

India-Sweden Relations

The ties between India and Sweden were established in 1949 and are founded on shared democratic values. High level contacts between the two countries go back to 1957 when Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited Sweden. The most recent Prime Ministerial visit was that of former Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt in November, 2009 for the India-EU Summit and bilateral talks. Since then a number of bilateral Ministerial visits have taken place focusing on specific areas of cooperation. Parliamentary contracts have gathered momentum, adding further substance to the relations between the democracies.

In recent years, mutual economic interests have emerged as the driver of the relationship with growth in bilateral trade, which crossed US\$ 2 billion in 2009-10 and increased to US\$ 2.4 billion in 2013-14. Two-way investments are also expanding. There are complementarities in the areas of cutting edge technologies creating good potential for bilateral collaboration in important areas such as green technology, renewable energy, smart infrastructure, health and defence.

Active Ministerial exchanges have taken place in recent years. Last year (2013) alone, nine Ministerial visits were exchanged. State Secretary (equivalent to Deputy Minister) for Foreign Trade Mr. Gunnar Oom and State Secretary for Enterprise and Energy Mr. Daniel Johansson visited India in February and April respectively. Swedish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, Mr. Jan Björklund accompanied by a large delegation consisting of State Secretary in the Prime Minister's office as well as other senior officials visited India in May. Mr. Peter Norman, Minister for Financial Markets visited India in October. Foreign Minister Mr. Carl Bildt visited India in November to attend the ASEM Meeting. From the Indian side, last year Minister of State for Corporate Affairs, Shri Sachin Pilot and Minister of State for Power, Shri J.M. Scindia visited Sweden in April and May respectively, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Shri Gulam Nabi Azad in May and Minister of State for External Affairs, Mrs. Preneet Kaur in June.

The first ever India Friendship Group was set up in Swedish Parliament in February 2006. An India- Sweden Friendship Group has also been set up in Parliament of India. A six member delegation from this Group visited in September, 2013.

A number of bilateral Institutional Dialogue Mechanisms and Agreements (complete list of Agreements at Annexure) are in place to foster cooperation in different areas. The leading institutional mechanism of inter-Governmental dialogue between India and Sweden is the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) at the level of the Ministers of Commerce and Industry. The last round (16th) was held in New Delhi on October 31, 2012 chaired by India's then Commerce, Industry & Textile Minister Mr. Anand Sharma and the then Swedish Minister for Enterprise, Ms. Annie Lööf.

There is a mechanism for regular consultations between the two Foreign Ministries through Foreign Office Consultations. The fifth round was held in Stockholm

on 26th April 2013 chaired by the State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Frank Belfrage and Shri Sudhir Vyas, Secretary(West).

Commensurate with desire for enhanced relations, a number of inter-governmental Agreements/arrangements have been put in place for promoting cooperation in diverse areas including, among others, science & technology, environment, defence and health and regular meetings and dialogue are held to review and facilitate progress.

Economic & Commercial relations

Bilateral trade in 2013-14 is US\$ 2412 million and the main Swedish exports to India are in the areas of pharmaceuticals, paper & pulp products, chemicals, engineering products and telecom equipment. The main items of Indian exports are chemical products, food products, and semi manufactured and manufactured goods.

As per DGFT bilateral trade data is as follows:

Years	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
India's Exports to Sweden	476.73	615.68	825.00	686.15	732.30
India's Imports from Sweden	1590.14	1619.38	1992.00	1681.43	1679.56

Source: Ministry of Commerce, India . Figures in US \$ million and year refer to financial year i.e April-March

About 40 Indian IT companies have opened representative offices in Sweden. Indian Pharma and Biotech companies are also present. Aditya Birla Group, Wipro and Bharat Forge are among the other major Indian investors in Sweden. According to rough estimate the cumulative Indian investment in Sweden is currently in the range of US\$ 500-600 million.

Swedish companies came to India even before it gained independence. Ericsson, Swedish Match (WIMCO), SKF and ASEA (later to become ABB) have been in India from the 1920s. Since then other Swedish companies like Atlas Copco, Sandvik, Alfa Laval, Volvo, Astra Zeneca, SAAB etc. have invested in India. Other leading Swedish MNCs such as transport solution provider Scania and the hygiene and forest products company SCA are among the more recent entrants. Retail giants IKEA and H&M are also expected to make significant investments soon. At present there are over 160 Swedish joint ventures wholly owned subsidiaries in India and according to Swedish Statistics, the size of investment is about \$ 70 million (2013).

Cultural & Educational Relations

Indian music, dance, art, literature, films and cuisine are widely appreciated in Sweden in the absence of a Cultural exchange Agreement between the two countries; cultural ties are promoted mainly by local associations and by the Embassy with the support of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations.

The establishment of Chairs on India Studies at three major Swedish Universities – Lund, Gothenburg and Uppsala – is giving an impetus to the academic interest in India. Some Swedish universities have established links with Indian educational institutions and regularly send students to India for different programmes. Many Indian students study in Swedish Universities, however, the number has declined after fees were introduced for non-EU foreign students in 2011.

Indian Community

As per latest statistics, there are about 9,000 Indian origins including 5,003 PIO/OCI card holders and 9,234 Indian passport holders are living in Sweden. They are working in the academic/professional fields or in business/trading.

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List of Bilateral Agreements/MOUs

- a) Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement, signed on June 24, 1997. Protocol for amending the Convention and Protocol approved by the Cabinet on January 24, 2012. Formalities for signing the amended Protocol completed on Indian side. Swedish response is awaited.
- b) Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement (BIPA), signed on July 4, 2000.
- c) MoU between the Sweden India Business Council (SIBC) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) to promote bilateral trade and investment signed in June 2005.
- d) Bilateral Science & Technology Agreement signed on December 9, 2005.
- e) MOU between Central Pulp and Paper Research Institute (CPPRI) and the Swedish Pulp and Paper Research Institute (STFI) signed in 2007.
- f) MOU on Air Services Agreement between India and the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Denmark and Norway) signed on November 30, 2006.
- g) MOU between India and Sweden for cooperation in the field of Healthcare and Public Health signed in February 2009.
- h) MOU between the Karolinska Institute and the Indian Council of Medical Research signed in June 2009.
- i) MoU on Defence Cooperation signed in November 5, 2009.
- j) MoU on Cooperation on Environment signed in November 2009.
- k) MoU in the field of Renewable Energy signed on April 19, 2010.
- l) MoU between Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Lund University, Sweden on establishing a new Chair on Indian Studies at Lund University signed on June 22, 2010.
- m) Memorandum of Intent between the Swedish Institute for Communicable Disease Control and the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, India signed on May 19, 2011.
- n) An Agreement with University of Gothenberg to establish a Chair on Indian Studies at the University for 2012-2015 signed on December 20, 2011.
- o) In early 2012, an MOU on implementation of the project Young Masters Programme on Sustainable Development in India- 2012-2016 was signed

between Centre for Environmental Education, India and the International Young Masters Programme Foundation, International Institute of Industrial Environmental Economics (IIIEE), Lund University to promote collaboration between India and Sweden in the area of Environment and Education.

- p) Protocol of the 16th Session of the Indo-Swedish Joint Commission for Economic, Industrial and Scientific Cooperation was signed between Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Textile and Ms. Annie Lööf, Minister for Enterprise of Sweden on 30 October, 2012.
- q) Arrangement on Gainful Occupation for members of the family forming part of the household of members of the Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post between the Governments of India and Sweden was signed on November 26, 2012 by Joint Secretary (CE), MEA and Ambassador of Sweden to India.
- r) An Agreement with University of Uppsala to establish a Chair on Indian Studies at the University for 2013-2016 was signed on 22nd January, 2013.
- s) Bilateral Social Security Agreement between India and Sweden was signed during the visit of H.E. Mr. Ulf Kristersson Swedish Minister for Social Security to India on 26-28th November, 2012.
- t) Protocol on Cooperation in the fields of Science & Technology was signed during the visit of 13-member Science & Technology delegation to India from 23-28 January, 2013 during the Bilateral Joint Committee on Science and Technology meeting.
- u) Protocol amending the Convention for the avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion was signed in Stockholm on 7th February, 2013 during the visit of a 3-member delegation led by Shri Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Joint Secretary(FT-TR1), Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.

Useful Resources

For more information and latest updates please visit

Embassy of India to Sweden and Latvia website:

<http://www.indianembassy.se/>

Embassy of India, Stockholm Facebook

page: <https://www.facebook.com/IndianEmbassyStockholm>

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