building, human resource development and public awareness programmes in the field of intellectual property.

## Fighting Climate Change

We face serious challenges in tackling climate change and achieving sustainable development globally.

We reaffirm our commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and to its objective through both mitigation and adaptation in accordance with our common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

On this basis and taking into account the scientific knowledge as represented in the recent IPCC reports, we remain committed to contribute our fair share to tackle climate change in order to stabilize green house gas concentrations at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.

To this end we need a flexible, fair and effective global framework and concerted international action.

We underline the crucial role of economic incentives, in particular by carbon markets, for the necessary investments in climate friendly technologies at large scale.

The adaptation to climate change will be a major challenge for all countries, in particular for developing countries, and means for adaptation need to be included in a future agreement along with enhanced technology cooperation and financing.

We call on all parties to actively and con-

structively participate in the negotiations on a comprehensive agreement at the UNFCCC Conference in Indonesia in December 2007.

## Energy

We recognize the need for closer, more practical and result-oriented regional and international cooperation in the energy sector, especially in ensuring secure and affordable supplies of energy as well as in improving energy efficiency and the access to advanced and affordable energy technologies.

We confirm our commitment to promote energy efficiency, through cost-effective solutions, to advance the effective use of fossil fuels, such as the clean coal technology, and to increase the use of cleaner and renewable energy sources, such as biofuels and biomass, as an important step towards secure, stable and competitive energy supplies for achieving sustainable development.

## Development, particularly in Africa

We reiterate our commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the eradication of poverty and sustainable global development.

In view of our responsibility regarding the challenges of development we shall strengthen cooperation and coordination between us to achieve these goals.

We commit to embark on a high-level dialogue on specific challenges as proposed by the G8 (Heiligendamm Process) as a follow up to continue our discussion in a more structured manner for a period of two years until the G8 Summit in 2009 where we will review the progress made on the following issues:

— Promoting cross border investment to our mutual benefit,

— Promoting Research and Innovation, Development, particularly Africa, and

— Sharing Knowledge for improving Energy Efficiency. ■

## PM's intervention on Climate Change at Heiligendamm Meeting of G8 and G5, June 8, 2007

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The IPR regime should balance rewards for innovators with the common good of humankind.

We also believe that the carbon market has a significant role to play in tackling climate change and that we should spur private sector involvement in climate related tech-

nologies and investment.

The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) has worked well and needs to be expanded to include approvals for programmatic approaches. Enhanced level of GHG abatement commitments by the developed countries would significantly stimulate CDM projects.

Let us leave Heiligendamm determined to continue our exchanges and to invigorate the existing fora where these issues are being negotiated. In the meantime, our representatives could continue informal discussions way to carry forward our dialogue and build on what we believe in common.

**Thank you.** ■

## India offers technical assistance to AAAS

The establishment of an Afghanistan Academy of Agricultural Sciences (AAAS) is one of the cherished goals of Afghan President Hamid Karzai, as a means towards reforming the agricultural research sector in Afghanistan, crippled severely over the long years of conflict and strife.

The genesis of the idea goes back to November last year when President Karzai participated in the Indo-Afghanistan Symposium on "Converting Deserts into Oasis", at the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS), New Delhi, and zeroed in on the strong imperative for strengthening agricultural research in Afghanistan.

Following this, the Indo-Afghan Joint Committee arrived at a conclusion to recommend establishment of a dedicated organisation to strengthen the national agricultural research system in Afghanistan.

The main aim of the proposed organisation will be to cater to the needs of Afghan farm-



(From Left) Dr. S.P Ghosh, Dr. R.K Singh and Prof. M.L Madan gifting books on agriculture to Afghan Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Obaidullah Ramin (second from right).

ers and farming systems in particular, as well as management of natural resources and agriculture sector in general.

The AAAS would be under the patronage of the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock to organise and supervise research institutes within the country.

To take the idea forward, recently a five-member team from NAAS, New Delhi, led by Prof. M.L. Madan, Secretary, NAAS and Vice-Chancellor, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Veterinary University, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, visited Kabul, May 15-22, in connection with the establishment of the AAAS.

The other members were Dr. R.K. Singh, Ex-Director (Research), Nand Education Foundation for Rural Development, Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh, Dr. S.P. Ghosh, Ex-DDG (Horticulture), Indian Council for Agriculture Research and Food and Agriculture Organisation expert, Dr. Farid Waliya, Principal Scientist, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, Hyderabad and Dr. P.S. Pathak, Forestry and Fodder Expert.

During the visit, the delegation had wide-ranging meetings with leadership of Afghan Ministry of Agriculture as well as Ministries of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and Energy and Water.

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## India provides fortified biscuits to 1.4 mn school children

Indian Embassy in Kabul recently organised the high-protein biscuit distribution ceremony at Feroz Nakhshir Boys school and Naswan Girls school in the backward northern province of Samangan in Afghanistan. "Healthy and strong children today will make a healthy and strong Afghanistan tomorrow" was the message projected by Indian Ambassador Rakesh Sood. The ceremony held on June 27 also saw the participation of the Afghan Education Minister Hanif Atmar, affirming the commitment of the Ministry of Education to the school feeding programme, Richard W. Corsino, Country Director, World Food Programme, that administers the programme and Governor of Samangan Abdul Haq Shafaq.

Afghanistan faces a chronic food shortage after long periods of strife, instability and natural disasters. Despite international efforts, a large populace still lives in acute poverty. As part of the post conflict relief and rehabilitation efforts, India has been a major contributor to the WFP's On-site School Feeding Programme. In October, 2001, the Indian Government approved the donation of 1 million tonnes of wheat for Afghanistan, which is then converted into



School girls at Naswan Girls school at Samangan, Afghanistan, with their protein biscuit packets and pencil boxes.

biscuits, fortified with micro-nutrients that boost a child's nutrition, reduce short-term hunger and enhance the ability to concentrate and benefit from the learning imparted. The \$100-million programme is the largest humanitarian assistance programme being undertaken by India in partnership with WFP in the country, with the distribution of 100 gm of high protein biscuits daily to 1.4 million school children (almost a

quarter of the total of 6 million children enrolled in schools country-wide) in the most remote, poverty stricken areas, where enrolment is low. The aim is to prompt parents to send their children to schools, alleviate short-term hunger, improve education and nutritional health of Afghan students as also of reducing the gender gap among school children. (In the last 5 years, the overall ratio of girls at schools has risen from 3 to 6 girls for every 10 boys). Since November 2002, around 57,000 tonnes of biscuits supplied by India have been distributed in four tranches. School kids in 31 provinces and around 210 districts in Afghanistan are beneficiaries of the project. The three excluded provinces are Kabul and Panjsher — which are less vulnerable in terms of food security, as well as Bagdhis — where a separate nutrition programme is being run by a NGO.

At the biscuit distribution ceremony in Feroz Nakhchir Boys school, the 450 school children, teachers and village elders braving the soaring temperature and dust storm, spilled out of the massive colourful tent put up in the school courtyard to witness the ceremony and listen to the dignitaries.

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# Afghanistan takes part in SAFMA meeting at Shimla

**I**t was a heady mix of politicians and media personalities at the two-day meeting of South Asian Free Media Association (SAFMA) Parliamentary Forum at Shimla. At the June 2-3 gathering, a 14-member delegation from Afghanistan with six members of Wolesi Jirga (lower house of Afghan parliament) and eight journalists were in the thick of action in the meeting. Samander, Secretary General of SAFMA-Afghanistan Chapter was quite nostalgic about the trip and elated about the experience. He observed, "For us a visit to India is always memorable. But here is an occasion we could combine business with pleasure by visiting one of most popular summer hill stations in India."

With the formal inauguration of the SAFMA Chapter in Kabul on May 30, the Afghan delegation made their maiden official appearance at the Shimla gathering. Afghanistan media, experiencing a tremendous growth since the fall of the tyrant regime of Taliban, is now formally reaching out to its South Asian media brethren.

The Shimla meet is a build up on the Bhurban Declaration adopted at the end of first meeting of South Asian Parliament meeting held in May, 2005 in Punjab, Pakistan. With the focal theme of 'South Asian Parliament: towards South Asian Unity', the Shimla meeting witnessed participation of a wide spectrum of political personalities and prominent media representatives from all over the South Asian region.

The meeting deliberated on topics from overarching theme of regional cooperation to specific issues like water sharing, South Asian



SAFMA meeting in progress at Shimla.

Human Rights Code, specific policy actions on energy cooperation, cross border cooperation in fighting the menace of terrorism, etc.

Afghan delegates found the proceedings very lively and an exposure to cherish. Noor Akbari, one of the Afghan parliamentarians and a frequent visitor to India, found the meet useful to catch up with some acquaintances and an opportunity to make new acquaintances. For Samander, it was an unusual experience offering the tough challenge of handling media and politics at such a large forum. Halim Fidai, President of SAFMA, Afghanistan Chapter, was very appreciative of India's active support for Afghanistan joining SAARC and the traditionally cordial relations between the two countries.

"SAFMA Afghanistan Chapter, though officially started only last week", a confident Fidai said, "is going to add a new chapter both physically and substantially to SAFMA in particular and SAARC in general. Our participation in the Shimla meet is only a small step in this direction."

## Excerpts from Shimla Declaration of SAFMA

- This is a historic moment when the people of South Asia have become conscious of their new tryst with destiny.
- We urge all our states to simultaneously move forward to address long-standing political disputes through peaceful means.
- A system of connectivity will have to be constructed especially for the railways and the truckers will have to be issued special permits.
- Countering the widespread threat of terrorism, the SAARC countries must implement the current protocol for cooperation against terrorism and bring it in line with the international norms.
- The regional efforts against terrorism must also include measures to combat the spread of small arms and light weapons, narcotics trafficking, smuggling, organized crimes and criminal mafias.
- This will require exchanges and interaction between the national intelligence and security agencies with their counterparts across the border and greater interaction between the armed forces and military establishments in the region.
- To overcome information deficit in the region, it is essential that all restrictions on access to and free and uninterrupted flow of information are removed forthwith. Media persons and products should be allowed free movement across frontiers.

## India offers assistance to AAAS

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Inputs were also sought from international organisations like Food and Agriculture Organisation, International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, International Centre for Potatoes. Sectoral working groups were formed to discuss the overall framework of AAAS in the fields of crop improvement, R&D programmes in agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, livestock, forestry and natural resource management, etc.

The team also undertook site visits to research farms at Badambagh and Binihesar, vegetable farm at Qaragah, key agricultural and animal husbandry cooperatives as well as Afghanistan Academy of Sciences. Based on the deliberations and the outcomes of the meetings and working groups, the Indian team will shortly be submitting its concept plan for AAAS, to be taken up appropriately by the Afghan side.

President Karzai's worthwhile goal for reform in the vital agricultural research sector may, then, not be too far from being realised plurality. ■

## India provides fortified biscuits

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Minister Atmar welcomed the protein biscuit distribution programme led by India, maintaining that the nutrition provided will help in making children more active and boost their overall development. Ambassador Sood reaffirmed India's commitment to continuing the protein biscuit distribution programme as a valuable means towards reviving the crippled education sector in the country. WFP Country Director Corsino, on his part, welcomed the timely arrival of biscuits. The Samangan Governor Shafaq appealed to the community elders to send more and more children to schools to benefit from the programme.

At the Naswan Girls school too, the ambience was hugely uplifting. It was the first time that the school was receiving Ministerial-level dignitaries, and it had pull out all the stops in according an appropriate welcome. Watching the smiling faces of school children, framed against the afternoon sun, it was not hard to figure out why the protein biscuit distribution programme is considered the most visible symbol of partnership between India and Afghanistan. ■



## Irrfan Khan: India's true international star

**T**alent unlimited... that's perhaps the apt way to describe the critically acclaimed Irrfan Khan. He is the first Indian actor to receive 'the much wanted' attention while walking the red carpet with Hollywood celebrities Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt at the recent Cannes Film Festival.

Having regaled Indian audience with his powerful performances in 'Maqbool', 'Yun Hota To Kya Hota' and 'Metro', the actor tried to explore new terrain with directed Michael Winterbottoms' docu-drama 'A Mighty Heart' based on the life of the slain *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl.

If Jolie, who plays Daniel's wife in the film, got rave reviews for her performance, Irrfan too could manage to please all and sundry and the scribes gave him full marks for etching out the role of the head of a Pakistani counter-terrorism unit with perfection.

James Rocchi of cinematical.com wrote in his review: "A special praise has to go to Irrfan Khan. His character is the head of the new Pakistani anti-terrorism unit, and he's a man torn between the public pronouncements of support for the West's initiatives and the labyrinthine power-struggles of his government and massive public support for radical Islamic action. He is the face of a new kind of power in Pakistan, and his every line, every motion has the coiled power of a punch about to land, even in stillness."

Indeed 'A Mighty Heart' is a triumph for this versatile actor.

However, Irrfan is not an unfamiliar name in the global film circuit. In 2001 his 'The Warrior', a historical film made by London-based director Asif Kapadia, stormed into international film festivals and made people take notice of him.

His colleagues feel that Irrfan's grounded personality is the key to his success.

"There is a thing about Irrfan which will



take him to very far in life is his talent and his down to earth nature. No amount of success goes to his head. He is a very grounded person," Anurag Basu, who worked with him in 'Metro', said.

He has one more international project called 'Partition' in his kitty. Directed by Canadian director Vic Sarin, the film stars Jimi Mistry and Neve Campbell.

Recently, Irrfan won accolades for his yet another powerful performance in U.S.-based Indian filmmaker Mira Nair's 'The Namesake', based on Jhumpa Lahiri's best-selling novel.

Next on his wish list is to find a foothold in Bollywood masala films.

"For me it's important to be commercially viable. The distributors should be willing to pay for my space. I still have very limited choice... So what's the point of being known as a good actor when you need to be recognised as commercially saleable? I want a better deal," said Irrfan.

But at the same time, he is looking forward to churn out more milestones like 'Maqbool', 'Warrior', 'Haasil' and 'Namesake'.

He said: "It's been a long journey. But I've a long way to go. I'm happy with life. My wife is writing for Rituparno Ghosh and Bela Bhansali. I've two kids, aged eight and three. I'm enjoying watching them grow. No experience can match that." ■