

## **India-Argentina Relations**

India-Argentina relations are cordial and encompass political, economic, scientific and technological cooperation including Antarctic research and cultural cooperation. India opened a Trade Commission in Buenos Aires in 1943 and later converted it into an embassy in 1949. Argentina had established a consulate in Calcutta in the 1920s which was transferred to Delhi as an embassy in 1950. Argentina opened a Consulate General office in Mumbai in April, 2009.

### **Visits from India**

External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid visited Argentina in February 2013. During the visit he met with President Cristina Fernandez, Vice president Amado Boudou, FM Hector Timerman and Parliamentarians. During bilateral exchanges, issues relating to Science and Technology Co-operation, Cultural Exchange Programme, Agriculture, Agreement on Phytosanitary Cooperation among others, were discussed.

Smt Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs, participated in the Bicentenary celebrations of Argentina held on 25th May, 2010, and conveyed greetings to the Argentine President Cristina Kirchner Fernandez. More recently, MOS (Commerce) Jyotiraditya Scindia visited in May 2011 and Minister of Agriculture Sharad Pawar in September 2010. Some of the important recent visits include:

- Minister of Textiles Mr Sankarsingh Vaghela - April 2008
- Minister of State for External Affairs Mr Anand Sharma - February 2008
- Minister of State for External Affairs Rao Inderjeet Singh -2005
- Prime Minister Narasimha Rao - 1995 (for G-15 Summit)
- President Zail Singh - April 1984
- Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi – 1968

### **Visits from Argentina**

President Cristina Fernandez visited India in October 2009, which also marked the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations. She was accompanied by the Ministers and Governors of the provinces of San Juan and La Pampa along with a 70 member business delegation. Ten agreements/MOUs for cooperation, covering wide ranging areas such as sports, science & technology, industrial research, hydrocarbons, trade promotion and business visas were signed. During the visit, both sides agreed to develop a Comprehensive Dialogue leading towards a Strategic Partnership. The Argentine Senate and the Chamber of Deputies have formed Friends of India Parliamentary groups in 2008. Some of the other important visits from Argentina include:

- Agriculture Minister Julian Dominguez – August 2010
- Chief Minister of Buenos Aires Mr. Mauricio Macri - April 2010
- Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana-September 2007 (for Doha Round Consultations)
- Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana – September 2007 (for G-20 Consultations)
- Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana – July 2006
- President Carlos Menem-March1994
- President Raul Alfonsin - 1985 (chief guest for the Republic Day)
- President Reynaldo Bignone - 1983 (to attend NAM summit)
- President Arturo Frondizi - Dec 1961

### **Bilateral Agreements signed on during the Visit of President CFK in October 2009**

The bilateral agreements signed during the visit of President CFK were:

1. Framework Agreement on cooperation in the Peaceful uses of Outer Space.

2. MOU between SEGEMAR of Argentina and Geological Survey of India.
3. Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology
4. MOU on sports cooperation
5. MOU Trade Promotion
6. MOU between INTI of Argentina and National Research Development Council Corporation, New Delhi
7. MOU on cooperation in the petroleum sector between ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) and ENARSA of Argentina
8. Cooperation Agreement between the Argentine Council on Scientific and Technical Research [CONICET] and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research of India (CSIR)
9. Agreement providing for 5-year multiple entry free business visas
10. Agreement for cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

### **Other Agreements**

Other agreements are :

1. Agreement on Exchange of information and assistance on Tax issues - November 2011
2. Customs agreement - April 2011
3. MoU for Cooperation in Agriculture and Allied Sectors – September 2010
4. MoU for Cooperation in Agricultural Research and Education – July 2006
5. BIPPA Agreement – 1999
6. MOU on Antarctic Cooperation – 1998
7. Agreement for exemption of Visas for holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports – 1994
8. MOU on Foreign Office Consultations – 1994
9. Agreement for Grant of three years' Business visa – 1993
10. Agreement on Technical and Scientific Cooperation – 1985
11. Cultural Agreement – 1974
12. Agreement for waiver of fee for tourist and transit visas – 1968

## **Co-operation**

The Joint Commission established since 1994 coordinates and reviews bilateral cooperation. The third meeting of the Joint Commission was held in New Delhi in July 2006, co-chaired by the Argentine Foreign Minister and MOS External Affairs from the Indian side. The next meeting is to be held in Buenos Aires.

Foreign Office Consultation is another mechanism of cooperation between the two countries. After a gap of 3 years Shri Vivek Katju, Secretary (West) led the Indian delegation for the Foreign Office Consultations with Argentina on 4th October, 2010 in Buenos Aires, where he reviewed with Vice Foreign Minister Mr. Alberto Dalotto the entire gamut of bilateral relations, and exchanged views on regional and multilateral issues.

India gives 10 ITEC scholarships to Argentine candidates every year. Argentine diplomats attend the courses at the Foreign Service Training Institute of India from time to time.

ISRO launched an Argentine nano-satellite, called as Pehuen Sat-I (weighing 6 kg) on board PSLV of India in January 2007 on a commercial basis. There exists scope for such cooperation in future.

Under the Agreement on Technical and Scientific Cooperation of 1985, the Programme of Cooperation (POC) for 2009-11 was signed in 2009 during the Argentine President visit to India in October 2009.

**Antarctic Cooperation** India and Argentina also have ongoing cooperation in the Antarctica. Both are members of the Antarctic Treaty. The Secretariat is located in Buenos Aires. An MOU on Antarctic cooperation was signed between India and Argentina in 1998 and renewed in 2006.

## **Defence**

The Argentine Government has posted a Defence Attache in their Embassy in New Delhi in 2008. Delegations of the National Defence College (NDC) of India visited Argentina in May 2008 and May 2012, respectively. An Indian Naval Officer joined the six-month global sailing of the Argentine Naval Sailing Vessel 'Libertador' in 2008. Indian Naval officers are regularly being deputed to attend the Antarctic Navigation course since September 2009. One Officer from the Indian Army had been deputed to undergo Equestrians Training Course in Argentina since 2010.

## **Trade and Investment**

Indo- Argentine Trade turnover for the year 2012(Jan-Dec) was USD 1838 million (USD 1.8 bn) as follows:

**(In Million US \$ )**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Indian Exports</b>	<b>Indian Imports</b>
<b>Jan-Dec 2012</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>1264</b>

**Indian Exports to Argentina (Item Wise Composition, Period: Jan-Dec 2012)**

<b>Items</b>	<b>In million US \$</b>
Organic chemicals	154
Sound and image devices	90
Vehicles and autoparts	63
Synthetic fiber	21
Machinery	45
Garments	32
Dyes	13.5
Iron and Steel	13
Plastic Products	14
Bulk drugs	17

The main items of Indian exports to Argentina are Organic Chemicals, Vehicles and Auto parts, Lubricants, Machinery, Sound and Image Devices and Garments, among others.

**Indian Imports from Argentina (Item Wise Composition, Period: Jan-Dec 2012)**

<b>Items</b>	<b>In million US \$</b>
Soybean oil	1068
Sunflower oil	42
Copper	30
Pulses	21.5
Leather	16.5
Barley	11.7
Cotton	10.5
Wool	6
Ferro alloys	5
Cosmetics	4.8

The main items of India's imports from Argentina are Soybean oil, Sunflower oil, Leather, Wool , Ferroalloys among others. Organic Chemicals and fine chemicals constitute the biggest item of Indian export to Argentina and Soybean oil, India's biggest import from Argentina.

India's trade turnover with Argentina in the last 6 years are as below:

**(In Million US \$)**

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Year</b>						
<b>India's exports</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>328</b>
<b>India's imports</b>	<b>1264</b>	<b>1214</b>	<b>2032</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>1002</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1838</b>	<b>1774</b>	<b>2528</b>	<b>1218</b>	<b>1328</b>	<b>1330</b>

## **Indian Investments in Argentina**

Almost thirteen Indian Companies have established operations in Argentina. They provide employment to about 7000 Argentines. Eight of them are in the IT sector, two in agro-chemicals, one in pharma, one in cosmetics and one in electrical lighting. Indian investment in Argentina totals to an estimated USD 930 million.

The details of Indian investment in Argentina include:

**A. Information Technology sector:** TCS has a unit employing about 450 Argentines in Buenos Aires and has plans to increase the staff strength. Cognizant Technologies has IT and BPO operations employing 350 staff. Aegis Group from India has acquired Argentine BPO Company Action line in 2010 which employs 5,000 people in Buenos Aires, Cordoba, Tucuman and Bahia Blanca. Almost all their clients are local. This is the largest Indian BPO in Latin America. CRISIL's IREVNA has set up a KPO (Knowledge Process Outsourcing) unit in Buenos Aires for financial and investment research services employing around 70 Argentine staff and has plans to expand. This is the only third-party KPO in Argentina. Copal Partners, an Indian Financial Research company has established an office in Buenos Aires in 2010, employs around 50 staff. Cellent, a Mumbai-based IT company, has bought an Argentine start-up company "Net People" which specializes in software for mobile phones.

**B. Chemicals:** United Phosphorus Ltd (UPL) of Mumbai has acquired three Argentine agrochemical and seeds companies and operates four manufacturing units and a R&D unit employing around 200 Argentines. Punjab Chemicals and Crop Protection Ltd (PCCPL) has acquired an Argentine company "Síntesis Química" and operates with two factories in Argentina producing and exporting agro chemicals. Their turnover is about USD 25mn.

**C. Pharmaceuticals:** Glenmark has acquired an Argentine pharma company "Servycal SA" in 2011, which specializes in oncological products and is expected to become the global centre of oncological products for the company. They are already exporting to about 30 countries.



**D. Cosmetics:** Godrej has acquired two Argentine cosmetic companies in 2010: Issue Group and Argencos. They produce hair color and other cosmetic products. They also export to other countries in the region.

**E. Oil and Energy Sector:** Reliance has formed a joint venture with an Argentine oil company Pluspetrol (the consortium includes Westwood of Australia) and they have won a concession in Peru for oil exploration and production. ONGC (OVL) has signed a MoU with ENARSA, their Argentine counterpart for possible joint ventures in Argentina for oil exploration.

**F. Transport:** Ashok Leyland has signed a MoU with Plaza Group of Argentina for joint venture in production of buses and trucks. Tata Motors is exploring possibilities of joint ventures in vehicle production in Argentina. Sonalika Tractors has signed a MoU with an Argentine company for tractors and agricultural machinery.

**G. Others:** Kirloskar is planning to put up assembly plant in Argentina for manufacture of pumps. IFFCO the Gujarat based fertilizer cooperative company is in talks with Americas Petrogas of Canada to set up a urea plant using gas produced in La Pampa region of Argentina. IFFCO is also exploring possibility of setting up a urea plant in Argentina. Srishti Group of Kolkata has signed (in 2009) a MoU with the provincial government of Misiones to build a "Vedic Hotel" in the tourist resort of Iguazu. World famous ophthalmologist from Argentina Dr. Roberto Saldivar in collaboration with Dr. Lal Dave of Baroda, with Indian patented technology and partnership, is setting up an intraocular lens production unit in Mendoza, Argentina.

### **Regional Action Plan**

A unique **Regional Action Plan**, was started in August 2012, to promote India's commercial and economic interests in Argentina especially with special focus on its Provinces to a) identify areas of imports and exports b) bring investment in mining, energy and infrastructure in provinces with assured returns c) identify sectors for manufacturing or joint ventures for export to Argentina and

Latin American countries d) export technical collaboration and e) organize visits of the Governors of States with commercial delegations to India.

Under the Plan, the provinces of San Juan, Cordoba, Mendoza and San Luis have been covered during August –November 2012 and the Ambassador has addressed various business seminars and interacted with regional leaders of trade and industry, looking for prospects for boosting trade relations. Also, the Governor of all the above 4 Provinces are scheduled to visit India in March/April 2013, leading business delegations.

### **Argentine Investments in India**

Total Argentinian investment in India stands at USD 120 million. TECHINT, which is one of the largest seamless steel tubes manufacturers in the world, has offices in Delhi employing about 200 people. IMPSA, an Argentine engineering company, specializing in hydroelectric projects, has opened an office in Gurgaon. They are exploring opportunities for projects as well as supply of power generation equipments such as turbines. They have a manufacturing unit in Malaysia. Biosidus, an Argentine pharma company, has a proposal to set up a plant in India for production of biotech pharmaceuticals for Indian and Asian markets. They are already exporting over 3 million dollars a year to India.

Bago, the leading Argentine pharma company has opened an office in Hyderabad. They have a joint venture operation with Ranbaxy to market their products in Thailand.

### **Non-Resident Indian Companies**

**Arcelor Mittal** has acquired the Argentine steel company Acindar and steel distribution company Magjadalani for over USD 600 million. **Sterling Group of India** (owned by NRI Sivasankaran) has acquired a 1700 hectare olive farm in Catamarca Province of Argentina. “**Olam**”, a NRI company with headquarters in Singapore has some investment in agribusiness and does trading in groundnut

and other agro commodities. They grow peanuts, soya and wheat in 30,000 hectares of land in Rio Cuarto and Salta areas and have plans to increase the acreage. They have acquired 2 peanut processing plants in Rio Cuarto. They are planning rice production in Argentina and Uruguay. There are some Non Resident Indians who are in textiles business( imports, wholesale and retail ) in Buenos Aires.

### **Business Centre**

The Embassy has established a Business Centre in the Chancery which was inaugurated by the Commerce Secretary of India in June 2008. It has become a meeting point and resource centre for Argentine and Indian businessmen.

### **Cultural Co-operation**

The Embassy in Buenos Aires has been organizing cultural programmes and visits of Indian troupes from time to time. There are thousands of followers of Sai Baba, Brahmakumari, Art of Living, Rama Krishna Mission, Hare Krishna and other such groups. Yoga is very popular. There are hundreds of Yoga centres all over the country. Argentine exponents of classical dance and music have dance/music schools with good reception. Ms. Myrta Barvie is a well-known dancer of Bharatanatyam, Odissi and Kuchipudi. She was trained in Kalakshetra for five years. Indian film music and dance are also becoming very popular.

Proposal for the setting up of a Indian Cultural Centre in Buenos Aires has been approved by the Government of India. Also, India and Argentina are in the process of negotiating a formal Cultural Exchange Programme, soon.

### **Festival of India**

The Embassy has been organizing Festivals of India since 2008. The first Festival was held in November 2008 and the second in November 2009. The third was held from 4-16 November 2010 and the fourth between 3-13 December.2011. The Festival includes handicrafts exhibition, live demonstration of handicrafts, classical and folk dance performances, Film Festivals, seminars, literary contest, Food Festival, yoga demonstration, photo exhibition and Incredible India tourism promotion. The festival has become extremely popular and more than 70,000 people visited attended different events.The Festival of India 2013 is proposed to be held in April 2013.

### **Literature**

Rabindra Nath Tagore had visited Argentina in 1924 and stayed for two months as the guest of Victoria Ocampo, a well-known literary personality and writer. He wrote a series of poems under the title "Purabi" containing memory of his stay in Argentina. Victoria Ocampo was given a honorary doctorate by the Viswa Bharati University and this was handed over by PM Mrs Indira Gandhi during her visit to Argentina in 1968. Jawaharlal Nehru University had organized a seminar on Victoria Ocampo in 1991. Maria Rene Cura, the Argentine writer (died in 2007) and associate of Victoria Ocampo had published for some years a magazine on India. She ran a cultural centre devoted to India called as " Anand Bhavan". The theme of the Fourth Festival of India was on Tagore.

### **Films**

Pablo Cesar, the Argentine movie director has directed a Indo- Argentine joint production film "Unicorn- the garden of fruits". This was released in 1996. He is now working on co-production of a film "Thinking of him" based on the interaction between Tagore and Ocampo. The Embassy has put him in touch with Indian film directors and producers.

Trivandrum based "Toonz Animation India" and Illusion Studios of Argentina have co-produced an animation film "El Gaturro". It is based on a famous Argentine cartoon character "Gaturro". The Film, costing 3 million dollars was premiered in Buenos Aires on 7 September, 2010. The famous Argentine music director Gustavo Santaolalla, now based in Hollywood composed music for the Bollywood film Dhobi Ghat.

India regularly participates in atleast 3 Argentine Film Festivals including the famous Pinamar film festival and Argentina participates in 6 Indian Film Festivals including IIFF.

### **Ayurveda**

Ayurveda is becoming popular and there are some Ayurvedic Spas and massage centres in Argentina. The University of Buenos Aires and the University of Cordoba are running courses in Ayurveda. University of Cordoba recently started a two year post graduate course in Ayurveda from April 2010. Dr Jorge Luis Berra is the organiser of these courses. Our Honorary Consul General in Cordoba city Dr. Sergio Suarez is a well-known Ayurvedic expert.

### **Education**

A MoU is operational between the Jawaharlal Nehru University of India and FLACSO of Argentina for exchange of professors, students and semesters. A proposal for setting up of a Chair in Oriental Studies in the University of Cordoba is under consideration.

### **Think-tanks**

The Indian Council for World Affairs has signed a MoU (April 2009) with the Argentine Council for International Relations. More Argentine think tanks have shown interest in exchanges with their Indian counterparts.

## **Economics**

Raul Prebisch, the renowned Argentine economist was conferred Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding in 1974. Argentine economists have participated in conferences organized by Indian think tanks such as ICRIER. Indian economists such as Rakesh Mohan and Rajiv Kumar have participated in seminars in Argentina.

## **Sports**

Argentine Football legend Diego Maradona visited Kerala in 2012 and to Kolkata in 2008 at the invitation of the Indian Football Academy where he inaugurated a football school named after him. The Indian Football Academy is establishing a collaboration programme with the Argentine Club “River Plate” for training and exchanges. In June 2009 an Argentine professional football player Sebastian Monesterolo signed for Kingfisher East Bengal club to play in the Indian premier football league. Argentina played Venezuela in a FIFA international friendly match held in Kolkata, India in September 2011.

Indian Hockey teams have visited Argentina and played tournaments in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

An Indian Army Polo team played matches with their Argentine counterparts in December 2008 at Buenos Aires and sent an Indian officer for a one-year equestrian training in Argentina. Argentine Polo players have been playing in Indian teams. Indian Polo players visit Argentina for training and participation in tournaments.

## **Consular Relations**

**Under the 1968 Visa agreement, fees for transit and tourist visas have been abolished.** Under the new visa agreement signed during Argentine Presidential visit in October 2009, it has been agreed that five year multi-entry business visas would be given free of cost.

## **Indian Community**

There are about 200 Indians in Buenos Aires of which half are those settled for over thirty years. Most of these are from the Sindhi community. Others are professionals working with Indian companies and multinational corporations like TCS, Cognizant Technologies etc.,

About 300 Sikhs from Punjab have settled down in Salta province in the course of the early and mid twentieth century. Now, with families they number around 2000 persons. They have become Argentine citizens and are well assimilated in the local population. Most of them are in retail and wholesale trade. The first generation immigrants speak Punjabi. There is a Gurudwara in the town Rosario de la Frontera, where they celebrate Guru Nanak Day every year. President Zail Singh had visited the Gurudwara in 1984.

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