

**Embassy of India**  
**Berne**  
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**India-Switzerland Relations**

**A. Introduction**

India and Switzerland have had cordial and friendly relations since India's Independence, based on shared values of democracy and rule of law. India's policy of non-alignment and Switzerland's traditional policy of neutrality led to a close understanding between the two countries. Switzerland established diplomatic relations with India soon after Independence. A Treaty of Friendship between India and Switzerland was signed at New Delhi on August 14, 1948; one of the first such treaties to be signed by independent India and an important milestone in Indo-Swiss relations. ***In 2018, India and Switzerland celebrated the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Friendship.***

The relations between India & Switzerland have achieved new heights following the visits of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Switzerland in 2018, 2016 and Swiss President Mrs. Doris Leuthard to India in August/September 2017. The Joint Statement issued during the visit of the Swiss President in 2017 noted the India-Switzerland relations as '***A Long Standing Dynamic Partnership***'.

Switzerland has an Embassy in New Delhi and Consulate Generals in Bengaluru and Mumbai; it also has Honorary Consuls based in Kolkata and Chennai. There is a Swiss Business Hub in Mumbai, and a Swissnex office in Bangalore. The visa section of the Swiss Consulate in Mumbai, till February 2016 when it was closed and transferred to the Embassy of Switzerland in New Delhi, was issuing the maximum number of visas by any Swiss Consulate. India has an Embassy in Berne and a Consulate General in Geneva.

From 1971 to 1976, during and after Bangladesh's struggle for Independence, Switzerland represented India's interests in Pakistan.

**B. Bilateral visits**

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Davos in January 2018**

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid a visit to Switzerland in January 2018. During his visit, PM Modi met H.E. Mr. Alan Berset, President of the Swiss Confederation and discussed matters of mutual interest. After the bilateral segment, PM delivered the key-note address at the Inaugural Plenary Session of the Annual Meeting of World Economic Forum on January 23, 2018. On the sidelines of WEF, PM met other Heads of States to discuss issues of mutual interest.

**Other ministerial visits at Davos in 2018 to attend WEF**

Indian group of Ministers comprising CIM Shri Suresh Prabhu, Minister of P&NG and Skill Development Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister for Railways and Coal Shri Piyush Goyal, MoS in PMO Dr. Jitendra Singh and MoS for External Affairs Shri M. J. Akbar addressed a number of sessions on various topics including economy, foreign policy, security and politics. Besides, Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra and a few Members of Parliament and State ministers also attended WEF.

### **Swiss President's visit to India in 2017**

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. PM and the Swiss President jointly addressed a meeting of Swiss businessmen and leading Indian entrepreneurs with business interest in Switzerland.

### **PM's visit to Switzerland 2016**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid an official visit to Geneva, Switzerland on 5-6 June 2016. This was a historic visit; the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Switzerland in the last several decades. 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-Ammann; a Business Round Table with Switzerland's top companies; and a meeting with Indian research scholars based at CERN.

### **Previous bilateral visits at HOS/HOG-level**

**Incoming:** Swiss President Mrs. Micheline Calmy-Rey [5-7 November 2007]; Swiss President Mr. Pascal Couchepin [6-12 November 2003]; Swiss President Mr. Flavio Cotti [1998; first ever visit by a Swiss President to India].

**Outgoing:** President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil [30 September to 4 October 2011]; President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam [May 2005]; President Shri V.V. Giri [1975].

### **Ministerial-level and Parliamentary visits**

**Incoming:** Mr. Niklaus Samuel Gugger, Member of Swiss Parliament [7-15 November 2018]; Foreign Minister Dr. Ignazio Cassis [10 August 2018]; Swiss Parliamentarian Mr. Niklaus Samuel Gugger and Mayor Jean-Philippe Pinto [1<sup>st</sup> PIO Parliamentarian Conference [9 January 2018 in New Delhi]; Federal Councillor Mrs. Simonetta Sommaruga, [5-7 October, 2016]; Federal Councillor for Economic Affairs, Education and Research Mr. Johann N. Schneider-Ammann, [15-17 May, 2015]; Federal Councillor for Foreign Affairs Mr. Didier Burkhalter [11-12 November 2013]; Federal Councillor for Environment, Transport, Energy & Communications Mrs. Doris Leuthard, [18-20 October 2012]; Federal Councillor for Home Mr. Alain Berset [1-3 October 2012]; Federal Councillor for Foreign Affairs Ms. Micheline Anne-Marie Calmy-Rey [August 2010]; a 4-member Swiss Parliamentary delegation [12 February 2016].

**Outgoing:** Chief Minister of Kerala Shri Pinarayi Vijayan (12-15 May 2019); Minister of State for External Affairs General (Dr.) V.K. Singh (Retd.) [26 November 2018; Berne]; Minister of Health and Family Welfare Shri J.P. Nadda [19 May 2018]; Parliamentary Delegation from Maharashtra [separate visits in February and April 2018]; Minister of State (I/C) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy [June 2016]; EAM Shri Salman Khurshid [22 January 2014]; Minister of State (IC) for Sports & Youth Affairs Shri Jitender Singh [14-15 May 2013]; Minister of Commerce &

Industry Shri Anand Sharma [8 April 2013]; Lok Sabha Speaker Smt. Meira Kumar [16-19 October, 2011; 16-17 July 2010]; an 18-member Indian Parliamentary Goodwill delegation led by Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Water Resources Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal [1-4 April 2010]; Minister of Textiles Shri Dayanidhi Maran [25-28 October 2009]; Minister for Road Transport & Highways Shri Kamal Nath [ 11-12 August, 2009].

### **Other visits**

**Incoming:** Swiss State Secretary and Director SECO Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch [25-26 June 2018 in Mumbai]; Head of International Affairs, Swiss Federal Office of Energy Jean-Christophe Fueg [10-12 April 2018 in New Delhi]; Swiss State Secretary and Director SECO Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch [19-20 March 2018 in New Delhi]; State Secretary of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Pascal Bareiswyl [5 December 2017]; 4-member delegation led by Ambassador Frank Gutter, Head of Security Policy Division, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and including Ambassador Thomas Schneider, Head of International Affairs, Federal Office of Communication, Government of Switzerland To participate in the 5th edition of Global Conference on Cyber Space [23-24 November 2017 in New Delhi]; Swiss State Secretary for International Financial Matters Mr. Jacques de Watteville [15 June 2016]; Swiss State Secretary for Economic Affairs Ms. Marie Gabriel Ineichen Fleisch [10 June 2016]

**Outgoing:** Secretary, Department of Science and Technology Prof. (Dr.) Ashutosh Sharma [28 April-1 May 2019]; Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dr. K.P. Krishnan [3-6 July 2018]; Foreign Secretary Dr. S. Jaishankar [10-13 Sept. 2015]; Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary (West) [8 March 2016]; Secretary, Department of Science & Technology Prof. Ashutosh Sharma [16-19 Sept 2015]; a delegation from the International Cooperation Division of M/o Skill Development and Entrepreneurship [31 August to 8 Sept. 2015]; Secretary, Department of Sports Shri Ajit Mohan Sharan [23-25 March 2015]; Revenue Secretary Shri Shaktikanta Das [15 October 2014]

### **C. Bilateral Dialogue Mechanism**

i. **Foreign Office Consultations (FOC):** The FOC were established in January 1996 with the 1<sup>st</sup> round of FOC taking place at the Secretary-level in February 2000. The latest [10<sup>th</sup>] round of FOC was held in New Delhi on 5 December 2017. It was co-chaired by Secretary (West), MEA and Swiss State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Ms. Pascale Baeriswyl.

ii. **Joint Economic Commission:** It was set up in 1959 to intensify economic and commercial relations. Its latest session [16<sup>th</sup>] was held in New Delhi on 23 February 2018 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.

iii. **Joint Committee on Science & Technology:** The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Indo-Swiss Joint Committee on S&T was held on 23 September 2011 in Berne. The latest [5<sup>th</sup>] meeting of the Joint Committee was held on 30 April 2019 in Berne co-chaired by Prof. (Dr.) Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, and Ms. (Dr.) Martina Hirayama, State Secretary, State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).

iv. **Consular Dialogue:** The 1<sup>st</sup> round of the composite dialogue on Consular and Legal matters was held in New Delhi on 2 March 2012. The latest [4<sup>th</sup>] round was held in New Delhi on 11 May, 2018. It was co-chaired by Joint Secretary (CPV) Mr. Amrit Lugin and Head Third Countries and Multilateral Affairs Section, State Secretariat of Migration Mr. Karl Lorenz.

v. **Financial Dialogue:** The 1<sup>st</sup> round of the Financial Dialogue was held in Berne on 6 July 2012. The latest [3<sup>rd</sup>] round was held on 15 June 2016 in India co-chaired by Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs and Swiss State Secretary for International Financial matters Mr. Jacques de Watteville.

vi. **Defence Dialogue:** The 1<sup>st</sup> Defence dialogue was held on 18 November 2016 in New Delhi.

#### **D. Commercial Relations**

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. In 1915 when Europe was in the grip of the war and the need of the hour was to secure for Switzerland food and economic prospects, the Swiss Consulates were set up in key locations across the world including Mumbai. The Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, set up based on 1949 agreement signed between the Government of India and the Swiss Cars and Elevators Manufacturing Ltd. Zurich, celebrated its diamond jubilee in Sept. 2015. It expanded its network, diversifying its activities, and soon becoming the backbone of Switzerland’s economic presence in India.

The Indo-Swiss Treaty of Friendship signed in 1948 laid the foundation for a strong economic content to the bilateral relationship. Article 3 to 6 of this Treaty secured the “most favoured foreign nation treatment” to Switzerland. As provided by the Treaty itself, it has set the pace for further treaties like Double Taxation Treaty in November, 1994, followed by Amendment protocol in 2010, Promotion and Protection of Investment Treaty in July 1997. The first major investment by Swiss companies in India came in the mid-50s.

**Bilateral Trade:** As per EXIM Bank, India figures, Switzerland was the **11<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner** for India with the total bilateral trade including bullion, amounting to USD 19.263.38 million in 2018-19. The imbalance mainly arises out of export of bullion and precious metals to India. As per the Swiss Federal Department of Finance figures, in 2018, India was Switzerland’s **8<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner** with the total bilateral trade including bullion, amounting to USD 19696 million.

The major items of Indian exports to Switzerland are textiles and garments, organic chemicals, pearls, precious stones and jewellery, dyestuffs, non-electrical machinery and parts, leather products, shoes and shoe uppers, cotton, plastics, coffee, tea and hand-knotted carpets. Besides bullion, Swiss exports to India consist of chemicals & pharmaceuticals, machinery, transport equipment’s, precision engineering products and watches.

**Year-wise bilateral trade figures (including precious metals)** [Source: Swiss Customs]

*(in Million USD)*

<i>Year</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>
India’s Exports	969	1474	1547	1662	1785	1523	1500	1643	1876
India’s Imports	2482	3364	30739	25725	21014	21276	14517	19755	17820

<b>Total Trade</b>	<b>3451</b>	<b>4838</b>	<b>32286</b>	<b>27387</b>	<b>22799</b>	<b>22799</b>	<b>16017</b>	<b>21398</b>	<b>19696</b>
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**Bilateral Investment:** Switzerland invested FDI equity worth approximately USD 4.39 billion in India from April 2000 to June 2018 thus becoming the **11th largest investor** and accounting for about 1.1% 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.

In terms of industry-wise distribution of Swiss investments in India, traditional sectors of Swiss excellence, e.g. engineering and industrial equipment, services (tourism, financial, logistics etc.), precision instruments, chemicals and pharmaceuticals continue to maintain top positions. Most of the Swiss multinational companies like Nestle, ABB, Novartis, Roche UBS and Credit Suisse etc. have their operations in India.

Recent reform initiatives by India have created enhanced potential for Swiss businesses. Sectors such as clean technology, life sciences, precision engineering, medtech, financial services and fintech, construction materials and equipment, consumer goods, railways and defense offer plenty of opportunities for Swiss companies.

Overseas Direct Investment from India to Switzerland for the duration from April 2014-December 2017 was USD 1.72 billion (4.36% of total Overseas Direct Investment) placing it at 7<sup>th</sup> position. Overseas Direct Investment from India to Switzerland for the duration from April 2017-May 2019 was USD 931.98 million (3.27% of total Overseas Direct Investment) placing it at 7<sup>th</sup> position. Recent Indian investments in Switzerland have gone into sectors such as ICT, life sciences, engineering and chemicals. Major Indian IT companies including TCS, Infosys, HCL, Tech Mahindra, etc. have their offices in Switzerland and provide services to major Swiss pharma companies, banks and insurance firms. Indian companies in pharma and life science sectors having presence in Switzerland include Dr. Reddy, Wockhardt and Glenmark. Tata and Birla also have their representative offices. Swiss luxury goods firm *Lux* was taken over by Eureka Forbes and in 2010 *M/s. Steiner*, a construction company, was taken over by HCC Ltd. Rajesh Exports acquired the world's biggest Swiss gold refinery 'Valcambi' for USD 400 million in 2015.

Switzerland continues to attract investment from Indian companies looking for a gateway to Europe. Key factors that make Switzerland attractive for Indian investors are its geo-strategic location in the centre of Europe, political and economic stability, modern infrastructure, the strong financial centre, the liberal labour market, strong industry and technology clusters and a moderate tax structure.

Switzerland's initiatives to remain competitive such as the Corporate Tax Reforms and the introduction of the Swiss Innovation Parks are ensuring the interest of Indian and foreign companies alike to consider the country as a base for European operations.

The Embassy of India in Berne has initiated the ***Momentum of India: Swiss SMEs Programme*** for facilitating the entry of Swiss SMEs into the Indian market. The Mission is also regularly participating/organising events for enhancing India's trade and investment relations with Switzerland. The Embassy has also started an ***India Business Information Center*** in Zurich. The Embassy has launched the ***Indian Professional Network*** as an outcome of the discussions held with the Indian diaspora on the occasion of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas on January 9, 2018 in Berne. It is the one of the

public diplomacy arms of the Embassy of India with the aim to outreach to the professionals in the Indian diaspora with a view to come up with ideas to strengthen bilateral relationship. Another initiative of the Mission is the **India Business, Start Up, and Innovation Centre** that was launched on 15 October 2018. In order to highlight the trade and investment as well as tourism opportunities in various States, this Mission has also started the **State Presentation Series**. The recent activities of this Mission are as follows:

- Investment and Trade Promotion Event [February 2, 2018; Berne]
- Freisein Event [March 15-17, 2018; Zurich]
- Session on Immigration issues (March 21, 2018)
- State Facilitation Event [March 24, 2018; Horgen, Zurich]
- State Facilitation Event [March 24, 2018; Museum Rietberg, Zurich]
- Round Table on Ayurveda in Switzerland (April 13, 2018)
- MUBA Exhibition [April 20-29, 2018; Basel]
- Workshop on Trade and Investment [May 17, 2018; Zurich]
- Swiss Yoga Conference [May 25-27, 2018; Zurich]
- India-Switzerland Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (May 30, 2018)
- Indian Wine Tasting Event [June 1, 2018; Berne]
- Ayurveda Festival in 10 cities in Switzerland and Liechtenstein in June 2018
- Digital India Summit on 15 August 2018 in Berne
- SINDEK Exhibition 2018 [August 28-30, 2018; Berne]
- Trade and Investment Workshop on 12 September 2018 in Basel
- Joint Workshop with Swissmem and Swiss-Indian Chamber of Commerce on 24 September 2018 in Zurich
- Trade and Investment Workshop/State Facilitation Event on 11 October 2018 in Lugano
- Inauguration of Embassy of India's *India Business, Start Up, and Innovation Center* on 15 October 2018 in Berne
- Trade and Investment Workshop on 31 October 2018 in Zurich
- Start Up Round Table under the Embassy of India's *India Business, Start Up, and Innovation Center* on 2 November 2018 in Berne
- Yonamo Exhibition [November 10-11, 2018; Thun]
- Ayurveda Lounges on the sidelines of the Festival of India being celebrated by the Mission all over Switzerland and Liechtenstein from September-December 2018
- Asia Workshop [19 November 2018; Zurich]
- Celebrating Ayurveda in Switzerland: India-Switzerland Ayurveda Summit [1 December 2018; Seelisberg]
- Start Up India Conclave [7 December 2018; Berne]
- State Presentation Series – Himachal Pradesh [14 December 2018; Berne]
- State Presentation Series – Uttar Pradesh and Kumbh Mela [19 December 2018; Berne]
- Ayushman Bharat-Health India Summit [28 Jan 2019; Berne]
- Philatelic Exhibition On Mahatma Gandhi In Switzerland [30.1.2019; Berne]
- State Presentation Series - Exploring Northeast [30.1.2019; Berne]
- India-Switzerland Ayurveda Summit [16.02.2019; Geneva]
- Indian Tea Tasting event [27.02.2019; Berne]
- Study in India: India Switzerland Education Summit [28.02.2019; Berne]
- Curtain Raiser For 'India Year Of Science And Technology In Switzerland [5.3.2019; Berne]
- Interactive Session on India - Switzerland Relations at FORAUS Neuchâtel [6.3.2019; Berne]

- Rumals of Chamba Exhibition & Gandhi Philately Exhibition and Khadi Exhibition [6-8 March 2019; Zurich]
- Rumals of Chamba Exhibition & Gandhi Philately Exhibition and Khadi Exhibition [14-15 March 2019; Montreux]
- Rumals of Chamba Exhibition & Gandhi Philately Exhibition and Khadi Exhibition [16.3.2019; Lausanne]
- Next Destination Incredible India: India – Switzerland Tourism Summit [19.3.2019; Berne]
- Partiamo Swiss Tourism Fair in Locarno [29-31 March 2019]
- Mednat Agro Bio Expo [4-7 April 2019; Lausanne]
- ICCR Foundation Day In Switzerland [9.4.2019; Berne]
- Doing Business with India, Webster University, Geneva [10.4.2019; Geneva]
- Lecture on India-Switzerland Commercial Relations [10.4.2019; ZHAW School of Management and Law]
- State Presentation Series – Maharashtra Day [1 May 2019; Berne]
- Lecture on Ayurveda at the University Hospital in Berne [6 May 2019; Berne]
- Business event on Investment Opportunities in Kerala [14.5.2019; Berne]
- Trade and Investment Workshop [27 June 2019; Berne]

### **E. Sectoral Cooperation**

**Science & Technology:** During the visit of Swiss President to India in 2003, an inter-Governmental framework Agreement on Technical and Scientific Cooperation was signed under which an Indo-Swiss Joint Research Programme (ISJRP) was launched in 2005 as the main vehicle for S&T cooperation through periodic POCs. To oversee and coordinate S&T Cooperation, the Joint Committee on Science and Technology has been set up. The Mission is celebrating 2019 as the India Year of Science and Technology in Switzerland.

**Railways:** During the visit of the Swiss President to India in August-September 2017, two MoUs were signed in the field of Railways: MoU on Technical Cooperation in the area of Railway Safety & Technology between Ministry of Railways and Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication of Swiss Confederation and MoU between Konkan Railway Cooperation Ltd. (KRCL) and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich) in the field of tunneling and underground structures.

**Civil Aviation:** An Air Services Agreement (ASA) was signed in May 2001. Swiss Airlines commenced direct flight to Delhi from December 2007. Presently, Swiss Air operates direct daily flights to Delhi and Mumbai under code sharing arrangement with Air India providing an impetus to both tourism and business links between the two countries. The passenger composition on these flights is approximately 60% Indians and 40% Swiss.

**Education/Skill Development:** Minister of State (I/C) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Mr. Rajiv Pratap Rudy, visited Switzerland to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Vocational and Professional Education and Training Congress from 20-22 June, 2016. A MoU to institutionalize bilateral cooperation in the areas of skills development and vocational education and training was signed. Under this MoU, the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Indo-Swiss Joint Working Group on Vocational Education and Training was held in New Delhi on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2017.

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 working on the model of Swiss Dual System of Training. On the day of the inauguration, an MoU was signed between the Government of Rajasthan and BSDC for 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 which are yet to become operational.
- **Skillsionics India Private Limited:** Skillsionics partners with Swiss VET institutions and adapts Swiss content to the Indian requirements.
- **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.

**Tourism:** There is an increase in the number of Indian tourists travelling to Switzerland. In 2017, tourists from India had 7,39,185 overnight stays. The Mission is celebrating 2019 as the India Year of Tourism in Switzerland.

**AYUSH:** Ayurveda along with 3 other traditional systems of medicine i.e. Chinese, European and homeopathy, has been approved for federally recognized national diploma examination in Switzerland.

**Cultural relations & people to people contacts:** The two countries do not have an institutional arrangement on cultural cooperation like Cultural Cooperation Agreement or CEP. Numerous Swiss artists and researchers had been actively engaged in the Indian subcontinent, notably Le Corbusier (architecture) and Alice Boner (painter, sculptor, art historian) while film producers such as Yash Chopra brought Switzerland and India closer through popular Hindi movies filmed in the Swiss Alps.

The Embassy has launched the **Indian Cultural Network** as an outcome of the discussions held with the Indian diaspora on the occasion of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas on January 9, 2018 in Berne. It is the cultural arm of the Embassy of India. A Book Reading event was organized under the framework of the Indian Cultural Network on May 18, 2018 in Berne. A lecture on Indian Miniature Paintings was delivered by Curator of the Indian Miniature Paintings in the Museum Rietberg, Zurich on 14 December in Berne. The Embassy also organised the following exhibitions in Berne: Rumals of Chamba – Embroidered Cloth Exhibition [December 2018] and Vastram: Textile Exhibition [December 2018]. A presentation by Dr. Roshni Arora, Curator of Rumals of Chamba – Embroidered Cloth Exhibition was held on 19 December 2018 in Berne. The Embassy also organised **Namaste Switzerland**, a cultural gala and talent event for the Indian diaspora from 17-22 December 2018 in Berne.

Celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the India-Switzerland Treaty of Friendship, a **Festival of India** was organised from **September-December 2018** all across Switzerland. The Festival of India celebration included the following:

- Berne and Gumligen – Bharatnatyam performances



- Berne, Geneva, and Fribourg – Lokrang Performance
- Brug Windisch, Lugano, and Zurich – Kathak Performance
- Luzerne and Berne – Dhrupad Performance
- St. Gallen, Basel, and Berne – Kathakali Performance

Previously, 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.

A number of events are presently being held by the Embassy across Switzerland and Liechtenstein celebrating the **150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi**.

The 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 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
- Vaduz [Principality of Liechtenstein]

The International Day of Yoga 2019 is being celebrated at 14 different venues across Switzerland and also in the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Road shows for promoting MICE Tourism to India were jointly organised by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and India Convention Promotion Bureau in Geneva and Zurich on June 28, 2018 and June 29, 2018 respectively.

In the Joint Statement issued during the State visit of Swiss President to India in 2017, both sides acknowledged the need for greater people-to-people contact at different levels, particularly in the field of academics, culture, cinema etc. to foster closer ties between the two countries.

Government of India extended the e-tourist visa facility to 37 more countries from 26 February 2016 including Switzerland. There is a significant traffic of Indian visitors to Switzerland.

A MoU was signed between ICCR and the University of Lausanne to establish Rabindranath Tagore Chair on Indian Studies. The MoU has been extended for another 3 years in June 2016. An MOU was signed in 2012 between the Indian Council of Social Science Research and the University of Lausanne for institutional cooperation in social sciences and humanities projects under the Indo-Swiss Joint Research Programme [ISJRP].

To mark the International Day of Peace and Non-Violence, a statue of Mahatma Gandhi was installed in Ariana Park, Geneva on 14 November 2007. The 150<sup>th</sup> birth centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda were held in Saas Fee on 30 August 2013 with the unveiling of a plaque at Hotel Grand Metropole where Swami Vivekananda stayed in 1896. A bronze bust of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore was unveiled to commemorate the 150th birth Anniversary of Gurudev Tagore on 4 October 2011 during the *State Visit* of President Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil at the University of Lausanne

Switzerland opened an office of Pro Helvetia – Swiss Arts Council in New Delhi in 2007. Pro Helvetia focuses its efforts on contemporary literature, visual arts, dance and design and offers scholarships in Switzerland as well as in India. The Universities of Berne, Lausanne and Zurich offer courses for the study of Hindi, Sanskrit and Indology. The Rietberg Museum in Zurich reportedly possesses the largest collection of Indian miniature paintings outside India and the UK.

**Indian community:** The Indian community in Switzerland comprises of approximately 24,567 Indians including over 7,164 persons of Indian origin. Most of them are professionals in Engineering, IT, pharmaceuticals and paramedical fields. Few are deployed in the International Organisations like UN, UPU and other prestigious Swiss institutes like Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich and EPFL, Lausanne. The Indian community is concentrated in Zurich, Geneva, Basel, Baden, Berne and Lausanne in that order. There are about 1000 Indian students studying in Switzerland. A number of Indian associations actively organize cultural activities and celebrate Indian national days. In 2016, there were about 850 Swiss nationals living in India.

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**July 2019**

### **List of Bilateral MOUs/Agreements**

- Agreement for the avoidance of double taxation w.r.t. taxes on income, signed at New Delhi on 2 Nov. 1994, and amended by the supplementary protocols signed at New Delhi on 16 Feb. 2000, and on 30 Aug. 2010
- Agreement on Collaboration in Biotechnology signed in 1999
- Air Services Agreement signed in 2001
- Agreement for Scientific & Technological Cooperation signed in 2003
- Agreement on Social Security signed in 2009
- MoU establishing the ‘Rabindranath Tagore Chair’ on Indian Studies signed on October 4, 2011 valid for 4 years since 2012. An MOU for extension of existing chair was signed on 9 June 2016.
- MoU between Indian Ministry of Power and Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation signed in 2011 for cooperation in energy efficiency
- MoU on Indo-Swiss Building Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP) signed on 8 November 2011.
- MoU on Mutual Cooperation in Local Governance signed in 2011
- MoU signed in 2012 between the Indian Council of Social Science Research and the University of Lausanne for institutional cooperation and social sciences and humanities projects under the ISJRP

- MOU on Cooperation in the fields of Skill Development as well as Vocational and Professional Education and Training signed in June 2016
- Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic Passport signed in October 2016
- Technical arrangement on the Identification and Return of Swiss and Indian Nationals signed in October 2016
- Arrangement between the two countries on Authorization for Dependent Person of Diplomatic, Consular, Technical and Administrative Staff of Diplomatic and Consular Mission to perform gainful employment signed in October 2016
- Joint Declaration on the introduction of the Automatic Exchange of Information on Tax matters signed on 22 November 2016
- MoU on Technical Cooperation in the area of Railway Safety & Technology between Ministry of Railways and Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication of Swiss Confederation in August 2017
- MoU between Konkan Railway Cooperation Ltd. (KRCL) and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich) in the field of tunneling and underground structures signed in August 2017
- Joint Statement issued on the occasion of the State Visit of the Swiss President to India in August 2017
- Letter of Intent for Sister State Agreement between the State of Andhra Pradesh and the Canton of Zurich in January 2018

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