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# THE CONSULAR CHRONICLES

NEWSLETTER



Hon. Consular Corps  
Diplomatique-India

*Happy New Year*

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

### Feliz año nuevo - Happy New Year

A new decade awaits us. The New Year comes with new resolutions, new promises for a better and more beautiful future.

It is my privilege to take over as Editor of The Consular Chronicles and I am fortunate to be working with a great team. I am looking forward to continue to bring to our readers news on events from across the country and the world.

The NCC-FICAC conference was held in Kathmandu in November and the Secretary General of World Federation of Consuls Mr. Nicolas Margaropoulos who during his visit to New Delhi was awarded "Medal of Honor" by HCCD-India for his contribution towards promoting Consular activities around the World.

The name "Kazakh" comes from the ancient Turkic word qaz, "to wander", The name Cossack" is of the same origin The Persian suffix stan means "land", so Kazakhstan can be literally translated as "land of the wanderers". In 'NATION IN FOCUS' we have featured Kazakhstan.

The Membership of HCCD-India continues to grow and we welcome new Members to the fraternity of Honorary Consuls

I hope you enjoy reading this issue off The Consular Chronicles. I welcome your feedback and look forward to the next issue in Spring 2020.

Warm Regards

**Surbhi Sharma**  
Editor  
Honorary Consul of Spain

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**Special Focus** – Chief Guest at  
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**A Special Guest** – Consul General of Switzerland

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Hon. **Mr. Purushottam Agrawal**  
Honorary Consul of Zimbabwe at Mumbai

Hon. **Mr. Neeraj A Sharma**  
Honorary Consul of Palau at New Delhi

Hon **Mr. Kasu Venkata Rajagopal Reddy**  
Honorary Consul of Seychelles at Bangalore



## DELHI

Hon'ble Mr. Nikolaos Margaropoulos, Hony. Consul of Philippines and Secretary General of FICAC (World Federation of Consuls) was on a visit to Delhi. During his visit a Dinner was hosted in his honor and Hon'ble Mr. Nikolaos Margaropoulos was awarded 'Medal of Honour' by HCCD - India for his contribution towards promoting Consular activities around the world.





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## NATION IN FOCUS - KAZAKHASTAN



Hon'ble  
**Mr. Sraj Shantakumar**  
Honorary Consul of  
Kazakhstan,  
Chennai

Kazakhstan has made vast developments during the last two decades as an independent nation, in advancing its economy with a firm commitment towards developing a prosperous nation to the betterment of all its people. With the 1st priority set on the accelerated technological modernization of the economy, Kazakhstan's high authority in the international arena shall join the world's top 30 developed countries by 2050.

Geographically, Kazakhstan is the largest land-locked country covering a territory equivalent to the whole of Western Europe and is recognized as the world's ninth largest country, with an area of 2.7 million square kilometers and home to people of more than 130 ethnic groups who follow the teachings of different religions.

Kazakhstan is one of the world's best-endowed states possessing world-class deposits of minerals and raw materials, rich in natural resources like oil and gas as well as gold, silver and various other precious metals, placing Kazakhstan among the global top five and providing around 3 percent of the world's expected oil demand within the next decade.

The government provides preferential project financing as part of the Business Roadmap 2020 and Economy of Simple Things programmes to enhance the food and processing industries.

Investment subsidies up to 25 percent of costs are provided to construct and modernise agricultural processing plants. Subsidies are also offered to reduce interest rates on loans to replenish fixed and current assets.

Kazakhstan has attracted \$3.3 billion in agricultural investment in last five years. Forty-nine projects with foreign participation have been launched, including 25 projects worth \$1.4 billion.

In January-October 2019 fixed asset investments in art, entertainment and leisure reached a record US\$309.27 million in Kazakhstan, a 53.5-percent increase year-on-year (yoy) and 1.2 percent share of all fixed asset investments. One Fourth of the investments are in Nur-Sultan. The top three regions, which also include the East Kazakhstan and Almaty regions, account for almost 59 percent of all investments in the field. A noticeable increase in the investment portfolio resulted from a 93.5-percent increase (up to US\$140.46 million in own fund investments, 45.4 percent of the total volume of capital investments in the field.

As of October, 436,500 small companies are registered in Kazakhstan, a 2.3-percent increase year-on-year (yoy). The number of operating companies increased 10.1 percent to 294,000. Accordingly, the share of small operating enterprises from registered companies increased from 62.6 percent to 67.4 percent. The number of operating small businesses has increased in all regions, with Nur-Sultan showing the most noticeable growth of 15.1 percent to 49,300. The Turkestan Region and Shymkent had the highest growth rates of 14.5 percent and 14.4 percent, respectively. One-quarter of all operating companies are in Almaty.





At the end of October, Kazakh second-tier banks loaned US\$670.56 million to agricultural entities compared to US\$1.29 billion in 2018. The Almaty Region provided almost half (48 percent) of the loans, followed by the Akmola (US\$65.03 million) and Kostanai (US\$60.09 million) regions. The loan reduction was caused by the banks' high average lending rate (12 percent and higher) and stringent requirements on borrowers' collateral base. Small enterprises comprised the largest share (97.5 percent) of agricultural borrowers during the ten-month period.



In the first ten months of the year, metal ore mining reached US\$4.16 billion and the industrial production index was 115.8 percent (104.6 percent in 2018). In 2018, metal ore production value was slightly less than US\$3.90 billion. Non-ferrous metals accounted for more than 78 percent of total production. The Kostanai Region led in metal ore production with US\$984.78 million, of which US\$804.8 million was iron ore and US\$179.99 million non-ferrous metals. The East Kazakhstan Region, the second biggest producer, extracted US\$869.81 million in non-ferrous metal ores. The Aktobe Region closed the top three with US\$643.77 million, of which US\$631.55 million is non-ferrous metals and US\$11.96 million iron ores.

Automobile and urban electric transport company income across Kazakhstan increased from US\$530.62 million to US\$577.44 million in January-October 2019. The income share of all transport enterprises is 8.8 percent for the second year in a row. Goods transportation in the industry was 61.9 percent or US\$357.39 million. Accordingly, the revenue share of passenger traffic decreased to 38.1 percent, or US\$220.05 million.

The Kazakh National Bank recently maintained the base rate at 9.25 percent per annum while maintaining the



interest rate band at +/- 1. Annual inflation is below the expectations of the National Bank. Real GDP growth is gradually accelerating. Given the current decision on the base rate, inflation is expected to develop within the target corridor of 4-6 percent for 2019-2020. Further decisions on the base rate will be made considering internal and external risks, which will determine the level of actual inflation and its compliance with the targets.



## MUMBAI

Mr. Vijay Kalantri, Chairman, Honorary Consular Corps Diplomatique – Mumbai (HCCD) felicitating Mr. K. L. Ganju, President - HCCD – India during the Executive Committee Meeting of HCCD – India organized on in Mumbai.



Honorary Consuls courtesy meeting with His Excellency, Governor of Maharashtra

# SPECIAL FOCUS - PRESIDENT OF BRAZIL CHIEF GUEST AT INDIA REPUBLIC DAY PARADE 2020



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**Apparao Mallavarapu Rao**  
**Honorary Consul of Brazil –**  
**Bangalore**

This Republic Day celebrations is a special day in the relations between India and Brazil. The Government of India has bestowed the honour of inviting President Bolsonaro as the Chief Guest for the Indian Republic Day which the President has graciously accepted.

As two of the world's largest developing countries, Brazil and India have built a strong and comprehensive relationship over 70 years of bilateral relations, rooted in shared world views. This partnership has encompassed closer alliances on prominent international issues and on important mechanisms such as the BRICS, IBSA, BASIC and G4.

Ever since taking office in January 2019, President Bolsonaro has already met PM Modi twice under the BRICS framework, giving them opportunities to hold wide-ranging discussions on topics such as trade and investment, agriculture, energy and biofuels in the context of climate change. Their meetings highlighted that the shared values of democracy and multiculturalism and the common quest for development and sustainability unite both countries.

As Brazil and India look for ways to take this fruitful partnership further, there is a strong understanding that it must also be reflected in a solid economic base, through increased trade and investment. It must be stressed that cooperation between Brazil and India is thriving in many areas such as Energy, developing the Ethanol Market and Digital Economy Sector. In the start-up ecosystem, we have been observing an intense flow of innovative companies between the two countries in the past three years.

There are, many areas in which relations can be expanded for the mutual benefit of our societies. These will be reflected in the many agreements expected to be signed during President Jair Bolsonaro's visit to India as the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations

The visit of Brazilian President Bolsonaro to India will certainly help bring together, two of the most vibrant, diverse and entrepreneurial societies. As we expand trade and investment, strengthen bilateral cooperation in many areas and become acquainted with each other's capabilities, technological breakthroughs, culture and business environment, the yet untapped potential of Brazil – India partnership will become clear.



## CHENNAI



Royal Thai National Day Celebration on 4th December 2019 at Taj Connemera, Chennai.



Reception hosted by Honorary Consul Mr. Shantakumar on the occasion of the visit of the High Commissioner of Malta to India H.E. Ambassador Mr. Stephen D. Borg's visit to Chennai



Remembrance Day – at Chennai with Mr. Oliver Ballhatchet – British Deputy High Commissioner





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# HCC – FICAC REGIONAL CONFERENCE AT KHATMANDU

*A Report by Hon'ble Mr. Purushottam Bhaggeria – Secretary General – HCCD - India*

The FICAC - South Asia Consular Conference was held at Khatmandu, Nepal from 12th to 15th November, 2019. HCCD-India was represented by Mr. K.L. Ganju, Consul General (Hy.), President of HCCD – India, Hon'ble Mr. Vivek Burman, Hony. Consul General of Nicaragua and President (Emeritus), HCCD – India, Hon'ble Mr. Purushottam Bhaggeria, Hony. Consul of Moldova, Secretary General – HCCD – India, Hon'ble Mr. T. Shantakumar, Hony. Consul of Malta and Vice President – HCCD – India, Hon'ble Mr. Suraj Shantakumar, Hony. Consul of Kazakhstan. The South Asia Consular Conference was inaugurated by Vice President of Republic of Nepal and also attended by Foreign Minister of Nepal.

The Conference concluded with a Gala dinner hosted by the Tourism Minister and was attended by large number of Ambassadors, Career Consuls, Hony. Consuls, Government officials etc etc. The HCCD – India conferred on the President of World Federation of Consuls and President of Hony. Consul of Nepal with 'Award of Honour' for their contribution towards promoting consular activities around the world.





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## BANGALORE



Reception in Honour of the Ambassador of Brazil visiting Bangalore to Inaugurate the office of the Honorary Consul



Reception in Honor of the Ambassador of Seychelles visiting Bangalore to inaugurate the office of the Honorary Consul



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Farwell Party hosted by Bangalore Chapter for Consul General of France, British Deputy High Commissioner and Deputy Consul General of Switzerland.



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## A SPECIAL GUEST



### SABESTIAN HUG

Consul General of Switzerland

#### From Bollywood to Tech Diplomacy

Imagine a typical, pristine Swiss landscape: green meadows with happy cows, centuries-old wooden chalets covered in red and purple flowers, in the background impressive, snow-covered mountain ranges. And in the midst of it: Shahrukh Khan on a medieval-stone-bridge, dressed in a kurta dancing to Hindi music. This picture certainly might remind you of one of the countless Bollywood movies shot in Switzerland over the last 50 years. Now imagine this: Shahrukh Khan dancing .... to an AI-generated song, in a self-driving Swiss electric public bus, filmed by a fleet of autonomous drones.

Admittedly, Raj Kapoor and Yash Chopra may not be impressed with the “science-fiction” and would prefer to stick to the happy cows and flowery chalets. It is also thanks to them that Switzerland's image in India has been marked by such positive associations and makes India one of the fastest growing markets for the Swiss tourism and hospitality sector.

Many Indians do not think of Switzerland as a place of disruptive technologies, cutting-edge research and a world-leading education system. Yet, a brief look at the various global innovation rankings makes it clear that Switzerland is not only about chocolate, cheese and watches, but a place where the future is being shaped.

This is not unlike India, where the entrepreneurial spirit has moved beyond Bangalore's Electronic City, and reached cities like Gurgaon, Hyderabad or Pune to become strong and thriving innovation ecosystems.

More than ever, in the age of open innovation and global challenges, collaboration across organisations, disciplines and borders have become the need of the hour. Not surprisingly then, Tech Diplomacy has become an important part of Indo-Swiss relations over the last decade. Located in Bangalore since 2010, swissnex India is Switzerland's Tech Consulate in India with the mission to “connect the dots” in education, research and innovation between our two countries. My team and I are doing this by providing intelligence and coaching, connecting students, scientists, entrepreneurs and innovators, facilitating exchanges and collaborations, and raising awareness and visibility for opportunities.

How to promote block chain technologies through innovation-friendly policies and ecosystem building? What are the different options for a Swiss startup in the digital health space to enter the Indian market? What are the hottest Indian startups in the logistics and mobility sector? These and many other questions have guided our efforts in the past year to strengthen the Indo-Swiss ecosystem around new technologies and research.

Looking forward, a busy and exciting 2020 lies ahead. Starting with a week-long workshop on how to translate research into policy in Bangalore, to leading a Swiss health tech delegation to BioAsia 2020 in Hyderabad, where Switzerland is the official partner country, to promoting the first-ever call for proposals for bilateral innovation partnerships, and exploring questions around digital governance.

And who knows: Maybe Bollywood will discover Switzerland's techie side in 2020 and feature Shahrukh Khan dancing to an AI-powered Hindi song, dressed in a smart Kurta monitoring health rate and releasing infrared light to improve his muscle recovery.

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