



SWISS NATIONAL DAY

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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

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MESSAGE

ON the occasion of the Swiss National Day, I would like to extend, on behalf of the people and the Government of Switzerland, my warmest and sincere greetings to the people and Government of Bangladesh. It is a time to celebrate, and it is also a time to focus on the long partnership between Bangladesh and Switzerland.

Bangladesh and Switzerland enjoy a nice and warm relationship. Switzerland participates in the development of the Bangladeshi economy through cooperation and investments. Bangladesh is one of the priority countries where Switzerland concentrates its long-term development efforts. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), active in Bangladesh since 1971, has recently adopted a new Country Programme that tries to address the critical areas of need in the contemporary Bangladesh situation.

During my over one year stay in this country, I found that Bangladesh faces some very complex political and economic difficulties that beset the development process. However, I observed that it is a country with huge potentials, too. Switzerland, one of the oldest democracies in the world and a very strong economy, can make good contributions in this regard. Some bilateral initiatives can put both the countries in a win-win situation. The signing of an agreement on avoidance of double taxation between Dhaka and Bern this year is a good example of it.

The trade and cultural relations between Bangladesh and Switzerland are growing, too. The last three decades have witnessed a slow but gradual increase of business ties between these two countries. The bilateral cultural relations lately were marked by the participation of a Bangladeshi film in the Fribourg

International Film Festival and the visit of a Bangladeshi theatre artist to Switzerland. Switzerland also participated in the Francophonie Festival in Dhaka and organised a Swiss film show.

In the coming years I shall do my best to give my personal contribution to further enhance the already existing close and friendly relations between Bangladesh and Switzerland.



Jurg Casserini
Charge d'Affaires AI of Switzerland
in Bangladesh

The best of Switzerland -- in one day

YOU are planning a business trip to Europe, but can spare a day or two to get rid of your fatigue. You are active, so you want a destination where you can bike, hike, ski, as well as try some of the more cutting-edge adrenaline-pumping activities, like trekking on a glacier or paragliding. You also want gorgeous scenery, good food and nice places to stay. Well, where should you go? The answer is simple: go to Switzerland, and your dreams will come true. There are lakes, mountains, rivers, villages and towns to create an ever-changing backdrop. Enjoy the friendly people's company, feel the diversity of cultures and see why Switzerland is consistently one of the top-visited nations for tourists.

In this text, we show you how to enjoy the best of Switzerland -- in one single day! You enter Switzerland through the Kloten Airport in Zurich on an early morning, and leave by the Cointrin Airport in Geneva the same day in the evening.

Step on to Zurich: The best quality of life in the world

The first stop is Zurich railway station. If you have 30 minutes to spare, then step outside the station immediately onto the Bahnhofstrasse, Switzerland's most exclusive shopping street. It is lined with over 100

trendy boutiques.

The Bally shoe and accessory store has a range of handbags to have and to hold. Bucherer means the most expensive handcrafted Swiss watches, and Teuscher is a chocolate shop.

Guardian Angel: In the station's great hall, built in 1871, look heavenwards to find the Guardian Angel; a giant, Fernando Botero-style sculpture designed by Nicki de Saint Phalle. The angel watches over the passengers who take the 1,600 trains that pull out of the station daily.

Every Wednesday at the station is market day, so stock up on fresh fruit, meats and Swiss cheese for the

Next stop: Lucerne

The Medieval City of Lucerne is just 50 minutes away from Zurich by train. Again, it is worth strolling around to take in the magnificent view of the lake that is framed by a medley of fancy hotels.

Ten minutes is all you need to see the famous wooden Chapel Bridge. Head out of the station, and keep going straight towards the lake. Photos of the bridge complete with swans floating by will make great snapshots for the family album.

Culture centre with wings: With 30 minutes and upwards to spare, it is worthwhile turning right out of the station to the Lucerne Culture and

always incredibly beautiful reflections and different atmospheres.

There is no doubt that Nouvel succeeded in drawing light into the building. The City of Lucerne is reflected in the huge glass windows.

The white roof, the size of two football fields, extends over the building like giant albatross wings. Water is pulled from the lake into the museum by way of streams and fountains.

Look up to the white roof as the water casts shadows of boats peacefully floating along.

That is about half an hour taken care of, so it is off to French-speaking Switzerland and the Swiss jazz capital

cast on Victor Hugo, Vladimir Nabokov, Charlie Chaplin and Ernest Hemingway, to name but a few.

Belle époque, belle vue: The Belle-Epoque interiors of the hotel evoke an age gone by, a world that Hemingway inhabited while in Montreux, and loved. His short story "Home to Switzerland" takes the reader to the cafes of Montreux, nearby Vevey and Territet railway stations.

"Inside the station café it was warm and light. The wood of the tables shone from wiping and there were baskets of pretzels in glazed paper sacks. The chairs were carved, but the seats were worn and comfortable... Outside the window it was snowing..."

Although the café described in Hemingway's story is now an office, it is recommended to sip a coffee in the Swiss Majestic's café where the wooden chairs are very comfy.

To get the spirit of an elegant ancient time, ride the hotel's one hundred-year-old elevator down a floor as it drops you on the "Grande Rue, or Lake Road."

Montreux Tourism recommends walking 10 minutes to the romantic Chateau de Chillon castle. Lord Byron immortalised the figure of Francois Bonivard, imprisoned in the castle from 1530 to 1536, in his poem "The prisoner of Chillon."

Lacking the relaxed itinerary of literary greats of a bygone era, it is forward march to Geneva airport, which is only an hour away. From Montreux, you take the train along the famous lake of Geneva, crossing Lavaux (the area of Swiss Wine) to Lausanne (the home of the Olympic Committee) to the Cointrin Airport in Geneva from where you can take your flight to the next destination.

While Swiss airports are rather soulless, a train trip around Switzerland is a window onto a country famed for its tidy cities, mountain scenery and placid lake fronts.

And who says you can't see it all in one day!



The medieval city of Lucerne.

onward journey. Also, there are two hundred shops in the railway hall, as well as a wide selection of cafes and bistros.

Roman ruins: It is encouraged for travellers with even just 15 minutes to spare between trains to head out of the station's far right exit towards a small hill called Lindenhof.

Lindenhof, a park these days, provides a panorama of the city. Below the park lie the ruins of a Roman customs' post and a late Roman fortress. Take a picnic there and watch the tourist boats float down the Limmat River.

Convention Centre. A couple of years old, the Centre was designed by the celebrated French architect Jean Nouvel.

The café on the ground floor provides an excellent resting place for weary travellers to enjoy a snack while taking in excellent views over Lake Lucerne and the mountains of central Switzerland.

Upstairs is Lucerne's Art Museum, but the Centre itself is a work of art. Nouvel's philosophy for the Centre was light.

Nouvel is always looking at the effect of light of the materials he uses, whether glass or stone, and there are

of Montreux.

Final stop: Montreux

This requires changing trains in Lausanne. From here, the train travels along the very edge of Lake Geneva. The spectacular beauty of the lake and Alps that seem to rise out of the water has inspired many thinkers. Writers, performers and other laureates.

To get the best shot of the scenery, step in to the Swiss Majestic Hotel that is situated directly opposite Montreux station. Its terrace is the perfect place to sip a Kir Royal (a sparkling wine based drink) and appreciate the spell the region once

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Bangladesh

SWITZERLAND is one of the long-standing development partners of Bangladesh. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), a part of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, has been working in Bangladesh since its independence. SDC considers Bangladesh as one of its priority countries to concentrate its long-term development cooperation efforts.

SDC has a substantial programme in Bangladesh with an aim to achieve an effective and sustainable poverty reduction in this country. During the last few years' work, SDC felt that although Bangladesh made huge progress in the previous few decades, notably in population control, food security, child mortality, malnutrition and access to education, it still remains one of the poorest countries of the world. The country programme of

SDC for Bangladesh, for the years 2003-2007, has been developed in response to the challenges which still beset Bangladesh.

Areas of work

The main areas of cooperation for SDC are crisis prevention and management, good governance, income generation and employment, social justice and sustainable use of natural resources. Within these priorities and in response to the critical areas of need in the contemporary Bangladesh situation, SDC in Bangladesh is currently working in the following priority areas:

In education, SDC addresses, through its Non Formal Education (NFE) interventions, the people who do not have the opportunity to get formal education as those who were dropped out of the system. NFE intends to (i) enable children and adolescents to get access to formal education system and (ii) assist

adolescents and adults to access opportunities for income generation and employment. Thus NFE contributes to improve the quality of life of these people. For example, Centre for Mass Education in Science (CMES), a partner of SDC, provides basic formal education to the out of school adolescents and then equips them with some technical skills that enable them to become self-employed or get involved in some kind of income generating activities.

Through Micro and Small Enterprise Promotion (MSEP), SDC in Bangladesh wants to increase the opportunities of employment and earning for the poor. To achieve this objective, it contributes to the development of micro and small businesses. Through financial services, like microfinance is a major component of MSEP; SDC is increasingly emphasising the provision of non-financial services. For example,

MSEP facilitates the development of business services that will stimulate the growth of small and medium enterprises.

The Sustainable Land Use (SLU) programme of SDC aims at improving the quality of life of poor farmers. It helps the farmers to increase their agro-forestry and vegetable production through improved land use practices and through improvement in production of seeds and saplings. The SLU programme also helps poor farmers in processing and marketing of their harvested crops, and provides earning facilities for landless people.

SDC is committed to facilitate the decentralisation of power in Bangladesh. The overall objective of the Local Governance (LGOV) programme of SDC is to support and foster more responsive, accountable, transparent and participatory local government. To achieve the objective, SDC pursues the following three specific areas of work: working directly with the local government units to effectively serve the local population and be accountable to them; enhanced democratic participation of local population especially the poor, disadvantaged and the women; influence policy reform agenda and reform processes at the national level. The main strategic choice emphasis of SDC in Local Governance is to establish the Union Parishads as entry point for improved local service delivery. SDC also supports civil society activities in order to ensure demand for accountability and transparency, democratic participation and pressure for change. For all these a conducive environment is also required -- policy reforms are encouraged for maximising the benefits of SDC's endeavours.

Moreover, to strengthen the effectiveness in its cooperation towards poverty reduction, SDC Bangladesh focuses all its programmes on Human and Institutional Development (HID) that promotes processes of learning and change. HID puts human beings and the way they organise themselves at the centre of all development works. It seeks to build up the skills and knowledge of people and the organisations and institutions they belong to. It enables them to take advantage of the opportunities that are available and thus influence the environment they live in.

SDC in Arsenic Mitigation

Arsenic in groundwater is simply termed as a silent killer. Undetectable in its early stages, arsenic poisoning may take between 2 to 14 years to have an impact on health. Underscoring the extent of the problem, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has given priority towards arsenic screening and mitigation, and therefore decided to address the problem by re-programming its already existing Water and Sanitation Programme.

The Arsenic Programme of SDC operates in Rajshahi and Chapai Nawabganj, involving three international NGOs i.e. CARE, DASCOH and IDE and 15 local partner NGOs. It covers all the villages (over 3000 in number) of these two north-western districts. It followed a flexible

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Our best wishes on the occasion of the Swiss National Day

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Nestlé Bangladesh Limited wishes all the best on the occasion of the Swiss National Day

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