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A Journal of Foreign Policy & National Affairs

70 YEARS OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP **INDIA-SWITZERLAND**



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ON 70 YEARS OF BILATERAL FRIENDSHIP

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India-Switzerland A Unique and Long Standing Dynamic Partnership



India and Switzerland have a unique and long standing dynamic partnership fostered by our vibrant democratic traditions, values and common interests.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Treaty of Friendship signed between India and Switzerland in 1948. During the last seven decades, our friendship and engagement have seen a consistent upward trajectory. These decades were marked by growing bilateral engagement in all areas including political, trade and commerce, science and technology, education and research, cultural exchanges as well as people- to people interaction.

Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi was in Switzerland in June 2016 when he met the then Swiss President HE Mr. Johann Schneider-Ammann. Swiss President HE Ms. Doris Leuthard was in New Delhi on a State visit in August 2017 during which both leaders issued a forward looking comprehensive Joint Statement which calls for a 'long standing dynamic partnership'. In January 2018, Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi was in Switzerland to deliver the opening key-note address at the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos. During this visit, he held detailed talks with Swiss President HE Mr. Alain Berset. And in August 2018 the Foreign Minister of Switzerland H.E. Dr. Ignazio Cassis visited New Delhi and the historic city of Varanasi.

Today, India has emerged as the fastest- growing large economy in the world, with a growth rate of nearly 7.5%. It is also emerging as a global hub for manufacturing and innovation. It is moving towards a knowledge- based society, which aims to build a five trillion dollar economy. This will make India the 3rd largest consumer market in the world by 2025. In recent years, India has taken several steps to introduce many far- reaching changes to build infrastructure, reform the business environment and promote education, skills, and economic development. India is witnessing an economic transformation today. India is striving hard to develop an economy driven by smart and sustainable cities, robust farm sector, vibrant manufacturing and dynamic service sector.

And, its engines to run on world class network of rail, roads, airports and digital connectivity. In India's transformational journey, Switzerland and Swiss companies have emerged as natural partners. India's multifaceted business engagement with Switzerland is growing rapidly. The total bilateral trade today is nearly USD 20 billion.



India's Flagship Programmes like Make in India, Smart Cities, Digital India, Swachh Bharat (Clean India), Startup India, Skill India and other initiatives are resonating well in this land of innovation and competitive edge. The Momentum in India- SME Programme (MISSP) that the Embassy of India in Switzerland has initiated has been a success, supporting more and more Swiss companies to engage with India. The engagement between Indian and Swiss companies continues to deepen. Similar is the case in other areas such as culture, movies, yoga, Ayurveda, tourism, cuisine and people to people exchanges.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that one can see an India connect in every corner of Switzerland. Some event related to Indian culture and tradition or business takes place in some part of Switzerland every day. Almost every museum in Switzerland has some India connection. Every year several hundreds and thousands of Indians travel to Switzerland to appreciate the beautiful landscapes of Switzerland. Each year several thousands of Swiss nationals travel to India for tourism and business.

Switzerland today is a household name in India. Thanks to Bollywood which spent considerable time shooting in Switzerland and continues to maintain its Alps connection. On the other hand, in Switzerland, Yoga and Ayurveda are household names. Yoga is celebrated in every village and town in Switzerland. Switzerland is among the pioneer countries in Europe which provided a legal framework for Ayurveda. Nearly half a million Indian tourists visit Alps every year. The number of Swiss tourists visiting India is also on the rise. The link between Himalayas and Alps continues to grow steadily.

Indian diaspora has branched out all over the world today. Well assimilated, wherever they are, they have produced successful entrepreneurs, beloved educationists, stars in every profession and good civic minded citizens. This diaspora is now nurturing a second and third generation that will surely outshine its parents, cherishing the fine traditions of India. Many of this diaspora is contributing to wards bringing the peoples of their host country and India closer.

In Switzerland, we have a vibrant Indian diaspora of around 25000 which serves as an important link deepening the engagement between the Himalayas and the Alps. The Indian community in Switzerland is well integrated and holds key positions in various companies as well as universities contributing to the progress of Switzerland.

We are all set to celebrate a Festival of India in several cities in Switzerland – 'Connecting Himalayas with Alps'. We have a variety of artists from India set to perform during September to December 2018. We are set to celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Switzerland. I invite all Indians and Friends of India to join hands with us to celebrate India in Switzerland and to promote India – Swiss cooperation at all levels.

H.E Mr. Sibi George
Ambassador of India to Switzerland,
The Holy See and Liechtenstein

Swiss-Indian Bilateral Relations and 70 Years of Friendship: Connecting Minds – Inspiring the Future



Dear readers,

As we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Swiss-Indian Treaty of Friendship, one of the first such treaties signed by independent India, we have many significant milestones to look back to and a well-founded confidence about our future together.

Switzerland and India share close and dynamic relations rooted in common democratic values. India is one of Switzerland's key partners in Asia. The close relationship is reflected in a large number of agreements and treaties, and in frequent high-ranking diplomatic visits between the two countries. In addition to Presidential and ministerial visits, the two countries hold yearly political and thematic consultations and dialogues. Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi travelled to Switzerland on an official visit in June 2016 and on a working visit in January 2018. Also, Swiss President Mrs. Doris Leuthard paid a State visit to India in August/September 2017. Switzerland and India have been regularly conducting foreign office consultations since 2005. Since 2012, the two countries have also been involved in a dialogue on migration and consular matters.

On the economic front, in the last few decades, a remarkable number of 250 Swiss companies, in the fields of engineering, manufacturing, distribution and services, have been steadily enlarging their presence in India. According to the cumulative FDI data compiled by the Indian Ministry of Finance for the period between April 2000 to March 2017, Switzerland stood as the 11th largest investor in India. India, on the other hand, is Switzerland's third largest trading partner in Asia, and its first in South Asia. India, one of the fastest growing emerging economies, offers a plethora of business opportunities for Swiss companies. Without doubt, Swiss companies, with their innovative mind-set and future oriented vision, will continue venturing into India.

Switzerland is considered favourably by many global multinationals as it has not only showed resilience through Europe's challenging economic conditions of the recent past, but has also consistently maintained a top position on many global league tables. In the context of a continuously changing business environment, a key element for Switzerland's success has been its emphasis on developing and ensuring an economic infrastructure that encourages R&D and innovation. The Swiss Business Hub India (SBHI) was set-up in 2001 in the Swiss Consulate in Mumbai and in the Swiss Embassy in New Delhi. The SBHI represents Switzerland Global Enterprise (S-GE), the official export and investment agency of the Swiss Government, mandated by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO. Because of its official status, the SBHI is well-placed to support Swiss companies in expanding and strengthening their business activities in India and to inform Indian companies about the advantages of Switzerland as a business location. S-GE and the SBHI together with regional/Cantonal representatives promote Switzerland as a competitive business location and facilitate investments of Indian companies who are in the process of considering investment in Switzerland. Today, I am happy to say that we have approximately 140 Indian companies that are present in Switzerland, especially in the field of ICT, biotech and life sciences.

Switzerland lays great emphasis towards proactively evolving its economic and political systems to remain a competitive contender for global companies. One indication that this effort has yielded results is that for eight consecutive years Switzerland has been ranked as the most competitive economy globally. Not just that, Switzerland is also one of the global leaders in the field of science, technology and innovation. The synergies between top global technical universities, such as ETH Zurich and EPF Lausanne, and the favourable R&D environment in Switzerland, combined with public-private partnerships, are key to Switzerland's innovation ecosystem. Switzerland's innovative landscape is represented abroad, among others, through its global network of swissnex offices, one of which is located in Bangalore, the startup capital of India.

swissnex India facilitates collaborations between Swiss and Indian institutions of higher education and research and acts as an information hub on developments in the science, innovation & education landscape in India and Switzerland. swissnex India also brings exciting projects combining science and arts into the spotlight and provides a lively platform of showcasing creativity in all art forms. Between 2013 and 2017, it has coached and facilitated over 350 deep science and hi-tech Swiss startups and researchers to validate and enter the Indian market, of which 42 startups are conducting business with India.

Besides trade, investments and research cooperation, let me briefly highlight a recent achievement of high importance in the financial field. On 21st December 2017, Switzerland and India signed a Mutual Agreement related to the introduction of the automatic exchange of information (AEOI) in tax matters, on a reciprocal basis. It is implemented as of 1st January 2018, with a first exchange of data in autumn 2019.

Further, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has been supporting development programs in India since 1958. Classical bilateral development cooperation was phased out a few years back, but SDC remains active in India with projects in the area of climate change adaptation planning, scientific cooperation on Himalayan ecosystems, low carbon and climate resilient urban development, micro-insurance, renewable energy policy analysis, enhancing energy efficiency of buildings, research on low carbon cement, promoting solar power generation as an alternative livelihood for farmers, etc. They are aimed at supporting India's climate-compatible development.

The projects are contributing towards the implementation of the Government of India's flagship national missions such as the National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem, the national programme on Energy Efficiency in Buildings, implementation of the State Action Plans on Climate Change and contribution towards the Smart City mission and other national programmes on rejuvenation of urban infrastructure in selected cities.

Speaking of people to people contact, Switzerland is a much preferred destination for many Indians. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that India is one of the most important markets of overseas tourists to Switzerland. With the efforts of the Switzerland Tourism office in India, arrivals from India have been growing steadily for many years, with approximately 739'185 overnights spent by Indians in Switzerland during 2017.

I conclude by inviting you to join us in celebrating 70 Years of the Swiss-Indian Friendship Treaty, which will see continued exchanges and conversations this year under the tag of 'Connecting Minds - Inspiring the Future'.

Dr. Andreas Baum
Ambassador of Switzerland to India and Bhutan

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Publisher's Note

Celebrating the 70th year of the Treaty of Friendship that was signed between India and Switzerland in August, 1948 and a strong, multi-faceted partnership that has only improved over the years, it's an honour and a privilege for me to present this special publication on India-Switzerland relations.



India and Switzerland have long shared a special bond, a connection forged not only by ever-increasing trade and the significant cooperation in areas of Science & Tech between our countries but, also by the many films and cultural exchanges that have brought Indians and the Swiss closer.

Today, extensive and growing trade ties have allowed the economic partnership between India and Switzerland to become stronger than ever. Similarly, the ties between the countries in science & technology and ICT have precipitated a growing cooperation in fields such as vocational training and higher education.

The strategic significance of this relationship was highlighted by the visits of Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in early 2018 and the President of the Swiss Federation H.E Doris Leuthard's visit in 2017 to Switzerland and India respectively. These bilateral visits plus regular sessions of the Indo-Swiss Joint Economic Commission and periodical dialogues on issues such as science and vocational education have further strengthened these ties.

We are deeply obliged to the Ambassador of India to Switzerland, H.E Mr. Sibi George, for giving us an exclusive interview and message, where he shared his views on the multi-faceted aspects of Indo-Swiss partnership.

We are also grateful to H.E. Dr. Andreas Baum, Ambassador of Switzerland to India and Bhutan for sharing with us a very insightful message on India-Switzerland friendship.

On behalf of our entire team, I convey my sincerest gratitude to all contributors for their valuable input to Diplomacy & Beyond Plus.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Surya Prakash'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Surya Prakash
Publisher

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Ambassador of India to Switzerland



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INDIAN DIASPORA IN SWITZERLAND
India and Switzerland have always had friendly
relations and both share some commonalities and
as stated by PM Modi, "India and Switzerland have
both been voices of peace, understanding and
humanitarian values in the world".

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In an interview with Diplomacy and Beyond Plus

H.E. MR SIBI GEORGE

Ambassador of India to Switzerland

Excellency, India and Switzerland are celebrating 70 years of bilateral ties this year. How do you view the relationship between the two countries so far?

India and Switzerland have a long standing dynamic partnership. Switzerland was the first country with which India signed the Treaty of Friendship in 1948. Our bilateral relationship is underpinned by our common values such as democracy and pluralism. The relationship has gained tremendous momentum in the last two years subsequent to the visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Geneva in June 2016. It was followed by the State Visit of the Swiss President H.E. Ms. Doris Leuthard to India in August – September 2017. Prime Minister Modi again visited Switzerland in January this year. He met the Swiss President H.E. Mr. Alain Berset in Davos and also

gave the keynote address at the Plenary of the 48th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum. Last month, Swiss Foreign Minister, Dr. Ignazio Cassis was in India on an official visit. I can firmly say that the India-Switzerland relationship is at its highest peak ever.

Switzerland is India's 7th largest trading partner. According to figures for 2017-18 given by Federal Council and Customs Administration of Switzerland, bilateral trade between India and Switzerland stood at USD \$21 billion. What can be done to further enhance trade between India and Switzerland?

Switzerland is India's second largest trading partner in Europe, just behind Germany. Switzerland is also the largest export sourcing country in Europe for India. Though, I should

mention that a large part of the India-Switzerland trade is in precious metals. India and EFTA countries (including Switzerland) have been negotiating the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement for a decade now. The need of the hour is to expedite the negotiations and conclude them. I am hopeful that signing of the India-EFTA TEPA would give a major fillip to our bilateral commercial relations.

Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been the first Indian PM to make a bilateral visit to Switzerland. He also gave the keynote speech at the WEF's meet this year. How significant, do you think is this visit in strengthening of ties between India and Switzerland?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Switzerland this year was a historic visit. During the meeting with the Swiss President H.E. Mr. Alain Berset, the entire gamut of India-Switzerland bilateral relationship was discussed and reviewed. Prime Minister Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to make the inaugural address at the World Economic Forum. The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has added a lot of content and provided a detailed agenda for the relationship.

The Indian Diaspora, currently, has a very thriving community in Switzerland. How have they been an influence on the Swiss government's administration and policy politics?

The Indian diaspora in Switzerland is well respected. It includes professionals, students and also individuals active in the field of politics. There are around 25,000 Indians and Indian origin persons in Switzerland. Earlier this year, Mr. Niklaus S. Gugger, first Indian origin Member of Swiss Parliament and Mr. Jean P. Pinto, Mayor, Volketswil participated in the first PIO- Parliamentary Conference in January 2018. I am happy to note that the Embassy of India in Berne and the Swiss Embassy, New Delhi jointly organized an event in April 2018 to celebrate the contribution of Indian diaspora to Switzerland.

India and Switzerland have a very historical relation when it comes to cultural exchanges, particularly in the spheres of architecture, art, literature, dance, and visual arts. How do both countries plan on further enhancing ties in this sector?

In order to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of India-Switzerland Treaty of Friendship, the Embassy of India, Berne is organizing Festival of India all around Switzerland from September – December 2018. The Festival will be a bouquet

of classical and folk Indian dances and music. I invite all the readers of this magazine to come and enjoy the various Festival of India performances. In addition, this Embassy has organized cultural event together with the prestigious Museum Reitberg in Zurich. The Embassy has also created the Indian Cultural Network which brings together various cultural stakeholders in Switzerland, including the various Indian Associations in Switzerland. Under the umbrella of the Indian Cultural Network, we have organized a book reading event of books written by Indian origin women authors.

What is your message for the readers of Diplomacy and Beyond Plus?

The India-Switzerland relationship is full of potentialities. The recent high level interactions have brought in momentum in the relationship. However, we need to keep working to broaden and deepen the various aspects of bilateral relations. Let us all work together in expanding the horizons of the India-Switzerland relationship. For the Indian and Indian-origin readers, I should emphasise that the Indian Embassy in Berne is a 'Home Away from Home' for them.

The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has added a lot of content and provided a detailed agenda for the relationship



INDIA'S HISTORICAL TIES WITH SWITZERLAND

BY VANYA LOCHAN

Member of Swiss Federal Council, Doris Leuthard writes, "Switzerland's swift recognition of India's independence in 1947, the prompt adoption of diplomatic contacts, and the conclusion of the Treaty of Friendship in 1948, laid the foundations for good relations between our two countries that continue to this day."



The Treaty of Friendship

The Embassy of India, too, maintains that, "India and Switzerland have had cordial and friendly relations since India's Independence, based on shared values of democracy and rule of law." With India and Switzerland celebrating 70 years of establishment of bilateral relations this year, it is important to reflect upon the context in which the Treaty was initiated, the policies and subjects that bring the two countries together, and the paths this friendship could potentially take in the context of the changing global power order.

The Treaty of Friendship was proposed by Jawaharlal Nehru as a sign of his appreciation for Switzerland speaking of 'perpetual peace' and 'unalterable friendship'. The Indo-Swiss Treaty, ringing very closely of the tenets of Nehru's *Panchsheel*, can be arguably placed in the long line of events that led to the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1956,

less than a decade after the Treaty was signed. The Treaty of Friendship led to the establishment of missions in Berne and Delhi and Consulate Generals in Bengaluru, Mumbai and Geneva; and over the course of time, this Treaty became the cornerstone of Swiss-India cooperation and friendship. Traditionally, Switzerland has maintained diplomatic relations with almost all countries and has historically served as an intermediary between other states. For instance, from 1971 to 1976, during and after Bangladesh's struggle for Independence, Switzerland represented India's interests to Pakistan and vice versa.

Regular diplomatic high-level visits and bilateral institutional arrangements have also functioned as confidence building measures and have enabled discussions on issues like their respective bids for the non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council, support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers



Photo : Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Doris Leuthard, President of the Swiss Confederation at Hyderabad House in New Delhi (August 31, 2017)

Group (NSG), the need for cooperation to bring tax offenders to justice, conclusion of an agreement on the automatic exchange of information on tax matters, cooperation in skill development and sports, etc. In addition to regular high-level interactions, Switzerland and India have maintained yearly political and thematic consultations and dialogues. Following the State visit of Swiss President Mrs. Micheline Calmy Rey to India in November 2007, Indian President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil visited Switzerland in September 2011. Swiss President Ms. Doris Leuthard visited India in August-September 2017, and Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited Switzerland in June 2016 and January 2018.

Swiss Foreign Minister, Mr. Ignazio Cassis also visited India in August 2018 and met with India's Foreign Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj.



Photo : Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Johann Schneider-Ammann, President of the Swiss Confederation in Geneva (June 06, 2016)

Bilateral Initiatives between the Two

The Joint Statement issued during the visit of the Swiss President in 2017 noted India-Switzerland relations as 'A Long Standing Dynamic Partnership'. Besides these visits, bilateral institutional arrangements such as The Indo-Swiss Joint Economic Commission (1959), Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) (January 1996), The Indo-Swiss Joint Committee on S&T (2011), and other dialogue mechanisms like India-Switzerland Financial Dialogue have also facilitated cooperation between the nations.

Over the course of 70 years however, Switzerland and India, owing to the bilateral visits and agreements, have also enabled each other's development on various fronts such as those of economy, technology, tourism, culture, etc. It can be observed that trade and economy occupy the central position in their diplomatic relationship. Commercial contacts between India and Switzerland date back to the early 19th century when in 1851 the Volkart Trading Co. established its offices in Basel and Mumbai.





A decade ago, the 60th anniversary of the Friendship Treaty was commemorated by launching a pilot project called the Swiss Vocational Education and Training Initiative India (SVETII).

Article 3 to 6 of the Treaty of Friendship between the countries, secured a mutual “most favoured foreign nation’ treatment”. As provided by the Treaty itself, it has set the pace for further treaties like Double Taxation Treaty signed in November 1994, followed by the Amendment Protocol in 2010, and Promotion and Protection of Investment Treaty in July 1997. Switzerland celebrated the centenary of setting up the Mumbai Swiss Consulate on 17th of July 2015, which had been opened to help Swiss cotton traders and protect their business interests. The celebrations also coincided with 75 years of the Swiss Business Hub in Mumbai.

It can be posited that there is a pattern in which stress is being laid upon particular



sectors that align with PM Modi’s ‘Make in India’ and ‘Digital India’ campaigns, that are designed to help foreign companies to set up shop and make the country a manufacturing powerhouse. A decade ago, the 60th anniversary of the Friendship Treaty was commemorated by launching a pilot project called the Swiss Vocational Education and Training Initiative India (SVETII). With India’s fast-paced development in the fields of economy, technology, and skill-development, and its replacing China as the ‘top FDI destination’, it is increasingly becoming a hotspot for investment and international trade. Switzerland is India’s 7th largest trading partner with the total bilateral trade including merchandise exports, bullion and IT services and software exports, amounting to USD 20 billion in 2017-18 .

Switzerland and India have also been actively engaging in discussions surrounding education, sports, science,



and other global social issues. Under the Indo–Swiss Joint Research Program, an MoU on cooperation in the social sciences was signed in 2012, and was implemented by the University of Lausanne on the Swiss side and the Indian Council of Social Science Research on the Indian side. Indo–Swiss scientific relations have been strong since 1966 and under the same program, an agreement for scientific and technological cooperation was signed in 2003.

Switzerland has also featured as a dominant tourist location in the imagination of Indians, a great deal of the credit definitely going to Bollywood. The recent appointment of actor Ranveer Singh as the Indian Ambassador for Swiss tourism is also supposed to feed the imagination and boost Swiss tourism. Diplomatic and Ministerial visits have also focused on youth affairs and sports.

India and Switzerland, owing to the fact

that both share the same priorities, are also working towards improving energy efficiency and expanding the utility of renewable energy.

The Ups and Downs

Doris Leuthard writes that, “With globalisation and digitalisation, it seems that the distance between India and Europe is shrinking. Today, the aim is to further deepen that cooperation and to take a determined approach to addressing global challenges for the benefit of both our countries.”

With the increasingly changing global power order, new challenges and new power dynamics are emerging. India itself has come a very long way from its Nehruvian ideals and policies that had marked the 1948 Treaty of Friendship. However, this is not to say that diplomatic friendship between Switzerland and India has not been sturdy enough to face the hurdles. In fact, considering the ways in which the two countries are trying to support each other’s immediate and long-standing goals, it can be argued that this friendship has been able to sustain 70 long years precisely because it has kept evolving with time.

It can, therefore, be said that the relationship that was established on shared ideals and vision has metamorphosed into a relationship that has evolved with time, into one that focuses on shared immediate and long-term commercial, diplomatic and cultural interests. In context of the changing global power order, it can be expected that the two countries will be able to keep their friendship dynamic, and will be able to keep evolving and benefiting each other.

Switzerland has also featured as a dominant tourist location in the imagination of Indians, a great deal of the credit definitely going to Bollywood



Let's write the future on a history of shared innovation.

For more than 70 years, India and Switzerland have come together in an international relationship built on unleashing opportunity through innovation. ABB is proud to be a partner in this alliance, committed to powering India's growth with reliable, sustainable energy. Today, we look forward to the next 70 years. **Let's write the future. Together.**



ABB



Photo : Prime Minister meets Alain Berset, President of the Swiss Confederation and Professor Klaus Schwab, Chairman of the World Economic Forum in Davos (January 23, 2018)

Indo–Swiss relations are founded on the signing of various bilateral agreements in various fields of trade, development, cooperation, education, and vocational training, air traffic and cooperation in science and technology



70 YEARS OF BILATERAL VISITS AND BUILDING BRIDGES

BY JASON WAHLANG

India is one of Switzerland's main partners. High-level visits and yearly political and thematic consultations and dialogues form the basis of this relationship.

Since the Year 1948

India and Switzerland have shared a long and cordial relationship since the independence of India; based on common values of democracy, multiculturalism, and rule of law. The traditional Swiss policy of neutrality and India's non-alignment policy have built a bridge for a close understanding between the two nations.

The start of relations between the two nations began in the year 1948 when the two nations signed a Treaty of Friendship on August 14th. This was one of independent India's first Treaties of Friendship. The two nations have established diplomatic missions in Berne and Delhi. Switzerland has also established Consulate Generals in Mumbai and Bengaluru, while India has established a Consulate General in Geneva. Switzerland has also established Honorary Consuls in Kolkata and Chennai, a Swiss Business Hub in Mumbai, and a Swissnex office in Bengaluru.

A number of bilateral agreements have been signed between India and Switzerland deepening the relations further. These agreements have been signed in various fields including education, air traffic,

railways, science and technology etc. The two nations have provided support to one another over various issues, including in multilateral forums. Between the years 1971 to 1976, Switzerland represented India's interests in Pakistan, including during the period of Bangladesh's struggle for independence.

High-Level Visits

Regular high-level meetings provide an opportunity for a complete review of the relationship. The bilateral relations have immensely intensified in the last few years with interactions taking place at the highest level. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has met Swiss Presidents Alain Berset (January 2018 in Davos, Switzerland), Doris Leuthard (August 2017 in New Delhi) and Johannes N. Schenider-Ammann (June 2016 in Geneva) in the last 2 years. The visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Geneva in June 2016 was the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime minister in several decades; this visit not only was historic in nature, but also restarted the trend of visits by high level officials between the two countries. Prime Minister Shri Modi's January 2018 visit was also historic as he became the first Indian Prime Minister to



The Indo-Swiss Joint Economic Commission, was established in 1959 to improve the economic and commercial relations between the two nations

Photo : Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the President of the Swiss Confederation, Mr. Johann Schneider-Ammann, in Geneva on June 06, 2016

deliver keynote address at the Plenary of the Annual Meeting of World Economic Forum.

The previous notable visits include the first major visit from the Swiss side that took place in the year 1998 with then Swiss President Mr. Flavio Cotti coming to India. President of the Swiss Confederation Mr. Pascal Couchepin paid a State visit to India in the year 2003. Another important visit from the Swiss side was in the year 2007 with the Swiss President Mrs. Micheline Calmy-Rey visiting India.

From the Indian side, there has been reciprocity in the high level visits with the first State visit made by President Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam in May 2005. This visit was followed by the visit of President Smt. Pratibha Patil visiting Switzerland in 2011 in the month of September.

There have been bilateral Ministerial exchanges on regular occasions between the two nations with various protocols being signed during these visits. Minister of Health and Family Welfare Shri J.P. Nadda visited Switzerland in June 2018. Minister of State (I/C) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy visited Switzerland in June 2016 during which a Memorandum of Understanding

on Cooperation in the field on Skill Development as well as Vocational and Professional Education and Training was signed. A Parliamentary Delegation from Maharashtra visited Switzerland in February 2018 and April 2018. Previous notable Ministerial visits from the Swiss side include in the year 2010, when the Swiss Foreign Minister Calmy-Rey was visiting India, and signed the protocol to revise the Double Taxation Agreement. The agreement came into force the following year on 7th October 2011.

Joint Dialogues and Initiatives

The Indo-Swiss Joint Economic Commission, one of the main components of Indo-Swiss relations, was established in 1959 to improve the economic and commercial relations between the two nations. The latest session was held in 2018 and was co-chaired by JS (Europe), Department of Commerce Ms. Anita Praveen and Head of Bilateral Economic Relations, State Secretariat of Economic Affairs Amb. Mrs. Livia Leu Agosti.

Another step towards bilateral relations between the two nations was the Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) which was

established in the year 1996. The first round of the FOC took place in the year 2000 at the level of secretaries. Since this period there have been nine rounds of consultations held in the capital cities of both the nations. The last and tenth round of FOC was held in New Delhi on 5th December 2017 at the Secretary-Level.

Another important initiative taken up by the two nations has been the Indo-Swiss Joint Committee on Science and Technology. The initiative has been a byproduct of the former bilateral framework agreement signed between India and Switzerland in 2003, which was based on the cooperation in the field of science and technology. Under this initiative, there have been 55 research projects and regular exchange programs. The main focus of the work is on reciprocity, parity, and active mutual funding. The first meeting of the commission was held in 2011 in the Swiss capital of Berne. The latest [4th] meeting of the Joint Committee was held on 21 November 2017 in New Delhi. In the field of vocational education and training, the 1st meeting of the Indo-Swiss Joint Working Group on Vocational Education and Training was held in New Delhi on 21st April, 2017.

To further improve interaction, a Consular dialogue was held in the year 2012, in order to have discussions on consular and legal matters. The 4th meeting of the dialogue took place in New Delhi on 11th May 2018.

The 1st round of the Financial Dialogue was held in Berne on 6th July 2012. The latest round was held on 15th June 2016 in India.

For Each Other's Progress

The visit of Honorable Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi in 2016 was historical as he became the first Indian Prime Minister to visit the country in decades, leading to further improvement of relations between India and Switzerland. PM was accompanied by a high powered delegation and had a packed program which included highly productive bilateral meeting with the then Swiss President Mr. Johann N.



Schneider-Amman; a Business Round Table with Switzerland's top companies; and a meeting with Indian research scholars based at CERN.

President of the Swiss Confederation His Excellency Mrs. Doris Leuthard paid a State Visit to India from 30 August-02 September 2017, accompanied by the Swiss State Secretary for Economic Affairs, State Secretary for International Financial matter, amongst others and a 33-member high-level business delegation of CEOs and Senior Executives of leading Swiss companies. A comprehensive Joint Statement was issued during the visit.

In 2018, India and Switzerland, are celebrating 70 years of establishment of bilateral relations. Both the nations have shared a strong relationship with the main focus being the need to bring about peace and cooperation and economic profit for both countries. It is important for India and Switzerland to not only maintain but constantly work towards developing this bilateral relationship as both nations hold importance for one another's progress and their future on international platforms. Their future together seems fruitful and bright, with new initiatives gaining pace and further improving relations.

Photo : Prime Minister meets Alain Berset, President of the Swiss Confederation in Davos, Switzerland (January 22, 2018)



THE UPWARD TRAJECTORY OF **INDO-SWISS ECONOMY**

BY SAHIL MEHRA

Switzerland and India, 70 years ago, embarked upon the path of diplomatic relations, established by the signing of the Treaty of Friendship in August 1948.

Since then, the dynamic partnership between Switzerland and India has embraced cooperation in several areas including economy, science, education, and culture. In addition to ad hoc presidential and ministerial visits, Switzerland and India maintain annual political and thematic consultations and dialogues.

Following the State visit of then Swiss President Mrs. Micheline Calmy Rey to India in November 2007, former Indian President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil visited Switzerland in September 2011. Swiss President Ms. Doris Leuthard visited India in August-September 2018. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Switzerland in June 2016 and January 2018. The European Free Trade Association and India have been negotiating their Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) since 2008. The 15th round of negotiations took place from January 11-13, 2017, in New Delhi.

The Import-Export Balance

The Indo-Swiss relationship has not only bourgeoned but has also reached new heights in recent years. Switzerland is

the seventh largest trading partner for India. India is a priority country for Swiss foreign economic policy as can be ascertained from the following statement by Mr. Flavio Cotti on the eve of the first-ever official visit to India by any Swiss President in 1998—“We consider India one of the most important strategic countries in the world ... India is potentially the most important market in the world”. Since then economic ties between the two nations have grown exponentially. Where, the total bilateral trade stood at USD 3,261 million in 1997, after a steady rise, it reached a peak of USD 35,854 million in 2011-12. However, since then, the total trade has come down. It decreased to USD 20,276 million in 2015-16 and was only USD 18,227 million in 2016-17 and became USD 20,006 million in 2017-18. Swiss exports to India have declined in recent years due to adverse currency rate movements and slowdown in Indian economy. Looking at the long-term trend of imports from Switzerland, we observe that after 2003, imports increased from USD 5 billion in 2005 to a peak of USD 30 billion in 2010 and were stationed at USD 15 billion in 2017. Similarly, for exports



Mr. Flavio Cotti on the eve of the first-ever official visit to India by any Swiss President in 1998—"We consider India one of the most important strategic countries in the world ... India is potentially the most important market in the world"

Exports to Switzerland

Organic Chemicals	38%
Pearls, precious metals stones, coins	15%
Machinery, nuclear reactors, boilers	5.8%
Articles of apparel, knit	4.2%
Electrical, Electronic Equipment	3.3%
Inorganic Chemicals	3.2%
Optical, technical, medical apparatus	2.4%
Clocks & Watches	2.1%

Imports from Switzerland

Pearls, precious stones, coins	92%
Machinery, nuclear reactors, boilers	1.9%
Optical, technical, medical apparatus	1.1%
Electrical, Electronic Equipment	0.8%
Organic Chemicals	0.8%
Pharmaceutical Products	0.65%
Tanning, dyeing, pigments etc.	0.65%
Clocks & Watches	0.65%

to Switzerland, we observe a more or less rising trend with little fluctuation around the trend. From USD 500 million in 2005, the value of exports reached a peak of USD 1800 million in 2013 and, was valued at USD 673 million during 2017.

As can be observed, India's import basket from Switzerland is significantly skewed towards pearls, precious stones, metals and coins, accounting for USD 14 billion in value and 92% of total imports from Switzerland. Gold unwrought or in semi-manufactured forms, or in powder form comprises 99.5% of this category. It is interesting to note that before 1989, this category of commodities comprised a very negligible quantity and value; however, there was a sudden spurt in its imports after 1997 and again after 2004, where the imports increased from USD 5 billion in value to a peak of USD 29 billion in 2011. Also, in 2003 the category of machinery, instruments, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, together accounted for roughly 81% of the import basket, we see an apparent shift of Indian demand away from capital goods towards consumer goods. However, it can also be argued that pearls, gold etc. are imported as intermediate commodities to be used in further production process, which, in turn, is used for export. Another argument can be extended that such huge imports of precious metals might have undertones of black money leaving the domestic economy. Juxtaposing it against the export of precious metals, which constitute 15% of total exports to Switzerland; we observe that 90% of the category consists of export of diamonds. Further, India's major exports to Switzerland consist of organic chemicals, which account for 38% of the total exports and USD 258 million in value. Other export commodities like apparels, machinery, and electronic equipment form only a small portion of the total export basket.



India is the largest provider of generic drugs globally. The industry supplies over 50% of global demand for various vaccines, 40% of generic demand in the U.S. and 25% of all medicine in UK

Indo-Swiss Investments

Overall, India maintains a negative balance of trade with Switzerland. Though the official sentiment is positive, it is not the bilateral trade that matters, rather, the overall foreign trade of a country that matters for balance of trade. However, India's overall negative balance of trade is flagrantly obvious. The main culprit is of course crude oil and petroleum products, and recent trade and geopolitical wars have only increased the crude oil prices for the world, which, in turn is going to have a negative impact on India's balance of trade.

India should try to focus on improving its exports to Switzerland. India's IT and telecommunication industry

offers a huge potential to strengthen the bilateral trade. India is the leading sourcing destination accounting for approximately 55% market share of the USD 185-190 billion global services sourcing business in 2017-18. Similarly, India's pharmaceutical Industry also serves a prospective source. India is the largest provider of generic drugs globally. The industry supplies over 50% of global demand for various vaccines, 40% of generic demand in the U.S. and 25% of all medicine in UK.

Apart from trade in commodities, Indo-Swiss bilateral investment forms a fundamental aspect of their relationship. Historically, we can observe the presence of Swiss companies in India, for the likes



India's predicament on the front of education and research highlights immense possibility of improvement, and it is on this front that India can really benefit from the bilateral relationship

of Nestle and ABB, have had their business roots in India from much before independence. Moreover, Volkart Trading Company opened its branches in Basel and Mumbai in 1851, which later became the backbone of Switzerland's economic and consular presence in India.

More recently, i.e. from April 2000 to March 2018, Switzerland invested FDI equity worth approximately USD 4.31 billion in India thus becoming the 11th largest investor and accounting for about 1.14% of total FDI in India during this period. As a large part of

FDI in India, is routed through third countries, actual Swiss FDI in India is much higher, with overall Swiss investment inflows into India pegged at about USD 7.71 billion during 2005–2016 as per Swiss National Bank (SNB).

More than 250 Swiss companies have a presence in India through their own subsidiaries and joint ventures. Many Swiss companies have been increasingly outsourcing their work to Indian companies and many have entered business partnerships. Overseas Direct Investment from India to Switzerland for the duration

from April 2014–December 2017 was USD 1.72 billion placing it at seventh position. Major Indian IT companies including TCS, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, etc. have their offices in Switzerland and provide services to major Swiss pharmaceutical companies, banks, and insurance firms. Most of the Swiss multinational companies like Novartis, Roche UBS and Credit Suisse etc. have their operations in India.

Education and Climate

India's predicament on the front of education and research highlights immense possibility of improvement, and it is on this front that India can really benefit from the bilateral relationship. An important venture in this regard is Swissnex India, established in Bangalore in 2010, which connects Switzerland and India in the fields of science, education, art and innovation. The activities of Swissnex India are focused on four main pillars: academic relations, entrepreneurship, innovation, and the intersection between the arts and science.

Another crucial aspect where the bilateral relationship can be consequential is formulating a strategy to tackle the problem of climate change. Unpredictable monsoon rains and the melting of glaciers in the Himalayas will have an impact on the lives of millions of people in India. The glaciers are receding in Switzerland too, which has an influence on water management and energy production. As part of its Energy Strategy 2050, Switzerland has decided to take steps to improve energy efficiency and boost the share of renewable energies in the energy mix. A step towards the same is CapaCITIES, where Switzerland is helping municipal authorities in India to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. India is a developing nation and soon its development strategy is going to be affected by climate change.

Swiss-Indian Chamber of Commerce

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SWISS-INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Carina Steiner Langeneke Executive
Director, SICC Switzerland

Dear Readers

Switzerland and India share close and dynamic relations rooted in common democratic values.

India is one of Switzerland's key partners in Asia. This year, Switzerland and India are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Swiss-Indian Treaty of Friendship, signed on 14th August 1948. This was one of the first such treaties signed by independent India and an important milestone in Swiss-Indian relations.

India is a country of high importance for the Swiss economy. India is Switzerland's fourth largest trading partner in Asia, and its first in South Asia. India, one of the fastest growing emerging economies, offers a plethora of business opportunities for Swiss companies.

According to Swiss foreign trade statistics (provisional data) Swiss exports to India in 2017 amounted to CHF 19.511 Mrd. (+36.2%), while Swiss imports from India in 2017 amounted to CHF 1.618 Mrd. (+9.4%).

Switzerland is the 11th largest investor in India. Swiss companies made investments worth CHF 4'614 billion (US\$ 4.61 billion) in India between 2000 and 2016. Swiss companies have created up to 100,000 jobs in India so far. Over the last years, the number of Swiss companies active in India has further increased, with currently around 250 subsidiaries, joint ventures, branches or liaison offices present.

As Executive Director of the Swiss-Indian Chamber of Commerce (SICC), it gives me great pride that our chamber has been active for more than 30 years in the field of supporting and facilitating the development of the economic exchange and the business relationship between the two countries. With offices in Zurich, Switzerland and India, Mumbai we have two engaged teams on the ground as well as a very well connected Board, SICC is the ideal partner to support you in building up or developing your business in India or Switzerland.

Our chamber is rich in a diversity of businesses and our networking events and platforms for member engagement reflect that. SICC runs more than 40 events in India and Switzerland per year focusing on different industries and relevant business topics (for details please visit: www.sicc.ch).

We are very much looking forward to hearing from you or seeing you at one of our future events. We invite you all to join us and subscribe to our members network by visiting our website.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Steiner Langeneke'.

Carina Steiner Langeneke
Executive Director, SICC

ABOUT US

SICC is a bi-national, private sector, non-profit association with 400 Swiss and Indian members. It is devoted to growing business between individuals and companies in India and Switzerland. Founded in 1985, SICC is widely recognised as a key player in advancing Indo-Swiss economic relationships. As an independent organisation, the Chamber co-operates with all public and private institutions that pursue similar goals.

SICC achieves its objectives by:

- Enhancing the flow of information on investment and trade related issues between India and Switzerland
- Improving bilateral commercial, industrial and technical co-operation between India and Switzerland
- Supporting the establishment of joint ventures and strategic alliances between enterprises of both countries

The SICC Board includes representatives of firms that actively pursue the enhancement of Swiss-Indian economic relations. The Board is supported by an advisory body that helps to strengthen the SICC's network, and functions as a sounding board on a variety of issues that the chamber routinely confronts.

SICC has offices in Zurich, Switzerland and Mumbai, India. In India, SICC is represented by Regional Presidents in Bangalore (SICC Southern Region); Delhi (SICC Northern Region) and Mumbai (SICC Western Region) and Pune (Pune Chapter).

For further information and to download a member application form please visit our website: www.sicc.ch

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YOUNG PROFESSIONALS' NETWORK

The Young Professionals' Network is an initiative of the SICC aimed at connecting young professionals and students in Switzerland who have an interest in doing business with and in India. Such a network keeps the Swiss-Indian Chamber of Commerce on the pulse of business news, events, and young professional communities.

We endeavour to:

- Reach out to those of the next generation that have a curiosity about the Swiss - Indian economic and/or political environment;
- Inspire them with fresh ideas and perspectives; and
- Provide them with a platform for networking, business and career development.

We look forward to hearing from you and answering any questions you may have about the organisation or its membership. You can reach us at sicc.ypn@sicc.ch



"The extensive SICC network provides members with an effective means of forming new contacts within the Swiss-Indian / Indo-Swiss Business Community through informative conferences, workshops, seminars, presentations and networking events."



SICC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS 2017-2018



INDIA MOVIE NIGHT AT THE ZURICH FILM FESTIVAL 2016 - 2017



INTERACTIVE MEETING - OPEN INNOVATION PLATFORM FOR SWISS CORPORATES IN INDIA

Mr. Sebastien Hug, CEO Swissnex India addressed CEOs of Swiss member companies in Pune on July 26, 2018



SICC INDIA EVENT HIGHLIGHTS 2017-2018

Jointly with the Embassy of Switzerland in India and the Embassy of India in Switzerland together with SICC and multiple partner organisations a very special gathering was organised in Bern, Switzerland specially for the Indian Diaspora. To mark the 70 years of Friendship between both countries H.E. Ambassador Sibi George and H.E. Ambassador Andreas Baum were present as honourable hosts of the occasion. Here are just a small collection of photos from this special occasion:



CELEBRATION OF SWISS NATIONAL DAY IN PUNE ON JULY 26, 2018

Chief Guest, Mr. Sebastien Hug, CEO, Swissnex India(C) raising a toast with Mr. Prakash Apte, President, SICC India-Pune (R) and Mr. Upendra Deglurkar, Vice President, SICC India-Pune.



FERTILE GROUND FOR INNOVATORS: THE INDIAN DIASPORA IN SWITZERLAND 2018



CELEBRATION OF SWISS NATIONAL DAY IN BANGALORE - AUGUST 03, 2018

Dr. Shravan Subramanyam - President SICC India and Mr Sebastien Hug, Consul General of Switzerland in Bangalore cutting a cake in celebration while Mr Abubaker Koya, President, SICC India- South looks on (L)

If you are interested in joining our chamber please contact us:

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FROM SCIENTISTS IN EPFL TO RESEARCHERS IN DST

BY SHRUTI CHAKRAVARTY

The history of India and Switzerland's mutual understanding and friendship goes back to 1948 when India's first Prime Minister, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru extended an offer for diplomatic partnership towards the Swiss Federation. The choice of Switzerland as one of the first nations India expressed a desire to have diplomatic alliance with wasn't very surprising considering India's Non-Alignment stance and Switzerland's neutrality during the cold war era. Since then, their relations have only flourished. In 2018, the two nations are celebrating the 70th anniversary of this iconic "Treaty of Friendship".

Sectors of Cooperation

Over the years, the ties between India and Switzerland have spanned a myriad of sectors. Many high-profile representatives of each state have visited the two countries

leading to strengthening of bilateral ties. In recent times, Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi travelled to Switzerland on an official visit in June 2016 and on a working visit in January 2018. The Swiss President announced his support for India's NSG (Nuclear Suppliers Group) membership in 2016, a breakthrough. Swiss President Mrs. Doris Leuthard paid a State visit to India in August/September 2017. Both countries have signed various agreements in trade, developmental cooperation, education, and vocational training, visas, migrations, air traffic, investments, finance, taxation, and cooperation in science and technology.

Commercial contacts between India and Switzerland date back to the early 19th century when in 1851 the Volkart Trading Co. established its offices in Basel and Mumbai. The Swiss are India's 7th largest

trading partner with the total bilateral trade including merchandise exports, bullion and IT services and software exports.

Switzerland has been a principal foreign investor in Indian market and accounted for about 1.14% of the total FDI (during Apr 2000–March 2018). More than 250 Swiss companies are present in India, majoring in engineering and industrial equipment, tourism, financial and logistic services, precision instruments, chemicals and pharma. Swiss multinational companies like Nestle, ABB, Novartis, Roche UBS and Credit Suisse have in total, created over one lakh jobs in India. About 100 Indian companies invested from 2012–2014 in Switzerland, making it one of the top five European investment destinations. These companies include TCS, Infosys and Tech Mahindra and they provide vital services to major Swiss pharma companies, banks and insurance firms. The Swiss luxury goods firm Lux was taken over by Eureka Forbes and earlier in 2010 M/s. Steiner, a construction company was taken over by HCC Ltd. Rajesh Exports acquired the world's largest gold refiner in Switzerland, European Gold Refineries for USD 400 million in 2015. The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and India have been negotiating the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) since 2008. The 15th round of negotiations took place on January 11–13, 2017, in New Delhi. A document shared by the non-profit organization Knowledge Ecology International in Washington DC showed the Swiss government pushing for more patent protections and data exclusivity in the negotiations that underwent. It was revealed that the Swiss government had asked the Indian government to do away with its legal provisions for compulsory licensing, which is crucial for production of generic medicines in India.

Indo-Swiss S&T Sector

Science and Technology has been one of the key linking factors in building the friendship between the two nations. The Agreement on Scientific and Technological



Cooperation signed in 2003 and the MoU on cooperation in social sciences signed in 2012 are major advancements in this regard. All activities under these agreements are implemented through the Indo–Swiss Joint Research Program from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Lausanne (Natural Sciences) and the University of Lausanne (Social Sciences). Till date, both Switzerland and India, have invested about CHF 15M in the program by funding 55 joint research projects, one public-private partnership project, 4 institutional partnership projects and 91 exchange grants, involving researchers and students from 19 Swiss and 69 Indian universities and research institutions in the fields of information and communication technologies, life sciences, materials science and nanotechnology, human health sciences and medical sciences, sustainable urban development and renewable energy sources. The program is financed by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research & Innovation (SERI) and the Indian Department of Science & Technology (DST) on the principle of matching funding. Representatives from both countries meet every two years to discuss progress of the concerned activities. Other than this, India is a priority country

Photo : Vice President meets Doris Leuthard, President of the Swiss Confederation in New Delhi



The pharmaceutical sector has particularly enjoyed a lot of growth as a result of friendly relations between Switzerland and India

for the prestigious Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships which provide for interested graduates in all fields, to pursue doctoral and post-doctoral research in Switzerland at one of the public funded universities or recognized institutions. To date, about 240 Indian nationals have been offered a research, PhD or post-Doctoral scholarship.

Swissnex India, established in Bengaluru in 2010, is a bridge between Switzerland and India in science, education, art and innovation, and focuses on academic relations, entrepreneurship and innovation. Initiated by SERI along with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Swissnex India is also a part of the Consulate General of Switzerland in Bengaluru. They play an active role in strengthening Switzerland's profile as a nation of leading-edge research, quality and innovation and connecting Swiss scientists, entrepreneurs, and policy makers with potential

partners in India. They also facilitate various academic programs, global innovation strategies and knowledge exchanges and maintain networks with relevant contacts at universities, research institutions and companies to sustain a strong pool of worldwide knowledge. Overall, they strive to be the worldwide "go-to" partners in academic relations and education, innovation and entrepreneurship, science and arts. Various Indian enterprises including Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), IITs Bombay, Madras, Delhi, Roorkee, Kanpur, IIM Bangalore, Christ University, ISRO, IISc, TEDx Bangalore, etc. have been Swissnex India partners as of 2016. In 2018, Swissnex India will be hosting Science Comm'18 India, a conference on science communication by making it more engaging for the masses and Maker Week 2018, aimed at bringing together Swiss startups and Indian innovation enablers in hardware prototyping and manufacturing.

The pharmaceutical sector has particularly enjoyed a lot of growth as a result of friendly relations between Switzerland and India. In 2007, an Avesta-Cipla joint venture acquired Siegfried Biologics, a Switzerland based company, to manufacture U.S. FDA and European Medicines Agency (EMA) compliant biopharmaceuticals for the global markets. Glenmark is an Indian pharma giant with a substantial footprint in the Swiss market. In 2004, Glenmark inaugurated its biologics research center in Switzerland, with currently 50 researchers. Kareus Therapeutics was established in 2007 by former members of Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, another important Indian presence, and runs currently as a virtual company headquartered in Switzerland. Rhizen Pharmaceuticals S.A. was incorporated in Switzerland, with the aim to develop and partner compounds originating from Incozen, a biotech company founded in 2008 in Hyderabad to discover novel treatments for oncology and inflammation. Indian biopharma giant Biocon recently entered into collaboration with Sandoz, a unit of Novartis to develop, manufacture and commercialize multiple biosimilars in immunology and oncology for patients.

Conclusion

The thread of India and Switzerland's friendship has thrived for 70 years now and lived through tough times like the Cold War. Various collaborative programs have helped strengthen ties, from scientists in EPFL and ETH Zurich to cultural actors telling their stories on film with the beautiful Alps as their backdrop. Current endeavors in trade, science, and arts are intended only to further this relationship in the future and enable both these countries to go hand in hand in, becoming a force for good in global economy.



CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF SWISS INNOVATION IN INDIA

What do a super-fast car racing through the streets of Zurich and three-wheeled auto rickshaws that ply their trade 7000 km away on the streets of Jabalpur, in India, have in common? Swiss innovation and partnership for e-mobility.

India's friendship with Switzerland goes back seven decades. It started when India – just a day away from celebrating its first year as an independent nation on August 14, 1948 – signed a Treaty of Friendship with Switzerland, attracted by its policies of democracy and neutrality. The agreement was the first of many that helped drive economic and technological progress in India, while opening a new market for Swiss innovation.

Today, standing together, we see a hyper-connected India serving a population of more than 1.3 billion people. We can imagine a country where super-fast transportation is powered by clean renewable energy and where technology enables humans and robots to work in harmony in local factories. This is the vision we share.

As India, the world's biggest democracy, gears up to become a global superpower, its long-standing relationship with Switzerland will continue to grow stronger. Swiss innovation has been at the heart of many infrastructure projects in India, and for ABB, India has been the land of many firsts since it first began work in the country in 1949. The country's sheer size and diversity have offered ABB many opportunities to provide innovative

technologies. ABB executed the world's first multi-terminal ultrahigh voltage link (UHVDC) that travels 1,730 kilometers to bring 6,000 MW of hydropower from the remote north-east region to Agra, home of the Taj Mahal. From Agra, the power is fed to the northern grid benefitting over 90 million people, based on average national consumption. What better example to illustrate the shared potential of India and Switzerland than the ongoing energy revolutions in the two countries? The Swiss Energy Strategy 2050 shares India's ambition to increase energy efficiency and encourage the development of renewable sources such as wind, hydropower and solar energy. Growth demands power, and access to clean, reliable energy is at the heart of India's economic development. With ABB technologies developed in Switzerland, the company has delivered over 2,000 units of solar power invertors in India, increasing its renewable capacity to more than 4.5 Gigawatts. This is a step forward in the nation's ambitious goal of generating 60 Gigawatts of renewable energy by 2022. Swiss technology is also powering India's aim of installing cleaner transport to reduce pollution. ABB's technologies are powering metro rail systems in some of India's most densely populated cities, such as Delhi, which has the largest network, Bangalore, Chennai, Lucknow, Jaipur and Kochi. Metro networks are key to sustainable urban mass mobility in the nation's cities, where about 40 percent of the population

is projected to reside by 2030.

In the state of Gujarat, which has been facing water shortages, ABB Ability™-powered flowmeters are making a difference. Using these flowmeters, the city of Surat is able to monitor water consumption in 500 textile mills and make smarter decisions on distribution.

ABB worked with the local administration in Jabalpur, in central India, to install critical technology for solar-powered vehicle charging stations in the city. The ultimate aim is to convert the 5,000 diesel-powered rickshaws to run on electricity, reducing carbon emissions and allowing residents to breathe cleaner air in the city famous for marble rocks and waterfalls.

At NITI Aayog, the Indian government's think tank in New Delhi, ABB has installed its Terra 53 fast-charging stations, which power an electric car in just 30 minutes and serves as a proof of concept for future e-mobility opportunities in the country. As the world leader in electric vehicle charging solutions, with the largest installed base of fast-charging stations worldwide, ABB is committed to power India's growth with reliable, sustainable technology.

India's ever-deepening ties with Switzerland serves as an ideal for collaboration and trust that will further expand the boundaries of possibility and economic growth. Seven decades is just the start of this journey, and ABB is proud to continue being India's partner in writing this future, together.



TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE: THE SWISS WAY

BY SAURABH MOHAPATRA

The International Hub

Every year 5.53 lakh Indian students go abroad to study in 86 different countries. Out of these 86 countries, one such prominent place is Switzerland. Otherwise known for its picturesque landscapes and its sports culture, the country is also a hub for top eight universities globally, marking it as one of the most prominent countries for international students to pursue their higher education. With its world class training and modern infrastructure,

Switzerland is known for attracting maximum number of students based on its vocational training and research programs.

India, one of the fastest developing countries, has always maintained soft diplomatic relationships with Switzerland; from our Bollywood films for decades showcasing the beauty of the country to 70 years of regular political interaction between the two. With the requirement to

train a large youth population in a country that is likely to become the world's youngest country by 2020, Switzerland is a perfect complement. While one hand Switzerland has the world's best Universities, on the other hand it is world famous for its dual system of education having around 300 registered apprenticeships. Around two third of Swiss students opt for the dual system of education. Not only does this system put emphasis on the best of training and placements



Photo: India - Switzerland Cooperation in Vocational Training organized by Embassy of India, Berne



Photo: Digital India Summit organized by Embassy of India, Berne

but it also addresses the problems concerning major focus areas of India, namely:

- Skill India
- Make in India
- Employability of Rural Youth
- Increasing Agri-Productivity
- Use of Sustainable Technologies

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in the fields of skill development as well as vocational and professional education and

training was signed between the two countries on the 22nd of June in 2016 at Winterthur on the sidelines of the 2nd International Congress on Vocation and Professional Education and Training. A Joint Working Group has been set up under this MoU which held its first meeting in April 2017.

Initiatives

Swiss initiatives in the field of vocational education in India include the following:

- Bharatiya Skill Development Campus and University: Bharatiya Skill Development Campus [BSDC], Jaipur established by the Switzerland-based 'Rajendra and Ursula Joshi Foundation' and inaugurated on 23 April 2016 works on the model of Swiss Dual System of Education. On the day of the inauguration, an MoU was signed between the Government of Rajasthan and BSDC for the establishment of Bharatiya Skill Development University [BSDU] which was launched in March 2017.
- Indo-Swiss Centre of Excellence, Pune: The Indo-Swiss Centre of Excellence, Pune is a not-for-profit organization set up to impart highest standards of skill training by applying Swiss Vocational Education System. It is setting up a Centre of Excellence in Manufacturing and a Centre of Excellence in Agriculture, both of which are expected to become operational in 2018.

- **Skillsonics India Private Limited:** Skillsonics partners with Swiss VET institutions and adapts Swiss content to the Indian requirements. It is a partner company of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). The predecessor of Skillsonics was the Swiss Vocational Education and Training Initiative India (SVETII) that was launched in 2008 on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the signing of the India-Switzerland Treaty of Friendship. Skillsonics has trained about 5000 students till date.
- **Vocational Training Center, Andhra Pradesh:** Government of Andhra Pradesh and BJ Institutes, Aarau Switzerland signed contracts for the establishment of a Vocational Training Center [VTC] in Andhra Pradesh and also for extension of the SOPEX (Solar Power Experience, a program for imparting practical experience with solar energy) program in February 2017. The courses in the VTC are likely to start by 2019.

Another initiative that connects India-Switzerland is Swissnex—a system that connects India and Switzerland across the fields of science, education, art, and innovation. The Swiss government, under this system, has made Centers of Innovation in the fastest developing cities and states across the world, namely in Bengaluru, Boston, Rio de Janeiro, San Francisco, and Shanghai. The system virtually connects startups and students in India with Swiss scientists, giving them the best of results with prime focus on Research & Development while still working in the Indian market. Anthill Ventures, one of the top startup ventures, has also collaborated with Swissnex in connecting few such selected



Both countries have so far taken some very concrete steps in truly building a robust mechanism for effective transfer of knowledge and respective key competencies

startups to accelerate their growth. With innovation partners like Christ University, Tedx Bangalore, etc. this system has completed its two years successfully and is responsible for providing the right exposure to new startups from these innovation centers.

Agreements signed between India and Switzerland in these sectors are proving to be a beneficial investment not just in the vocational and professional training areas but also in the field of research and innovation. With the initiation of Indo-Swiss Joint Research Program (ISJRP), a new way has been found to enhance the scientific and technological strategies for both the countries, further giving way to innovation. Through this program, the countries aim to bring together young

researchers with Swiss faculties, introducing students to global exposure and top scientists of different countries while trying to devise a methodology for the betterment of both the countries. The projects are also funded by the Swiss government. To oversee and coordinate S&T Cooperation, the Joint Committee on Science and Technology has been set up. The latest round of the Joint Committee was held in November 2017.

Vision for the Future

Clearly all of these initiatives bode well with the present Government's key focus areas. Skill development and vocational training have been high on the agenda for the Indian Government since 2014, leading to the creation of NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation); the Start-up India, Stand Up India campaign;



and encouraging Public-Private Partnership for skill development.

Both countries have so far taken some very concrete steps in truly building a robust mechanism for effective transfer of knowledge and respective key competencies. But, there is still a long way forward. Job creation is one

of the key areas the Indian government has been targeting and although there has been a surge in the number of jobs being created, for a country with the demographic strength that India possesses, a lot more is left to be accomplished.

Steps towards addressing this issue

need to be taken. The Indo-Swiss relationship's contributions till now have provided the youth of the country with respectable education and vocational training, but now efforts need to be made to provide these skilled individuals with jobs to match their training. This is where the next step has to be taken by both governments to create a stronger working relationship in terms of ease of doing business and setting up of joint ventures.

Switzerland is one of the financial hubs of the world, with a robust banking system and one of the biggest wealth funds. India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world at present and continues to show promise. Hence, it is of utmost importance that better Indo-Swiss relations lead to simpler investment opportunities and fewer trade barriers. This would ensure higher FIIs and FDIs leading to job creation and better employment opportunities for the educated Indian youth.



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CELEBRATING INDO-SWISS CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND DYNAMISM

BY SHRUTI BALAJI

In commemorating 70 years of bilateral ties between India and Switzerland, it is significant to dwell on the role played by culture in facilitating cooperation and collaboration between the two countries

While power in international relations and foreign policy has traditionally been defined through economic might and military capabilities, there is an increasing realisation that it is positive attraction and persuasion in the form of soft power that will actually achieve foreign policy objectives. States are now influencing one another through cultural exchanges and initiatives that build lasting bonds. Indeed, it is such soft power that brings together countries as diverse as India and Switzerland.

In 1948, post India's independence, a Treaty of Friendship was signed between Switzerland and India, with regular high-level bilateral visits on both ends. There have been Indo-Swiss cultural exchanges in domains as diverse as art,



architecture, food, entertainment, literature, and music, among others and they have particularly seen a boom in the globalisation era.

One of the major features that India and Switzerland have in common, it is cultural heterogeneity. Both the countries are models for Unity in Diversity. Presently, Swiss art and architecture finds representation in India through Pro Helvetia—The Swiss Arts Council established in New Delhi in 2007. It promotes cultural exchanges between the two regions with a focus on exemplary creativity as well as diversity in representation. India too, has left its mark on Swiss culture through the proliferation of Bollywood, Indian cuisine, and more recently Yoga and Ayurveda. It will be difficult to find a village in Switzerland which does not have Yoga practitioners.

Visual Art and Architecture: Creativity & Innovation

Visual art and architecture are tangible symbols of cultural ties. India and Switzerland's architectural collaborations have a rich history with India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru inviting the Swiss–French Artist Le Corbusier to design the city of Chandigarh. Indeed, Chandigarh's modern architecture, Le Corbusier's dream project, is representative of a modern and independent India. The plan incorporated Le Corbusier's principles of light, space, and greenery and stands testament both to Corbusier's vision as well as the Indo–Swiss legacy in architecture. In 2015, an article published by BBC named Chandigarh as one of the perfect cities of the world in terms of architecture, cultural growth, and modernisation. Furthermore, in

When Indians think of Switzerland, they think of its innate beauty, the beckoning Alps and indeed, Bollywood. The unique association between India, Bollywood, and Switzerland cannot be exaggerated

July 2016, Chandigarh's Capitol Complex was declared by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. In many ways, the symmetrical architecture of Chandigarh makes us reminiscent of Western modernity in architecture, of which Le Corbusier remains a pioneer. Till date, this remains one of the most successful creative collaborations between Switzerland and India.

As of today, Pro Helvetia awards studio-residencies to South Asian nationals who wish to reside long-term in Switzerland and take up creative projects in the fields of visual arts, theatre, and literature, with the aim of promoting mutual exchanges between South Asia and Switzerland. These exchanges go a long way in promoting people-to-people contact and enhance creative expression. The aim of this project is to take artists away from their familiar artistic environments in order to facilitate newer forms of creative expression and diversity. The artists working in varied media often question and challenge everyday social and political conditions, both in India and Switzerland, giving their art value. Furthermore, these Indian and Swiss artists create sustainable networks with one another that lead to long-term ties of friendship and camaraderie.

Photo : The Bollywood connection for Switzerland's tourism does not end with Yash Chopra's scintillating song and dance sequences



In 1989, a 'Festival of India' was held in Switzerland. In 1991, a 'Festival of Switzerland' was held in the four metropolitan cities and in Bangalore. ICCR has also been sending cultural troupes to Switzerland.

Bollywood's Tryst with the Alps

Despite regional disparities, the Alps have played an essential role in shaping the history and culture of Switzerland, notes Oliver Zimmer. When Indians think of Switzerland, they think of its innate beauty, the beckoning Alps and indeed, Bollywood. The unique association between India, Bollywood, and Switzerland cannot be exaggerated. When Indian tourists step into the icy terrain of Mt. Jungfrauoch, the tallest Swiss peak, a life-size cut-out of Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol's poster from the 1995 blockbuster, *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* welcomes them. Indian film directors and producers have flocked to the Swiss Alps in search of artistic inspiration for their song and dance sequences since the trendsetting film *Sangam* (1964) which was shot in European locales.

According to ETC MarketInsights (2015), for five decades, Alpine landscapes have featured in over hundred non-western productions, turning Switzerland into the most preferred honeymoon destination for Asian visitors. Furthermore, the Swiss tourism market has also cashed in on this special connection. For instance, the Swiss Government has propelled a drive to attract residents of second-tier cities in India. This campaign includes aggressive marketing strategies under consumer outreach

programs, advertising promotions including television commercials in leading channels, and training programs for travel agents in Tier II and Tier III cities in India.

The Bollywood connection for Switzerland's tourism does not end with Yash Chopra's scintillating song and dance sequences. More recently, Switzerland Tourism's move to hire Ranveer Singh—a sought-after Indian actor with a social media following of over seven million people—as its brand ambassador, has resulted in a spike in young Indian travellers under 35 by over 25% during the 2017 summer season, according to SWI swissinfo.ch.

Presently, India is among the top 10 source markets for Switzerland at the eighth position and according to Switzerland's Tourism CEO Juerg Schmid, is third as the long haul source market. "We expect the growth trend to continue and in next decade India is likely to move up the ladder as the source market," he said. In terms of foreign policy, a move towards providing Indian tourists with e-tourist visas to Switzerland would go a long way in facilitating people-to-people interactions and give a further boost to Indian tourists between the two nations. On the other hand, the Government of India, too, extended the e-tourist visa facility to Swiss citizens in February 2016.

Strengthening Cultural Ties: Gastronomy, Yoga & Beyond

Gastronomically, Switzerland has catered to both the Indian Diaspora and tourists alike, with authentic Indian food. Several vegetarian



restaurants have mushroomed, particularly in the much-frequented tourist destinations of Switzerland, to satisfy the Indian palette. On the other side, ventures such as *Swiss Gourmessa* in New Delhi promise to bring some “Swissness” to India through their freshly baked bread, premium Swiss chocolates, and gourmet pastries. For those who cannot resist cheese Swiss-style, there are a variety of options of cheese fondue in and around major cities of India as well.

The International Day of Yoga (IDY), a brain-child of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi Government, was celebrated for the first time on 21st June, 2015 in Switzerland. The 4th International Day of Yoga (IDY) was celebrated by the Embassy of India in Berne from June 16-24, 2018 in various cities in Switzerland. It concluded in Berne with a unique philately exhibition at the Universal Postal Union focusing on Yoga-related stamps. An Ayurveda Festival was also organised at all the venues coinciding with the International Day of Yoga celebrations. It received a positive response from the Swiss public. The International Day of Yoga and the Ayush festival were organised at the following venues:

- Berne
- Basel
- Zurich
- Davos
- Flaach
- Bad Ragaz
- Neuchatel
- Spreitenbach
- Lausanne

In essence, cultural links between Switzerland and India have blossomed, particularly in the fields of art, architecture, food, and entertainment, since the 1980s. However, there are currently no institutional agreements or Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs) on cultural cooperation between the two countries. Institutionalizing cultural ties will go a long way in forging lasting bonds between India and Switzerland and also promote trust and confidence. From the Swiss Government’s perspective, consideration for e-tourist visas for Indian tourists, will provide further impetus to Indian tourists going to Switzerland. With regard to India, further endorsements to attract Swiss tourists to popular destinations such as Agra, Rajasthan, and Goa could foster greater cultural ties.



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Photo : Solidarity With Kerala event at India House, Berne organized by Indian Embassy, Berne and Swiss Malayali Association



Photo : MISSP: Momentum in India workshop 2018 organized by Embassy of India, Berne at Zurich



Photo : 72nd Indian Independence day Celebrations at the Embassy of India, Berne



Photo : International Yoga Day Celebrations at Basel, Switzerland





Photo : Festival of India Celebrations organized by Embassy of India, Berne



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INDIAN DIASPORA IN SWITZERLAND

BY RETD. AMBASSADOR MANJU SETH

India and Switzerland have always had friendly relations and though they are two quite different countries, both share some commonalities including being democracies and as stated by PM Modi, "India and Switzerland have both been voices of peace, understanding and humanitarian values in the world"



Indian diaspora is today present in many cities of Switzerland and contributing to its diversity, multiculturalism, progress and economic growth.

The NRIs and PIOs

When we use the term 'Indian Diaspora', it connotes a generic term used to describe the people who migrated from territories that are currently within the borders of the Republic of India, and also includes their descendants. The Indian Diaspora encompasses both Non Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs).

As India's profile in world affairs has grown, India's Diaspora policy has also transformed and India has engaged with and acknowledged its Diaspora and its immense contributions to strengthening bilateral ties. India is now deeply connected to its diaspora worldwide and lays emphasis on a people-to-people partnership. India is justifiably proud of its diaspora, its achievements, and its contribution to strengthening bilateral relations with the country where they have made their home, whether temporarily or permanently.



Photo : Panel discussion on 'Fertile ground for innovations,' at Embassy of India, Berne

Engagement with diaspora has become an important part of government policy in most countries, and pursuant to this, a separate Ministry was created in India in 2004 (since merged as a Department of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2016) to formulate appropriate diaspora policy and engage with them meaningfully. After the initial policy of keeping its diaspora at arm's length, India changed its approach in the mid-1980s, though in a sporadic manner. It is only since the 2000s that India has embraced its diaspora and focused on tapping its potential. The Indian Missions and Consulates are Home Away from Home for the Indian diaspora in countries abroad.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas is a high-level platform that brings together India's vast and varied diaspora on one platform to interact, exchange ideas, and build bonds while also addressing the challenges faced by the diaspora. India has sought to leverage the strengths of its diaspora for socio-economic development and sees them as important non-state actors who could potentially influence policy in host countries and contribute to strengthening bilateral relations. As such, India regards its diaspora as an element of its soft power

India's almost 30 million strong global diaspora, present in 146 countries, including Switzerland, sends huge remittances back every year and according to the World Bank, around US\$ 69 billion were remitted in 2017, with India remaining the top country for remittance flows

assets. Another positive aspect is that these diaspora send remittances to home states in India, thereby adding to the economic well-being and prosperity of local communities. India's almost 30 million strong global diaspora, present in 146 countries, including Switzerland, sends huge remittances back every year and according to the World Bank, around US\$ 69 billion were remitted in 2017, with India remaining the top country for remittance flows.

Diaspora and Globalisation

With the rapid pace of globalisation and quicker connectivity for travel and communication, diaspora ties and links with



Photo : Cultural Festival organized by Keli International in Zurich

India have deepened and, especially, the well-off diaspora, including from Switzerland, are able to build bridges through their economic contribution and involvement in the socio-political life of both countries. Indians have long viewed Switzerland positively, thanks to the many Bollywood films that have been shot there, encouraging a large number of around 2,50,000 Indian tourists to visit Switzerland every year. Late Mr. Raj Kapoor started the trend of filming Bollywood films in Switzerland in 1964. However, it was late Mr. Yash Chopra, who shot many films in Switzerland who made it a popular destination for tourists and film makers from India. For his contribution, he has been immortalised in the form of a statue in Interlaken. Bollywood has spawned support architecture of small companies, entrepreneurs, including diaspora companies and restaurants, across different cities in Switzerland for Indian film production units.

Bollywood has brought Switzerland close to Indians while Yoga and Ayurveda have brought India closer to the Swiss as both have become well known across the country. Indian restaurants and Indian grocery shops can be found in different cities and these cater to both the Indian community and local populace. Indian dance and music

classes are popular with some of the young, second generation Swiss Indians and holding regular performances familiarises the locals with Indian music and dance.

The Indian diaspora in Switzerland comes from different parts of India, speaks different languages, belongs to different religious and ethnic groups, and yet there is a common thread of Indian-ness that gives them a sense of identity and cultural mooring. There are currently about 24,567 Indian Diaspora [PIO (7,164) and NRI (17,403)] residing in different parts of Switzerland, a majority of whom are professionals working in the Information Technology, Pharmaceutical, Research and Health sectors. Others work for the UN and other prestigious Swiss Institutes. There are about 1000 Indian students pursuing Hotel Management and other professional courses in prestigious Swiss Institutes. The Indian community is concentrated in Zurich, Geneva, Basel, Baden, Bern and Lausanne, in that order.

Indian Presence in Switzerland

As India and Switzerland celebrate 70 years of bilateral ties, it is interesting to observe that the number of Indians



Photo : Festival of India celebrations at the Embassy of India, Berne

choosing Switzerland to study or to work has grown exponentially, constituting a growing and sizeable diaspora. However, the number of permanent residents or PIO remains relatively small and most diaspora is 'temporary' diaspora. The profile of Indian migrants to Switzerland has evolved over the years even as the numbers have

increased from about 2000 in 1980 to more than 24,000, currently. The majority are temporary or short-term residents on postings of three to five years or students pursuing higher education. Earlier the Indians coming to Switzerland were mainly engineers or scientists working in multinational companies or employed in the

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UN and other International organisations in Geneva. The more recent immigrants from India comprise skilled professionals working in the ICT, Finance and Management, biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences sectors in addition to students, around 71% of whom are pursuing their PhD degrees and others as professors.

In more recent times, some of the young Indian professionals employed in multinationals in Switzerland have established startups in the ICT, Biotech and solar energy, etc. sectors in view of the entrepreneur friendly environment. The University spin-off programs open doors for young Indian entrepreneurs and help give credibility to young companies. While some startups folded up, others prospered and have created jobs contributing significantly to the Swiss economy and to the innovation oriented startup ecosystem in Switzerland.

There are about ten Indian Associations in Switzerland, broadly correlating with the Cantonal boundaries. Other Indian Associations include regional Indian Associations and Indian Student's Association based in Zurich and Lausanne. The Indian Association of Geneva was established in 1947 and is probably the world's oldest Indian Association

running un-interrupted since its inception. These Associations regularly organise Indian National Day (both Republic Day and Independence Day) functions and celebrate various festivals including Diwali, Holi, Onam, Baisakhi, Navratri, Gurpurab, Eid, Christmas, etc. All these Associations help to bring the Indian diaspora together and help to foster a positive image of India and actively promote Indian cuisine, culture and traditions among the locals and in some ways are the informal 'ambassadors' for everything Indian; their activities help build bridges and create positive impressions about India and this indirectly influences government approach and policy.

Though the Indian Diaspora is 'temporary', diverse and multicultural, its ability to adapt and assimilate in the local milieu, while maintaining its Indian roots, values & affinity for peace, has been appreciated and their contribution to the Swiss economy acknowledged. Both India and Switzerland have benefitted from the presence of the Indian Diaspora in Switzerland. The contribution of Indian diaspora was celebrated in an event held on 6 April 2018 in Berne organised jointly by the Embassy of India in Berne and the Embassy of Switzerland in New Delhi.



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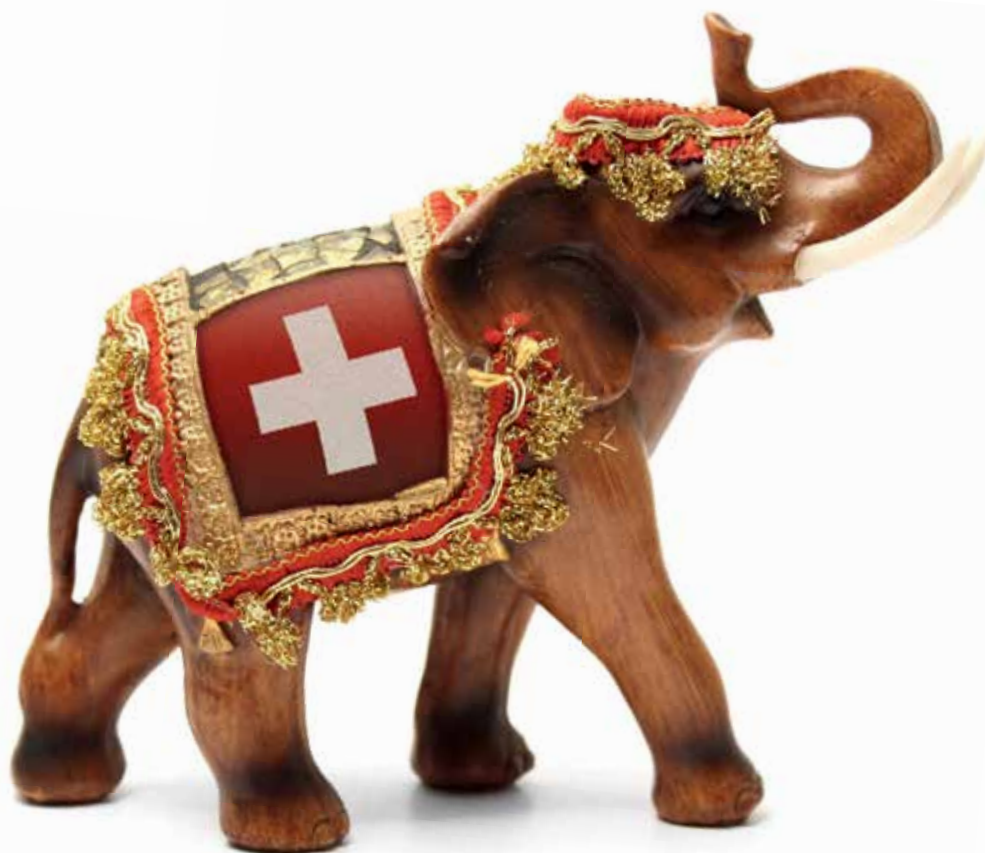
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