



# Ireland-India Council

November, 2010

Volume 1, Issue 05

## Special Interest:

IRELAND AND  
INDIA:  
RENEWING OLD  
LINKS

FUTURE  
PROJECTIONS  
FOR IRELAND-  
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OF DIWALI

NEW MEMBERS

LINKS BETWEEN  
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UNIVERSITY OF  
PUNE

## Forth Coming Events:

LECTURE  
"IRELAND AND  
INDIA: AN  
HISTORICAL  
PERSPECTIVE"  
on 24<sup>th</sup> November,  
2010

## Official opening:

IRISH-INDIAN  
INFORMATION &  
CULTURAL  
CENTRE  
On 26th  
November, 2010

For further details  
please visit  
[www.irelandin  
diacouncil.ie](http://www.irelandin<br/>diacouncil.ie)

John Hume once  
said "The  
ANSWER to  
DIFFERENCE is  
to RESPECT it"



**Conor Lenihan**  
Minister of state for  
Science,  
Technology,  
Innovation and  
Natural Resources

'I found the Council to be the most progressive group that I met in my period as Minister for Integration.

The Indian people share with the Irish that remarkable characteristic of being both practical and intellectual at the same time.

India is clearly emerging as one of the power house economies on the planet and the business acumen of the Indian people, both here and abroad, is truly remarkable.'



**Mary White Minister**  
of State for  
Integration, Equality  
and Human Rights

'I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the enormous contribution that the Indian community has made to Irish society. As well as your knowledge, skills and experience, Indian migrants have introduced a vibrant and colourful culture to Ireland.

The popularity of Indian cuisine, music, dance, fashion and film in Ireland, is testament to our appreciation of Indian culture.'



**Gerry Breen**  
Lord Mayor of Dublin

As a Lord Mayor of Dublin, it gives me great pleasure to be involved in this year's Diwali celebration. Over the course of the festival there will be many opportunities for you to experience some wonderful Indian culture. With music, dance, food, arts and crafts, there's something for everybody!

Of course, none of this would be possible without the work of the Ireland-India Council, Dublin City Council's One City One People initiative, and the support of the neighbouring Local Authorities.

I would like to thank all involved for their hard work in organising this wonderful programme of events and I wish them every success. Enjoy the festival!



**P. S. Raghavan**  
Ambassador of  
India to Ireland

I extend to all members of the Indian community in Ireland warm greetings on the occasion of Diwali. The festival of lights is a major landmark in India's cultural calendar and it is heartening to see that a number of Indian community organisations are celebrating the festival all over Ireland.

The Indian community continues to make a valuable contribution to the economy of its country of domicile and has integrated harmoniously into its social fabric. I am happy that the community also retains its cultural links with its country of origin.

## IRELAND AND INDIA: RENEWING OLD LINKS



*Paddy Banks is a former political advisor to Minister Conor Lenihan, TD. He worked on the white Paper 'Migration Nation' published by Mr Lenihan when he was Minister for Integration. The views expressed are his own.*

The struggles for independence from the British Empire forged numerous links between Irish and Indian politicians such as Eamon de Valera, M K Gandhi and Pandit Nehru in the early to middle Twentieth Century. Regrettably, these valuable connections fell into abeyance after the passage of these luminaries. They need to be revived in the present time and clear ideas established in both countries about the identity and potential of the other.

I am somewhat concerned to learn from Indian friends and acquaintances that for many modern and highly educated Indians that Ireland is still perceived as part of the United Kingdom and that our diplomatic presence in India is widely seen as a subsidiary and supporting part of British diplomacy in the sub-continent. If this view is well-founded, we need to take remedial action to raise our profile as an independent player in India and on the world stage.

Surprisingly, according to recent figures from the Central Statistics Office, despite the recession and the resumption of emigration by Irish citizens, our population continues to grow partly due to continued immigration.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation have tightened, and will continue to tighten up on the requirements for entry but Ireland's economy still has a requirement for skilled people from outside the E.U.

We need make no apology for being highly discriminating in selecting those deemed suitable for entry to meet the needs of our

economy and society. Despite what some uninformed lobbyists would wish, we do not, and will not, have an open door policy. We already have an underclass; we don't need to import another.

However, talented people from India can continue to be assured of a welcome and can make a definite contribution to Ireland's developing knowledge economy. It is my considered opinion that the Government and Higher Education Authority are overestimating the contribution that China can make to our development and are consequently underrating the benefits to be had from developing strong scientific and technological links with the growing regional and international power that is India.

A recent editorial feature in the Economist (2 October 2010) highlights the rapid progress that India is making and contrasts favourably its attractiveness compared to China. I quote from the leading article: "Ideas flow easily around India, since it lacks China's culture of secrecy and censorship. That, plus China's rampant piracy, is why knowledge-based industries such as software love India but shun the Middle Kingdom."

The Irish Government needs to put considerable effort behind the implementation of The Programme of Co-Operation in the Fields of Science and Technology between the Government of India and the Government of Ireland for the period 2009-2011.

This landmark agreement, signed by Minister Conor Lenihan TD, in 2009, on behalf of our Government, provides a solid basis for expanding joint enterprises in areas vital to the continuing success of both economies. Indian Institutes of Technology are world beaters and our opportunity to tap into their expertise through the agreed programme should be fastened on as a basis for continued development and expansion in applied science.

What does this background mean for Indian people coming to Ireland? The last Census in 2006 showed that 10% of our population was composed of immigrants from all over the world amongst whom Indians are a small but growing minority. The Irish experience of immigration to date has been relative trouble free. We are a welcoming people and our attitudes to incomers are in part,

no doubt, informed by the centuries-long history of inward and outward migration in this island.

We are proud of our laws, customs and beliefs and expect long-term immigrants to absorb and respect them. The pernicious and discredited doctrines of multiculturalism espoused in some quarters, both native and immigrant, have been clearly demonstrated to be an obstacle to successful integration. A common, seamless social fabric cannot be constructed from a disparate collection of unconnected fragments and scraps. Multiculturalism encourages separation rather than integration.

In particular, in a time of economic stress attempts to confer additional rights and entitlements on immigrant communities leads the indigenous population to believe that it is being discriminated against and simply serves to exacerbate whatever low level of anti-immigrant sentiment exists.

While integration is a necessity for a harmonious and productive economy and civil society, it is vital for Ireland to ensure that the valuable connections immigrants have to their home countries and the language skills that they bring are used to the mutual benefit of the host country and the immigrants' country of origin. The possibilities for the development of networks that facilitate international trade, technological and cultural exchange are endless.

Entrepreneurial immigrants can also play an important role in addressing the structural imbalance in the Irish economy: Its relatively underdeveloped small and medium enterprise (SME) sector? The Ireland India Council has, particularly through the committed efforts of its Director, Prashant Shukla, played a significant role in refashioning the links between our two countries. The Council deserves the unswerving support of both Governments and all who have an interest in fostering links between Ireland and India.

When Indian immigrants settle and acquire over time the peculiar failings, faults and frailties that we recognize, acknowledge and tolerate in ourselves, they will have become truly Irish.

**Zindabad Ireland! Zindabad Hindustan!**

## FUTURE PROJECTIONS FOR IRELAND-INDIA COUNCIL

To date we have seen the Ireland India Council (IIC) go from strength to strength and our future aim is to continue the growth of the organization.

We have a substantial amount of corporate, individual and life members and hope to increase this, yet again, in the coming year. Our members come from a wide variety of the sectors. . Education, Hospitality, County Councils, etc..... and our aim is to continue to support these members on a wide variety of issues.

We have been working on the integration and education of our two communities on the culture of both countries. As both our countries have long standing historical connections we would like to share these connections with both communities as a lot of people are not aware of the depth of this connection. To achieve this we will introduce a new library to our offices with a wide variety of books available for reference and a list of these books will appear on our website from Jan. 2011. Later, this month, we are hosting a day with a well renowned historian, who will address the historical connections of India and Ireland and this lecture is open to all and is free of charge. Should this be successful we would plan to hold similar lectures throughout 2011 and details of these will appear on our website.

Our Director, Mr. Prashant Shukla has been invited to address conferences on issues like integration, diversity and culture and hopes to continue to accept these invitations in the future. One of the most recent conferences he was asked to

This showed us the interest out there in establishing relations with India/Ireland and it is our aim for 2011 to promote Ireland as a country where investors can invest; a country that, despite the hardships we have at the moment, is inviting; and a country where there is scope for investing and increasing business opportunities. On this and indeed many other issues we have been in contact with government departments, embassies and other relevant organizations and we intend to continue this pursuit to find a satisfactory result for all involved and hope to assist in developing a firm and solid business relation between the two countries.

We wish to look into the prospect of holding language classes whereby both sides learn the language of the other. While the Indian community is well familiarized to the English language as English is the second language of India there maybe areas where more specific business or academic English may be required and indeed as Ireland is not familiar with Hindi (the mother tongue of India) we feel it would be of great benefit for this language to be available. We are considering how best to do this in the future.

As we have recently been successful in securing new premises, our aim is to promote our offices and our services to a wider community. A secure premises like this gives us the scope to widen our involvement with both communities. While we are, at present, working with organizations nationally such as Cork Institute of Technology, UCD, DCU, DIT

and different County Councils, we feel we can now broaden our horizons even further. We will continue to celebrate all festivals of both Irish and Indian.

Our annual summer lecture which addresses a different relevant topic each year continues to be a huge success. This lecture brings together the Business and Academic sector and we will continue to host this event.

Our annual conference which yet again is a huge success in bringing together both communities will also continue to be held.

We have a "Cross Community Integration Programme: Local Initiative Global Perspective which is supported by the Office of the Minister for Integration. This programme widely used by not only Indians living in Ireland but also other ethnic minorities, we hope that we could renew this cooperation.

We will continue to support Science and Technology Co-operation within Irish and Indian Institutions and confident that again in 2011 we will host another forum.

Well, IIC has indeed come a long way and we foresee it going a lot further in future years.

To sum it all up our main projections will be centered around Science & Technology, Education, Tourism, Integration and supporting investment and commerce between the two countries.

We also would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support in the past and we hope it will continue in the future.

## Significance of Diwali-Festival of Light

Diwali is also known as Deepawali meaning 'an array of lights'. This festival of lights falls on the day of Amavasya, which is a moonless dark night, according to the Hindu calendar. Light, being the symbol of hope and positive energy, indicates the victory of good over evil, light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance, [prosperity over recession.]

Diwali is a festival of celebration so people clean and paint their houses months ahead and decorate them with colourful electrical bulbs and Diya and candles, children wear new clothes and fire crackers are used on the day after the rituals. Women make plenty of sweet dishes, there are social gatherings to exchange greetings and gifts with the loved ones.

**Continued on next page...**

## Welcome to our New Corporate Members

9 Russell Crescent  
Russell Square  
Tallaght, Dublin24  
Republic of Ireland

PHONE:  
+353 -1- 4131241

EMERGENCY:  
+353 -0- 868957747

E-MAIL:  
info@eircom.net

### UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School

We have a long standing relationship with UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and are delighted to welcome them in recently becoming a Corporate Member of IIC. The school has a distinguished history as a leader in business education. It values it's heritage and embraces it's responsibility to maintain the highest

standards and pushes the boundaries of what they can achieve.

### Maldron Hotel, Tallaght.

The hotel is conveniently situated in the heart of Tallaght. It is a very warm and welcoming hotel and aims to keep its customer satisfaction to the highest level. It is the ideal place for conferences, meetings, functions or just for a friendly chat.

### Merrion I.T.

Merrion I.T. was established in 2002 here in Ireland and also has a company in India. Merrion I.T. recognised the need for Outsourcing and its need for a service model that is global enabled by technology, supported by a highly skilled, low cost workforce and defined by a range of tools, services and delivery models.

*'I have become my own version of an optimist. If I can't make it through one door, I'll go through another door – or I'll make a door. Something terrific will come no matter how dark the present' - Rabindranath Tagore*

*We wish  
you all a  
Very  
Happy  
Diwali*

### Cork Institute of Technology

The Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) has signed an agreement of cooperation with University of Pune (UoP). This agreement will facilitate joint Masters and Phd supervision and development of joint programmes of teaching.

Through this cooperation the vice Chancellor of Pune University Mr Raghunath Shevgaonkar and President of Cork Institute of Technology "hope to build an innovation ecosystem that is truly international in nature and fully

aligned with the development needs of India and Ireland."

The agreement of cooperation was marked by a formal ceremony on 27th September, 2010, which was witnessed by His Excellency P. S. Raghavan, Ambassador of India to Ireland, and Mr Billy Kellegher, Minister of State for Trade and Commerce. Also in attendance was Mr Prashant Shukla, Director of Ireland-India Council, Mr Brendan O' Regan, CEO of Zenith Technologies and a large number of invited guests.

## Significance of Diwali-Festival of Light continued from page3.....

Celebration of this five day long festival begins with Dhanteras when people buy mostly utensil, jewellery or gold and silver coins. The second day of Diwali is Narak Chaudas which is popularly known as Choti Diwali and people clean their houses and take special herbal baths and light diya in the corner of the house. The third day of Diwali is a big celebration, which is today, and on this day people perform worship of Goddess Laxmi [Goddess of wealth and prosperity] and Lord Ganesha [God of wisdom]. People keep their doors open that night to welcome goddess Laxmi into their house. This year we will put a special request to Goddess Laxmi that after her tour in India she must visit Ireland as in these recessionary times we badly need her blessings for wealth prosperity in this country. The fourth day of Diwali is Govardhan Pooja, the fifth day is Bhai Dooj, a special day for all the brothers and sisters.

Diwali celebrates the return of Lord Ram, the ancient idol of the heroic ages, the embodiment of truth, of morality, the ideal son, the ideal husband and above all the ideal King. He returns with his wife Sita and his brother Laxman from fourteen years of exile after a war in which he vanquished the demon king Ravana. It is believed that the people lit oil clay lamps all along the way to light the Royal family's path in the darkness.

According to The Times of India editorial,

Regardless of the mythological explanation one prefers, what the festival of lights really stands for today is a reaffirmation of hope, a renewed commitment to friendship and goodwill, and a religiously sanctioned celebration of the simple and some not so simple joys of life.

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