



PRESS RELEASE 2008-THE YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS!

The year 2008 is a year of celebrations for India and Switzerland – a year that commemorates 60 years of the signing of the Indo-Swiss Friendship Treaty and of friendship that dates back to much earlier than that.

It is the objective of strengthening present relationships, seeking new partnerships and presenting the diverse image of Switzerland to the decision makers of today and tomorrow, that serves as a basis of the jubilee celebrations, apart from celebrating 60 years of the signing of the treaty. Various projects, in the fields of culture, economic, politics, education, science & technology and development, have been planned in India and Switzerland across the year 2008, in association with a number of partners like Pro Helvetia, Switzerland Tourism, Swiss Development Cooperation and Swiss-Indian Chamber of Commerce. Projects are being coordinated by the Embassy of Switzerland, New Delhi and Presence Switzerland.

The visit of the President of the Swiss Confederation, Ms. Micheline Calmy-Rey, to India, in November 2007, served as the 'launch' of the jubilee celebrations. Some of the other highlights of the jubilee celebrations in India, which are planned are: A Swiss flower clock in the heart of Delhi; re-discovering the traditional Swiss instrument-the Alphorn-through a tour by Eliane Burki; a spectacular light-installation in Delhi by Swiss artist Daniela Zehnder; performances by the most renowned and leading choreographers of Europe-Ballet B ejart Lausanne; Delirium by Plasma; Criss + Cross: design from Switzerland highlighting the inventiveness and diversity of Swiss design over the past 150 years; Da Motus: interesting works involving site-specific choreography; internships in museums; visit of Federal Councillor Ms. Doris Leuthard along with a high-level business delegation; inauguration of the Swiss-Indian Chamber of Commerce; release of a book on Swiss-Indian trade and investment relations; increase in the number of Federal Grants for graduate students to study in Swiss universities; addition of a Scientific Counsellor at the Embassy; launch of a school-level exchange programme; a book to commemorate the jubilee celebrations; a political symposium in Delhi; symposium on Direct Democracy in Switzerland to be held in both India and Switzerland; TERI Delhi Sustainable Development Summit based on the theme 'climate change'; publication on 50 years of Development Cooperation Switzerland-India and the North-South MediasFestival in New Delhi in 2008, amongst others.

Some of the highlights in Switzerland are: Horn Please-an exhibition of Indian contemporary art, symposium on Direct Democracy in Switzerland, Romantic Garden: Concert for sitar and philharmonic orchestra, Soorya India Festival: A fusion of Carnatic, Hindustani and Western music and dance, Aarohi: Health, Education and Agriculture in the Indian Himalayas, Indian Ball 2008 being organized by the Indian Association Zurich, Picturesque Views: Early photography in India, Rama and Sita: An exhibition on Ramayana in Indian paintings, unveiling of a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in the city of Geneva and many others.

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