



MEXICO

Dia de la Independencia



INTERVIEW

Federico Salas Lotfe
Ambassador of Mexico to India

Mexico-India: Enhancing global impact together

What are the key opportunities that you see for Mexico-India trade relations in the dynamic economic landscape?

The trade relationship between Mexico and India is flourishing, marked by significant growth and diversification. As our economies continue to evolve, we are strengthening traditional sectors like automobiles and green energy, and witnessing an impressive expansion in the pharma industry with 26 Indian pharma firms in Mexico. This number is increasing.

New sectors such as Fintech, e-commerce, and agrotech are emerging, reflecting our modernization efforts and the innovative agenda of trade. Furthermore, the startup sector is shaping future trade dynamics.

It is a matter of pride and joy for us that alongside a surge in tequila consumption, wherein it doubled in India last year, Mexican cuisine – recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage – has gained immense popularity in India. This helps boost not only trade and cultural exchange but also deepens the bond between our societies, wherein we share in common the love for food and life as an integral part of our respective cultural fabric.

In the context of the Global South, how do you envision Mexico and India collaborating to address various challenges, such as climate change, poverty, and sustainable development?

Mexico and India have a strong history of collaboration to tackle challenges within the Global South, including but not limited to climate change, poverty, and sustainable development. Owing to our common priorities, both Mexico

and India share a responsibility to address the wide range of issues that affect our countries and the community of countries in the Global South.

Alongside supporting Indian priorities during India's G20 Presidency, Mexico has emphasized climate change's devastating impact on development, agriculture, and the survival of small island states.

Our focus also spans issues pertaining to development, poverty eradication, and enhancing financial structures to aid vulnerable countries. Akin to how India has programs for its neighbourhood, Mexico supports development initiatives in Central America and the Caribbean.

Through joint initiatives and summits, including recent virtual meetings, Mexico and India are advancing the energy and education sectors while addressing health and a wider range of issues, demonstrating that collective action is essential for dealing with global challenges that affect the countries of the developing world.

How do you envision India-Mexico diplomatic ties evolving amid the current global geopolitical climate?

The diplomatic relationship between Mexico and India has gone from strength to strength. Recent high-level political dialogue and visits, including that of the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar to Mexico and the then Mexican Foreign Minister visits to India, have strengthened our communication and collaboration while helping us identify our priorities and shared values that we want to promote.

Serving together in the UN Security Council as non-permanent members has further deepened

our dialogue on global issues as we have supported each other's priorities. Furthermore, both countries have expressed concerns and are seeking solutions to reform the international system to better address diverse global challenges.

India's growing global influence as the world's fifth largest economy and increased focus on Latin America, especially Mexico – the largest trading partner of India in Latin America and the largest investor of Latin America in India – is significant and notable. The positive trajectory of the evolving relationship between Mexico and India looks promising for enhancing our joint impact on global affairs.

On Mexico's National Day celebrations, which key cultural and historical aspects would you like to highlight for both Mexicans and Indians?

Both Mexico and India share not only a promising future but also a deep pride in their rich cultural heritage. Notably, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee recently highlighted our close cultural ties, with India and Mexico closely ranked in heritage sites.

Historical exchanges include the Galeón de Manila's trade route connecting us, and various cultural influences such as Mexico's marigold flowers, used in Indian religious ceremonies, and chiles, integral to Indian cuisine, originating in Mexico.

Another fascinating link is the "China Poblana," the traditional style of dress of women in Mexico, inspired by the dress of a Gujarati princess from the 17th century who settled in Mexico. Furthermore, the Indian revolutionaries of the early 20th century to the versatile, multifaceted Indian artist Satish Gujral were deeply influenced by their visits to Mexico.

The Nobel laureate, poet, diplomat, and former Ambassador of Mexico to India, Octavio Paz, brought Indian culture to the Spanish-speaking world and global attention through his acclaimed works who were inspired by his experiences in India.

As we celebrate Mexico's 214th Independence Day, against the backdrop of the remarkable impact Mexico and India have had on each other over centuries, we celebrate these enduring cultural connections with our Indian friends.

Mexico-India, a long-lasting cultural bond



Vanessa Espinosa
Head of Cultural Affairs,
Embassy of Mexico to India

DURING the last five centuries, Mexico and India have developed ties that have had an impact on each others' cultures. As a result of colonialism in the Americas and Asia, the new maritime trade routes enabled the exchanges of products and people between both regions. Two of those products are chilli peppers and marigold flowers brought from Mexico to India. In both cases, the adoption and adaptation of them into the Indian culture is remarkable, such that its actual origin is now forgotten.

Mexico's most prominent female national dress, the China Poblana outfit, was influenced by the clothes of Meera, an Indian princess kidnapped from the coast of Gujarat and taken to Mexico in the 17th century. The China Poblana dress resembles a lehenga: rounded long skirt embroidered with colourful beads and sequins.

Notable characters of the social movements that led to the most important political changes of the 20th century in Mexico and India—Revolution and Independence, respectively—were at some point in contact either with Mexico or India. Mexican ideologue and revolutionary leader, Francisco I. Madero, is said to have had certain influence from the Bhagavad Gita to start the revolutionary movement. Likewise, José Vasconcelos—Mexico's first education minister—was fascinated by Indian history and philosophy, which then influ-

enced the cultural and education policies he tried to apply in the early 20th century.

In the final phase of the Revolution, the Mexican political landscape was filled with various ideological tendencies. Exiled in Mexico in 1917, the Indian nationalist MN. Roy, along with Mexican militants, founded the Mexican Communist Party, the first one after the Russian party. The Indian freedom fighter, Pandurang Khankhoje, conducted in Mexican institutions important agricultural researches that he later applied to build the independent India's agrarian economy.

In mid-twentieth century, then Mexican Ambassador to India, Octavio Paz—later a Nobel literature prize awardee—developed a profound relation with India that remarkably influenced his literary work. As a diplomat, Paz assisted artist Satish Gujral in obtaining a scholarship to study in Mexico under the mentorship of the great muralists Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros. The cultural work of the Embassy of Mexico in India has consistently been creating and promoting meaningful exchanges. Highlights of the past include a photography exhibit, and book, with the work of the great photographers Graciela Iturbide and Raghu Rai; a dialogue of poets of both countries during the Covid pandemic; and participation in the Kolkata book fair.

During 2024, as part of the cultural programme of the Embassy, Mexican writer Ivan Uriel developed the series iradas India-México' a comparative literary perspective between the works of prominent writers of both countries. As we move towards the future we will continue to promote cultural exchanges to keep nurturing the rich, multifaceted, and flourishing relationship between Mexico and India.

FLEX Films has had a strong presence in Mexico for the last 15 years and I wish the leaders, citizens, and residents of the United Mexican States a Happy National Day.

Located in Altamira, Tamaulipas, Mexico, Flex Films has a sprawling manufacturing facility spanning almost 40 acres. This manufacturing plant underscores Mexico's attraction as a key investment hub and highlights our commitment to expanding our global footprint and enhancing our presence in the vibrant Latin American market. Over the years, Flex America has solidified its position as a pivotal player in Mexico's packaging film manufacturing sector, significantly contributing to the nation's economic growth. We employ close to 900 individuals in Mexico, and more than 95% of the workforce are residents. Our people are our greatest asset, and we would like to thank our employees and business partners for their contribution toward our success - resulting in an ever-increasing customer base and a wide portfolio of innovative and sustainable products.

Flex America is amongst the leading responsible corporations in Mexico to operate a clean energy plant with an installed capacity to generate 15 MW of power. In the last year, taking our ESG journey forward, we set up a first-of-its-kind PET (bottles) and MLP (Multi-layered Plastic) mixed plastic waste recycling plant to address the problem of plastic waste management in Mexico. On Mexico's National Day, we renew our commitment to the country and look forward to the next phase of expansion and growth for Flex Films America in Mexico".

ANANTHSHREE CHATURVEDI, Vice Chairman and CEO, Flex Films International



**China Poblana-
Traditional
Dress for
Women**



**Palacio de
Bellas Artes**



**Pyramid Chichen
Itza in Mexico**

Electromobility: The future of mobility in Mexico and India



Ricardo Daniel Delgado Muñoz,
Head of Economic Affairs and
Trade Promotion,
Embassy of Mexico to India

ELECTROMOBILITY (EV) is a priority in Mexico and India and we are working together to change the future of mobility. By encouraging the use of electrical transportation and developing electrical infrastructure around major populated areas, the EV sector is one of the key industries in the economic relationship between our nations. Globally, the EV market is rising and our countries are no exception. In Mexico, the market is growing at a 40% pace with more than 70,000 units (electric and hybrids) sold in 2023. This figure is expected to keep growing due to a major intention of Mexicans to purchase electric or hybrid cars, private sector mobilisation to produce more EV units and government policies to improve the electromobility ecosystem.

The National Electric Mobility Strategy (ENME) and the Electro Mobility Association, A.C. (EMA) expect that by 2030, 50% of new cars in Mexico will be electric. The electrification of the transportation system in Mexico will contribute to a reduction of 30 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO2). India also projects 35% of the total vehicles sales to be electric by 2030 and to reduce between 110 to 380 MtCO2 by 2050.

With these common goals, the cooperation and commercial opportunities between Mexico and India in the EV sector are countless. In 2023, the Mexican min-

istry of Foreign Affairs and the Indian Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) signed an agreement to encourage the common research in biotechnology, water resources, airspace and lithium, a key resource for electrical batteries.

On the commercial side, there has been a longstanding connection of the auto industries in our economies that can be expanded into the electrical transportation sector. Both Mexico and India are in the top 10 biggest car manufacturers in the world. While Mexico is the 7th largest producer of cars, India holds the 4th position in the rank (OICA, 2023).

Currently, a lot of Indian two-wheeler vehicles are being sold in the Mexican market like Hero, TVS and Royal Enfield. Also, several Indian auto parts companies have settled plants in Mexico like Brakes India, Rane Madras and TitanX, part of Tata AutoComp. It is noteworthy to mention that even Mexico has invested in the Indian auto sector, in 2015 Tata AutoComp signed a joint-venture agreement with the Mexican company KATCON Global to manufacture 'Indian-Mexican' auto parts in Pune.

In the first quarter of 2024, for the first time, India ranked 7th as the country that invested the most in the Mexican auto industry, with a 5.9% share of the total. Following the example of the new investment projects in the Mexican EV industry like Tesla, BMW and Volkswagen, Indian OEMs could expand their electromobility operations, using Mexico as a manufacturing hub. With the USMCA and the trade agreements Mexico has with the rest of the American continent, Indian EV units could get preferential access from North America all the way to South America.

Fostering EV adoption and infrastructure development has become a key element in our economic partnership



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