CHAPTER V

SCIENTIFIC, EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL TIES
The educational, scientific and cultural ties between Britain and India together constitute an important strand of cooperation between the two countries. Co-operation and collaboration in scientific and technical fields helped to strengthen their bilateral relationship, by speeding up development and sharing experiences across a wide range of endeavours. The vitality of these links and the vigour with which they were pursued helped to increase mutual understanding and bring the two countries closer. Of course, in a fast changing technological scene, to meet the growing technology needs of a developing country like India would require an extensive programme of collaboration between scientists, technologists, researchers and managers so that information resources and technical assistance could rapidly be made available.1

The Indian educational system has been developed largely on the British pattern and as such the Indo-British educational, scientific and cultural cooperation made rapid progress since independence. India received substantial assistance from Britain in the form of equipment under the Colombo Plan. Besides, a number of scholarships have been

instituted by the British Government to enable Indian students to study in British universities. The retention of English as the link language to a large extent, facilitated Indo-British educational, scientific and cultural cooperation. The British Council also helped the Indian educational system to develop rapidly, especially in the teaching of English language. The Council's activities in this regard deserve special mention. Culturally also, India, before independence, practically had little contact with any other country, except Britain. After 1947, these ties have been fostered, mainly through the British Council and visits of cultural delegations from both countries. The Festival of India in Britain in 1982 did also go a long way in strengthening these contacts.

Scientific and Technical Cooperation

Indo-British scientific cooperation prevailed in the pre-1980 period had been maintained and developed both at the multilateral (Commonwealth) and bilateral levels. A number of organisations functioned in this field. They included: Indian Scientific Liaison Office, London, established in 1948, Commonwealth Consultative Space Research Committee, British Commonwealth Scientific

Committee, Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux, etc. These organisations, besides fostering greater Indo-British cooperation in scientific development, also fostered cooperation through the interchange of scientists provided by occasions like annual meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science and the sessions of the Indian Science Congress. British assistance was also made available to India in a very important field of modern research — nuclear energy — in the decade of the fifties.³

Plans were already underway in 1981-82, to supplement the long standing science and technology links between the two countries, which already existed involving such institutions as the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, and the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore and British institutions through a new science and technology Technological Cooperation Programme and through the development of a variety of projects under the British Council's Academic Links and Interchange Scheme.⁴

The provisions of the Technical Training Cooperation Awards, started in the late seventies, apart from providing

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³ Ibid.
⁴ Thomson, n.1, pp. 15-16.
essential project support, also assist with the manpower development of various Indian scientific institutes and organisations. They support management development in Indian public sector industry, Indian railways and the Indian Administrative Service and included arrangements for over 100 Indians to go to Britain for management courses in 1980-81.5

The ICL computer systems at IIT Delhi, is a gift from Britain under the Colombo Plan technical collaboration arrangements. The British Minister for Overseas Development, Mr. Neil Martin, on a visit to India, said: "Britain is glad to have contributed to the growth and success of the college through staff interchanges, equipment and training facilities, and especially through the collaborative link between the Imperial College of Science and Technology at London and the IIT."6

In addition, two experimental solar energy systems installed in Leh, capital of the cold and mountainous Ladakh region, by local craftsmen working under the direction of Metro-Technic Associates International, London. The project was funded by the Industrial Services

5. Ibid.
Under the Colombo Plan technical cooperation arrangements, Britain gave two optical mark radar machines worth £60,000 (about Rs.10.8 lakhs) to India's Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). Britain had collaborated with the UPSC to implement reforms and innovations to improve efficiency. In continuation of this technical cooperation arrangement, five British specialists visited India, in October 1980, to participate in workshops in Bangalore and Nagpur on Union Public Service Examination reforms. This visit was sponsored by the British government's development cooperation programme in India.

In April 1981, five memoranda of understanding were signed in the presence of Indira Gandhi, Indian Prime Minister, and the visiting British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, covering Indo-British cooperation in key sectors of the Indian economy, like coal, power, science, technology and space. In science and technology, there was

already considerable research collaborations between India and Britain. Areas covered included renewable natural resources, health, technical education and applied sciences. The memorandum agreed that research collaborations should be extended in these and other areas such as nutrition, genetic engineering and alternative energy under the Colombo Plan arrangements.¹⁰

The memorandum on space collaboration, in areas such as space science missions — for example, astronomy and earth observation using 600 kilogram class satellites that were launched in 1990 and exchange of space technology such as development of maintenance terminals to improve communications were agreed upon by both India and Britain enhancing the scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries.¹¹

A "Science in India" exhibition, held at the Science Museum in South Kensington, London, in March 1982 provided a forum for the display of science in India and India's contribution to the growth and advancement of science. There was special emphasis on the science of 'Ayurveda' and


¹¹. Ibid.
the basic concepts of ayurvedic science were explained to the British people.\textsuperscript{12}

Strong institutional links between Britain and India in science and technology have been built up over the years. They have contributed to training, collaborative research and transfer of technology in support of India's economic and social advancement. While India placed very high priority on scientific research and technological development, Britain, through a number of technical cooperation projects, which included provision of equipment, training and skilled manpower, helped India's initiatives in this field. There were four such projects:

(a) Ultrasonic standards for industry

In 1986-87, Britain has supported a collaboration between the National Physical Laboratories in Delhi and Teddington to develop three main areas - ultrasonic measurements and standards, underwater acoustics and non-destructive testing. These ultrasonic measurements would help Indian industries to achieve greater sophistication and precision to meet international standards.

\textsuperscript{12} British High Commission in India, \textit{British Information Services}, (New Delhi), BIS-B 68, 25 March 1982.
(b) **Printing technology in Madras**

British aid amounting to £3,66,700 was allocated for the establishment of a degree course in printing technology at Anna University to meet the growing demands of the industry in India.

(c) **Foundation Engineering**

This study by the Central Building Research Institute at Roorkee and the Building Research Establishment (UK) looked at the behaviour of piled foundations in different soils in India with the aim of improving designs and construction practices. This study was based in Delhi.

(d) **Research to improve the understanding of the atmospheric features that control the annual monsoon on which Indian agriculture still mainly depended.**

British aid was attuned to help work on storm surge modelling, diagnostic studies in monsoon dynamics and numerical modelling of air pollution. The universities of Cambridge and Reading and the Imperial College, London, collaborated with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, in this regard. Besides these collaborations and fundings, Britain also provided rails, machine tools for workshop modernisation and components for locomotives and rolling stock, for Indian railways, and also
collaborated in India with the Railway Staff College at Baroda to develop their management training courses.\textsuperscript{13}

In continuation of the technical training cooperation programme, Britain, on a request from India, allocated a further grant of £22.2 million to meet the local costs for Phase II of the Indo-British Fertiliser Education Project (IBFEP). A further sum of £1.2 million was provided for technical cooperation in India and the United Kingdom. The main features of the project were education of the farmers in proper utilisation of the fertiliser usage and supply of other production inputs.\textsuperscript{14}

In areas of conservation, and to provide India with plant protection techniques, an Indo-British conservation initiative aimed at protecting animal and plant life in the face of development was launched, in February 1987, in UK, lasting for three years. The implications of using pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers were researched and attention was given to specific areas noted for their

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} UK, Overseas Development Administration and the Central Office of Information, \textit{Britain and India: Partners in Development} (London, 1987), pp.16-17.
\item \textsuperscript{14} British High Commission in India, \textit{British Information Services}, (New Delhi), BIS-B 510, 15 February 1987.
\end{itemize}
wildlife, such as Bharatpur.15

Under various award schemes, some six hundred persons a year have been asked to visit Britain to carry out study or research programmes, which enabled specialists from Britain to come to India for study and teaching purposes. Such programmes helped economic and social development and facilitated communication within scientists, academics and others.16

Scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries got further strengthened when, in 1988, a group of 10 engineers from the Indian Railways Central Organisation for Modernisation of Workshops (COFMOW) received an eight week training in welding and fabrication technology from Britain, which was funded by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) under the Indo-British Technical Cooperation Training Programme.17

A short term course on Micro Processor Applications for Energy Conservation and Control of AC drives was held in IIT, Delhi, in February 1988 as part of the Indo-UK


collaboration programme. Besides, the British government funded several other projects in IIT, Delhi, in such diverse fields as instrumentation technology, fibre optics, atmospheric sciences, erosive wear, solid mechanics and physiological fluid dynamics. A number of British universities are linked with IIT Delhi, for joint research in these areas. All these projects are managed by the British Council Division of the British High Commission in India.18

The Indo-British technical cooperation programme, funded by the ODA, is basically an agreement to improve manpower resources. The programme provided opportunities for Indian engineers and technocrats and professionals to go to Britain and have a first hand knowledge about the latest techniques and get acquainted with the modern technology in their respective fields. Under this programme, a group of 18 Indian engineers from various State electricity boards and Central Electricity Authority had undergone, in 1988, a ten weeks training in power station maintenance. An Indo-British Workshop on Heat Pumps and Energy Conservation was held, at the National Chemical Laboratory (Pune) in collaboration with the

University of Salford (UK), under this technical cooperation programme in 1988.\(^\text{19}\)

Similarly, in 1988 a group of eight engineers attended, an Integrated Digital Network Course at the British Telecommunications Training Centre in Bath, under this technical training programme.\(^\text{20}\) Under the same arrangement, nine port officials, nominated by the Ministry of Surface Transport, went to Britain in 1988 to attend a three month port management and operations course at the University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology.\(^\text{21}\)

The bilateral programme of manpower development launched by India and Britain has been progressing on a massive scale. More Indian personnel undertake training in Britain under the Indo-British Technical Cooperation training programme (also known as the Colombo Plan Fellowship) than under any other bilateral scheme. Britain has offered almost three times as many training places to India than to any other country in the world. There


remained close cooperation between the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), the British Council Division of the British High Commission in India, the Indian Ministry of Finance and nominating authorities within the Indian public sector. A recent feature of the programme is the increasing number of special courses in Britain exclusively for Indian officials - like the special courses in urban development are an example. Under this arrangement a group of fifteen public sector managers, civil servants and trainees, nominated by the Government of India, went to Britain in 1988 to undertake the Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme at the University of Leeds.

In December 1988, a group of fourteen directors and senior faculty members of Indian training institutes made a 3 week visit to Britain in 1988 to study the civil service training programme there. The visit formed part of a major effort of the Government of India, in collaboration with the British Council and the Overseas Development Administration and the Indian Department of Personnel and Training, to upgrade facilities in central and state


training institutions. This project included refresher courses and training methodology in different subject areas. 24

Britain's technical aid programme was designed to meet India's priorities and social needs. This technical cooperation programme funded by the ODA and the part played by the British Council in it, specially in the area of field management of over forty-five developmental projects in management, science and technology, renewable natural resources and the environment and training programmes in the coal and power industries, railway management and public administration, has been quite fruitful. 25

The Indo-British technical and scientific cooperation has provided considerable opportunities to Indian professionals, technical personnel, manufacturers and businessmen to compete in a fiercely competitive world and learn modern techniques of the trade and be conversant with all the relevant and up-to-date state of art, and technology, of their respective professions. The opportunities it provided to Indian managers and other


professionals nominated by their respective department and ministries to get trained in the United Kingdom and at its different advanced universities and training institutes was certainly a constructive element of bilateral cooperation between India and Britain.

**Health and Educational Cooperation**

Association between India and Britain in spheres of health management and educational cooperation deserves special mention, particularly to draw attention to the huge amount of British aid that was disbursed to provide primary health care in the rural areas of India. Under this programme, a family welfare project in Orissa was provided in 1981, with a grant of Rs.19 crores.26 Similarly, in the same year, Britain gifted the MEL SL 75/5 linear accelerator to the Gujarat Cancer Research Institute (GCRI) in Ahmedabad. Britain gifted this vital component in cancer radiotherapy, along with other associated and back up equipment, under the Colombo Plan technical cooperation arrangements. This equipment constituted the largest donation the GCRI has ever received.27


Similarly, the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) received a mobile clinic financed under the British aid programme. The clinic was manufactured by the British firm Seaward Surgicals and was specially designed for use in the rural areas of India at a total cost of £11 million. ²⁸

The priorities for ODA support for health and population development in India fit closely with India's own programme as set out in its various five-year plans. First is the support for the development of health sector, including its organisation, management and financing, in keeping with India's interest in public sector reforms and the constitutional amendments, linked to the Panchayati Raj system. Second, which is also in accordance with India's population priorities, is to help find ways to improve reproductive health, including family planning and women's health. The third priority is to contribute to a reduction in the suffering and disability that result from malaria, tuberculosis and HIV, through partnerships that supported the development and appropriate use of cost-effective

²⁸. British High Commission in India, British Information Services, (New Delhi), BIS-B-150, 14 April 1980.
technologies and delivery systems.²⁹

These priorities are addressed through a mixture of large scale state projects, support for national programmes, research and training. There are also substantial health aspects to ODA's urban, industrial and water projects. The largest British project in the sector, the Orissa Health and Family Welfare project which began in 1981, provided fully equipped residential and clinic facilities for the Auxiliary Nurse/Midwives who provide health and family planning services at village level. Since the project began, more than 100 members of the Orissa health services have been trained in Britain and many British experts have visited Orissa to work on project assignments.³⁰

In continuation of the work done by the ODA in the spheres of child and healthcare activities, Sawtry village college at Huntingdon (Eastern England) took up sponsorship of an SOS children's village in Calcutta in 1981. It maintained personal contact with the Indian children and the scheme was organised by the British branch of the

³⁰. Ibid.
International aid group, 'SOS Children's Villages'. 31 Similarly, in April 1987, the Newcastle General Hospital gifted to the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratisthan, Calcutta, a brain scanner and the doctors at the Newcastle Hospital raised £35,000 through voluntary activities which were used to pay for running and maintenance costs. 32 The Andhra Pradesh School Health project is the second largest ODA health sector project in India. Commenced as a pilot project in eleven districts of Andhra Pradesh in 1984, this project covered over 5 million children in 49,000 state primary schools of all the 23 districts of Andhra Pradesh. 33

ODA assisted projects are also working elsewhere in India. In Delhi, ODA has funded the expansion of St. Stephen's Hospital, which enabled it to provide enhanced maternal and neonatal care. In West Bengal, a project funded by the ODA supports the National Aids Control Organization. Two regional projects support the work of the Spastics Societies of North and East India and a


Community rehabilitation project is developing models of services for the handicapped in a number of Indian cities. In spheres of old age care and rehabilitation of the old and the handicapped, in January 1990, the British High Commission in India, gave a grant of Rs 3 lakhs to the Delhi branch of Helpage India, the national voluntary organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for the elderly in need of help.

Britain's ODA programme of assistance in India has constantly evolved with the Government of India's own priorities. A series of medical research projects targeting rotavirus in Manipur, cancer in Gujarat, haemoglobinopathy in Bombay and viral hepatitis in Delhi were completed. And, they were succeeded by a new generation of projects that targeted action in the community against blindness and other diseases. The British healthcare projects in India, funded by the ODA, provide not only primary health care, but also nursery schools and adult literacy classes in villages, and training in business and vocational skills to the rural population.

34. U.K., ODA, n.29.
36. UK, ODA, n.29.
EDUCATION

The close relationship between language and thought is undeniable and a major factor in Britain's shared heritage in India has been the development and spread of English as the principal channel of communication across ethnic boundaries. It has ensured that the classics of English literature are enjoyed as much in India as in Britain. Britain continues to work closely with Indian institutions concerned for the improvement of English teaching. The British Council, established in 1934, and opened its office in India in 1948, rendered a tremendous service in this regard. The Council enables specialists in English language and literature from Britain to visit India and makes available to Indian Scholars advanced training facilities in Britain.37

The British support for education in India is focussed on primary education. The ODA has funded the Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (APPEP), which began as a small pilot project during 1984, was extended to cover the entire state in 1989, to bring about a substantive qualitative improvement in teacher competence, classroom practice and learning outcomes, and contribute to the attainment of

universal primary education. In addition to work in the primary education field, ODA has also supported a major technical education project, which could improve the quality of engineers graduating from the Regional Engineering Colleges (REC's) in India. Besides providing consultancies and equipment, the project would also strengthen the internal mechanism for curriculum review by drawing industrial resources into it and to make the process self-sustainable. Other pertinent elements are inputs into the management system, libraries and information resources, support to disadvantaged students and female participation. The project was to draw on the resources of the Northern Consortium of 12 British universities. All ODA education projects in India are managed by the British Council.38

In 1988-89, under a bilateral agreement concluded in Delhi in August 1988 between the British Open University and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Rs.8 crore assistance was provided to the IGNOU.39 On 6 November 1989, Lynda Chalker, British Minister for Overseas Development Administration, told the House of Commons:


We provide more than £31 million towards the development of the IGNOU and the primary education project in the state of Andhra Pradesh and in addition there are a large number of English language tuition programmes and collaborative links between Indian and British academic institutions. There is also a British training programme which costs £11 million a year.40

In 1980, Britain increased fees for overseas students. After Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister in U.K., she removed all the subsidies that were so far available to overseas students in Britain, specially from the Commonwealth countries, and, as a result, the number of students from India going to Britain for studies showed a rapid decline, as is illustrated by the statistics below:

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<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1131</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>740</td>
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The change from 1979-80 to 1983-84 was -35%.

In 1988, however, Britain offered palliatives in the form of increased student grants and these grants were funded by the ODA and administered by the British Council. And, between 1988 and 1991 a lot of grants was diverted to the technical training cooperation programme. The number of Indian students in British universities showed a marginal increase due to the measures introduced by the British government — for example, in February 1983, the British government announced a scheme to help overseas students, in particular those from the Commonwealth countries who could no longer afford to study in Britain.\textsuperscript{42}

The number of students from India enrolled in British Higher and Further Education in 1993 were:\textsuperscript{43}

| Students at Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Higher Education, etc. | ... 1,300 |
| Trainees (Accountants, Doctors, etc.) | ... 400 |
| Trainees under Colombo Plan | ... 1,200 |
| **Total** | **... 2,900** |

\textbf{Note:} These are approximate figures.

An important contribution of Britain to educational links with India has been to increase the number of

\textsuperscript{42} Daily Telegraph (London), 9 February 1983.

scholarships on offer. Information is available in all the libraries, and these include shared scholarships offered by a number of British universities in partnership with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The scholarships available to Indian students for study in Britain are the British government funded Commonwealth Scholarship Fellowship Plan (CSFP) (75); Nehru Centenary British Fellowships (15), introduced in 1991 September; Overseas Development Administration Shared Scholarship Scheme; British Chevening Scholarships; British Council Fellowship Programme; Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Trust; Agatha Harrison Memorial Fellowship; Technical Cooperation and Training Programme; Commonwealth Senior Medical Fellowship; Commonwealth Academic Staff Fellowship; Charles Wallace Trust (2); Felix Scholarship (approximately 20); and Overseas Research Students Award Scheme (850 awarded worldwide).

Close cooperation between India and Britain also existed in the field of publishing. A high level 14-member trade mission from the British Publishers' Association visited India in 1988. Tony Read, Director of the British

44. UK, Central Office of Information, n.25. pp.4-8.

Publishing Association's book development council said, "We continue to strengthen our keen interest in and commitment to the Indian market." A whole lot of British education books were sold in India, during the delegation's visit and its mission to India was very fruitful. The delegation met its Indian counterparts — the Federation of Indian Publishers (FIP) and the Federation of Publishers and Booksellers Associations in India (FPBAI) for discussions on key issues of mutual concern. Despite the price problems, sale of books from UK to India remained high in recent years. The delegation also noted the growing interest of British publishers in India and the increasing level of cooperation with Indian publishers on licensing. There have been for many years, a number of joint British/Indian publishing companies, like Oxford University Press, and Macmillan (India), all with Indian majority shareholding, are examples. The strong cooperative stance of British and Indian publishers on copyright issues is a further indication of the strong links between the two industries which have been strengthened by the announcement of the Paul Hamlyn Scholarships for Young Indian Publishers. This scheme provides for two annual scholarships each worth £3,000 to enable young Indian

publishers to spend several months in Britain, working with British publishers and studying British publishing techniques. The FIP has responded by offering assistance for a young British publisher to visit India to study the Indian book trade.47

Indo-British academic and educational links remained strong, thriving and deep rooted. The British Council Division of the British High Commission in India promoted academic and research links in collaboration with the University Grants Commission (UGC) and research bodies — there are about thirty active links of this kind. Since 1990, Indo-British legal forum have attracted distinguished representation on both sides, and have become regular events.48 The fact that the Indo-British educational and academic cooperation are strong and links are deep rooted is illustrated by the statistics given below regarding the number of overseas students in the U.K.:49

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>1012</td>
<td>1131</td>
<td>1111</td>
<td>1145</td>
<td>1151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.31</td>
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According to statistics provided by the Department of Education, India ranked 17 among countries whose students are at British universities. The Department of Education's figure, for 1991, of the total number of Indian students at all levels is 1259.50

**COOPERATION IN ART AND CULTURE**

During the period of British imperial rule, India practically had no cultural exchange with other countries of the world; whatever cultural exchange was there, it was mostly confined to relations with Britain and other countries of the empire. After independence, at the unofficial level, cultural activities programme with foreign countries was mainly the responsibility of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), created in 1949 as an autonomous body, although financed entirely by the Government of India. On the other hand, from the side of the British government, the British Council, played an

50. Ibid.
important role in the promotion of cultural exchanges between the two countries.\textsuperscript{51}

The cultural ties between India and Britain received a big boost in 1980s. In November 1979, it was decided that a ten day exhibition on Asian life styles would be held in London in 1980 and it was the first ever major exhibition in the West designed to celebrate ancient Asian lifestyles, its cultures, arts and crafts. India was a leading participant in the exhibition. The exhibition included food items from India and entertainments like sitar recital from eminent Indian artists.\textsuperscript{52}

The Indian and the British governments announced on 29 April 1980 that they agreed to organise a Festival of India in Britain in 1982. The festival was to consist of a series of exhibitions and other events reflecting many aspects of Indian life and civilisation down the ages. In a joint statement, B. Shankaranand, the Indian Minister of Education and Culture, and Norman St. John Stevas, the British Minister for the Arts, said that a new generation of Indians and Britons were looking for a new understanding of one another. They said: "This desire is ready for a

\textsuperscript{51} Thomson, n.1, pp. 14-16.

\textsuperscript{52} British High Commission in India, British Information Services, (New Delhi), BIS-B-373, 29 November 1979.
formal expression and the festival will show that the whole civilisation and culture of India is not only worth knowing for its own sake, but has much to offer the world in art, philosophy and a way of life. The festival will mark an important step in the new relationship between India and Britain." The Festival included exhibitions of Indian art and sculpture, dance recitals and concerts of Indian music and an exhibition depicting life in a Gujarat village, displays of modern industrial designs and graphics and numerous other events at many of Britain's major museums, galleries and concert halls.53

The Festival of India marked a collective triumph, in Indo-British cooperation, of scholars and historians, museum administrators, civil servants and diplomats. However, the Festival planners in India or Britain had never lost the sight of a relatively small but highly significant audience of Indians settled in UK over the past thirty years or so and, in particular, Indian children born in Britain. For the Indo-British community in Britain, the Festival of India, offered a viable substitute for a long visit to their country. At a deeper level, while it enabled them to reaffirm proudly their Indian identity, the

53. British High Commission in India, British Information Services, (New Delhi), BIS-B-166, 29 April 1980.

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festival also showed the other Britons the rich contribution the Indian community was making to contemporary Britain.\(^{54}\)

The Festival of India, an eight month long celebration on Indian art, Science and Culture ended officially on 14 November, 1982. Speaking at a press conference on 11 November, Sir Michael Walker, chariman of the Festival of India committee, said that the festival had enjoyed a success far wider than anticipated. The objective had been to renew the vitality of long standing links between India and Britain, make people aware of the wonder of the arts in India and her achievement in the field of 20th century science and space technology. The Festival had also enabled the Indian people in Britain to confirm their pride in their cultural heritage.\(^{55}\)

An 'Indian heritage' exhibition opened in London, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, as part of the Festival of India.\(^{56}\) It attracted a large number of visitors and it

\(^{54}\) British High Commission in India, British Information Services, BIS-B-62, 22 February 1982.


\(^{56}\) British High Commission in India, British Information Services, (New Delhi), BIS-B-108, 23 March 1982.
was hailed as a "success". The Daily Telegraph hailed The Festival as being highly successful and it received widespread coverage in the British press. 57

The British Broadcasting Corporation also celebrated the Festival of India by telecasting Indian feature films, specially made documentaries and repeat telecasts of acclaimed programmes made about India.

The "Festival of India" was appreciated and praised by Francis Pym, British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, in the House of Commons. He said: "The festival of India is an exciting cultural event and I welcome the initiative for an exhibition relating to the festival, by the all party committee." He was also the sponsor of the "India today" exhibition. 58

The Festival of India officially ended on November 14, 1982, but its impact stayed on. The cultural exchanges between the two countries, received a big push.

The festival provided to the British people and the second generation Indians born and brought up in Britain,

regarding the cultural diversity of India, while at the same time, giving an insight into the modern Indian art and culture. It created an awareness about India and stimulated an urge, and a desire, to visit India. The number of British tourists visiting India, over the years, specially from 1983-84, till 1988-89 have increased progressively over the years. The number of visitors from Britain to India in the year 1983, increased immediately after the year of the festival, 1982. The table below illustrates the point:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of British tourists to India</th>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
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<td>1,20,772</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>3,00,696</td>
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The Festival of India officially ended on 14 November 1982, but its impacts stayed on. The cultural exchanges between the two countries, received a big push.

ACTIVITIES OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL

The British Council, an independent non-political organisation is Britain's principal agency for the conduct of cultural relations overseas. Its aim is to promote understanding and appreciation of Britain in other countries. It does this by providing access to British thought, experience and achievement across the cultural spectrum, but notably in education, science and technology, arts and fields which are important in international development.60

The British Council opened its office in India in 1948 at the invitation of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Indeed the Council has its longest overseas operation in India. In India the Council has four regional libraries — in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras — and nine British libraries — in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Bhopal, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Patna, Pune, Ranchi and Trivandrum. About 92,000 members use these libraries, and they borrow over two

million books a year. The Bombay library is the busiest of all the British libraries in the world, with Madras and Pune not far behind. Sharing the management with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) for the nine British libraries is a unique international collaboration, and something Britain does with no other country.61

The library network of the British Council provide bibliographical information through a range of services; current awareness material to keep specialists up to date in their fields; access to a range of British computerised databases; and British Library reprints. All the libraries now have Compact Disc Roms of bibliographical, educational, commercial and medical information. A major refurbishment of the Calcutta library took place during the city's tricentenary year in 1989-90, and was inaugurated by Princess Alexandra, who also visited Trivandrum for the library's silver jubilee.62

The British Council's objective in India is to sustain and strengthen Indo-British relationship by promoting enduring forms of collaboration between institutions and individuals: by managing joint projects which directly meet

61. Robert Arbuthnott, "An enduring Cultural bond" in Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 28 February 1990, p.VII.
62. Ibid.
India's development needs, and by demonstrating British achievements — especially in science and technology, arts and humanities, and education. It seeks to combine British and Indian ideas, talents and experience through the common medium of the English language. 63

Activities of the British Council in the promotion of English studies include the development of new materials and methods for traveling purposes; seminars for practitioners in, for example, curriculum design and evaluation; joint sponsorship of story-writing and poetry competitions; and lecture tours by British writers and critics. British Council's annual report of its activities in India in 1993-94 shows the following facts:— 64 1,000 training awards, 50 Foreign and Commonwealth scholarships, (tenable by Indians in Britain), 80 Commonwealth scholarships, 2.42 million library issues, bookstock of 410,700, 6,000 library users each day, 55 academic links mainly with universities, 111,000 library members, 5,500 film and video files.

The Indo-British Cultural Exchange (IBCE) is a voluntary organisation bringing together fourteen major

63. UK, Central office of Information, n.25, pp.8-10.
64. Ibid, p.11.
Indian communities and vocational organisations in the UK. The IBCE has been working, over the years, to promote fruitful cultural exchanges between India and Britain and its major aims have been: (a) to preserve and promote the highest standards of Indian culture and ideals amongst Indian and host communities in the UK; (b) to promote mutual respect and understanding between the Indian people and the host community; (c) to encourage harmonious race relations by means of cultural and artistic interchange by all appropriate means, such as production of artistic and cultural projects; and (d) to advise and coordinate action on cultural, social and educational questions relating to Indian communities in UK which will encourage goodwill between Britain and India. IBCE sponsored the first major British production of an Indian epic - 'Nrityanatika Ramayana', which performed in Delhi in January 1982.65

Cultural relations between the two countries are also maintained through the visits of theatre companies from UK, who performed in India, like the National Theatre from UK did in December 1982, which was sponsored by ICCR and the British Council Division of the British High Commission.66


Apart from this, there were British film festivals organised in India. The British folk groups and orchestra groups also performed in India. Besides, there were exhibitions of contemporary art from Britain.  

In 1982, there was a month long cultural festival held in London organised by the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission (UK), part of the Swaminarayan fellowship, which has a large following worldwide. This cultural festival encompassed traditional music, dance, arts and crafts, architecture as well as religious ceremonies, exhibitions and conferences.  

Literary links between India and Britain were made stronger through the organisation of the Tagore festival in the summer of 1986 in London, to celebrate the 125th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. It was organised by a society known as 'Tagoreans' and was supported by the visiting arts unit of Great Britain, the Charles Wallace (India) Trust, ICCR and the Visva Bharati.  

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It is pertinent to note, the importance of popular culture in bringing together people of diverse and far-flung lands. Television is now the principal medium for giving people an insight into far away places and patterns of life of which they have no direct experience. Radio and the cinema have a similar function, while popular music has no geographical boundaries. The work of Ravi Shankar and other Indian musicians is renowned in Britain and has wrought major changes in musical styles in UK. The era of cheap mass travel has given many first hand experience of different ways of life. Every year took thousands of Indian visitors to Britain, while India has become an increasingly popular destination for the British tourists.\textsuperscript{70} The number of visitors from India to Britain was expected to more than double by 1994, growing at 10 per cent per annum, according to the new "Tourism Intelligence Quarterly" published by the British Tourist Authority. The publication identifies India as a major generator of tourism traffic in the near future and calls it tourism's "sleeping giant".\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{70}. Thomson, n.1, pp.14-18.

\textsuperscript{71}. British High Commission in India, British Information Services, BIS-B 176. 25 July 1987.
At the governmental level, Britain gives India a high priority. The British Council's activity is the largest of its overseas operations — with offices in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, with an annual budget of over £14 million.

Another British success is the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The former resident correspondent of BBC in India, Mark Tully, is a respected figure in India and Britain, and, ironically, his prominence is reflected in the demonstrations that have been directed against his office during phases of tension between the two countries. The BBC World Service in English is very popular in India and the British accent of English is much more comprehensible to the Indians generally.

The BBC runs regional service in many Indian languages, like Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Tamil, etc. and these programmes are very popular in India. The BBC's hourly news broadcasts are quite popular with Indian viewers. For the Indian mass media, London still has the largest concentration of Indian correspondents abroad. Indian papers also publish a substantial body of material from British publications.

under bilateral arrangements. This is, however, a one-sided arrangement. The British newspapers seldom reproduce articles from Indian journals and newspapers. 73

However, there has been a few controversies regarding the BBC's reporting on India. The mass media, especially the press and the television have been a powerful, though rough, strand of relations between India and Britain. There has been bad feelings in India over what is regarded as the consistently hostile attitude of the British press and television to affairs in India. Implicit to the intention is the idea that this hostility was born out of a feeling of malice or spite against India and the Indians. 74 It is not a new phenomenon - but a continuing one. A glaring example was the British papers' endorsement of Britain's numerous votes against India on Kashmir in the United Nations. 75 A survey of the British media coverage of the Indo-Pakistani War in 1965, sponsored by the Press Institute of India, came to the conclusion that the volume of anti-India reports outweighed the volume of

73. J.D. Singh, "Indo-British Relations: the Media" in K.N. Malik and Peter Robb, eds., India and Britain: Recent Past and Present Challenges, (New Delhi, 1994), pp. 208-212.


75. Malik and Robb, n.73, pp.212-213.
anti-Pakistan reports. There were also controversies over the BBC interview of the Sikh extremist leader, Jagjit Singh Chohan, in 1984-85.

The English language itself is an asset which fastens Indo-British relationship. It is, indeed a unifying factor in a subcontinent where there are over two hundred diverse languages. Of the first thirteen Booker Prizes, four were awarded to Indians. In addition, Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati speakers in the United Kingdom, can now contact charterline, the public service information helpline for Indians which has been piloted in the East Midlands of Britain, where there is a sizeable amount of Indian immigrant population. With funds provided by the British government, Charterline helps Indians in this area to gather public information in their mother tongue in the above Indian languages.

Thus, it may be seen that Indo-British technical, scientific, educational and cultural links are deep rooted and firm. Britain has provided India with the state of the

76. Press Institute of India (New Delhi, 1970), British Press Attitudes on Indo-Pakistan War 1965, pp.25-30.
78. British High Commission in India, British Information Services (New Delhi), BIS-B-102, 27 August 1993.
art technologies in various institutions and has helped the computerisation of the IIT, Delhi, and the ongoing technical cooperation project for the improvement of manpower resources. About 200 Indian specialists in a variety of fields undertake professional programmes of visits in Britain, each year in their respective fields -- whether it is engineering, management or medicine. British consultants provide expert advice in areas vital to India's development such as water management, oil and gas technologies and power engineering. In 1989, a new £40 million aid facility was made available to finance environmental projects, particularly to help conserve India's valuable forests. Besides, the British government is funding an extra £1 million annually specifically to create scholarships for Indians to study in the UK. This is of enormous importance for the future link between the two countries.79

Besides Indo-British technical and scientific links, cooperation in health care and education between the two countries are also noteworthy. The British government's slum improvement projects at Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, and the ODA funded Orissa Health and Family Welfare

79. British High Commission in India, British Information Services (New Delhi), BIS-B-409, 7 July 1990.

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project, which began 1981, deserve special mention. The British government's efforts to control communicable diseases in India and the several projects to improve reproductive health, including the health of the mother and the child, constitute an important area of cooperation between the two countries.\textsuperscript{80}

Indo-British educational links constitute another area of fruitful cooperation between the two countries. The ODA funded Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (APPEP) started in 1984, and the tie-up of the Indira Gandhi National Open University and the British Open University is another successful link up in this field. The provision of scholarships to enable Indians to study in Britain, specially the institution of the Nehru Centenary British Fellowships in 1991, has also strengthened the links between India and UK.\textsuperscript{81}

Cultural relations between India and Britain are strong and developing. The Festival of India, organised for the first time in Britain in March 1982, and went on till November 1982, gave a big boost to this cultural link. Similarly reinforcing was the British film festivals and

\textsuperscript{80} U.K., Overseas Trade Board, no.38.

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
the visits of British theatre groups and drama troupes to India. The IBCE (Indo-British Cultural Exchange) has been working in promoting successful cultural exchanges and relations between the two countries. The organisation of cultural festivals, Tagore festival and art and cultural exhibitions had also played an important role in this regard. The activities of the BBC in India, in spite of certain controversies, have been of prime importance as far as the role of mass media is concerned in the strengthening of the bilateral relationship. The activities of the British Council Division of the British High Commission in India has also an important role in forging and strengthening the cultural bonds between the two countries. Thus the British Council Division of the British High Commission in India, through its activities, has fortified the Indo-British cultural and educational links. Above all, the English language, which has remained as a link language within India and the medium of communication with Britain, has played a nodal role in making Indo-British scientific, technical, cultural and educational relationship more durable and matured.