

India aid demand-driven: Mathai

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 15

India's top diplomat has asserted that the country's engagement with partner countries is "demand-driven" and that it "does not attach conditionalities, does not prescribe policies and does not challenge national sovereignty".

The remarks were made by foreign secretary Ranjan Mathai who was addressing a conference in the capital on "South-South Cooperation: Issues and emerging challenges" on Monday.

Among the partner coun-



Ranjan Mathai

tries to whom India provides a substantial amount of financial assistance are neighbours such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bangladesh.

The FS also said that India's engagement with partner countries responds to their developmental priorities.

Mr Mathai also cautioned against developed countries stopping ODA (Official Development Assistance) to their developing counterparts as suggested by the recent communique of the UN Secretary General on the post-2015 development agenda. He further said, "we should reinforce the argument that while South-South cooperation and the voluntary efforts of developing countries such

as India will continue to play an important role, it would be a travesty to project them as the principle new component of a redefined global partnership of the new agenda." The FS also cautioned against replacing North-South cooperation with South-South cooperation. Observing that North-South engagement leads the aid process and should continue to do so, Mr Mathai said it is evident that while South-South cooperation supplements North-South cooperation, the former bloc is not in a position to replace the latter.