



Newsletter



PM Shri Narendra Modi attended the Bastille Day Parade in Paris as the Guest of Honour during his official visit to France on 13-14 July 2023

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi attended Bastille Day Parade as Guest of Honour at the invitation of H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of France, on the Champs-Élysées on 14 July 2023. To mark the 25th anniversary of the India-France Strategic Partnership, 241 member tri-service Indian armed forces contingent led by a military band also participated in the Parade. The Indian Army contingent was led by the Punjab Regiment, along with the Rajputana Rifles Regiment. Rafale Jets of the Indian Air Force, from the 101 Squadron from Hashimara, formed a part of the fly past during the parade.

PM Shri Narendra Modi was conferred with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, France's highest award, on 13 July 2023, by H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic of France.



Emmanuel... • 15.07.2023. ...
To the people of India, trust and friendship.




Emmanuel Macron ✓
@EmmanuelMacron

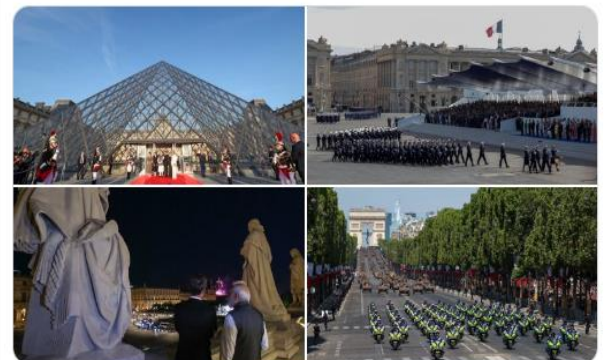
This 14 July, soldiers and Rafale aircraft from India are marching and flying alongside our troops.

We honour the memory of those who fought with the French in the First World War. We shall never forget.



Narendra Modi ✓
@narendramodi

This France visit was a memorable one. It was made even more special because I got the opportunity to take part in the Bastille Day celebrations. Seeing the Indian contingent get a pride of place in the parade was wonderful. I am grateful to President @EmmanuelMacron and the French people for the exceptional warmth and hospitality. May  friendship continue to soar!



Prime Minister's meeting with the President of the Republic of France

PM Shri Narendra Modi held tête-à-tête and delegation level talks with H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic of France at the Elysee Palace in Paris on 14 July 2023. Both leaders held extensive discussions on wide range of areas of bilateral cooperation including defence and security, civil nuclear, science and technology, energy, trade and investment, space, climate action and people to people ties.

Visit of MoS Mrs. Meenakshi Lekhi to Croatia (July 08-09, 2023)

Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture (MoS), Mrs. Meenakshi Lekhi was on an official visit to Croatia from 08-09 July 2023. In Croatia, MoS participated in the prestigious Dubrovnik Forum organised by the Croatian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs on 08 July 2023. The 2023 edition of the Forum focused on the dynamics and needs of global geo-politics and geo-economics.

Mrs. Lekhi addressed the Dubrovnik Forum & spoke on India's role in the global order and stability. She also highlighted the importance of having a strategic perspective on Indo Pacific from Europe, reform of the UN to strengthen Multilateralism, and adopting a middle path for global peace & stability. Watch the full address by MoS [here](#).



Meeting at the sidelines of the Dubrovnik Forum



Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture (MoS), Mrs Meenakshi Lekhi met the Prime Minister of Croatia H.E. Mr Andrej Plenković and exchanged views on bilateral, regional, and international developments. MoS also met H.E. Mr Gordan Grlić Radman, Croatia's Minister of Foreign and European Affairs and exchanged views on further strengthening India-Croatia relations. Also, discussed regional and global issues.



On the margins of the Dubrovnik Forum, MP of Croatia Domagoj Hajduković met with Mrs Meenakshi Lekhi to talk about the already excellent relations between India and Croatia and how to deepen and strengthen them. MoS also met the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic, H.E. Mr. Jiří Kozák on the sidelines of the Dubrovnik Forum in Croatia and discussed bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest.

MoS received by the Mayor of Dubrovnik

Mayor of Dubrovnik Mato Franković, Head of the Administrative Department for Mayor Ivana Brnin and Head of the Administrative Department for Culture and Heritage Julijana Antić Brautović received the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Culture of the Republic of India Mrs. Meenakshi Lekhi and the Indian delegation, during their attendance at The Dubrovnik Forum. On this occasion, the mayor of Dubrovnik welcomed MoS Lekhi and the Indian delegation to Dubrovnik and Croatia. Minister Lekhi expressed her satisfaction and delight at the natural beauties and the rich cultural, historical, and religious heritage of Dubrovnik.

Mayor Franković briefly presented to the Indian delegation the influence and importance of Dubrovnik in this area and Europe. The meeting also marked discussions on further cooperation in the fields of art, culture, film industry development and tourism, especially since Indian visitors have always had a special interest in visiting the far south of the country. MoS thanked the delegation of the City of Dubrovnik for their reception, emphasizing that it is necessary to further invest in bilateral cooperation despite the distance between countries, strengthening ties between Indian and Croatian peoples and getting acquainted with customs and traditions.



Healthcare Industry in India

The Indian hospital industry accounting for 80% of the total healthcare market is expected to touch US\$ 132 billion by 2023

The Indian healthcare sector is expected to record a three-fold rise, growing at a CAGR of 22% between 2016–22 to reach US\$ 372 billion in 2022 from US\$ 110 billion in 2016. By FY22, Indian healthcare infrastructure is expected to reach US\$ 349.1 billion. In the Economic Survey of 2022, India's public expenditure on healthcare stood at 2.1% of GDP in 2021-22 against 1.8% in 2020-21 and 1.3% in 2019-20. In FY22, premiums underwritten by health insurance companies grew to Rs. 73,582.13 crores (US\$ 9.21 billion). The health segment has a 33.33% share in the total gross written premiums earned in the country. The Indian medical tourism market was valued at US\$ 2.89 billion in 2020 and is expected to reach US\$ 13.42 billion by 2026. According to India Tourism Statistics at a Glance 2020 report, close to 697,300 foreign tourists came for medical treatment in India in FY19. India has been ranked 10th in the Medical Tourism Index (MTI) for 2020-21 out of 46 destinations by the Medical Tourism Association. The e-health market size is estimated to reach US\$ 10.6 billion by 2025. As per information provided to the Lok Sabha by the Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar, the doctor population ratio in the country is 1:854, assuming 80% availability of 12.68 lakhs registered allopathic doctors and 5.65 lakh AYUSH doctors.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES. Some of the major initiatives taken by the Government of India to promote the Indian healthcare industry are as follows:

- Under the Union Budget 2023-24, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been allocated Rs. 89,155 crore (US\$ 10.76 billion), an increase of 3.43% compared to Rs. 86,200.65 crore (US\$ 10.4 billion) in 2021-22.
- Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) was allocated Rs. 3,365 crore (US\$ 0.41 billion)
- Human Resources for Health and Medical Education was allotted Rs. 6,500 crore (US\$ 780 million).
- National Health Mission was allotted Rs. 29,085 crore (US\$ 3.51 billion).
- Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) was allotted Rs. 7,200 crore (US\$ 870 million).
- Rs. 5,156 crore (US\$ 675.72 million) was allocated to the newly announced PM-ABHIM to strengthen India's health infrastructure and improve the country's primary, secondary and tertiary care services.

Source: [LINK](#)



Prof. Tejas Patel, one of the world's leading interventional cardiologists, president of the most respected cardiology clinic in India "Apex Heart Institute", scientist who established the method of transradial percutaneous coronagraphy is visiting the European Center of Excellence, Special Hospital St. Catherine. During his work, he performed more than a million procedures in interventional cardiology, and with his colleague and friend prof. Dragan Primorc, he discussed the methods of personalized medicine, including the prevention of sudden cardiac death by analyzing 294 genes and associated mutations, which the Special Hospital of St. Katarina positioned globally.

New India at work in diverse sports arenas

Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen wins Canada Open 2023 Badminton Tournament. The 21-year-old Lakshya Sen triumphed over the reigning All England Champion Li Shi Feng by winning the first set by 21-18 and the second set by 22-20.



Asian Athletics Championships in Bangkok: India displayed a fantastic performance as they finished 3rd, winning 27 medals, with 6 Gold 🥇, 12 Silver 🥈 and 9 Bronze 🥉. The five day-event started on the 12th of July and ended on the 16th July.

Rank	teams	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Japan	16	11	10	37
2	China	8	8	6	22
3	India	6	12	9	27
4	Sri Lanka	3	2	3	8
5	Qatar	2	1	1	4
6	Philippines	2	0	0	2
	Singapore	2	0	0	2
8	Kazakhstan	1	2	1	4
	Uzbekistan	1	2	1	4
10	Thailand*	1	1	4	6
11	Chinese Taipei	1	1	0	2
12	South Korea	1	0	2	3
13	Vietnam	1	0	1	2
	Iran	0	2	1	3
14	Saudi Arabia	0	2	1	3

New world record: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy has set the Guinness world record for the fastest hit by a male player in badminton, recording a mindboggling 565 km/h with his smash.



SAFF Championship 2023: India wins thrilling penalty shootout to claim ninth title



The Indian men's football team won the SAFF Championship 2023 title after beating Kuwait 5-4 in a thrilling penalty shootout at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru. India, who are 100th in the latest FIFA rankings, won their ninth SAFF Championship 2023 in 14 editions. This was India's second silverware on the trot after clinching the Intercontinental Cup last month. After the regulation time ended 1-1 and neither team could score in the extra time, the final came down to penalties. Kuwait's captain Hajjeia missed the decisive spotkick in sudden death. In regulation time, the newly-crowned AIFF Player of the Year Lallianzuala Chhangte (39') had equalised for India after Shabaib Al Khaldi (14') had given the Kuwait football team the early lead.

NEWS ON INDIA

HPE is to start manufacturing servers in India under PLI 2.0 scheme. Hewlett Packard announced plans to manufacture approximately USD 1 billion worth of high-runner servers in the first five years of production from India. Hewlett Packard Enterprise manufactures high-end servers in India.

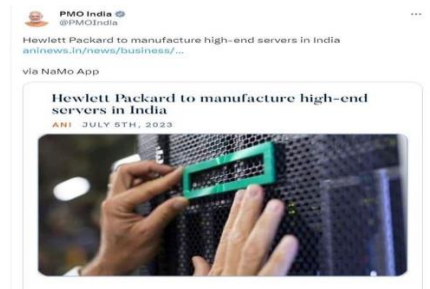
Tesla in talks to set up India factory for electric cars

Tesla, the renowned Electric Vehicle (EV) manufacturer led by Elon Musk, is currently engaged in discussions with the Indian government regarding an investment proposal to set up a car factory in India. The proposed factory is expected to have an annual production capacity of nearly 500,000 electric vehicles. According to media reports, Tesla, which already holds a significant presence in China with its manufacturing facilities, is also considering utilizing India as a base for exporting cars to countries in the Indo-Pacific region. The reports added that Tesla has also held discussions with union government officials to explore the possibility of bringing its auto parts and electronics supply chain to India.

Impressive growth in defence exports

India's defence exports for FY23 reached a historic high of approximately INR 16,000 crore, marking an impressive growth of over 10 times since FY17 when defence exports amounted to INR 1,521 crore. The Ministry of Defence has reported that India exports various major platforms, including the Akash missile, BrahMos, Pinaka, Dornier-228, thermal imagers, 155 mm Advanced Towed Artillery Guns (ATAGs), radars, simulators, body armours, and mine-protected vehicles. Additionally, platforms like the Light Combat Helicopters, Aircraft Carriers, and Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas have gained significant interest and demand. With an export target of INR 35,000 crore by FY25, India is determined to further expand its defence exports.

By the end of this decade, automakers in India would invest close to US\$ 10 billion (Rs. 80,000 crores) to construct the infrastructure needed to manufacture electric vehicles (EVs). The decision was made during the worldwide electrification wave sweeping the automobile sector. Additionally, the government's push for battery-powered automobiles over pure internal combustion engines has also prompted it. The capital outlay would comprise investing in battery factories to create batteries from the cell level, creating a few green field EV plants, and supporting grid charging infrastructure. Two-wheeler manufacturers are preparing to produce 15.5 million EVs, which would be equivalent to nearly two-thirds of the total installed capacity of two-wheelers powered by internal combustion engines (ICE). The tentative plans of carmakers show that they are planning to create a capacity of around 2 million EVs, taking the cumulative installed capacity to around 7.2-7.5 million units by 2030.

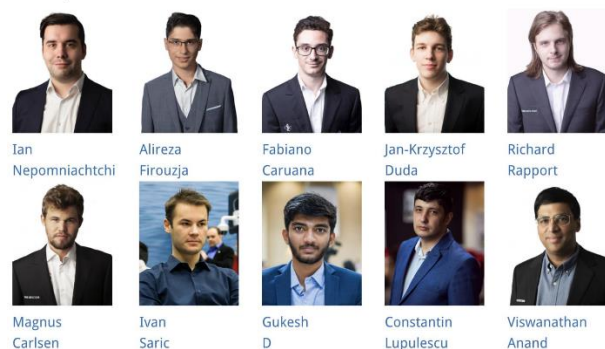


Ambassador's outreaches



Grand Chess Tour took place in Zagreb from 3-9 July with 2 players from India. Ambassador Srivastava met again with GM Vishwanathan Anand after his previous two participations in 2019 & 2021.

Participants



Ambassador Srivastava participated at the Introductory virtual interaction to explore R&D cooperation opportunities between the Mediterranean Institute for Life Research Medils and Indian participants from the National Centre for Cell Science (NCCS) was organized which unfolded good potential for collaboration.



Ambassador Srivastava participated at the Dubrovnik Summer Festival inauguration ceremony attended by the Prime Minister of Croatia and other distinguished guests, and hosted by Mayor of Dubrovnik. The Dubrovnik Summer Festival was instituted in 1950 in Dubrovnik, Croatia. It is held every year in July-August.



Read in the latest edition of the [Federation of Indian Export Organisations \(FIEO\) monthly magazine](#) FIEO News about Croatia as its focus market of the month with inputs from Ambassador Srivastava



FOCUS MARKET CROATIA



With Inputs from H E Mr Raj Kumar Srivastava, Ambassador of India to the Republic of Croatia (Zagreb)

Croatia, spanning approximately 57,000 square kilometres and housing a population of 3.88 million people, may be considered a small country, but it holds a prominent position as an economic leader in Southeastern Europe. With a GDP per capita of USD 18,821, Croatia's potential as a promising market is often overlooked by Indians. However, it presents itself as a gateway not only to the relatively unfamiliar Balkan market, comprising over 20 million people but also to Western Europe.

Having been a member of the European Union for a decade, Croatia recently joined the Schengen Zone and adopted the Euro currency, meeting all the necessary requirements. These developments further solidify its integration with European systems and present opportunities for increased trade and collaboration. Even though its history extends far into the past, Croatia gained independence from the Yugoslav Federation in June 1991, and has been an active participant in international politics ever since. In May 1992, India formally recognized Croatia, and this recognition paved the way for the establishment of diplomatic relations on July 9, 1992.

During the era of former Yugoslavia, Croatia played a crucial role in fostering strong ties between India and Yugoslavia. Trade between the two nations was heavily influenced by Croatia, accounting for more than two-thirds of the total volume. Noteworthy transactions included India's substantial purchase of Croatian ships during the 1970s and 1980s. Prime Minister Nehru and Marshal Tito were also instrumental in shaping the Non-Aligned Movement, reflecting their shared vision for global cooperation and independence. These friendly linkages with India have continued after Croatia's independence, so India and Croatia currently enjoy robust

bilateral political and cultural ties, with a focus on enhancing economic collaboration.

Foreign trade in 2022

Final data of the Croatian Bureau of Statistics on foreign trade in goods in 2022 show an increase in export and import of the Republic of Croatia. The total export of the Republic of Croatia in 2022 amounted to about USD 25 billion (+16%), while the total import amounted to about USD 44 billion (+30%). Croatia exports mostly food, coke and refined petroleum products, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, as well as electrical equipment. On the other hand, Croatia has significant growth in import of mining and quarrying commodities, food products, coke and refined petroleum products, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, wearing apparel, basic metals and machinery and equipment.

The European Union (EU) is Croatia's primary trading partner, accounting for about 70% of exports and imports in 2022. Key EU partners are Italy, Hungary, Germany, and Slovenia. Outside the EU, important trading partners include Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United States and Serbia. While India-Croatia trade is increasing annually, there is still ample potential for further growth.

India-Croatia bilateral trade

India's exports cover a wide range of products, including aluminium ingots, chemicals, fertilizers, pharmaceuticals, machinery, equipment, ceramic tiles, metals, readymade garments, textiles, rubber and plastics. On the other hand, India's imports consist of plastic and rubber machinery, instruments and appliances for measuring and testing, food and wood products.

To further enhance India's exports, there are opportunities in sectors like textiles, leather, pharmaceuticals, basic chemical products, coffee,

tea, industrial machinery, and electrical machinery. Additionally, Croatia can serve as a gateway to the South-eastern European markets for India, utilizing the major ports of Rijeka and Ploče.

Indian direct investment in Croatia totalled Euro 40.05 million from 2001 to Q3 2022, while Croatia invested Euro 5.55 million in India during the same period. Although Croatia's economy is relatively small and has limited prospects for outward foreign direct investment (FDI), there are substantial opportunities for collaboration in sectors including infrastructure, defence, tourism, automotive, construction, shipbuilding, renewable energy, agro processing, IT and pharmaceuticals.

Indian companies in Croatia

Despite being a small market, Indian companies have made significant investments in Croatia. ACG WorldWide acquired Lukaps in 2007 and has become a major supplier of gelatine capsules to the EU. It plans to double its capacity in 2023 and establish an R&D Centre. In 2017, ACG also acquired IN2 Trace, a Croatian IT company specializing in pharmaceutical serialization solutions.

Orient Green Power (Europe), owned by Orient Green Power (Chennai), invested in the construction of wind power plants near Sibenik in 2011. Infosys Engineering Delivery Centre, located in Karlovac, was opened in 2017 and serves as the main near shore center for Europe after taking over GE engineering operations. JGL, a Croatian pharmaceutical company, signed two five-year license agreements with Dr. Reddy's in 2017.

Croatian-Hungarian trading company A&A Bioenergy Viro invested in a cogeneration plant for wood biomass of 3 MW electric power output at the Antunovac Entrepreneurial Zone

India-Croatia Bilateral Trade

(In USD million)

Year	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
EXPORT	153.79	146.97	141.91	493.18	339.73
IMPORT	38.92	57.18	42.81	59.43	117.54
TOTAL TRADE	192.71	204.15	184.71	552.61	457.27
TRADE BALANCE	114.87	89.79	99.10	433.75	222.19

(Source: Department of Commerce, Government of India)

in Virovitica in November 2019. Power plant uses the Indian turbine, which was purchased from Triveni Turbines Ltd. (Bangalore, Karnataka) based on the shortest delivery deadline and references.

Capitel Group signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Petrinja, which envisages up to €50 million investments in agriculture in the Petrinja area in growing hazelnut, walnut and chestnut plantations.

Amagi, a prominent SaaS technology provider for broadcast and connected TV, announced their most recent investment. They are opening their first research and development (R&D) center outside India, expanding their presence in a new location.

Croatian companies in India

Croatian companies are increasingly recognizing the potential of the Indian market, given its size and diversity, and the quick returns on investments. One such company is Altpro, specializing in safety and signaling equipment for rolling stock and infrastructure. Altpro signed a contract with Indian company Sigma (owned by Texmaco) to supply its "Train Detection System" and ToT.

Similarly, Koncar, a prominent Croatian engineering company, has signed multiple contracts with Indian industrial groups like Jaypee and Virgo for mutual cooperation. Koncar is actively involved in small hydro power projects in India and is exploring collaborations with Indian companies in the field of non-conventional energy sources, particularly wind energy. Koncar's primary focus is in southern India, with ongoing cooperation with Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited (TANGEDCO).

Infobip, one of Croatia's leading IT companies, has been doing business with Indian companies since 2009. Founded in 2006, Infobip has grown into one of the world's leading communication platforms for the processing and delivery of SMS messages, push notifications, OTT messages, voice messages and emails for its business

clients. Infobip collaborates with some of the largest, leading companies in India and it has offices in New Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Pune. Each one of these cities has more inhabitants than that of entire Croatia.

Telegra, Croatian artificial intelligence traffic management company installed Elec-tronic Toll Collection System (ETCS) at one of the highways in India and exported some of Croatian Road Traffic Signalling Equipment to India. Telegra's current business activity in India is maintaining this ETC system.

MM Farmachem, a Croatian pharmaceutical company, has been conducting business with Indian companies since 2004. It has an office in Hyderabad and employs 10 Indian workers. MM Farmachem imports Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) from India and supplies them to countries in Southeast Europe. Additionally, it assists buyers in obtaining the necessary documentation for medicine registration in specific countries.

Kanaan, Croatian food processing company is in touch with Indian company SV Agri for cooperation in the field of agriculture, particularly in the ToT regarding planting of "seeds potatoes".

Bilateral visits and agreements

In 2017, the two countries signed an Agreement on Economic Cooperation, which served as a significant catalyst for strengthening trade and investment ties. Subsequently, in 2019, Hon'ble President of India, H E Mr Ram Nath Kovind, visited Croatia accompanied by a 35-member business delegation, further solidifying the relationship. More recently, in April 2023, the Croatian Foreign Minister, Mr Goran Grlj Radman, travelled to New Delhi to attend the Raisina Dialogue and held a meeting with the Indian External Affairs Minister, Dr S Jaishankar. They signed the MoU on Defence Cooperation, which would help in building defence technology partnerships between companies of the two countries. Two

weeks later, Mrs Meenakshi Lekhi, the Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture, made an official visit to Croatia, engaging in discussions on various areas of mutual interest such as education, economy, culture and technology, with the aim of strengthening bilateral cooperation.

Croatia's strategic location and its integration with European systems through its EU membership and adoption of the Euro currency make it an attractive market and gateway to both Southeastern Europe and Western Europe. The bilateral trade and investment relations between India and Croatia have been steadily growing, with Indian companies investing in various sectors in Croatia and Croatian companies recognizing the potential of the Indian market. The recent high-level visits and agreements between the two countries further emphasize their commitment to strengthening bilateral cooperation in areas such as trade, economy, culture and technology.

Demographic complementarity between India and Croatia

Croatia is set to witness a multitude of investments in the next five years, thanks to the European Union. Numerous projects focusing on green transition, digital advancements and connectivity infrastructure are currently underway. However, a significant challenge lies in the scarcity of available workforce, particularly in sectors such as construction, hospitality, food delivery, infrastructure development, agriculture and shipbuilding. On the other hand, India is increasingly establishing itself as a skill capital on the global stage. This complementary relationship between two countries has already led to approximately 7,500 Indians securing employment opportunities in Croatia within the past two years.

Tourism: Croatia's coastline and sea are valuable national assets that significantly contribute to the country's economy, making it a highly sought-after tourist destination. The tourism sector alone contributes 11 percent to Croatia's GDP. Among the most popular tourist destinations are Dubrovnik and Plitvice Lakes.

Emerging automotive industry powerhouse - Rimac Group: Headquartered on the outskirts of Zagreb, and with locations across Europe, Rimac Group has gained prominence as a leading player in the automotive industry. With over 1,300 employees, the group specializes in manufacturing electric hypercars and providing cutting-edge technology solutions to global automotive manufacturers. ■

India successfully launched Chandrayaan-3



India successfully launched its third moon mission, Chandrayaan-3 at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. Chandrayaan-3 comprises an indigenous propulsion module (PM) and a lander module (LM). The mission aims to develop and demonstrate new technologies necessary for interplanetary missions. According to ISRO, the lander is capable of achieving a soft landing at a designated lunar site and deploying the rover. During its exploration, the rover will conduct in-situ chemical studies of the lunar surface. The lander is equipped with scientific instruments for studying the lunar surface and subsurface. The landing is expected to occur on August 23, 2023. Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that Chandrayaan-3 marks a significant milestone in India's space exploration and commended the dedication and ingenuity of the scientists involved.

Startups will increase 10 times in the next 4-5 years: MoS Rajeev Chandrasekhar

Union Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Electronics & IT, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, highlighted India's remarkable progress in building unicorns and startups. Speaking at the JITO Incubation Innovation Foundation (JIIF) 6th Foundation Day & Investors/Startup Conclave in Hyderabad, the minister highlighted their successful forays into emerging technology fields like AI, Web 3, and deep tech. "In 2014, our nation's tech landscape was limited to IT and ITes. However, since then, opportunities have emerged across various domains such as deep tech, AI, data economy, semiconductor design, microelectronics, and high-performance computing. From 108 unicorns I am sure we will reach 1,000 in the next 4-5 years. Today we have over a lakh startup in India and it will increase by 10 times," the Minister said. Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar also lauded the collaborative efforts between the industry and the government to enhance skill development. Recognising the historic challenges faced by a significant portion of the population lacking skills, the Minister emphasised the transformative impact of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Skill India initiative. He said that through strategic partnerships with both big and small companies, the government now works closely to identify necessary skills, creating a comprehensive framework with the active involvement of academia, communities, and corporations.

ZAGORJE OPG GROWING INDIAN BANANAS



One Zagorje OPG (family farm) is growing no less than exotic Indian bananas in the rolling hills of Gornja Stubica. It boasts one of the largest plantations in all of Europe. As Poslovni Dnevnik writes, the hardworking Plaščar family from Gornja Stubica grows Indian bananas. It all started back in 2014 with about fifty test seedlings, and today they have more than two and a half thousand of them. Although extremely unusual for this climate, the Indian banana absolutely thrives there, and according to data from the Faculty of Agriculture, this is one of the largest plantations in all of Europe, writes HRT.

TENERIFE STARTED IT ALL

During a trip to Tenerife, Ivan Plaščar and his wife tasted fruit that made all his senses jump into action. After that, it was precisely the tasty Indian banana that he decided to plant in 2014 on his property in the very heart of Zagorje. "That's right, here in the village of Šagudovec near Gornja Stubica, I started with those fifty plantations, they were overgrown, I started consolidating the land and planting more and more bananas," explained Ivan Plaščar. He bought the neglected groves, cleared and planted Indian bananas. There were various anecdotes as a result, as one might imagine.

2018 WAS A CRUCIAL YEAR

"There was one tree growing. Every day I was coming to the ranch and measuring the plant from May until September," he explained. Today, there are as many as two thousand five hundred Indian bananas planted over five hectares thanks to this Zagorje OPG. Flowering time takes place in April, and now the first fruits are being monitored, because this year's fickle climate is actually more or less in their favour. In Zagorje, this fruit grows between 250 and 500 grams in weight, and when it ripens, it tastes like mango, pineapple and ordinary banana.

TWO TONNES OF CROP

The harvest is during September, and back in 2022, the yield from this Zagorje OPG was a very impressive two tonnes, this year it will be double, and in a few years, during the full harvest, he expects yields of 50 tonnes. "The prices are from 10 euros per kilo, last year we placed everything on the doorstep. We're planning to process fruit pulp, we have already started to purchase the machines themselves and we're now seeing what we can do with regards to funds", said Plascar. Although there is a lot of work, Mr. Plascar is proud because he has one of the largest Indian banana plantations in this part of Europe, right in the heart of gorgeous Zagorje.

Source: <https://total-croatia-news.com/news/zagorje-opg/>

AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV

International folklore festival with the Rajasthani Panihari Lok Sangeet Group supported by Indian Council For Cultural Relations



The streets and squares of Zagreb's city centre came alive from 19 to 23 July with the 57th Zagreb International Folklore Festival, a traditional event and one of the most significant gatherings in the field of folklore and traditional culture in Croatia. The Zagreb Folklore Festival, which promotes local heritage and amateur folklore, has been held since 1966. The theme of this year's festival is the commemoration of the centenary of the Kupa River Expedition, as a tribute and recognition to a group of experts and enthusiastic individuals who, by kayaking along the Kupa River, visited 34 villages and documented the traditional clothing and architectural heritage of that region through words, imagery, scientific research, and professional work. In honour of the occasion, this year's program included folklore groups from the Pokuplje region, joining to pay tribute to the expedition.

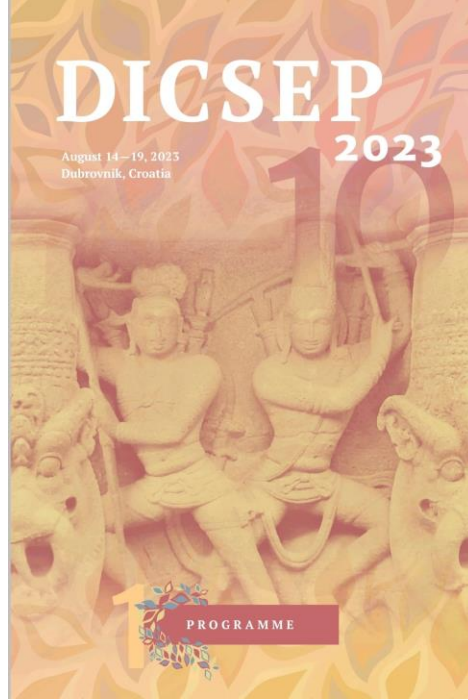
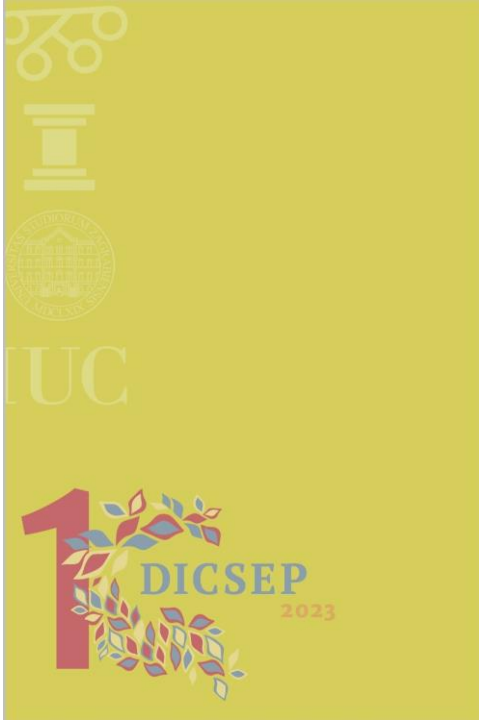
Performance of the Rajasthani Panihari Lok Sangeet Group in Zagreb and Sveta Nedelja

ICCR-sponsored 8-member Rajasthani Folkloric Group represented India in the prestigious Annual Zagreb Folkloric Summer Festival during 19-23 July. India was the only non-European country represented this year. Group was also hosted for an official reception by the Mayor of Zagreb. They performed at Zagreb International Folklore Festival, Sveta Nedelja, stage by the lake Kipišće in Strmec on 20 July, at the stage in Zrinjevac Park, Zagreb among performances from other countries taking part in 57th International Folklore Festival, at the stage in Zrinjevac Park, Zagreb on 22 July and at the main stage of Ban Josip Jelačić Square in Zagreb on 23 July. On 23 July, Ambassador attended formal reception and distribution of certificate of appreciation to Rajasthani Panihari Lok Sangeet Group among participating groups from other countries in Dverce Palace with presence of Mayor as a part of International Folklore Festival in Zagreb from 19-23 July 2023.



AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV

DISCEP 2023 Conference to be held in Dubrovnik from 14-19 August, 2023



TENTH DUBROVNIK INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON THE SANSKRIT EPICS
AND PURĀṆAS (DICSEP 10)

August 14–19, 2023

IUC, DUBROVNIK, CROATIA

Programme



DICSEP 10 • PROGRAMME I

The Tenth International Conference on the Sanskrit Epics and Purāṇas will be held from August 14-19, 2023, in Dubrovnik. As in the previous conferences, many aspects of current research on the Sanskrit epics and Purāṇas will be discussed: critical editing of texts, composition, literary techniques, history of texts, chronology, intertextuality, historical context, religious and mythological contents, relationship of texts to the earlier Vedic and later Tantric texts, the contemporary importance of this tradition, etc. The theme of the 2023 conference will be: “Current work and research on the Sanskrit epics and Purāṇas”

The five days 10th DISCEP Conference would witness 12 regular sessions and three special sessions. Six of these would be devoted to Mahabharata, two to Ramajana, and four to Puranas. A special keynote address by the President of ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations), Dr. Vinay Prabhakar Sahasrabuddhe is scheduled on the occasion of Independence Day of India on 15 August 2023 to celebrate the grand finale of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav in Dubrovnik.

PROGRAMME

Conference programme can be found at the [LINK](#).

AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV

About DISCEP

The First Conference on Sanskrit Epics and Purāṇas was held in August 1997. In regular three-year intervals, the conference was held nine times, including the pandemic year of 2021, when the conference was held hybridly, via zoom and with direct participation. DICSEP is organized by the Department of Indology and Far Eastern Studies (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Zagreb University), Croatian Philosophical Society and the conference's International Committee. The International Committee consists of Ivan Andrijanić (University of Zagreb), Renate Söhnen-Thieme (School of Oriental and African Studies, London), Christophe Vielle (Institut orientaliste, Louvain la Neuve), James Fitzgerald (Brown University, Providence), Mislav Ježić (University of Zagreb), Mandakranta Bose (University of British Columbia, Vancouver), Sven Sellmer (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań), and McComas Taylor (Australian National University in Canberra). Attendees, including leading international experts, come from all continents where Indological research is undertaken. The Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts publishes the conference proceedings in cooperation with Dev Publishers (Delhi) in English with Croatian summaries. DICSEP has evolved into the leading international conference in the field, inspiring new research trends and bringing scientists together



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