

## **India - Ireland Relations**

- India-Ireland ties are both cordial and historical, dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when a significant number of Irish served in India and both the countries shared their respective freedom struggles. Directive Principles of State Policy in our Constitution derive inspiration from the Irish Constitution.
- Nationalist leaders and luminaries of the two countries such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Eamon De Valera, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Rabindra Nath Tagore, W. B. Yeats, Sister Nivedita, James Joyce, Annie Besant, etc. are well known. The work done by Irish Missionaries in India in the field of education is widely recognized.
- India was the first country in Asia with which Ireland established formal diplomatic links in 1947. India opened an Embassy in Dublin in 1951. The Irish Embassy in New Delhi was set up in 1964 and a Consulate General in Mumbai (2019). Honorary Consulates were opened in Chennai (2010) .... Kolkata (2017)
- In Mar 2007, a road in Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, was named Eamon de Valera Marg to celebrate these historical links.
- High Level Visits: There have been three Presidential visits from **Ireland** to India: Mary Robinson (1993), Patrick Hillery (1978) and Eamon de Valera (1948). PM Bertie Ahern visited in 2006 and PM Garret FitzGerald in 1984. There have been two Presidential visits from **India** to Ireland: Shri N. Sanjiva Reddy in 1982 and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan in 1964. PM Shri Narendra Modi visited Dublin in 2015. Before that, PM Shri Jawaharlal Nehru visited Ireland twice in 1956 and 1949.
- After the crash of an Air India aircraft, Kanishka, off the south-western coast of Ireland on 23 Jun 1985 in a terrorist bombing, there was extraordinary level of solidarity, support and assistance extended by the local population to the victims' families.
- The Minister of State for External Affairs, Gen. V. K. Singh (Retd.) invited Ireland on June 23-24, 2015 to represent the Government of India on the occasion of 30th memorial service of the Air India Kanishka plane crash. During the visit, he also unveiled the second bust of Rabindranath Tagore in County Siigo, W.B. Yeats' ancestral hometown.
- Irish Ministerial visits have included that of Jim Daly, MOS for Health (2019); Mary Mitchell O'Connor, MOS for Higher Education (2018); John Halligan, MOS for Training, Skills and Innovation (2017); Pat Breen, MOS for Employment and Small Business (2016); Brendan Howlin, Minister for Public Expenditure Reforms (2016); Dr. James Reilly, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (2015); and Mr. Richard Bruton, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (2015). Secretary General of the Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Niall Burgess, visited India (2019).
- The previous Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) were held in New Delhi (Nov 2017) while the next round is scheduled in Dublin on 28 Feb, 2020.

- Bilateral MoUs/ Agreements include: (i) Agreement on Air Transport (Feb 1991); (ii) Agreement on Foreign Office Consultations (Oct 1993); (iii) MOU on Joint Working Group on Information Technology (Apr 2000); (iv) Agreement on Avoidance of Double Taxation (Nov 2000); (v) Agreement on Cooperation in Culture; (vi) Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation and (vii) Agreement on Cooperation between Science Foundation Ireland(SFI) and Indian National Science Academy (2006); (viii) Agreement on authorization for dependents of Diplomatic, Consular, Technical and Administrative Staff of Diplomatic and Consular Missions to engage in Gainful Employment (21 Mar 2018).
- Ireland actively participates in UN peace-keeping operations and under the UN standby arrangement system, it contributes personnel and resources for UN-authorized peace-keeping missions. India and Ireland have worked together in peace-keeping missions in different parts of Africa and Middle East.
- India and Ireland share common positions against terrorism. In the aftermath of the Pulwama cross-border terrorist (14 Feb 2019), Irish Deputy PM and FM, Simon Coveney issued a statement (19 Feb 2019), strongly condemning the suicide bombing and affirming that Ireland will continue to work with India and the international community to support a comprehensive international response to preventing and countering terrorism.

### **Trade and Investment**

- **Bilateral Trade:** Bilateral trade in goods between India and Ireland in 2018-19 touched US\$ 1 billion. India's exports to Ireland were US\$ 681.1mn and India's imports from Ireland were US\$ 382.4 mn. Main Items exported by Ireland were machinery and mechanical appliances, telecommunications equipment, computer accessories, precision equipment and pharmaceuticals. Main items exported by India were organic chemicals, textiles, garments & clothing accessories, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, machinery, light engineering goods, plastics and rubber. Trade in services between India and Ireland has emerged as a major facet in economic relations. The total trade in services for 2018 was US\$ 4.03 bn, of which exports by India were US\$ 3.12 bn and imports were US\$ 0.896 bn.
- **Investments and technical know-how:** India encourages Irish companies to participate in our major flagship programmes such as "Make in India", "Digital India", "Clean India", "Smart Cities", etc. Ireland has strengths in sectors like agriculture (feeding technology for mulch animals aviation (aircraft leasing, airport management); tourism (low cost carriers).
- **Major Irish companies** which have presence in India are CRH, Quinn Property Group, PM Group, Aer Rianta, Globofos, Taxback Group, Connolly Red Mills, Globoforce, Keventer, ICON, Kerry Group, Diageo and Glanbia.
- **Major Indian companies** which have presence in Ireland include Pinewood/Wockhardt, Reliance Genemedix, Crompton Greaves, Deepak Fasteners, Jain Irrigation Systems, Wipro, TCS, Infosys, Shapoorji Pallonji, Amneal Pharmaceuticals, HCL, NIIT, Tech Mahindra, Mind Tree and Zomato. Companies have established their EMEA HQs in Ireland, Centres for European supply chain logistics, manufacturing, warehousing, delivery and customer service and business development.

- An Ireland-India Business Association (IIBA) was established in May 2008 and is working effectively with the Embassy and apex Chamber of Commerce for promotion of mutual business interests. An MOU was signed between IIBA and FICCI in Mar 2019.

### **Science & Technology**

- Ireland has a strong tradition of research in science and technology and has developed an **industry-oriented** research. An Agreement on cooperation in Science & Technology was signed between India and Ireland in 2006. Under this agreement, a bilateral programme of cooperation in Science and Technology between India and Ireland was signed in May 2009. Twenty-three joint research & development projects in nano-sciences, sustainable energy and energy efficient technology, medical and health sciences, pharmaceutical sciences and food and agriculture sciences were implemented till 2013. Currently, DBT / Ministry of Science & Technology and Science Foundation of Ireland are engaged in discussion for a new Agreement/arrangement.
- Ireland's premier University, Trinity College, has a robust South Asia Initiative, with its main thrust on India, aimed at drawing together all the strands of interactions in educational and research fields, in science, engineering and humanities. Science Gallery International, an initiative of Trinity College Dublin signed a MoU with the Government of Karnataka (Nov 2014) for setting up a Science Gallery in Bengaluru.

### **Education**

- Ireland is becoming a significant destination for Indian students seeking higher education, particularly post-graduate, doctoral and post-doctoral students in the areas of engineering/technology/management. There are around 5,000 Indian students in Irish higher educational institutions (2019 figure). Major Universities like Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin and University College Cork have offices in India.
- Trinity College of Ireland has entered into an agreement with Thapar University, Patiala aimed at upgrading the University's standards to international levels with introduction of a joint degree programme in five engineering and science disciplines.
- Eight higher education government scholarships were awarded by Ireland to Indian students for 2018-19, while a further 200 have been offered on institutional basis by higher education institutions. University College Dublin (UCD) has launched 'V.V. Giri' Global Excellence Full Tuition Fee Scholarships. Former Indian President V.V. Giri studied law at UCD from 1913 to 1916.
- There is an ICCR Chair on Politics and International Relations in the Dublin City University.
- India is one of the Partner Countries of the International Strategic Cooperation Award (ISCA) programme, which supports new and existing research-based collaborations between Ireland's Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and partner organisations. The other three partner countries are Brazil, China and Japan.

## **Culture**

- The friendship between Rabindra Nath Tagore and the Irish poet W.B. Yeats forms an important part of our cultural contacts. On the occasion of Tagore@150 in 2011 and Yeats@150 in 2015 a series of commemorative events were held. Two busts of Tagore have been installed in Ireland, one at St. Stephens' Green in down-town Dublin (2011) and the second in Sligo, birth place of Yeats, (2015).
- Gandhi@150: A series of events to commemorate 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi were held the event across several cities in Ireland (Dublin, Cork, Mayo). These included an inter-faith event at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin (2 Oct 2018); community art project on occasion of India's Independence Day (15 Aug 2019); Peace Walk at Croghan, County Arklow (8 Sep 2019) in collaboration with Fr. Michael's charity NANDRI; interactive discussions at University College Dublin (2 Oct 2019); launch of an illustrative book 'Walk with Gandhi' in Dublin (6 Oct 2019) and another book "Gandhi in Gujarat" in Cork (2 Oct 2019). Peace Trees were planted in University Campuses in Trinity College Dublin (4 Dec 2019) and University College Cork (30 Oct 2019).
- Nanak @ 550: Commemorative celebrations were held to mark 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji which included unveiling of a plaque (11 Sep 2019) to respect Max Arthur MacAuliffe from Limerick who translated the holy Sikh texts including Guru Granth Sahib into English in early 20<sup>th</sup> C; an interactive lecture by Center for Inter-religious Dialogue & The School of Theology, Philosophy and Music and Dublin City University, (14 Oct 2019); as well as a photographic exhibition on Sikhism at the Christ Church in Dublin (11 Nov 2019).
- Yoga: Practice of yoga is widespread in Ireland. Ayurvedic and other naturopathic systems are also growing in popularity. IDY-2019 was organised across 20 counties in Ireland, in association with City Councils and yoga institutes.
- Annual Indian Film Festival is a popular event in the cultural calendar with screening of contemporary films, participation of film actor, directors and thematic panel discussions. The 10<sup>th</sup> Ireland India film festival (IFFI) was held in Dublin (5-17 Nov 2019). Noted film personalities Prakash Jha, Parvati Nair, and Foukiya Akhter were special invitees this year in connection with the Irish premier of their film 'Pareeksha'.

## **Diaspora**

- There are an estimated 45,000 NRIs and PIOs in Ireland (PIOs 26,500 & NRIs 18,500). Most of the community is missing in health care (doctors and nurses), ICT, engineering and senior management positions. In 2019, 5,373 employment permits were issued to Indian nationals
- The last Irish PM Leo Varadkar (41 years) was the first ever PM of Ireland who was of Indian origin. He assumed office in June 2017 and previously held diverse portfolios of Minister for Social protection; Health; Transport, Tourism and Sport. He is a second generation immigrant. His father (doctor) migrated to Ireland from UK.

- In 2019, some significant decisions were taken by the Irish government effecting positively the Indian community viz allowing wearing of turbans and hijabs in police uniform; non-requirement of obtaining additional work permit for spouses of Critical Skill Employment Permit holders; non-requirement of obtaining re-entry visas for GNIB card holders. As of 1 Jan 2020 nursing has been included in critical skills, and quota on Chefs from non-EEA countries has been removed.

### **Civil Aviation**

- An MOU on Air Services Agreement was signed in 2010. Under this MoU, provisions like multiple designations, usage charges, routing flexibility including capacity entitlements have been agreed between the two countries. The designated airlines of each side are entitled to operate to and from any two points on each others territory via any intermediate point. Aer Lingus and Air India have been approved as the designated carriers for flights between Ireland and India, with code share arrangements. However, commencement of direct flights has not yet started.

### **Tourism**

- In 2019, an estimated 45,000 Indians visited Ireland and around 42,000 Irish nationals visited India. **The Government of India extended ETV facility to Ireland effective 15 Aug 2015** to promote greater tourist flow between Ireland and India. There is no reciprocity on the part of Ireland. A Tourism Road Show titled "Dekho Apna Desh" was held in Dublin (19 Sep 2019) with participation of Minister of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, Govt of Punjab, Mr Charanjit Singh Channi. Another Tourism Road Show was organised by the the Embassy and the India Tourism Office, London in Cork (11 Dec 2019).
- In 2015, India was included in the list of countries covered by the common 'British-Ireland Visa regime' which facilitates easier travel for Indian tourists to UK and Ireland on a common visa.

### **Useful Resources:**

Website: [www.indianembassydublin.in](http://www.indianembassydublin.in)  
<https://www.facebook.com/India> in Ireland's  
<https://mobile.twitter.com/India> in Ireland.

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