

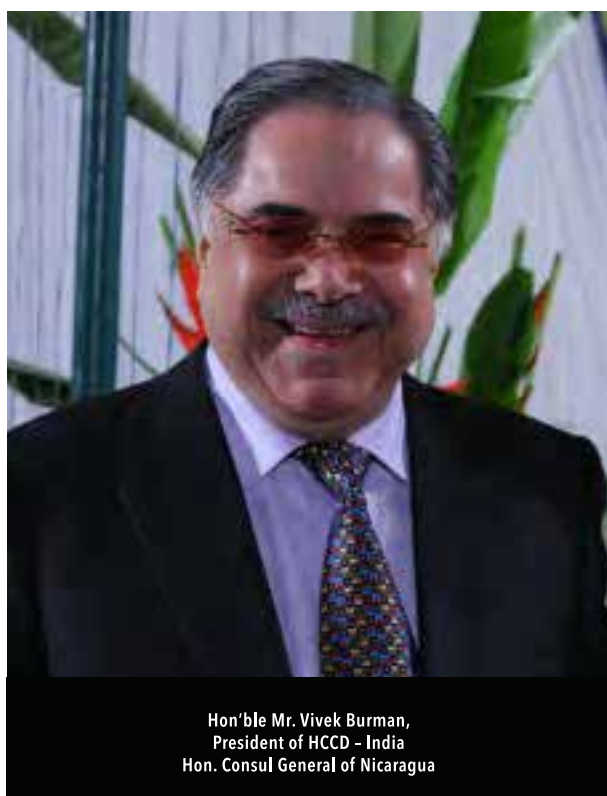
September 2016 | Vol 1

THE CONSULAR CHRONICLES



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India

NEWSLETTER



Hon'ble Mr. Vivek Burman,
President of HCCD - India
Hon. Consul General of Nicaragua

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am very pleased to learn that Hon. Consular Corps Diplomatique-India (HCCD-India), Bengaluru Chapter, under the leadership of the Hon'ble Mr. Suresh Vaswani, Hon. Consul of Benin in Bengaluru and Vice President of HCCD-India, along with his colleagues, the Hon'ble Ms. Surbhi Sharma, the Hon'ble Mr. Kiron Shah and their team, is bringing out the first edition of the HCCD-India Newsletter in September 2016.

I appreciate the efforts of the HCCD-India chapter for taking this initiative in the interest of the Hon. Consuls in India. I would appreciate it if all the other chapters contribute to the newsletter and make it a successful venture.

I wish them success and thank them for their effort.

Yours sincerely,
Vivek Burman

Dated: 06.08.2016

CONTENTS

- > Delhi: Inception, history and happenings
- > Mumbai: Inception, history and happenings
- > Chennai: Inception, history and happenings
- > Kolkata: Inception, history and happenings
- > Bengaluru: Inception, history and happenings
- > In-Depth: 60th Anniversary of Indo-Spanish Relationship
- > Country in focus : Netherlands

LATEST NEWS

Ms Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Hon. Consul of Ireland, has been appointed Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Légion d'Honneur (Knight in the National Order of the Legion of Honour) by the President of the French Republic in recognition of her outstanding achievements as Founder and Managing Director of Biocon



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India

EDITOR'S NOTE

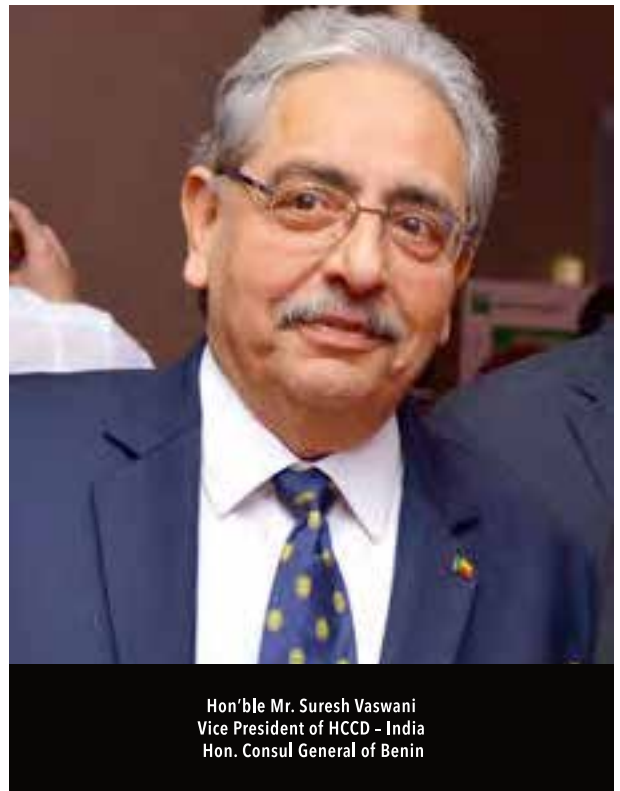
Dear Readers,

It gives me immense pleasure to unveil the inaugural issue of the HCCD-India Newsletter.

Through this newsletter, we hope to create a channel of communication for increased understanding and interaction between the Chapters of HCCD, further strengthening the association for the common benefit of all members. Furthermore, we hope the newsletter will act as a medium for sharing key happenings in the Consular Corps with diplomatic offices across the country, including the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, foreign embassies, high commissions and consulates, and international forums and associations.

We hope you enjoy reading our first issue, and we will be glad to know your feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Best wishes,
Suresh Vaswani
Vice President - HCCD-India
Hon. Consul of Benin



Hon'ble Mr. Suresh Vaswani
Vice President of HCCD - India
Hon. Consul General of Benin

UPCOMING EVENT

24

SEPTEMBER, 2016

Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique India
Meeting
Location: Mumbai

BRIEF INTRODUCTION ON HCCD-INDIA

Honorary Consular Corps Diplomatique-India (HCCD-India) was formed in 1995. Late Hon'ble Dr. Bhai Mohan Singh, Honorary Consular General of San Marino in India, was the Founder President of HCCD-India. Since his demise in 2006, Hon'ble Mr. Vivek Burman, Honorary Consul General of Nicaragua, has been the President. More than 100 Honorary Consuls/Consul Generals based in Delhi, Chennai, Goa, Kolkata, Bangalore and Mumbai are members of HCCD-India. The affairs of the HCCD-India are managed by a board of directors.



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India

HCCD-India was established with the following aims and objectives:

- > Promote and strengthen mutual understanding between Honorary Consular officers in and outside India
- > Develop a framework and basis for exchange of information, ideas and suggestions regarding matters related to the offices of Consuls General & Consuls (Hon)
- > Promote at national and international level, better understanding of the duties, rights, functions, obligations and privileges of the consular office and its incumbents, entrusted to fulfill and enhance their important role in international relations

DELHI

Before I start to write about the history of HCCD-India, I would like to go into the origin of Honorary Consuls. The origin of Honorary Consuls can be traced back to the 8th century, especially to China, India, and the Middle Eastern regions. The official Consular Corps was first established in France at the end of the 18th century. Other states soon followed. The office of the Honorary Consul was originally sanctified by common law. The extraordinary increase of consulates during the 19th and 20th centuries highlighted the need for a more precise legal framework, particularly concerning the consular service and the status of consuls.

After years of consultations and preliminary work, the United Nations Conference on Consular Relations met in Vienna (Austria) and adopted on April 24, 1963 the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963 and two optional protocols. The Convention 'baptized' both categories of consuls, gave them a legal status, invested them with the UN authority and gave them global reach and recognition. Over ninety countries as well as several international organizations attended the conference. It came into force on 19 March 1967. As on date, more than 175 countries have ratified this convention.

In line with the establishment of the Hon. Consular Corps around the world, Late Dr. Bhai Mohan Singh ji, the then Hon. Consul General of San Marino along with the Hon'ble Mr. Kartar Singh Bhalla, Hon. Consul General of Nauru initiated the establishment of the Consular Corp and named it as Hon. Consular Corp Diplomatique-India.

There are 193 United Nations (UN) member states, and each of them is a member of the United Nations General Assembly



The Hon'ble Mr. Vivek Burman, Hon. Consul General of Nicaragua and President, HCCD-India presenting a plaque to the Lt. Governor. Also in the picture is the Hon'ble Mr. K.L. Ganju.

The Indian Consular Corps was established in 1995 under the leadership of Dr. Bhai Mohan Singh ji as President and the Hon'ble Mr. Kartar Singh Bhalla ji as Secretary General. Subsequently, all the Hon. Consuls/ Consul Generals became members of this august organization. This included the Hon'ble Mr. K.P. Singh, the Hon'ble Mr. Vivek Burman, the Hon'ble Mr. Bharti Mittal and others.

The main purpose of establishing this Consular Corp was to have a liaison with the Ministry of External Affairs for persuading them to adhere to the articles of Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963. We succeeded, with the result that many facilities and privileges were accorded to Hon. Consuls all over India, including providing distinctive number plates for their cars. The HCCD-India also became members of F.I.C.A.C. (World Federation of Consuls) which was established in 1982. I am pleased to inform all the members that



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India



The Hon'ble Mr. Vivek Burman along with Amb. of Benin, Amb. of Bosnia, presenting the Consul of the Year trophy to the Hon'ble Mr. Suresh Vaswani, Hon. Consul of Benin. Also seen in the picture is the Hon'ble Mr. K.L. Ganju.

the representative of HCCD-India has been on the board of the directors since then—for more than 15 years. Every 3 years during the World Congress of the World Federation of Consuls, elections to the Board are held and the representative of HCCD-India has consistently won. India has a special place in the World Federation of Consuls and holds an important position in the World Organisation. Initially the Hon'ble Mr. Nand Khemka who is presently Hon. Consul General of Jamaica in India was on the board of the World Federation of Consuls till 2006. Since 2006, the Hon'ble Mr. K.L. Ganju has been elected every time and in the year 2015 he was elected for the 4th term which will end in 2018. The Hon'ble Mr. K.L. Ganju is also Chairman of the Consular Privileges Protection

MUMBAI

Honorary Consular Corps Diplomatique-India (HCCD-India) Mumbai Chapter was set up in Mumbai on 27th June, 2008.

We follow the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations in the belief that an international convention on consular relations and immunities would also contribute to the development of friendly relations among nations, irrespective of their differing constitutional and social systems. The Mumbai Chapter works in close liaison with the Government of Maharashtra and Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.

Committee. He has collected data regarding the privileges and facilities being enjoyed by the Hon. Consuls from more than 43 countries. The comparative statement was distributed all around the world which helped Consular Corps approach their respective receiving states for benefits.

The HCCD-India apart from having a liaison with the M.E.A., Govt. of India also organized the first FICAC South Asia Regional Consular Conference in the year 2011 in which more than 130 foreign Hon. Consuls and nearly 70 Hon. Consuls from India participated. This was one of the most successful regional consular conferences ever held by FICAC. Apart from this, the HCCD-India also celebrates Christmas and New Year in which ambassadors, high commissioners, government officials and Hon. Consuls participate.

This is the brief history of HCCD-India, giving a glimpse of the activities.

K.L. Ganju
Secretary General
HCCD-India

Most of our members are also members of HCCD-India and Consular Corps Association-Mumbai (CCAM). Today, as Chairman of the Mumbai Chapter, I am proud to say that we have a total of 56 members, increasing steadily every month, as new appointments take place. Truly, we believe that "unity is strength." We wholeheartedly recognize the importance of corporate social responsibility, and are keenly mindful of the need to uphold human rights. We organize The Oberoi Melting Pot which has various countries from across the globe uniting to showcase their cultures, lifestyles and cuisines, and contributing to a noble cause.



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India



Mr. Sumit Mullick, Additional Chief Secretary, Protocol Department, presenting a plaque to Mr. Swadhin Kshatriya, Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra, along with Mr. Gul Kripalani, President of HCCD Mumbai

The proceeds from this event go to well-deserving charities. The Oberoi Melting Pot is a signature event that we organize along with the Rotary Club of Bombay and the Oberoi Group of hotels.

In addition, we organize a commemorative event every 26th of November at the Gateway of India, to pay tribute to all those who lost their lives in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. This event is attended by the entire diplomatic community and the general public.

To celebrate the spirit of Christmas, a season dedicated to peace and goodwill, we organize a carol-singing event at the All Saints Church, where the entire diplomatic community participates, irrespective of caste, creed and religion.

These are just a few of the activities organized by the HCCD Mumbai Chapter, serving as an expression of our tireless commitment to the community and the environment (both ecological and social).

CHENNAI

The Chennai Chapter consists of 36 Honorary Consuls, with more appointments in the pipeline. It is one of the oldest chapters dating back to the early 80s and 90s—when a few appointments were made for Honorary Consuls. Recently, on 15th April, 2016, a lunch-in meeting of all the Honorary Consuls in Chennai was arranged, after a long gap, to reactivate the Chapter. In this meeting, more Honorable Consuls were appraised and encouraged to become members of HCCD. The response was very heartening. St. Patrick's Day, the national day of Ireland, was celebrated on March 13, 2016 at Chennai. H.E. Brian McElduff, Ambassador to India, Embassy of Ireland, New Delhi was the chief guest.



St. Patrick's Day celebrations 2016 hosted by Mr. Rajeev Mecheri, the Honorary Consulate of Ireland



Social responsibility initiatives from the Honorary Consulate of Malta in Chennai for the flood-affected people in Chennai

Around 400 guests from various strata like heads of prominent business houses in the city, representatives of NGOs, chiefs of diplomatic missions and Irish citizens living in Chennai participated in the event. As part of social responsibility, Honorary Consulate of Malta - Chennai was actively involved in providing assistance to the stranded population of Chennai during the recent floods, by delivering food packages and essential clothing materials to the affected people.



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India

KOLKATA

Consular Corps of Kolkata (CCK) comprises both career diplomats and Honorary Consuls. This is an atypical arrangement, unlike those to be found in the other metro cities, where career diplomats and Honorary Consuls have separate organizations. Presently Kolkata has 65 missions as members, of which 12 missions are manned by career diplomats, while the others are manned by Honorary Consuls.

CCK was formed 65 years ago, with its board comprising the dean and the vice dean, posts held by two senior-most career diplomats. The director, joint director and treasurer are from the Honorary Consuls. CCK has its meetings every second Wednesday of the month, where eminent speakers are invited to address the members in attendance over lunch.

Our next major event is to host a dinner for young diplomats coming to Kolkata from the BRIC countries, as the preliminary event leading up to the BRIC summit that's to be held in Goa later this year.

East Timor became the first
new sovereign state of the
21st century on 20 May 2002

BENGALURU



Receiving the Certificate of Membership from FICAC President on behalf of HCCD-India at the World Congress, November 2015

With the dawn of the new millennium, Bengaluru was added to the list of diplomatic destinations with the appointment of Ms Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw as Honorary Consul of the Republic of Ireland in the year 2000; subsequently, many other appointments were made; and in the year 2007, the first Consulate General's office was opened by Germany.

By the year 2012, Bengaluru had more than a dozen Honorary Consuls. Subsequently, it was decided that it was time to establish a Chapter of HCCD-India—and covering the geographical states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the fifth Chapter was inaugurated. A large event was conducted as the inaugural function of the Chapter, and members were introduced to a large gathering of dignitaries, Consul Generals, bureaucrats, politicians and leading citizens of the city. The Bengaluru Chapter now has 22 members, representing various countries from Peru to Mongolia and from Spain to Djibouti. The members of this chapter conduct 4 to 5 meetings a year to brainstorm and discuss various issues. The members of the chapter have regularly met and interacted with all consulates, and trade and government bodies.



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India



Bengaluru Chapter 3rd Anniversary Celebration (2016)



Farewell dinner for Mr. Eric Lavertu - Consul General of France (2015)

Events were regularly held to welcome newly appointed Consul Generals and farewell dinners arranged for diplomats upon completion of their term in Bengaluru. Our members have participated with great fervour in other national and international events as well. The national HCCD event in New Delhi and the South Asian Regional Meet in Colombo saw many members of the Bengaluru Chapter. In fact, the contingent from Bengaluru was the largest from any country outside Europe at the World Consul event in Istanbul last November.

Our members have been the recipients of various honours at the events, including the "Best Consul of the Year" award at New Delhi earlier this year. Taking keen initiative in bringing together HCCD members from all over India, the Bengaluru Chapter initiated and held a large event in February this year which was attended by members of HCCD from New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai.

The members of the Chapter are now embarking on a new project which will be part of our corporate social responsibility initiatives, and the details are under finalization.



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDO-SPANISH RELATIONSHIP



In the year 2016, Spain and India celebrate the 60th anniversary of their diplomatic relations. A crucial turning point indeed.

Spain recognised India as a sovereign state after its independence in 1947. Full diplomatic relations were established in November 1956, and only two years later, in 1958, Spain opened a resident embassy in New Delhi. Despite being a modest, humble and understaffed embassy, it was not a small achievement. Spain had by then only the Mediterranean countries and the American continent as the sole guiding lights for its foreign policy. An embassy in India was therefore something truly exceptional and marked the beginning of a new period, during which Spain opened up to all those areas of the world where it had not been historically present.

Nevertheless, while Spain had been diplomatically present in India since 1956, our relations really took off only relatively recently, in the year 2000. It was not until the year 2000 that the Spanish government, aware of the importance of the challenge, announced its Asia-Pacific Framework Plan. Successive versions of this plan have coordinated government efforts to increase the Spanish presence and visibility in the region, especially in India, seeking new ways to underpin Spain's image and performance in a part of the world that has brighter prospects than any other.

In the last ten years, our embassy has doubled in size and has opened a Defence Attaché Office, two Economic and Commercial Offices and the beloved Cervantes Institute (The Spanish cultural center), as well as added new sectorial counsellors to its staff. The setting up of institutions such as Casa Asia—with offices in Madrid and Barcelona—and Casa de la India in Valladolid or the Spain-India Council Foundation in Madrid, only reflects the on-going commitment to our presence in India. The numerous high level visits to and from India also contributed to bringing our authorities and our people closer and boasting a better knowledge of one another.

In 2012, the former King of Spain, H.M Juan Carlos I visited India, three years after the then Prince of Asturias—the current King of Spain—H.M. Felipe VI, had spent some days in Delhi. More recently, in 2015, to announce the grand celebration that would be the 60th Anniversary of our bilateral relations, the Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Spain, Pedro Morenés, followed by the Minister of External Affairs and Cooperation, J.M. García-Margallo, carried out an official visit to India, opening renewed venues of collaboration between both countries.

This year both India and Spain intend to bring about a more dynamic and diversified relationship between our peoples, to create new economic opportunities and to project a modern, updated image of our country, so as to present the deep changes that it has undergone in the last decades. Hence, this cultural programme boasts a three-fold hinge: economic initiatives, cultural activities and dialogue between our societies—a vast programme which covers areas such as sport, science and technology.

As far as our bilateral work is concerned, it is our ambition and our goal to increase our relationship. We expect VVIPs traveling to Spain during the year, as well as their Spanish counterparts coming to India. Politically speaking, we feel it is almost mandatory to count on India for the ever-increasing need for convergence in a multilateral world, whose threats are varied in nature and relentless in malice. Cooperation in security, counter-terrorism and regional police collaboration should be on top of our list.

The Spanish Government's new, more active and more ambitious approach to this important bilateral relationship cannot be understood without the pressure that has arisen from many large and medium-sized Spanish companies. The trade and investment figures



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India



Dr. Magdalena Cruz, Chargée d'Affaires
a.i. of the Embassy of Spain

have increased significantly from a very low starting point and there is great potential for this expansion to continue. Spanish firms are world leaders in many of the economic sectors that the Indian Government has earmarked as priorities: infrastructure, renewable energy, smart cities, sanitation, water treatment, transport management and so on.

THE NETHERLANDS AND INDIA: THE TWO ENDS OF THE "SPICE ROUTE"

The Indo-Dutch relationship goes back more than 400 years when India and the Netherlands were at the two ends of the "Spice Route". The Dutch East India Company visited the South and East coasts of India in the 17th century searching for spices and textiles. Those traders did not just set up trade between India and the Netherlands – they bought textiles in India and traded these in all corners of Asia to collect enough money to pay for the spices being shipped back to the Netherlands. Traces of the Spice Route trade can still be found in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and West Bengal.

This year is an ideal opportunity for Spain to mark this new era of relations with India with a rank of special cultural events which encompass music, gastronomy, art, cinema, and literature (like the opening of the Spanish Section at the Oxford bookstore in New Delhi). These events will serve their full purpose if they attract people to come and visit Spain. It is no secret that Spain is one of the world's main tourist destinations, and Indians love it. Yet it would be a pleasure if we could expand that destination beyond the already well known attractions of Barcelona, Madrid and the Balearic Islands.

The fact that both countries have jointly designed and approved a common logo shows the importance that we all have given to the celebration of this 60-year long relationship. The Embassy of India, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain and the Casa de la India Foundation announced a competition for the design of a graphic for the Year of India in Spain/Year of Spain in India-2016.

Spain and India, although very different in size and character, can and will benefit from a closer cooperation in many areas. There is a basis for a strong and expanding partnership as we take on the challenges and explore the opportunities in front of us. We are very much looking forward to further developing and expanding the rewarding and fruitful cooperation between Spain and India in the years to come.

At 21-square-kilometer (8.1 sq mi) area, Nauru is the smallest state in the South Pacific and the third smallest state by area in the world, behind only Vatican City and Monaco

One of the places where the Dutch traders had settled down was in Chinsurah in West Bengal, where, amongst others, the ancient Dutch cemetery can still be visited. Although the Dutch East India Company has not been in existence since late 18th century, trade and investment cooperation has continued to be a key component of the India-Netherlands relationship, and has shown impressive growth over the last decade. Currently, the



Hon. Consular Corps
Diplomatique-India



Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi with Mr. Mark Rutte,
Hon'ble Prime Minister of Netherlands

Netherlands is India's fifth largest trading partner in the EU and one of the top five investors in India over the period 2000-2015. Furthermore, the value of mutual trade has risen to more than six billion Euros.

The Netherlands is the 'Gateway to Europe', and an increasing number of Indian companies are realising this. There are more than 174 Indian companies present in the Netherlands, including Indian multinationals such as Tata Steel and Sun Pharmaceuticals, as well as major IT companies like Wipro and Infosys. Many Dutch multinational companies like Shell, Phillips and Unilever (called Hindustan Lever in India) have, amongst other smaller and medium enterprises, also found their way to India and maintained a growing, successful presence in the country. India's large pool of technical and

Vienna Convention on Consular Relations
was adopted at Vienna on 24 April 1963



Signing of the MoU with the UP Government

well-trained workforce, the enormous domestic market and increased economic growth make India a country that has much potential for Dutch businesses.

From the economic perspective, the initiatives of Prime Minister Modi, such as the Clean Ganga Mission and the Smart Cities Initiative, offer opportunities for Dutch companies to come up with innovative solutions in the field of waste management, water management and urban planning. These opportunities meet a lot of interest in the Netherlands, as they appeal directly to the Dutch core competences and, by collaborating with Indian partners, can be implemented to the Indian context. The agricultural sector also turns out to be a perfect platform for Indo-Dutch collaborations, as India is the world's largest producer of milk, potatoes and fruits and has seen a steady output growth in recent years.



Smart Cities Pavilion during the Smart Cities event
in New Delhi in May, 2016

The Centres of Excellence in the agricultural sector are a nice example of how this collaboration has been put into practice. These Centres of Excellence can be seen as a demonstration centre and education platform of the Dutch technical practices in the field of agriculture, adapted to the Indian context, in order to teach Indian farmers the latest Dutch technologies and innovations.

Presently, there are several developments in place which likely bring this Indo-Dutch relationship to an even higher level. Jet Airways' launch of a daily non-stop flight to Amsterdam from both Mumbai and New Delhi since the 27th of March will for sure benefit the strength of the connection between the Netherlands and India, and will have a positive effect on the trade and investment between the two countries. Instead of one

flight from Amsterdam to India, we now have three daily flights. That means three times more passengers, three times more business people, and three times more tourists. Moreover, an increasing number of Indian students now study in the Netherlands; in 2015 there were already more than 1000 Indian students.

The substantial Indian diaspora in the Netherlands is also playing a useful role by acting as a bridge between the two countries, where the Netherlands has the largest community of Indian diaspora in Continental Europe, outside the United Kingdom. One can say that the relationship between the Netherlands and India has grown from strength to strength and has all the fundamentals in place to keep growing in the future.