India-Finland Relations

Finland and India have traditionally enjoyed warm and friendly relations. In the recent past, there has been a perceptible increase in the level of engagements, both political and commercial, which saw the exchange of the visits of the Prime Ministers of the two countries during the same calendar year (2006). This was followed by a visit by the President of Finland Mrs. Tarja Halonen in January 2007, February 2009, February 2011 and February 2012. Finnish Prime Minister Mr. Matti Vanhanen visited India in February 2008 and February 2010, to attend the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit organized by TERI. In 2012, Minister for Rural Development Shri Jairam Ramesh visited in April and Special Envoy to PM Shri S.K. Lambah in June to attend the International Group meeting on Afghanistan.

Finland sees in India a large market for its products and a favourable investment destination for its high technology industries whereas India views Finland as an important member of the EU and a repository of modern technology.

Bilateral Agreements:

India and Finland have the following agreements:

(c) Setting up of the India-Finland Joint Commission (1974) (17 meetings of the Joint Commission have taken place upto November 2011)
(d) Cultural Agreement (1983)
(e) MOU on Textiles (1993)
(g) Bilateral agreement on Promotion & Protection of Investments (2002).
(i) Agreement on Cooperation in Road Transportation sector (May 2010)
(j) MoU on Bio Medical Research between the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Academy of Finland in November 2012

India-Finland Trade:

Indo-Finnish economic and trade relations have grown steadily in recent years with bilateral trade reaching Euro 1295 million in 2011, after declining a little bit in 2009 due to global slowdown. Following are figures for the past few years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012 (Jan-Oct)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exports from India to Finland</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imports by India from Finland</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>1295</td>
<td>711</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Finnish National Board of Customs

Main export items from India have been garments, made ups and textiles accounting for about a third of the exports. Other major items include metals, iron and
steel, chemicals, petroleum products and leather. Major imports from Finland include telecommunication equipment, power generating machinery, eclectic and other machinery.

Investment:

On the investments side, large Finnish companies like Nokia, Nokia-Siemens, Kone elevators, Wartsila, Ahlstron, Elcoteq, Metso, Fortum, UPM have set up manufacturing facilities in India and Finnode has opened its office in India. Over 100 Finnish companies now have operations in India and 15 Indian companies, mainly in the software and consultancy sector are working in Finland.

Cultural:

The ICCR deputed Yoga teacher is running Yoga classes successfully.

Ranganiketan, a Manipur dance troupe sponsored by ICCR visited Finland in June 2012.

Tourism:

Favoured Finnish tourist destinations in India are Goa and Kerala, though other destinations are also becoming increasingly popular. With the commencement of direct Finnair flights from Helsinki to New Delhi in 2006 the number of Finnish visitors has increased. Finland is among the five countries for which visa on arrival scheme has been made applicable w.e.f. 1st January, 2010. During the winter months (October-March) Finnair operates two to three charter flights a week to Goa, depending on demand. Finnish Tourist Board organised a special workshop on 17 September 2012 to improve cooperation between Indian and Nordic tour operators.

Indian Community:

There are about 5000 Indians in Finland and mainly in the capital Helsinki and the surrounding regions. Majority of the Indians who have settled in Finland are from Punjab. They are mainly engaged in the restaurant business. There are dozens of restaurants serving western food but owned by Indians/PIOs and some restaurants serve Indian food. Few are in garments, textiles, artificial jewelry, Indian provisions and groceries and gift items business. In recent years, a number of young Indians, mainly computer professionals, have joined Finnish high-tech companies such as Nokia, etc. Presently there are about 500 Indian professionals working in Finland for Finnish high-tech companies and Indian software companies like TCS and others based in Finland.

There are also a small number of Indian/PIO academics working in Finnish universities. The number of Indian students at Finnish universities has grown in recent years and currently about 350 Indian students are pursuing higher education in Finland.

Important visits from India to Finland

Prime Minister Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru 1957
Important visits from Finland to India

Prime Minister Mr. Sukselainen 1960
President Mr. Kekkonen 1965
Foreign Trade Minister Mr. Laine 1975, 1985, 1987
Prime Minister Mr. Kalevi Sorsa 1984
Foreign Minister Mr. Väyrynen 1984, 1987
President Koivisto 1987
Foreign Trade Minister Mr. Pertti Salolainen 1988, 1992, 1995
Foreign Minister Mr. Paasio 1991
Foreign Minister Mrs. Tarja Halonen 1996
President Martti Ahtisaari 1996
Foreign Trade Minister Mr. Kimmo Sasi 2000
Environment Minister Ms. Satu Hassi 2001
Environment Minister Mr. Jouni Backman 2002
Foreign Trade Minister Mr. Jari Vilen 2002
Foreign Minister Mr. Erkki Tuomioja 2004, Feb. 2005
Foreign Trade Minister Ms. Paula Lehtomäki February 2005
Prime Minister Mr. Matti Vanhanen accompanied by
Minister for Transport and Communications
Ms. Susanna Huovinen March, 2006

President Mrs. Tarja Halonen accompanied by
Minister for Trade and Industry Mr. Mauri Pekkarinen January, 2007

Minister for Foreign Trade & Development,
Mr. Paavo Väyrynen October 2007
Prime Minister Mr. Matti Vanhanen accompanied by
Mr. Kimmo Tiilikainen, Environment Minister February, 2008

President Mrs. Tarja Halonen accompanied by
Minister for Foreign Trade & Development,
Mr. Paavo Väyrynen February, 2009

Minister of Economy, Mr. Mauri Pekkarinen November, 2009
Minister of Communications, Mrs. Suvi Lindén January 2010
Prime Minister, Mr. Matti Vanhanen February 2010
Minister of Defence, Mr. Jyri Hakamies April 2010
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Alexander Stubb May 2010
Minister for Foreign Trade & Development, October 2010
Dr. Paavo Väyrynen

Minister of Communications, Mrs. Suvi Lindén December 2010
Minister of Migration and European Affairs,
Ms. Astrid Thors January 2011

Minister of Environment, Ms. Paula Lehtomaki February 2011
Minister of Economy, Mr. Jyri Hakamies September 2011
President Mrs. Tarja Halonen February 2012
Minister for International Development
Ms. Heidi Hautala February 2012
Speaker of Parliament Mr. Eero Hienälä April 2012

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January 2013