

India-Slovenia Relations

Slovenia, formerly a part of erstwhile Yugoslavia, attained Independence in 1991. India recognized Slovenia on 11 May 1992. Soon after our recognition, the then Foreign Minister of Slovenia Dr. Dimitrij Rupel visited India on 18 May 1992. India supported Slovenia for membership at the UN. Slovenia was admitted into the UN on 23 May 1992.

Opening of Resident Missions

Slovenia opened its resident mission in New Delhi on 1 August 2002. The Mission, initially headed by Charge d'Affaires, was upgraded to Ambassador level in September 2009. India opened its resident Mission in Ljubljana in February 2007.

High-level Visits

Numerous high level visits between the two countries is a sign of warm bilateral relations.

From Indian side MOS for Science & Technology Prof. Y.K. Alagh visited Slovenia in February 1997; MOS for Finance (Revenue) Shri Gingee N. Ramachandran (January 2003).

In 2006 Slovenia set up Bled Strategic Forum, an annual event, to explore strategic issues impacting Europe and Trans-Atlantic community. There have been MOS (EA) level participation from India for the event:- Shri Anand Sharma in 2008 , Smt. Preneet Kaur in 2009, 2010 and 2013 and Gen. V.K. Singh in 2014.

A Parliamentary delegation led by Smt. Meira Kumar, former Speaker of Lok Sabha visited Slovenia from May 26-30 2013

From the Slovene side, former President Dr. Janez Drnovsek attended the inauguration ceremony of International Conference on Human values organised by the Art of Living Foundation in Bangalore in Jan 2006 & the Satyagraha Centenary Conference in New Delhi in January 2007. Former President Dr. Danilo Turk attended the Delhi Sustainable Summit in Feb 2010. As Prime Minister, Mr. Borut Pahor paid a State Visit to India from 13-16 June 2011. Mr. Zerjav Radovan, former Deputy PM and Minister for Economic Development and Technology visited India from January 27-31, 2013. Foreign Minister Mr. Karl Erjavec visited India in November 2013 to attend the 11th ASEM FMM. Other high level visits included those by former Foreign Minister Dr. Dimitrij Rupel, Deputy PM for Economic Relations Dr. Dravorin Kracun, Ministers for Science and Technology Dr. Rado Bohinc, Dr. Lojze Marincek and Dr. Jure Zupan. Mr. Milan Berglez, Speaker of the National Assembly will be leading a Slovenian Parliamentary delegation to India from 24-27 November, 2015.

Bilateral Agreements/ Protocols/ MOUs signed

- Agreement on setting up Joint Committee on Bilateral Trade and Cooperation (1993)
- Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (1995)
- Agreement between FICCI/ASSOCHAM and the Slovene Chamber of Commerce and Industry to set up Joint Business Council (1995)

- Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations (1996)
- Cultural Agreement for cooperation in the fields of culture, arts, education, sports and mass media (1996)
- National Centre for Trade Information, India (NCTI) – Chamber of Commerce of Slovenia (CCS) Agreement for reciprocal sharing of information (1997)
- Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (2003)
- Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) – Slovenian Export Corporation (SEC) Cooperation Framework Agreement (2003)
- Bilateral Air Services Agreement (2004)
- MOU between ICCR and University of Ljubljana for establishment of Hindi Chair (2009)
- Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (2011)
- MOU between the Bureau of Indian Standards and Slovenian Institute for Standardization (2011)
- MOU between the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru and University of Nova Gorica for Cooperation in the Field of Research and Education (2011)
- MOU for the establishment of Long Term Chair of Hindi at Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana (2011)
- MOU between Air India, Aerodrom Ljubljana and Adria Airways (2011)
- Protocol amending the Bilateral Air Services Agreement (2012)
- Agreement on Short-Stay Visa Waiver for Holders of Diplomatic Passports (2013)
- Agreement between Air India and Adria Airways on code-sharing arrangements (2013)
- MOU between Prasar Bharati and RTV on Co-operation in Broadcasting (2013)
- MOU between NIMS University of Rajasthan, Jaipur and University of Primorska on Cooperation in the Fields of Education and Science and Research (Nov 2014)
- Agreement on Gainful Occupation of Dependents of Members of Diplomatic Missions and Consular Posts (April 2015)

India-Slovenia Foreign Office Consultations

Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) are held at regular intervals. The seventh session of India-Slovenia FOCs took place in New Delhi in July 2010. Slovenia will host the next session of FOC at Ljubljana.

Bilateral Trade

In 2014, the total bilateral trade in goods stood at Euro 213.03 mn with India enjoying a trade surplus of Euro 7.19 mn. In 2013, the total bilateral trade was to the tune of Euro 282.41mn with trade surplus of Euro 138.65 mn in favour of India.

A business roundtable entitled “India :New Frameworks for Business and New Business Opportunities” was organized by Embassy of India, in collaboration with Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Slovenia, in Ljubljana on 12 May, 2015 to further ‘Make in India’ initiative launched by GOI in which high-ranking executives of 19 Slovene companies and Indian PSUs like NALCO and BHEL participated. A business conference to promote the "Make in India" campaign was organized by the International Trade Fair organisers at Celje (Jan 2015). India has been participating at the Celje International Trade Fair since 2009. In 2014, 18 Indian companies participated at the Celje International Trade Fair. India was a Focus Country at the annual Alpe Adria International Tourism Show at Ljubljana (Jan 2015). India was a focus country at the Business Bled Strategic Forum (Sept 2014). A business delegation from FICCI and CII visited Slovenia during the Bled Strategic Forum. A

selection of wines from India was introduced for the first time in Slovenia at the Ljubljana Wine Competition (June 2014) and VINO Ljubljana International Wine Fair (Sept 2014). India also participated at Dao Yah Fair, (Jan 2015), 11th Altered Fair at Celje (Mar 2015), 45th Nature Health Fair (in the field of Ayurveda and other traditional medicines)(Nov 2014) & for the first time at the 30th Slovenian Book Fair (Nov 2014) all at Ljubljana.

Slovenia participated in the CII Partnership Summit, Jaipur in January 2015. Mr. Peter Macek, State Secretary at the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science & Sport led a delegation for the CII's Knowledge Expo 2014 in New Delhi (Nov 2014). Earlier, a Slovenian delegation attended the first India-Central Europe Business Forum organised by FICCI in New Delhi (March 2014). Two Slovenian companies participated at the Minerals, Metals, Metallurgy & Materials Exhibition in New Delhi (Sept 2014). Slovenian company Iskra Sistemi participated at the Bangalore Engineering Expo 2014. Gostol participated at Aahar Food & Hospitality Fair in March 2014. Former Minister of Economic Development and Technology Mr. Zerjav Radovan accompanied led a business delegation to New Delhi, Agra and Kolkata (Jan 2013). A large business delegation accompanied the then Prime Minister Borut Pahor during his State Visit to India (June 2011) and visited Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore. The visit focused on enhancement of economic cooperation and strengthening of bilateral relations between the two countries.

Science and Technology

Joint Committee of Science and Technology cooperation was established through an agreement in 1993. India-Slovenia Joint Working Group on Science and Technology met in New Delhi on 19 November 2014. Issues of mutual interest were discussed and the joint projects were identified for implementation during POC 2014-2016. The Agreement on Science & Technology Co-operation was extended to cover the period from 2015-18.

Cultural Cooperation

The Mission has been organizing ICCR sponsored cultural events in collaboration with local co-sponsors which are widely acclaimed in Slovenia. The Government of Karnataka sponsored Pandit Narasimhalu (2011), Dr. Mysore Manjunath (2012) and Dr. Suma Sudhindra (2013) on the occasion of Indian Republic Day celebrations in Slovenia. A bust of Jawaharlal Nehru was unveiled at Dobrovo, Goriska Brda in May 2013. A statue of Mahatma Gandhi, donated by ICCR, was installed at Slovenj Gradec on 1 October 2010. A bust of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, donated by ICCR, was set up in November 2011 in the Municipality of Maribor - the Cultural Capital of Europe for 2012.

The first edition of "Days of India in Slovenia" festival was organized in Jan 2014. Under the rubric of the second edition of Days of India Festival (20-30 Jan 2015) the Mission arranged a series of cultural events like concert of classical Sarod music, painting exhibition showcasing art of SAARC countries "Jaisalmer Yellow" and photo exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi-"My Life is my Message".

A photo exhibition "Facets of India" and screening of 'The Making of Mahatma' were organized at Jesenice (Mar 2015). An exhibition of the photos of the North-Eastern region of India was displayed at Slovene Ethnographic Museum, Ljubljana (Mar 2015). A 7-member Theater group "Yatrik" from New Delhi led by Shri Avijit Dutt (sponsored by ICCR) and another 7-member theatre group "Banyan Tree

Productions” from Mumbai visited Slovenia and performed at the 45th Festival of Slovenian Drama (March, 2015) at Kranj. The performance by Banyan Tree Productions won the critique’s award. The Embassy of India, in association with India Tourism Frankfurt, held a seminar ‘India-Slovenia Day of Partnership in Tourism’ in Ljubljana (Mar 2015). Like 2014, Gurudev Tagore Week was organised during the month of May 2015 in collaboration with the Society for International Development, Kud Sodobnost Society, Ljubljana and the Municipality of Maribor. The events included violin recital of ‘Rabindra Sangeet’ by Mr. Hans Vermeersch, a renowned Violinist from Belgium, specializing in contemporary and classical music of the Indian sub-continent, at Goriska Brda, Slovenj Gradec, Ljubljana and Maribor. Recitation of poems by Tagore and painting exhibition entitled “Three Tagores” was held at the Ljubljana Conservatory. An exhibition of photos of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru was displayed at Municipal Library of Bled (27 May-18 June) to mark the closing of the year of his 125th Birth Anniversary. The first International Day of Yoga was celebrated in 28 cities of Slovenia on 21 June, 2015. Various Yoga schools in Slovenia gathered under a common platform of “Joint Organisational Committee”, and facilitated plans for celebration of IDY in Slovenia. A large number of people congregated to demonstrate and observe the Common Yoga Protocol. There was extensive media coverage of the event.

A joint stamp to commemorate the 125th birth anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru was released on 28 Nov 2014. The book - Letters from a Father to His Daughter - was translated into Slovene and released on 19 November 2014. “INDIA WEEK” was organised across municipal libraries in Ljubljana (1-5 Dec 2014) which included display of books on India in the libraries, screening of Indian films, symposiums and roundtables. Indian films were screened at film festivals in Slovenia including the Open Isola Film Festival (June 2014), Bled Film Festival (June 2014), and the Ljubljana International Film Festival (Nov 2014). Two Indian films and a commercial were shot in Slovenia in 2014. Secretary, AYUSH visited Slovenia in Sept 2014 and inaugurated AYUSH Information Centre at the Chancery premise. Slovenian delegation led by the Rector of University of Primorska, participated at the 6th World Ayurveda Congress held at New Delhi in Nov 2014.

Slovene Parliamentary Friendship Group with India- The Parliamentary Friendship Group with India was established on 6 February 2009. Ms. Suzana Lep Simenko is the Chairman of the Slovene Parliamentary Friendship Group with India since 21 May, 2015. In Nov 2009, the then Chairman of the Friendship Group, accompanied by two more members visited India at the invitation of Govt. of India.

Indian Community - There are about 150 Indian nationals/PIOs in Slovenia. Most of them are employed. Some are married to Slovene nationals.

Useful Resources:

Embassy of India, Ljubljana website:

<http://indianembassy.si/>

Embassy of India, Ljubljana Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/eoi.ljubljana>

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