

India, US discuss climate change, food security

India and the US Thursday held their annual talks to expand cooperation on a wide array of global issues ranging from democracy promotion and countering pandemics to climate change and food security.

The US delegation, led by US Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula J. Dobriansky, discussed with Indian officials led by Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon steps to intensify cooperation across a spectrum of trans-national issues.

This was the sixth meeting of the US-India Global Issues Forum, which was started in October 2002.

"The two delegations engaged in productive discussions to strengthen cooperation on a range of global issues of common concern," said a statement at the end of the day-long talks.

The issues discussed between the two sides included the promotion of democracy and human rights, controlling avian flu, mitigating a future pandemic, accelerating polio eradication, addressing climate change and food security.

Cooperation in disaster management, protecting endangered wildlife and promoting science and technology cooperation also figured in the discussions, said the statement.

Other issues impinging on regional stability like the resurgence of the Taliban-sponsored violence in Afghanistan and the Iranian nuclear programme, suspected of developing atomic weapons, were also discussed, official sources said.

With climate change becoming a prominent theme in global discourse, the two sides also discussed the need for a new post-Kyoto global regime for tackling global warming that will be a key theme at the G-8 summit which Japan will host in the northern island of Hokkaido in July.

Dobriansky discussed issues relating to climate change with Shyam Saran, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's special envoy on climate and the India-US nuclear deal, to bridge differences on this critical issue.

Saran reiterated India's position of collective but differentiated responsibility of developed and developing countries in curbing their greenhouse gas emissions that is affecting global environment.

India has rejected a US proposal, backed by Japan, to replace national limits on carbon-dioxide pollution with targets for individual industries.

"There can't be an imposition of industry-wide norms on a global basis," Saran told business leaders in [Mumbai](#) early this week.

India is opposing the so-called "bottom-up sectoral approach" devised by Japan as it pushes for a successor to the emissions-limiting Kyoto accord, which runs out in 2012.

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