

2023 - 24 ANNUAL REPORT



Alliance Française
Delhi



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It is my privilege to present to you, on behalf of the Governing Body, the annual report of Alliance française de Delhi for the year 2023-2024. I am happy to report that it has been another year of very satisfactory performance.

Our primary activity is teaching of the French language. During the year the number of students enrolled with us, remained almost the same as in the previous year, although the number of students enrolled at the beginner level declined significantly. Besides, there was a marked increase in the number of students opting for physical classes as compared to those opting for the online ones. We also noticed a preference for physical classes in the mornings and during weekends. Besides, there was a significant increase in the number of students who are younger in age, namely children and teenagers. Keeping these trends in view, we are taking steps to increase the classes for kids and teenagers. At the same time we are continuing our practice of renting 5 to 7 classrooms of the Lycée Français International de Delh, during the weekends.

Our Library saw a much bigger footfall and the Translation cell saw a healthy increase in its activities. During the year we signed an agreement to open a branch in the premises of TDV (The Design Village) NOIDA. As per this agreement, TDV will make available to us, modern, well equipped classrooms for free. In return we will give a 20% discount to their students who enroll for French classes. Others shall have to pay full tuition fees. The branch was launched on May 3, 2024. It is a model that is risk free and cost effective for us.

During the year we continued to focus on the renovation and repairs of our infrastructure, which were started last year. As you are aware, our campus is now over twenty years old and was in urgent need of maintenance and repairs. These aimed at replacing the stone cladding to stop seepages, increase durability of the structure and prevent accidental injuries. The pavements around the campus were relaid, the glass box above the art gallery underwent extensive renovations, and the pergola was repainted. External fire hydrants were installed for increasing safety and security, and landscaping was done to improve the aesthetic appearance of the campus. In the next phase of this activity, we shall focus on stopping seepages of rainwater through the windows, and on upgrading the toilets on the ground floor. This activity will spill into the next financial year.

Our cultural activities too saw a big spurt as physical performances were restarted. They not only reached but even surpassed the pre-covid levels. Our auditorium has been equipped with a state of the art projector, which has made it the preferred location for various film festivals. There was a marked increase in the number of cinema shows, art exhibitions, talks, discussions, theatre shows and music performances. I specifically wish to mention the show “PIXEL”, which was staged in Kamani auditorium in December 2023. Created by French choreographer Mourad Merzouki, it merged physical elements with virtual ones, resulting in a spectacular show. The Francophonie Mela and the Fete da la Musique were celebrated with great enthusiasm and several events were held under the banner of Design X Design, which is now into the second decade of its partnership with us. In November 2023, we collaborated with “One Teacher One Scientist” to host RISE-Re-Imagining School Education, which aimed at aligning Holistic Education and Neurosciences with Sustainable Development Goals. While the workshops and panel discussions were in progress, a parade of giant puppets was staged in the Lodi Garden by the renowned puppeteer Dadi Padamjee. Our collaboration with the EUNIC enabled us to stage several events in which many European countries participated. Prominent among them was the Long Night of Literatures, and the Restoration Toolbox, which aimed at democratizing heritage conservation through the active participation of local citizens.

Last year we launched a project to formulate a comprehensive Human Resource Policy for equitable and transparent management of all categories of staff. A beginning was made in this regard by getting a preliminary study conducted by a consultant. This was followed by assigning a more detailed study to the consultants. Their report is now in our hands and is being examined for implementing the recommendations made therein. The issues are complex and we are according them overriding priority so that tangible progress can be made at the earliest possible.

We are engaged in the promotion of Indo French cultural relations, and teaching of the French language. We do so with the co operation and advice of the French Embassy in India and

the Institut Francais en Inde. I am extremely grateful to His Excellency Mr Thierry Mathou, Ambassador of France to India, for his constant encouragement and support. I also wish to thank Mr Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens Counsellor and Director, Institut Francais en Inde and his intire team for their invaluable cooperation and assistance in helping us organise numerous cultural events during the year.

My thanks are also due to my colleagues in the Governing Body, notably the two Vice Presidents, Mr Iftikhar Mulk Chishti and Mrs Amita Mishra, Mr Sandeep Sapra, Immediate Past President, Mr Surya Bhatia, Treasurer, Mr Harpreet Singh Secretary, Mrs Vaishali Gupta, Joint Secretary and others who have served on varous Committees and thus made possible the day to day running of the Alliance. I am specially thankful to Mr Chishti for his invaluable professional advice and the long hours spent by him in the preparation and execution of the renovation project. Special thanks are also due to Mr Sapra, for his priceless advice in tax related matters and to Ms Amita Mishra and the teachers representative, Ms Ragini Mehta, for their valuable suggestions and contributions to the discussions of the Academic Committee.

The day to day management of our operations were very efficiently led by our Director, Mr Stéphane Amalir and the Academic Director, Mr Frédéric Wolska. It is because of their hard work and devotion that we are functioning as an efficient, well oiled machine. They are ably supported by a team of dedicated teachers who, by their diligent work have enabled us to show excellent results. They in turn were ably assisted by a devoted management team that looked after the day to day functioning of the Alliance. I am extremely thankful to all of them.

The appointment contract of our Director, Mr Stéphane Amalir ended at the end of August 2024. I wish to place on record the sincere appreciation of the Governing Body for the excellent work done by him during his term of four years, specially during the difficult days of the Covid lockdown. He was perfectly bilingual in English and French, had earlier experience of working in India as Director of Alliance Française de Bengal, and maintained very cordial relations with the members of the Governing Body. He left the AFD in a much healthier condition than at the time of his arrival in August 2020. By the time this report reaches you he will have already left. It was a pleasure working with him, and we wish him success in his future endeavours.

The outbreak of the Covid epidemic four years ago and the subsequent lockdown had a very adverse effect on our operations. We were forced to shut down our branches in Gurugram and NOIDA, and quickly shifted to online classes. Slowly we are getting back to our normal operations, though we are now facing very stiff competition from cheap classes being offered online. Our revenues which were very badly hit are slowly returning to the pre-covid level. An active management of our savings in banks has helped us increase our interest income

and offset the decline in revenues due to a fall in some categories of students. In spite of a very heavy expenditure on maintenance and repairs of our infrastructure, we have managed to ensure that our balance sheet remains healthy. We remain extremely vigilant and are hopeful of taking the organization to even greater heights in the days to come.

On this note of optimism, I present to you the annual report of the organization for the year 2023-24 for approval.

J L Sarin
President



J'ai le privilège de vous présenter, au nom du Conseil d'administration, le rapport annuel de l'Alliance française de Delhi pour l'année 2022-2023. Je suis heureux de vous annoncer que cette année a renoué avec résultats très satisfaisants.

Notre activité principale reste l'enseignement de la langue française. Au cours de l'année, le nombre d'étudiants est resté pratiquement le même que l'année précédente, bien que le nombre débutants ait diminué de manière significative. Par ailleurs, ceux ayant opté pour des cours en présentiel a nettement augmenté par rapport à ceux ayant choisi des cours en ligne notamment le matin et pendant le week-end. En outre, le nombre d'élèves plus jeunes, à savoir les enfants et les adolescents, a augmenté de manière significative. Compte tenu de ces tendances, nous prévoyons d'augmenter le nombre de cours destinés aux enfants et aux adolescents. Parallèlement, nous continuons à louer 5 à 7 salles de classe du Lycée français international de Delhi pendant le week-end.

Notre médiathèque a vu sa fréquentation augmenter et la cellule de traduction a accru vu ses activités de manière appréciable.

Nous avons signé au cours de l'année un accord pour l'ouverture d'une antenne dans les locaux de TDV (The Design Village) à NOIDA. Conformément à cet accord, le TDV mettra gratuitement à notre disposition des salles de classe modernes et bien équipées. En retour, nous accorderons une réduction de 20 % à leurs étudiants qui s'inscrivent à des cours de français. Les étudiants extérieurs à TDV devront s'acquitter de l'intégralité des frais de scolarité. Cette antenne a été inaugurée le 3 mai 2024. Il s'agit d'un modèle qui ne comporte aucun risque pour nous tout en étant rentable.

Au cours de l'année, nous avons continué à nous concentrer sur la rénovation et les réparations de nos infrastructures, commencées l'année dernière. Comme vous le savez, notre campus a maintenant plus de vingt ans et avait un besoin urgent d'entretien et de réparations. Ces travaux visaient à remplacer le revêtement en pierre afin de stopper les infiltrations, d'accroître la durabilité de la structure et d'empêcher de possibles accidents. Les allées autour du campus ont été refaites, la structure en verre de la galerie d'art a fait l'objet d'importantes rénovations et la pergola a été repeinte.

Des bouches d'incendie externes ont été installées pour améliorer la sécurité et l'esthétique du campus. Au cours de la prochaine phase de ce vaste chantier, nous allons nous efforcer d'étanchéifier les fenêtres et de moderniser les toilettes du rez-de-chaussée. Ce projet se poursuivra au cours du prochain exercice financier.

Nos activités culturelles ont également connu un important développement avec la reprise des spectacles en salle. Celles-ci ont non seulement atteint, mais ont même dépassé les niveaux d'avant la période du Covid. Notre auditorium a été équipé d'un projecteur digital DCP, ce qui en a fait le lieu de prédilection pour de nombreux festivals de cinéma.

Le nombre de séances de cinéma, d'expositions, de tables rondes, de discussions, de représentations théâtrales et musicales a nettement augmenté. Je tiens à mentionner tout particulièrement le spectacle "PIXEL", qui a été présenté à l'auditorium Kamani en décembre 2023. Créé par le chorégraphe français Mourad Merzouki, il a fusionné des performances physiques avec des éléments virtuels, ce qui a donné lieu à un spectacle impressionnant. La Mela Francophone et la Fête de la Musique ont été célébrées avec beaucoup d'enthousiasme tandis que et plusieurs événements ont été organisés sous la bannière de Design X Design, qui a débuté cette année sa deuxième décennie de partenariat avec nous.

En novembre 2023, nous avons collaboré avec "One Teacher One Scientist" pour organiser RISE-Re-Imagining School Education, qui visait à explorer les liens entre l'éducation holistique et les neurosciences, basés sur les objectifs de développement durable. Pendant que les ateliers et les tables rondes se déroulaient, un défilé de marionnettes géantes a été organisé dans les jardins de Lodi par le célèbre marionnettiste Dadi Padamjee.

Enfin, notre collaboration avec l'EUNIC nous a permis d'organiser plusieurs événements en collaboration avec de nombreux pays européens. Parmi ceux-ci, citons « La Longue Nuit de La Littératures » et «The Restoration Toolbox», ce dernier projet visant à démocratiser la conservation du patrimoine grâce à la participation active des habitants locaux.

L'année dernière, nous avons lancé un projet visant à mettre à jour notre politique globale des ressources humaines pour une gestion équitable et transparente de toutes les catégories de personnel. Nous avons commencé ce travail en faisant réaliser un audit préliminaire par un consultant externe, puis lui avons commandé une étude plus détaillée. Son rapport est maintenant entre nos mains et nous l'étudions en vue de mettre en œuvre les recommandations qu'il contient. Les enjeux sont complexes et nous leur accordons une priorité absolue afin que des progrès tangibles puissent être réalisés le plus rapidement possible.

Nous sommes impliqués dans la promotion des relations culturelles franco-indiennes et dans l'enseignement de la langue française. Nous le réalisons cette objectif avec la coopération et les conseils de l'Ambassade de France en Inde et de l'Institut Français en Inde. Je suis extrêmement reconnaissant à Son Excellence M. Thierry Mathou, Ambassadeur de France en Inde, pour ses encouragements et son soutien constants. Je souhaite également remercier

M. Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens, Conseiller de Coopération et d'Action Culturel et Directeur de l'Institut Français en Inde, ainsi que toute son équipe pour leur coopération et leur aide inestimables qui nous ont permis d'organiser plusieurs événements culturels au cours de l'année.

Je remercie également mes collègues du Conseil d'administration, notamment les deux vice-présidents, M. Iftikhar Mulk Chishti et Mme Amita Mishra, ainsi que M. Sandeep Sapra, président sortant, M. Surya Bhatia, trésorier, M. Harpreet Singh, secrétaire, Mme Vaishali Gupta, secrétaire adjointe, ainsi que d'autres membres du Conseil d'administration qui ont siégé dans divers comités et ont ainsi rendu possible le bon fonctionnement quotidien de l'Alliance.

Je remercie tout particulièrement M. Chishti pour ses précieux conseils professionnels et les longues heures qu'il a consacrées à la préparation et à l'exécution du projet de rénovation du bâtiment.

Je tiens également à remercier M. Sapra pour ses conseils inestimables en matière de fiscalité, ainsi que Mme Amita Mishra et la représentante des enseignants, Mme Ragini Mehta, pour leurs précieuses suggestions et contributions dans le cadre du comité académique.

La gestion quotidienne de nos activités est assurée de manière très efficace par notre directeur, M. Stéphane Amalir, et par le directeur pédagogique, M. Frédéric Wolska. C'est grâce à leur travail acharné et à leur dévouement que nous fonctionnons comme une mécanique efficace et bien huilée. Ils sont habilement soutenus par une équipe d'enseignants dévoués qui, grâce à leur travail assidu, nous ont permis d'obtenir d'excellents résultats. Ils sont à leur tour soutenus par une équipe administrative dévouée qui s'occupe du fonctionnement quotidien de l'Alliance. Je leur suis également extrêmement reconnaissant.

Le contrat de travail de notre directeur, M. Stéphane Amalir, s'est terminé à la fin du mois d'août 2024. Je tiens à exprimer la sincère appréciation du Conseil d'administration pour l'excellent travail qu'il a accompli au cours de son mandat de quatre ans, en particulier pendant la période difficile du confinement imposé par le Covid. Parfaitement bilingue anglais-français, il avait déjà travaillé en Inde en tant que directeur de l'Alliance française du Bengale et a entretenu des relations très cordiales avec les membres du Conseil d'administration. Il aura laissé l'AFD dans une situation beaucoup plus saine et robuste qu'à son arrivée en août 2020. Lorsque ce rapport vous parviendra, il sera déjà parti. Ce fut un plaisir de travailler avec lui et nous lui souhaitons beaucoup de succès dans ses futurs projets.

La survenue de la pandémie Covid, il y a quatre ans, et le confinement qui s'en est suivi ont eu un effet très néfaste sur nos activités. Nous avons été contraints de fermer nos antennes de Gurugram et de Noida, et avons dû rapidement passer à des cours en ligne. Nous reprenons

petit à petit nos activités normales, bien que nous soyons désormais confrontés à une très forte concurrence de la part des cours bon marché proposés en ligne. Nos revenus, qui ont été très durement touchés, reviennent lentement à leur niveau antérieur à la crise sanitaire. Une gestion active de notre épargne dans les banques nous a permis d'augmenter nos revenus issus des intérêts et de compenser la baisse des revenus due à la diminution de certaines catégories d'étudiants. Malgré des dépenses très importantes pour l'entretien et la réparation de nos infrastructures, nous avons réussi à faire en sorte que notre bilan reste sain. Nous restons extrêmement vigilants et espérons porter l'organisation vers des objectifs encore plus ambitieux dans les jours à venir.

C'est sur cette note d'optimisme que je vous sou mets, pour approbation, le rapport annuel de l'organisation pour l'année 2023-24.

J L Sarin
Président





Nearly four years ago, I began my second stint in India on a virtually deserted campus. Today, I shall leave behind a burgeoning Alliance where about a thousand students come in every day not only to study the French language, borrow a literary classic or take an exam, but also to play table tennis, badminton, and foosball, to try their hand at rifle shooting and archery, to ride a skateboard for the first time ever or to try to score a basket in basketball.

In this turn of events, first when nature compelled the entire world into isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, and now the scheduling of the Paris Olympics, presented a unique opportunity for the Alliance Française de Delhi to invite its students, employees and the people of Delhi to try their hand at over a dozen sports.

The monsoon season this year is bustling with activity as culture is not to be outdone: Alliance is hosting a unique exhibition, the first of its kind in decades. Through more than 90 works by the artist Henri Landier, the Romain Rolland Gallery takes its visitors on a journey through the France of yesteryears and today, with portraits and landscapes extending from Montmartre, where the artist lives, to Provence and then from Brittany to Alsace.

During the months of July and August 2024, France has been in the spotlight in Delhi. France as a country is seen as a friend by the curious, enthusiastic and generous Indians. Reflecting on my own four-year “journey” in Delhi in just two

pages is a daunting task. How does one summarize the challenges and successes, and most importantly, how does one recount the human encounters along the way?

The first and foremost challenge was that of dealing with the pandemic. The impact on the French language classes was harsh, at first with the mandatory shift of all courses online, and later with the need to convince students to return to our campus! These two instances demonstrated the great adaptability and resilience of the different departments at the Alliance, be it administrative, cultural or academic. Undoubtedly, technology proved to be a saviour, but for both students and teachers, the transition from in-person classes, with their pedagogical exchanges and human interactions, to courses entirely designed and pursued online in front of a screen was demanding, sometimes complicated, and often frustrating: it was necessary to empirically reinvent a new pedagogical and relational model.

But in 2023, nearly 5,500 students showed their continued faith in us, and today, often for practical reasons, one third of the students remain online. The vast majority of students have chosen to return to the Lodhi campus. It goes without saying that culture, also suffered setbacks during this period: one reaches a point of saturation rapidly when it comes to broadcasting events online... That is why I am happy and proud to be able to write today that the Alliance Française has once again become the leading cultural centre of the Capital, both in terms of the number of events organised and that of spectators. Well-liked events such as the two giant puppet parades at Lodhi Garden, the Francophone Melas, or the more recent Olympic fan zone; conferences on more sensitive topics such as attacks on democracy, the ongoing struggle for greater inclusivity, or more intellectual subjects like the legacy of Paul Ricoeur and Rabindranath Tagore; visits from Nobel Prize winners, political figures, and Olympic champions; exhibitions of young Indian artists, the recent retrospective of the painter Henri Landier: these few examples, chosen from among the hundreds of events organized over the past few years highlight and illustrate the Alliance Française's commitment to being a place for everyone, a place where excellence and eclecticism do not contradict each other.

Now a word about cinema, the favourite cultural leisure activity of both the Indians and the French: the Alliance is becoming the centre for "Art et Essais" (Art House cinema) of Delhi very fast. While French cinema, through its new releases and classics, remains predominant, Independent, Indian, and international cinema too has found a unique space for expression and dissemination here.

Known as a Indo-French cultural centre, the Alliance fully participates in French and Indian cultural diplomacy here, thanks to the continuous events, made possible by the myriads of private and institutional partnerships it has been able to forge: while it is impossible to mention

them all here, I would like to mention: Indian Habitat Centre, EUNIC, UNESCO, IIC, ...

During this difficult period for all, and tragic for many, the Alliance also succeeded in retaining all of its employees at its Delhi campus. This was indeed a priority for me.

In the course of these four years, I have had the privilege and the pleasure to work with dedicated, professional and motivated people. Some have left the Alliance following retirement or in the pursuit of new professional ventures, in India, in France, or even in Canada; others have been inducted: with over 120 employees or contractors, the Alliance is truly a small enterprise.

Hence, together with the Board of Directors, I initiated a comprehensive Human Resources reform, both to overhaul and standardize our processes and to offer current and future employees a real career perspective and to establish more equality between different statuses. This kind of reform necessarily takes time, but this time, dedicated to reflection and consultation, is essential to ensure its longevity and legality.

The other major project pertains, of course, to the renovation of our campus. After 20 years of monsoons, heatwaves, and more or less harsh winters, much of 2023 was to do with scaffolding, disruptions created by noise, and hindrances caused by dust. After significant waterproofing work on the walls and terraces, modernization of the fire protection system, and beautification of the outdoor spaces, we are now able to provide a safer, cleaner, and more beautiful campus to our employees, students, and visitors.

A very beautiful Indian tradition is the famous "Vote of Thanks," organized at the end of an event. At the very beginning of my stay, I thought it was rather a waste of time and that the speeches were too long. But no, I beg to differ today, this moment is an opportunity to formally thank all the participants and pay tribute to each one of them.

So far, I have mentioned the employees, students, and partners, but I must end by acknowledging the volunteers of the Board of Directors of the Alliance Française de Delhi. Without them, the Alliance would not exist, without them the Alliance would not function, without them the Alliance would not prosper. I have been lucky to work with these passionate and committed people, driven by the same vision, namely to promote and develop cooperation with France through the French language and a cultural dialogue.

I would particularly like to thank the two Presidents with whom I have had the opportunity and pleasure to work, Mr. Sandeep Sapra and Mr. J.L. Sarin. Both, in their individual styles and

with their unique expertise, have taught me a lot; the trust that they bestowed on me enabled me to accomplish my mission in the best conditions.

“Thank you all. Dhanyavaad, Namaste”

Stéphane Amalir
Director



Il y a bientôt quatre ans, je débutais ma seconde mission en Inde dans un campus quasi déserté, je quitte aujourd'hui une Alliance où non seulement près d'un millier d'étudiants se rend chaque jour pour étudier la langue française, emprunter un classique littéraire, passer un examen, mais aussi pour jouer au tennis de table, au badminton et au babyfoot, pour s'essayer aux tirs à la carabine et à l'arc, pour monter pour la première fois sur un skateboard ou pour tenter de marquer un panier au basketball.

Hasard des calendriers, celui de la nature qui a forcé le monde entier à s'isoler pendant la pandémie de la COVID-19 puis celui des hommes qui offre à Paris des Olympiades exceptionnelles et donne à l'Alliance l'occasion d'inviter ses étudiants, ses employés et le public de Delhi de venir s'essayer à plus d'une douzaine de sports.

Oui, la mousson de cette année est placée sous le signe de la foule, car la culture n'est pas en reste : l'Alliance accueille une exposition unique, la première en son genre depuis des décennies. A travers plus de 90 œuvres du peintre Henri Landier, la galerie Romain Rolland propose à ses visiteurs un voyage dans la France d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, avec des portraits et des paysages, de Montmartre, où vit l'artiste, à la Provence, de la Bretagne à l'Alsace.

Oui, la France est à l'honneur à Delhi au cours de ces mois de juillet et d'août, mais c'est une France accueillie en amie par le public indien, curieux, enthousiaste et généreux.

Tenter de retracer en deux pages mon propre « voyage » de quatre ans à Delhi n'est pas chose aisée : comment résumer les défis et les réussites, et surtout comment raconter les rencontres humaines ?

Le premier et le plus important défi a consisté à faire face à la pandémie. L'impact sur l'enseignement du français a été brutal, tout d'abord par le passage obligé de l'intégralité des cours en ligne, puis plus tard par la nécessité de convaincre les étudiants de revenir sur notre campus ! Ces deux problématiques ont démontré les grandes capacités d'adaptation et de résilience des équipes de l'Alliance, administrative, culturelle et pédagogique.

Bien sûr la technologie nous a aidés, mais pour les étudiants comme pour les professeurs, le passage d'un cours en présentiel, avec ses interactions pédagogiques et ses relations humaines à un cours entièrement conçu et suivi derrière un écran a été exigeante, parfois compliquée, souvent frustrante : il a fallu réinventer, de façon empirique, un nouveau modèle pédagogique... et relationnel.

Mais en 2023, ce sont près de 5 500 étudiants qui ont continué à nous faire confiance et aujourd'hui, si pour des raisons souvent pratiques, un tiers des étudiants reste en ligne, la grande majorité d'entre eux a choisi de revenir sur le campus de Lodhi.

La culture a bien entendu également souffert au cours de cette période : il existe une limite bien vite atteinte quant à la diffusion d'évènements en ligne... C'est pourquoi, je suis heureux et fier de pouvoir écrire qu'aujourd'hui, l'Alliance française est redevenue le premier centre culturel de la Capitale, en nombre d'évènements mais aussi en nombres de spectateurs. Des moments populaires comme les deux défilés de marionnettes géantes à Lodhi Garden, les méla francophones ou la dernière fanzone olympique ; des conférences sur des sujets plus sensibles comme les attaques contre la Démocratie, la lutte permanente pour plus d'inclusivité ou plus intellectuels comme l'héritage de Paul Ricoeur et celui de Rabindranath Tagore ; des visites de Prix Nobel, de personnalités politiques, de champions olympiques ; des expositions de jeunes artistes indiens, la récente rétrospective du peintre Henri Landier : ces quelques exemples, choisis parmi les centaines d'évènements organisés au cours de ces dernières années, éclairent et illustrent la volonté et la revendication de l'Alliance française d'être un lieu pour toutes et tous, un lieu où l'excellence et l'éclectisme ne se contredisent pas.

Juste un mot sur le cinéma, loisir culturel préféré, à la fois des Indiens et des Français : l'Alliance est en passe de devenir LA salle « art et essais » de Delhi. Si le cinéma français, à travers ses nouveautés et ses classiques, reste prépondérant, le cinéma indépendant, indien et international, a trouvé un espace d'expression et de diffusion unique.

Centre culturel franco-indien de par son identité, l'Alliance participe ici pleinement à la diplomatie culturelle française mais aussi indienne, grâce à cette activité permanente, rendue possible par la myriade de partenariats privés et institutionnels qu'elle a su lier : s'il est impossible de les citer tous ici, j'aimerais mentionner : Indian Habitat Centre, EUNIC, UNESCO, IIC, ...

Durant cette période compliquée pour tous, et tragique pour beaucoup, l'Alliance est aussi parvenue à conserver l'intégralité de ses employés sur son site de Delhi, ce qui était pour moi un objectif prioritaire.

Au cours de ces quatre années, j'ai ainsi eu la chance et le plaisir de travailler avec des équipes dévouées, professionnelles et motivées. Des personnes ont quitté l'Alliance, pour partir en retraite, ou pour de nouvelles aventures professionnelles, en Inde, en France voire au Canada ; d'autres sont arrivées pour les remplacer : l'Alliance, avec plus de 120 employés ou contractuels, est une véritable petite entreprise.

C'est la raison pour laquelle j'ai engagé, avec le Conseil d'Administration, une vaste réforme des Ressources Humaines, à la fois pour une refonte et une mise aux normes de nos process mais aussi pour offrir aux employés, présents et futurs, une véritable perspective de carrière et pour instaurer plus d'égalité entre les différents statuts. Cette réforme prend nécessairement du temps mais ce temps, dédié à la réflexion et à la concertation, est indispensable pour l'asseoir dans la durée, et la légalité.

L'autre chantier concerne bien entendu la rénovation de notre campus, puisqu'après 20 années de moussons, de canicules et d'hivers plus ou moins rigoureux, une bonne partie de l'année 2023 a été encombrée par des échafaudages, perturbée par du bruit et gênée par la poussière ; après d'importants travaux d'étanchéité des murs et des terrasses, de modernisation du système anti-incendie, d'embellissement des espaces extérieurs, c'est un campus plus sûr, plus propre et plus beau que nous pouvons offrir à nos employés, à nos étudiants et à nos visiteurs.

Une très belle tradition indienne est le fameux « Vote of Thanks », organisé à l'issue d'un événement. Au tout début de mon séjour, je me disais que cela était une perte de temps, que les discours dureraient déjà trop longtemps. Mais non, ce moment est l'occasion de remercier formellement tous les participants et de rendre hommage à chacun d'entre eux.

J'ai mentionné jusqu'ici les employés, les étudiants, les partenaires, mais je me dois de terminer par les bénévoles du Conseil d'Administration de l'Alliance française de Delhi.

Sans eux, l'Alliance n'existerait pas, sans eux l'Alliance ne fonctionnerait pas, sans eux l'Alliance ne prospérerait pas. J'ai eu la chance de travaillé avec ces gens passionnés et engagés, portés par une même vision, à savoir faire vivre et développer la coopération avec la France, à travers la langue française et le dialogue culturel.

Je voudrais particulièrement remercier ici les deux Présidents avec lesquels j'ai eu la chance et le plaisir de travailler, Monsieur Sandeep Sapra et Monsieur JL Sarin. Tous deux, dans leur style différent, chacun avec son expertise personnelle, m'ont beaucoup appris ; ils m'ont accordé leur pleine confiance et permis ainsi d'accomplir ma mission dans les meilleures conditions.

Merci à toutes et tous. Dhanyavad, Namaste.

Stéphane Amalir
Directeur



The Senate in Delhi: a TGV



Gérard Larcher, President of the Senate on an official visit to India, meets students of the Alliance française de Delhi

France and India are two great democracies, albeit with their similarities and differences. We are well aware of some of the latter and in particular the three following ones: France has a centralised form of government as opposed to the Federal system in India, with 28 states and eight union territories; India is six times the size of France; the population of India is at 1.4 billion as opposed to France's 68 million. But the links between France and India go beyond these disparities. Not only do they go back in history but are as prevalent at present.

French trading posts as early as 1671 in an attempt to counter British hegemony, French officers in the armies of the maharajas as early as the 16th century, cooperation in the nuclear field dating back to the early 1950s and the transfer of space technology during the 1960s are all high points and events that have been part of the relations between the two countries over time. The present is not an exception: two state visits led to the signing of the new Strategic Partnership between the two countries; the Indian Prime Minister was the guest of honour at the celebrations of July 14, 2023 and President Macron was the guest of honour at the Commemoration of Republic Day on January 26, 2024.

This partnership, which renews for the next 25 years the one signed by President Jacques Chirac in 1998, pertains to strategic bilateral cooperation and is based above all on close

collaborations in the fields of defence, civil nuclear power, space and security, particularly in terms of cybersecurity, counter-terrorism and intelligence. The major geostrategic novelty of this cooperation is undoubtedly its strong Indo-Pacific component...

But the common desire to work within a partnership between equals is not restricted to the number of Rafales, Airbuses and EPRs sold, nor is it reduced to an exchange of influences: it is of course based on mutual trust, which is also reflected in ambitious cultural and educational cooperation: President Emmanuel Macron has thus quoted the figure of 30,000 Indian students in France as a target to be achieved in the next five years. Today, there undoubtedly exists a real desire for an Indian presence in France and that of France in India, which is hence reflected in all sectors.

We can thus conceive that the visit of the President of the Senate, Mr. Gérard Larcher, is consistent with this willingness for dialogue, the desire to know and appreciate each other better. During an intense mission, which saw an increase in bilateral meetings between French and Indian institutions, the senatorial delegation wanted to take the time to meet the frontline players in this cultural and linguistic cooperation, namely the Alliances françaises in India. Thus, for over an hour, Mr. Larcher took part in the question and answer session with students, teachers and volunteers from the Alliance française de Delhi.

The entire delegation from the Senate¹ was therefore welcomed on Monday, January 19 at the Alliance française by Mr. Sarin, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Mr. Wolska, Deputy Director. The visit of the building, which just underwent complete renovation, focused on the 115-seat auditorium, the 15 classrooms and the brand new cafeteria which now offers a French menu for dinner!

1

Mr. Gérard Larcher, President of the Senate

Mr. Cédric Perrin, President of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Armed Forces Committee

Mr. Jean-Noël Guérini, President of the France-India Friendship Group,

Mr. Rachid Temal, Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Committee,

Mr. Hervé Maurey, Vice-President of the France-India Friendship Group

Ms. Audrey Bélim, Member of the France-India Friendship Group

Mr. Hubert de Canson, Diplomatic Advisor to the President

Mr. Patrick Dray, Special Advisor to the President

The very elaborate film program and the Alliance's aspiration to become the venue for "Art et Essai" (Art House cinema) in the Indian capital², the cultural program and its highlights which make the Alliance the leading European cultural center, the number of learners (5,500 per year) and especially their motivations were subjects of discussion.

The Q&A meeting, between about fifty students of the C1 level and the President of the Senate, took place in the media library, the emblematic agora of our institution; Mr. Larcher answered questions on the functioning of the French Parliament and its bicameral system, which has many similarities with that of India, his personal background and more generally on French political institutions. He also laid emphasis on the fact that the learning of the French language was an asset in pursuing a professional career both in India and internationally, by highlighting in particular the presence of 540 French companies and subsidiaries that employ nearly 300,000 people in India.

The sequence concluded with a presentation of medals from the Senate to the President, Mr. Sarin, to Ms. Chaudhuri, Dean of the teaching staff and to Mr. Singh, moderator of the discussions, and this of course over masala chai and samosas.

2. A DCP projector has just been acquired thanks to assistance from the Department



OLYMPICS at Alliance Française de Delhi



On 26th July 2024, Alliance Française de Delhi hosted a grand inauguration ceremony of its Sports Fanzone on the occasion of the Official opening of the PARIS Olympic Games, which celebrates every 4 years in the spirit of international sportsmanship and cultural exchange. As part of the event, Alliance Française installed a variety of games within its premises, including foosball, volleyball, badminton, shooting, archery, table tennis, skate-board, martial arts, golf, cricket and basketball and even fitness!

During the 2-week long event, these sports facilities were open to everyone—not just to the students, teachers, and employees, but also to the general public. People could practice these sports at any time, sometimes even until 10 pm. In addition to the installed games, special workshops were also organized on various activities, including darts, gymnastics, Rugby, CrossFit, Fencing, Karate, and even there was a session on how to care for your favourite Bicycle. These workshops added a dynamic and educational aspect to the event, making it an enriching experience for all the participants. Every day, more than 300 people visited for using the sports facilities installed at the Alliance Française de Delhi, both on weekdays and weekends.

Bravo to the dedicated team of around 30 volunteers who played a crucial role in the event's success. They worked tirelessly, always with smiles on their faces, to ensure that everything ran smoothly. A heartfelt thanks goes out to all these volunteers for their commitment and exceptional efforts in making this celebration a memorable event.

Additionally, an outdoor big screen was set up for the audience to watch the live broadcast of the Olympic Games directly from Paris, enhancing the experience and connecting the local celebration with the global event.

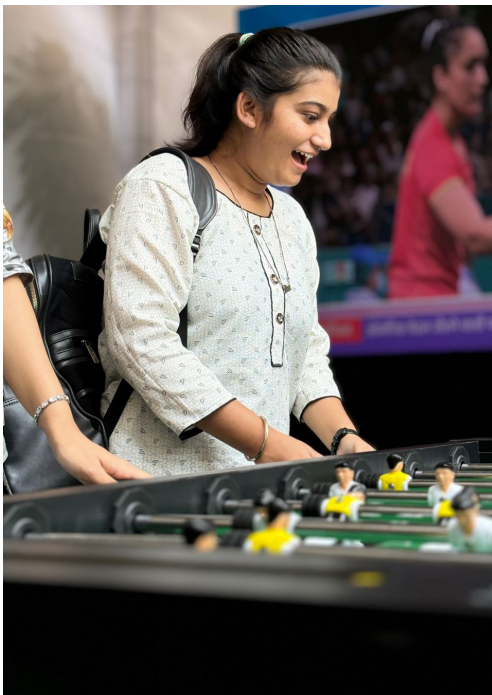
The ceremony brought together diverse audience, including diplomats, sports enthusiasts, and members of the French and Indian communities. Vibrant performances and speeches highlighted the importance of the Olympics in bringing the world together. The inauguration ceremony was led by H.E. Thierry Mathou, Ambassador of France to India, who was joined by distinguished guests including ministers from French Polynesia, M. Ronny Teriipaia and M.



Taivini Teia, as well as mayors from the Marquesas Islands. A special highlight of the evening was the enchanting Ruu dance and song performance by the Marquesas Islands delegation, adding a rich cultural touch to the festivities.

Mr. Sharad Saxena, DD Sports News Channel, the Master of Ceremonies, added to the excitement of the event by interviewing prominent Indian sports stars, including Ronaldo Singh (cycling), Tilottama Sen (shooting), Gaurav Bidhuri (boxing), Tejaswin Shankar (decathlon), Priya Mohan (athletics/4x400 relay), and Veer Chotrani (squash). These engaging interviews with top athletes further enhanced the celebration of the Games' opening, bringing their inspiring stories and achievements to the audience.

Alliance Française de Delhi, known for promoting French culture and language, added a unique cultural dimension to the Olympic celebration, making it a memorable occasion for all the people present at the event. The Olympic Games concluded on 11th August 2024, but Alliance Française de Delhi has decided to keep several games, including foosball, table tennis, badminton, and basketball, available on the premises. This allows students to continue enjoying these activities and ensures that these remain a regular feature at AFD, promoting an active and engaging environment even after the Olympic celebrations have ended.



ADMINISTRATION

The Administration Department of AFD is dedicated to ensuring the smooth operation and maintenance of our facilities. Over the past year, we have made significant strides in enhancing the infrastructure and addressing key issues within our buildings. This report highlights our major achievements, ongoing projects, and future plans to further improve our workplace environment.

Completion of Renovation and Refurbishment Project: We have successfully completed our extensive renovation and refurbishment project. This initiative marks a significant milestone for the Administration Department, showcasing our commitment to maintaining a modern and efficient workspace for all employees. The project involved updating key areas, improving aesthetics, and ensuring compliance with the latest safety standards. The enhanced environment will provide a more comfortable and inviting atmosphere for staff and visitors.

Future Project

Addressing building concerns following the completion of the renovation project, our focus has now shifted to tackling other critical building concerns. These include addressing issues related to seepage and the condition of washrooms on the ground floor. These concerns have been identified as priority areas that require immediate attention to prevent further deterioration and ensure the well-being of our employees.

To effectively address these challenges, we have initiated discussions with our architect to devise comprehensive solutions. The proposed rectifications will involve:

- **Seepage Control:** Implementing measures to prevent water ingress and moisture buildup, which can lead to structural damage and health hazards.
- **Washroom Upgrades:** Overhauling washroom facilities at the ground floor to improve hygiene and functionality. This includes dismantling the current washrooms, modernizing fixtures, enhancing ventilation, and ensuring compliance with accessibility standards.

Employee Engagement and Feedback: We believe that employee feedback is crucial in identifying areas for improvement. Therefore, we plan to conduct regular surveys and feedback sessions to gather input from staff regarding their workspace needs and concerns. This will help us prioritize projects and initiatives that have a direct impact on employee satisfaction and productivity.

Introduction of POSH and POCSO Policies: In our ongoing efforts to foster a safe and respectful workplace, we have updated the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) and in the process of introducing Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) policies into our manual. These policies are crucial in ensuring that our work environment remains free from harassment and that the rights and safety of all individuals, including children, are protected.

- **POSH Policy:** This policy aims to prevent and address sexual harassment in the workplace, ensuring a safe and dignified work environment for all employees. It outlines the procedures for reporting and addressing complaints, providing support to victims, and taking disciplinary action against offenders.
- **POCSO Policy:** This policy focuses on protecting children from sexual offences, establishing guidelines for handling cases involving minors, and ensuring that the workplace is safe for children who may visit or interact with our facilities. It underscores our commitment to the welfare and protection of children in all our operations.

The Administration Department remains committed to providing a safe, efficient, and pleasant working environment for all employees. The successful completion of our renovation and refurbishment project is a testament to our dedication and hard work. As we move forward, we will continue to address critical building concerns and explore innovative solutions to enhance our facilities. We look forward to another year of progress and improvements, guided by our commitment to excellence and sustainability.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Alliance Française de Delhi (AFD) continues to thrive in its mission to promote French language learning and Francophone cultural understanding. As technology plays an increasingly integral role in education and communication, the IT department at AFD has been diligently working to ensure that our technological infrastructure supports the diverse needs of our staff, students, and stakeholders. This report provides an overview of the IT initiatives, achievements, challenges, and plans at AFD for the fiscal year 2023-2024.

Key Initiatives and Achievements:

- 1. Migration of AFD Website:** The IT department successfully migrated our website from 3rd party vendor to our existing external web server. Now, new website will be under complete control, managed, and updated by the AFD IT team. The new website has received positive responses from our various stakeholders. These initiatives have led to cost savings of about Rs 1 Lakhs per annum, with no recurring cost, and faster resolution time.
- 2. Migration of AFD Mail server:** The IT department successfully migrated our mail server from 3rd party vendor to our external mail server. Now, the new mail server is completely controlled, managed, and updated by the IT team. These initiatives have led to cost savings, faster resolution time, and preventing issues like mail loss, and delays in receiving mail that plague our old server.
- 3. Upgradation of Internet Infrastructure:** The Internet infrastructure at AFD has been successfully upgraded to enhance connectivity and reliability. This included the upgrading of a high-speed internet connection to 100 MBS, and unlimited bandwidth.
- 4. Implementation of open-source pfsense firewall:** The IT team successfully replaced the proprietary subscription-based Sonicwall firewall with the open-source pfsense firewall. These initiatives have led to cost savings of about Rs 1 lakh per annum for firewall subscriptions, with no recurring cost and faster resolution time
- 5. New Desktops for the Library:** To facilitate students' and library members' easy access to shared library computers, 8 new Dell PCs have been installed in the library.
- 6. Enhancement of Cybersecurity Measures:** With the increasing prevalence of cyber threats, the IT department prioritized the enhancement of cybersecurity measures at AFD. This

included conducting regular security audits, implementing multi-factor authentication, and conducting staff training on cybersecurity best practices. As a result, AFD has experienced a significant reduction in security incidents and data breaches.

7. **Digitalization of Various Processes:** To streamline processes and improve efficiency, the IT department spearheaded the digitalization of various tasks. This included the implementation of shared files and folder service, 100% uptime for online registration portals, and in-house newsletter services. These initiatives have led to cost savings, reduced paperwork, and faster response times.

Challenges Faced:

1. **Adapting to Open-source Software:** The transition from paid service to open-sourced service posed challenges in terms of ensuring adequate support and troubleshooting. The IT department had to quickly adapt to new open-source software's steep learning curve and take support from various forums and support sites.

2. **Managing IT Resources:** Balancing the demands for new IT initiatives with limited resources posed a challenge for the IT department. Prioritizing projects, allocating budgets effectively, and managing vendor relationships required careful planning and coordination.

Future Plans:

1. **Expansion of Open-source software:** AFD plans to expand its use of open-source software for various IT processes including the ticketing system, HR system, etc.

2. **Continued Focus on Cybersecurity:** The IT department will continue to prioritize cybersecurity measures to protect against evolving threats. This includes investing in advanced threat detection technologies, conducting regular security training for staff, and staying informed about emerging cyber threats and best practices.

3. **Integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML):** AFD plans to explore the integration of AI and ML technologies to personalize website chat-bots, personalize learning experiences, automate administrative tasks, and improve educational outcomes. This could involve developing AI-powered language systems, predictive analytics for student performance, and natural language processing tools for language assessment.

The IT department at AFD has made significant strides in enhancing technological capabilities

to support the mission of the organization. Despite the challenges posed by the transition to open-source & in-house self-supported IT services with limited resources, AFD has successfully leveraged technology to improve IT outcomes, streamline processes, and ensure the security and accessibility of IT systems. Looking ahead, AFD remains committed to innovation and continuous improvement in leveraging technology to align with our mission to advance French language learning and Francophone cultural understanding.



CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

At the outset of another year, the culture department of Alliance Française de Delhi aimed to establish a platform for cultural appreciation and interaction through cooperative partnerships, immersive events, and stimulating artistic expressions. This past year, a variety of diverse and compelling events unfolded, including exhibitions, music performances, enlightening talks and debates, theatrical presentations, dance shows, and enriching film screenings.



Screenings

Ciné Club

Movies and the cinema experience have long played a vital role in both language learning and cultural appreciation. This year, Alliance Française de Delhi made strides forward by initiating the weekly Ciné Club, where a varied selection of films ranging from science fiction to comedy, biopics to fantasy, and documentaries to dramas were screened. We collaborated with One Teacher One Scientist for RISE monthly screenings, featuring animated movies that sparked the imaginations of children from NGOs. Additionally, Alliance Française de Delhi celebrated its annual festival the Francophonie Mela which included Francophonie Mela Screenings, showcasing movies from diverse Francophone countries including Tunisia, Quebec, Romania, and France with the presence of various dignitaries and expats, celebrating the richness of the French language and culture.

Independent Cinema

The year 2023 culminated in a partnership with the Kriti Film Club for its fourth edition called Beyond Borders – A Feminist Film Festival. This festival delved into themes such as feminist voices, dreams and desires, memories and nurturing, and freedom and questioning belief patterns, showcasing films in diverse languages including Urdu, Sinhala, Nepali, and Marathi. In collaboration with MUBI, the Alliance screened “Return to Seoul”. Additionally, there was the Nikon Film Festival, an array of short movies premiered at Le Grand Rex in Paris.

Continuing with our collaboration, CSH (Centre de Sciences Humaines) organised the Indie Talkies, focusing on independent Indian cinema and fostering discussions. This included films like Rapture, Turup, Aisee Hee and Nagarkirtan. The Aravali International Film Festival stands out as a beacon of cultural inclusivity and diversity in cinema. By hosting both monthly screenings and a dedicated two-day festival, the event showcases a wide array of films from various nationalities, including French, Nepalese, and Indian productions, highlighting cultural diversity through the visual arts. A significant aspect of the festival is its focus on inclusivity,



exemplified by the screening of “If I Could Tell You” by Niharika Popli, which attracted a diverse audience, including a large portion of the deaf community in Delhi. The festival also addressed social issues, with films tackling topics like the stigma around being an albino in the film “Paper Dreams”, and featured a screening of UN- Women on IDAHOBIT Day, shedding light on marginalized communities in India. These thoughtful selections prompted reflection and discussion among movie-watchers, emphasizing the festival’s commitment to social awareness and cultural understanding.

Screenings by WIP Labs supported artists by highlighting their work among avid cinema enthusiasts with films like Eeb Allay Ooo! and Ghode Ko Jalebi Khilane Le Ja Riya Hun. We

also screened the Academy Award-winning Ukrainian Documentary 20 Days in Mariupol in the presence of Ambassadors and other Diplomats. Along with the Austrian Embassy, we screened a film called Breaking the Ice which was very well received by the audience.

To mark IDAHOBIT Day on May 17, 2024, we screened “Un-Woman,” directed by Pallavi Roy. The event included a discussion and Q&A session with Pallavi Roy. On 31st May, we hosted screening of short films from the Que du Feu Festival in Lyon. The event aimed to showcase emerging talents in filmmaking and foster artistic experimentation. Attendees engaged with directors to boost the festival’s visibility and encourage Indian entries.

The Alliance Française de Delhi has transformed into a vibrant cinema hub where audiences can immerse themselves in the finest French cinema and discover films from independent directors worldwide. This dynamic space fosters exploration of social and cultural issues, encouraging viewers to share their opinions and thoughts. The ambition of Alliance Française is to provide a voice for artists to express their art. Through diverse themes and cultures, the Alliance seeks to cultivate a sense of togetherness, uniting people through the powerful medium of cinema.

Music

Music holds a unique power to shape language and society, enriching comprehension and fostering cultural understanding., Alliance Française de Delhi has successfully curated a diverse range of musical events throughout the year. We had several events held at our auditorium as well as other venues such as India Habitat Centre, Piano Man Jazz Club and The Design Village, Noida.



We had remarkable by AWORI - a Swiss- Ugandan singer with her hip-hop beats, Chamber Music by French Brass Band- Splendor featuring French trumpeters Jean-Baptiste Arnold & Nicolas Chatenet, alongside Indian pianist Nadine Jo Crasto , A soulful piano recital by Dr. Taras Filenko, a Ukranian artist, A unique ciné-concert by French musicians Robert Piéchaud and Stan de Nussac , a Spic Macay violin recital by Ustad Johar Ali Khan, a Valentine's day special concert Maxime Zecchini (Piano) and Isabelle Durin (Violin) and a women trio concert by Diane Mugot (Bassoon), Hélène (Clarinet) and Wen-Ying Lan (Piano) on the occasion of International Women's Day.

On 30 April 2024, the UNESCO South Asia Regional Office celebrated International Jazz Day by organising an International Jazz Concert in collaboration with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Alliance Française de Delhi, the Polish Institute, the Embassy of the Czech Republic at India Habitat Centre with performers from the Netherlands, France, Poland and India. All the artists from around the world came together to celebrate jazz. The Franco-Dutch band then performed at The Design Village in Noida for the AFD x TDV partnership inauguration. Through these performances, we continue to celebrate music's role in uniting communities and bridging cultural divides.



Exhibitions

Throughout the year, Alliance Française de Delhi curated a series of thought-provoking exhibitions, each offering unique perspectives on pressing global issues and innovative artistic expressions. 'Climate Migrants' and 'Humanity Heals' exhibitions delved into the harsh realities of migration triggered by climate change and the humanitarian crises that ensue. Through powerful visual narratives, attendees gained insight into the challenges faced by communities

worldwide. 'Afghanistan: Roses under thorns', curated by the French photographer Oriane Zerah, provided a deeply personal exploration of Afghanistan's turbulent history, using flowers as a poignant symbol of resilience amidst adversity.

In addition to these impactful exhibitions, the artistic exploration continued with the internationally renowned French photographer Anne Gardé's exhibition 'Shiva Blues', a captivating journey through the vibrant landscapes of North India. Through unconventional techniques, Gardé transformed her subjects into surreal visions, inviting viewers to contemplate the essence of human connection and cultural richness.

As part of the Francophonie month, French-Belgian artist Béatrice de Fays unveiled an immersive exhibition 'InSpace' merging traditional painting with digital augmentation, known as Augmented Reality. Her meticulous compositions, infused with symbolism, offered meditative spaces for introspection and exploration of diverse concepts. 'Beyond Face Value', curated by Rukmani Dhanukar, showcased French banknote designs from around the world. Previously exhibited in Spain, Greece, and the United Kingdom, this passion project aimed to highlight



the rich socio-cultural, political, artistic, and symbolic values embedded in banknotes, often overlooked during transactions. The curation emphasized that banknotes serve not only as mediums of exchange but also as mediums of communication. French banknotes from various nations epitomize art, romanticism, and flair, making them valuable artworks beyond their face value.

'Against the Grain', curated by Art Lune, was a transformative environmental project that employed art and community engagement to address global shifts in climate patterns and ecological challenges. The project emphasized the urgent need for sustainability, exploring international perspectives as well as the intricacies of India and the impact of daily actions on a broader scale. The narrative extended beyond identifying problems to highlighting solutions crafted by architects, designers, artists, and policymakers.

In summary, Alliance Française de Delhi's exhibitions served as platforms for dialogue, reflection, and cultural exchange, fostering deeper understanding and appreciation for the complexities of our world and the boundless creativity of human expression.



Dance

This year, Alliance Française de Delhi presented a variety of captivating dance performances. 'Sangam', a Sattriya dance recital by Oonmona Das & Perrine Legoullon, honored the Sattriya tradition and France-India friendship. The event featured solo and duet compositions, offering a unique chance to experience this rich tradition through dance.

In December, at Kamani Auditorium the show 'PIXEL' was showcased by Compagnie Käfig, in an exhilarating blend of Hip Hop dance and digital projection. As part of the Alliance Française Tour 2023 co-organised by IFI, this contemporary masterpiece, created by French choreographer

Mourad Merzouki, pushed boundaries by merging visual and physical elements, offering an immersive experience that redefined art and technology.



Talks/Discussions

The Alliance Française de Delhi hosted impactful talks and discussions on topics like Holocaust Remembrance and LGBTQ+ rights, fostering community engagement and raising awareness. Attendees enjoyed a conference with Daniel Boeri 'Le monde d'avant n'est plus ou quatre mutations et un enterrement?'



Another thought-provoking roundtable was held in remembrance of Gandhi Jayanti and celebrated 'Bapu: The Craftperson's Vision' with an exhibition. Miss Colombia, Camila Pinzon, shared her positive experience with French language learning. Ukrainian writer, Irena Karpa and French journalist, Frédéric Martel engaged in a thought-provoking discussion titled 'Softpower in Times of War: The power of words amidst global challenges'. The organization recently commemorated the 125th Anniversary of Zola's 'J'Accuse'. A special lecture co-organised by Alliance Française and UNESCO on Hampi's history, arts, and religion celebrated Prof. Pierre-Sylvain Filiozat's Padma Shri award.



Theatre

Alliance Française de Delhi, committed to showcasing French culture, hosts a variety of engaging theatrical events. These performances aim to promote cultural exchange, entertain audiences of all ages, and foster connections between different communities. Among the many shows



that took place, Actor-writer Koël Purie Rinchet made her playwright debut with 'Mummy's Dead, Long Live Mummy!', a delightful exploration of modern motherhood infused with humour and depth. Produced by actor Ira Dubey's esteemed theatre company, Lila Naatak Company, the 70-minute play offered a nuanced perspective on the complexities of parenthood.

In another compelling production, audiences were invited to experience the Finnish contemporary performance 'Johnny Got his Gun'. With mesmerizing soundscapes by Pauli Riikonen, viewers were transported into the journey of Joe, a World War I soldier, in a truly unforgettable theatrical experience. Additionally, a performance based on Blaise Cendrars' autobiographical text, 'J'ai Saigné', captivated audiences with its portrayal of resilience and healing. Recounting Cendrars' own experiences during convalescence following the loss of his right arm on the Eastern Front, the play celebrated empathy and the transformative power of storytelling.

To the magic bird of India I offer this youthful song of a little blackbird of France who was trying his wings, on leaving his nest.

– To Rabindranath Tagore, with my affection and respect.

Romain Rolland¹ Villeneuve, 1931

Audiences were also treated to 'He-Rose', a collaboration between the French School ENSATT and the Adishakti Laboratory for Theatre, Arts, and Research in India. Created by Vinay Kumar and written by Nimmy Raphel, 'He-Rose' celebrated the convergence of Indo-French cultures, showcasing the creativity born from diverse artistic backgrounds. From the Bhagavad Gita to the Iliad, the production explored themes of heroism and humanity, exemplifying the richness of cross-cultural exchange in the world of theatre.



Another unique performance was 'Battue La Terre' by Compagnie Étéya, a one-of-a-kind experience that blended the grace of tennis with the magic of theatre. Held at the RK Khanna Stadium on the premises of IFCCI, this performance explored themes of love, relationships, and separation as two individuals confronted each other one last time, seeking the courage to bid adieu. The innovative blend of sports and theatre created a mesmerizing spectacle that captivated the audience.



Francophonie celebrations

This year, the Francophonie festivities lasted for the entire month of March. Two new activities were introduced this year as part of the celebrations. A treasure hunt across Delhi was organized where some students had the opportunity to embark on an adventure in specially decorated auto rickshaws. In addition, AFD organized the Model United Nations (MUN) in French for the students. MUN is a popular activity where students simulate UN committees, learning about diplomacy and world issues.

The Francophonie celebrations kick-started with a lively football tournament on March 15th, with active participation from various Francophone embassies such as Guinea, Belgium, Vietnam, France, Madagascar and Ivory Coast. The winners were Belgium !

Following this, on March 16th, 2024, the highly anticipated Francophonie Méla took place, engaging students, expatriates, academics, artists, and diplomats in Francophone culture. The day commenced with school competitions ranging from singing, poster making and drawing

where students from various schools participated. These competitions infused the event with youthful vitality. Additionally, around 10 Francophone embassies set up cultural stalls, offering insights into their culture, including their local and regional delicacies. Alongside, there were food and book stalls, enhancing the event's diversity. Attendees enjoyed exploring different cuisines and indulging in Francophone flavours. The event peaked with the most anticipated competition called AFD's Got Talent and a cultural parade by the Embassy of Burkina Faso, attracting a crowd of over 1,000 people.

The evening concluded with a Mauritian musical performance at Sunder Nursery, blending traditional Mauritian music with sounds from the Indian Ocean and beyond. The band, 'Patyatann', showcased the cultural diversity of Mauritius through its music. As part of the Francophonie celebrations, attendees had the chance to experience the artistic talents of young artists from the French school Lycée Français International de Delhi. This exhibition served as an engaging exploration of various art forms, providing a platform for the expression of youthful perspectives and talents. All artworks showcased at the exhibition were available for sale, with proceeds dedicated to supporting TARA's initiatives.





EUNIC Cluster

Alliance Française de Delhi actively participated in various events as part of the EUNIC Cluster framework. The Long Night of Literatures, an event organized within the EUNIC Cluster framework, saw active involvement from Alliance Française de Delhi this year as well. This event provided a distinctive opportunity for the public to delve into the enchanting realm of literature. Attendees were invited to Cervantes Institute and 17 European countries participated to explore a variety of literary works, participate in engaging discussions, and enjoy interactive storytelling activities.

Furthermore, the Restoration Toolbox initiative, piloted by AFD and aimed at democratizing heritage conservation, reached its conclusion in September 2023. The final Plenary session, held at the Cervantes Institute, was followed by a reception at the Austrian Embassy. Inspired by the principles of the circular economy, this open-source platform empowered citizens to take charge of restoring their buildings. It sought to increase access to expert guidance, foster collaboration between citizens and policymakers, and enhance the quality of life in our communities.

The AFD Director, in his quality of vice-President of Delhi EUNIC cluster was also invited to Vietnam where he presented the Restoration Toolbox manuals and met with various dignitaries and stakeholders.

Flagship Events

Design x Design

Design X Design, also known as D x D, embarked on a fresh approach aimed at exploring design through a multidimensional lens. This year marked two significant highlights for the initiative. Firstly, the D x D Roundtable, organized by Alliance Française de Delhi and Studio IF, convened for its 12th Annual Roundtable themed 'Material Concerns'. Moderated by Madhav Raman, the discussion delved into nuanced explorations of materiality in design.

Secondly, the 14th Design X Design 20under35 Exhibition showcased the works of emerging designers practising in India. This exhibition aimed to decipher prevailing trends across various design-based creative industries. Recognizing the pivotal role of young designers in shaping cultural narratives, the exhibition featured the philosophies, working methods, and future aspirations of twenty shortlisted designers under the age of thirty-five. By sharing their insights, Design X Design sought to elevate appreciation levels, foster cross-connections, and illuminate pathways for the future.



Additionally, the 4th Design X Design Award was presented to Mr. Pradip Krishen for his remarkable contributions to ecological restoration. His work as a native plant gardener, inspiring naturalist, nature educator, and author was acknowledged, along with his earlier achievements as an offbeat filmmaker.

Other events

Alliance Française de Delhi introduced the Indian audience to Novembre Numérique 2023, a global celebration at the intersection of art and technology. This festival, now in its seventh year, showcased cutting-edge digital artworks and facilitated stimulating discussions on the evolving role of technology in contemporary art. “Midi et Minuit” offered an immersive journey into augmented reality, where eleven renowned artists brought their bilingual (French/English) creations to life, blurring the lines between reality and imagination. Meanwhile, “VR Selection 2023” transported audiences beyond the confines of physical space, presenting over thirty virtual reality experiences encompassing fiction, documentary, arts, and heritage.

Infusing glamour and style, Alliance Française de Delhi organized dazzling fashion shows like “Maison de Bose” by Santanu Bose. This event featured an eclectic mix of fashion styles and models, celebrating the vast diversity of fashion culture.

To tackle environmental issues, Alliance Française de Delhi partnered with Climate Fresk Facilitators in April 2024 to hold a unique Climate Fresk Workshop for World Environment Day. This initiative aimed to enhance environmental consciousness and motivate sustainable practices, with students actively engaging to contribute positively to the environment.

During the upcoming Pride month, a summit was organized called - THRIVE in collaboration with IMPULSE. In this session 25-30 community members were trained on HIV & Sexual Health, Stigma and Social & Digital media on order to improve engagement and communication. Additionally, the screening of movie LOVE+ followed by an open discussion took place as part of the 2 day event.



Throughout the year, Alliance Française de Delhi consistently showcased its dedication to cultural enrichment, education, and community involvement, offering a wide array of events that honoured French culture, encouraged creativity, and promoted meaningful connections among students, artists, and the public.

Collaboration

In September, the India Habitat Centre hosted a remarkable performance by the Lilanor Ensemble to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Élysée Treaty, a cornerstone of Franco-German friendship. The event, which played to a full house, was a mesmerizing experience that showcased the talents of three versatile French classical musicians influenced by various genres. The program immersed the audience in the decadent universe and the realistic and expressionist aesthetics of Paris and Berlin cabarets. It was uniquely presented through the perspective of a woman navigating the patriarchal society of that era. The originality of the project lay in its arrangements for accordion, piano, and voice, featuring masterpieces from the Lied, French Art Song, and cabaret/café-concert pieces. This unusual trio glorified a beautiful repertoire, resonating deeply with texts and poems by famous authors of the time. The performance was a true testament to the rich cultural heritage and artistic expression of the period.



RISE- Re- Imagining School Education

In November 2023, Alliance Française de Delhi and One Teacher One Scientist co-organized RISE, a Thought Exchange event focused on School Education. Themed around “Global Citizenship in Indian Schools,” RISE delved into the realms of Holistic Education and Neurosciences, aligning with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It was a truly fantastic event and we were honoured to receive sessions by Dr. Patrick Mitchell who came all the way from UK and educated us on topics such as understanding strategies for memory and recall, parenting sessions on emotions and learning and other critical subjects. The festival buzzed with workshops, panel discussions, and cultural sessions tailored for parents, teachers, and children alike. It provided an exceptional platform to embed SDGs into school curricula and foster dialogue among esteemed educators, thought leaders, and organizations. The event was inaugurated by UNICEF India Representative, Cynthia McCaffrey, setting a tone of significance and collaboration. A highlight of the festival was the spectacular giant puppet parade at Lodi Garden, conceptualized especially for RISE by Padmashree Dadi Pudumjee and Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust. Through captivating giant puppets, Dadi Pudumjee, under the banner of Ishara Puppet Theatre Trust, unveiled narratives of Gender Equality and Biodiversity, immersing audiences in the mesmerizing realm of storytelling. These meticulously designed giant puppets not only celebrated the breath-taking biodiversity of our world but also served as powerful vehicles for advocating Gender Equality, a pivotal goal on the global agenda of Sustainable Development.





Home's where the art is: An ode to France

At connoisseurs gathered for the opening of Douce France, an exhibition by French artist Henri Landler, in the Capital, recently. Curated by Landler's daughter, Sabine Ermakoff, the show, which goes on till August 19, features over 30 original works brought to India for the first time.

A dedication to capturing the beauty of his country is one work," says Thierry Mathou, ambassador of France, who was the guest of honour.

Among those who attended were art curator Alka Pande, Ukrainian ambassador Dr Oleksandr Polishchuk, Georgian ambassador Vakhtang Jaoshvili and Slovenian ambassador Mateja Vodeb Ghosh.



HTC (L-R) Dr Oleksandr Polishchuk, Cécile Mathou and Thierry Mathou



Sabine Ermakoff



▲ (L-R) Anu Priya Wazir and Dr Alka Pande



▲ (L-R) Stephane Amalir and Vakhtang Jaoshvili



ACTORS: The play features Swiss actors Lionel Fournier & Chloé Zufferey

IDREES BUKHTIYAR
@parit_deli

AT A special event, Alliance Française de Delhi, which seeks to promote the French language in India, combined tennis and theatre at the RK Khanna Tennis Stadium in the Capital.

The play, titled *Battue La Terre* by *Compagnie Etéya*, marked its debut in Delhi through a collaboration with the French Embassy in India, the French Institute in India, the Embassy of Switzerland in India, and the Indo-French Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Battue La Terre translates to the clay surface upon which tennis is played.

In *Battue La Terre*, two souls confront each other for the final time on the familiar grounds of the tennis court. They challenge, unravel, and ultimately summon the courage to bid farewell amid an ever-evolving moment.

This fusion of theatre and

tennis portrays a confrontation between two individuals who once cherished each other but are now parting ways. It encapsulates moments of regret, fear, and anger, intertwined with expressions of enduring love, albeit expressed differently by each character. It serves as a final reckoning and a poignant declaration of love.

The play commences as actor Lionel Fournier, portraying Elliott, invites his co-actor Chloé Zufferey, embodying Camille, to engage in one last tennis match before parting ways.

Elliott's character reminisces about how Camille's mother intervened when he contemplated ending their relationship, hinting at underlying tensions with their respective families that may have influenced their story.

The actors delivered their lines in French, with English subtitles provided on the tennis court scoreboard for the convenience of the audience.

theatre 'Battue La Terre': A fusion of tennis and theatre

THE FRENCH PLAY ENTHRALLS AUDIENCES AT THE RK KHANNA TENNIS STADIUM THROUGH A DISTINCTIVE METHOD OF STORYTELLING

The narrative delves into their minor quarrels, familial conflicts, and cherished memories. *Parit* had the opportunity to converse with Swiss-based artists during their visit to Delhi.

"This is the second time for both of us. I visited Kolkata 12 years ago, and Chloé went to Puducherry a few years back for

a training course with the Conservatoire National d'art Dramatique de Paris. We immensely enjoy performing here, engaging in wonderful exchanges with the audience, and playing at remarkable venues like the RK Khanna Tennis Stadium in Delhi. What a pleasure," said Lionel.

When questioned about choice of tennis as a medium to narrate this tale, Lionel explains that tennis offers a captivating aesthetic.

"It's a symmetrical space, equitable on both sides. Each individual possesses their own platform to express themselves, a realm of autonomy yet interconnectedness with the other. Moreover, the net holds profound symbolism," he elaborated.

Chloé, aged 28, elucidates the purpose of staging this theatrical endeavour in India.

"The aim aligns with the missions of the Alliances Françaises, as we perform upon their invitation. It serves as a means to disseminate Francophone culture and language through a cultural and artistic spectacle."



LAST SHOT: Two souls confront each other for the last time before parting ways.

AFD IN MEDIA

Citymy city

11

Giant puppets pull strings for sustainability; stun onlookers

Larger-than-life puppets, promoting sustainable life goals, surprised the regulars at Lodhi Gardens recently



HTC

I was enamoured to see these puppeteers. From the costumes to the masks, the emphasis was on the idea that, under the puppets, we're all one.

CHARY ARORA, *Member, Alliance Française de Delhi*

We used 6- to 12ft tall puppets to represent the themes of Mother Earth, gender equality, elements of Nature and biodiversity.

DADI PUDUMJEE, *Founder, The World Agency Theatre Trust*

Bringing music and drama together, environmentalists accompanied the puppeteers



in Trail at Centre, Alkhu

HTC/Khan

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Code to canvas

Augmented reality meets art in a unique storytelling

SUBHANGI SHAH

ART IS SUPPOSED TO take you places. Virtual reality, mixed reality, augmented reality—all kinds of alternate reality have the technical ability to do that. When the two come together, the experience can be 'moving'. In a one-of-its-kind exhibition ongoing at Alliance Française, Delhi (March 2 to 19), stories unfold in augmented reality. Titled *Inspace*, the 12 paintings on display tell the tale of a woman in Hyderabad.

"Hyderabad, because that's where I live," says French-Belgian Beatrice de Fays, aka B2 Fays, the artist behind the exhibition. "The ideas behind all of these are linked to the granite rocks of Hyderabad. I have a connection with those rocks. There's some kind of energy that I feel," she explains. And it shows, as all the paintings

appear to have been carved on the rocks, where de Fays captures it all—the ruggedness, the history they hold, and the flora and fauna they nurture.

Here is where the augmented reality comes into play. Scanning a painting with the in-space app brings it alive, turning it into a 3-D experience. For example, scanning through one of her paintings titled *Boudha*, the story unfolds of a girl angered by her polluted surroundings. "When you are angry, you behave in a certain way," quips de Fays. Suddenly, an imposing image of the Buddha appears, oozing tranquility and bringing in peace.

"While earlier she was angry as she couldn't change a thing, now the Buddha has brought with him a sense of peace," she highlights. To this, one wonders how much of the art on display is derived from the life of this artist, whose enthusiasm for everything art and spirituality is palpable, as she employs signs and gestures that often bridge through the language divide.

Speaking of her process, the artist explains, "First, I create the painting. Then,



I separate all the elements to bring them back together in the 3-D space," adding that as a painter, the process makes her immensely happy, because with this, "I can change my paintings."

Besides ideating and painting, de Fays also does the voice-over, along with Bari Kumar. The augmented reality has been developed by Guillaume Evrad, and music by Mathieu Constans for the exhibition.

All these elements create an experience that lets viewers get completely immersed in the art, the details, and the storytelling. And that's precisely the intent. "Being

an artist, I use technology as I want to offer people an experience that can change them," she says, as her artworks bridge the gap between the outer and the inner world, and between the ancient rocks aged at least

2,500 years and the technology of today. While Hyderabad and its granite rocks are a personal experience for the artist, the artworks also hold the potential to stoke a conversation on conservation.

Hyderabad is home to ancient granite rocks, which, even though protected by the government, are weathering away due to creeping urbanisation.

patriot

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NEW DELHI | FRIDAY 26 JULY - 1 AUGUST 2024

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Indian people enjoyed my vision of France: 90-year-old artist

NONAGENARIAN HENRI LANDIER IS DISPLAYING HIS WORKS IN A PAINTING EXHIBITION TITLED 'DOUCE FRANCE', WHICH SHOWCASES HIS ORIGINAL WORKS IN INDIA FOR THE FIRST TIME

IDREES BUKHTIYAR
@patriot_delhi

RENOWNED FRENCH artist Henri Landier, aged 90, said he was deeply honoured by representing France in India for the first time.

Landier's painting exhibition at Alliance Française de Delhi commenced on July 20 and will conclude on August 19. Titled 'Douce France', it is an exquisite and unique exhibition showcasing more than 90 original works of the artist.

"Stéphane Amalric, the director of the Alliance Française of New Delhi asked me to present this exhibition in New Delhi. It is an honour for me to represent France in India for the first time," Landier told *Patriot* in an exclusive interview.

"The Alliance Française is a fantastic network. Its aim is not only to spread the French language and culture but also to promote dialogue between all cultures. Alliance Française de Delhi, under the direction of Stéphane, has done a tremendous job to help the Indian people understand French

culture, and vice versa," he shared.

When asked about the Indian art lovers, the artist said, "For me, it is a new world. I hope they are curious and they like France. The cultural dialogue between French and Indian artists started in the 60s with many Indian artists going to France."

Landier described 'Douce France' as a personal pilgrimage for him.

"I wanted to do it before the end of my life. I wanted to travel once more through this great country that I love. The title 'Douce France' comes from a song by Charles Trenet, which is dedicated to this beautiful country," he said.

Regarding his creative process, Landier explained, "I start by making many sketches and think about the composition a lot. When I have it in mind, I start painting and I do not take much time. Once it is in my mind, I can make a painting in one or two days but for a whole series, it can take months



TOPIC: Landier's exhibition showcases various aspects of France to Indian art lovers

or a few years," he said. He said that he decided to work on 'Douce France' in 1998.

"I started as usual by making plenty of drawings but I turned them into paintings. I made a lot of paintings on travels till 2022 to places in France I like and then I exhibited them in Paris recently," he said.

He said his art has evolved from a tragic vision of life to a more serene mindset.

"I do not paint the way I used to in the 1950s and I would not be able to reproduce the paintings I

made a few decades ago. When I was young, I used to put many layers of paint on the canvas to create a very dense atmosphere, but now I think the lighter the better. I do not use palette knives anymore either. Nowadays, I mostly use watercolours and I use bright colours. The older I get, the more joyful my works are," he remarked.

When asked about the challenges he faced while showcasing France in the exhibition, he said, "For me, it was a pleasure to paint my country and to show the beauty and the diversity of landscapes of different regions of France. Lots of people called my work the paintings of a young man with energy and colours."

He called France, the country of love.

"I hope Indian people enjoyed my vision of France with a lot of life, beauty, harmony, and softness. It is also a world I like, a world I want to be preserved. But at the same time, I would like to convince people that France is the country of love, of great literature, of new



FIRST IMPRESSION: Artist Henri Landier is visiting India for the first time

trends, and also a country of modernity, innovation, and future," he said.

Landier said he loves to paint things wherever he goes.

"I am almost always working. I take my sketchbook with me anywhere I go, even if I go to a show or on holidays. There is always a person, a landscape, a situation that I feel like drawing. Even when I go to dinner, I might make portraits of the guests," he said.

"I do have a second passion though, which is reading. There must be at least 2,000 books in my library. I read books about philosophy, psychology, education, art, and history. One of my favourites is the compilation of the letters by artist Vincent Van Gogh which he sent to his brother Theo Van Gogh. It is an amazing testimony, and I have read that probably five times already," he added. ■

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

1. French Lessons

1.1 Evolution of registrations for French Language courses

The 2023-2024 academic year clearly marks a revival in students opting for face-to-face classes. The campus, with its educational facilities, media library, and cafeteria, presents attractive and valuable assets. Cultural programs and regular workshops also play a crucial role in students' preference for in-person over the online classes. This year, face-to-face classes increased by 35% as compared to 2022-2023, rising from 233 to 359. Popular time slots from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on weekdays, as well as weekends, are quickly filled. To meet the growing demand for weekend courses, AFD continues its agreement with LFID, renting 5 to 7 classrooms at the high school on weekends.



In terms of registrations, the figures for 2023-2024 remain similar to those of 2022-2023. However, there is a significant decrease in the number of new students i.e. beginners. For the first time, the Alliance Française experienced a drop in entry-level registrations. This trend affects several Alliances in India and reflects a loss of attractiveness for the French language. Contributing factors can be the rising popularity of other languages (e.g., German, Asian languages), the political crisis between India and Canada, and strong competition from online courses offering beginner-level classes at very attractive rates, despite their lower quality unfortunately.

The Alliance attracts the most motivated students who are committed to learning French and seek advanced level courses which are not offered elsewhere.

To address this, AFD is going to enrich its "beginners" courses by reducing the number of hours for the A1 course and supplementing it with online modules via its learning platform, Apolearn.

The children and teenager students, representing a significant market potential for our establishment, has grown by 30% this year (2023-24: 491 Kids & Teens registrations; compared to 2022-23: 377 registrations). This segment therefore, needs to be further developed.

The AFD is focussing on meeting the needs of these new sections of students. It has standardized the textbooks used for Kids & Teens classes to ensure better progression between levels, according to the age groups and has scheduled a series of training sessions for its teaching team.

The Alliance Française is also a pilot for the network of 15 Indian institutions in developing professional French programs. Another promising segment is French courses for the corporates. To support this initiative, a client manager, whose main mission is to explore market opportunities in this niche, joined the academic team in March 2024.

	2020 - 2021	2021 2022	- 2022-2023	2023-2024	Progression from one year to another (%)
<i>No of different students</i>	3697	4671	4871	4557	- 6.45%
<i>No of registrations</i>	7352	7452	8092	8138	0.6%
<i>No of hours sold</i>	617 358	620 470	677 217	674 443	-0.4%



1.2 Opening an Annex in Noida

Since January 2023, AFD has been offering courses at The Design Village (TDV). This partnership was officially inaugurated on May 3, 2024. TDV was selected for the quality of its campus, which closely resembles the AFD campus with its modern, well-equipped classrooms, auditorium, and cafeteria.

Additionally, TDV maintains partnerships with various design schools in France, providing its students with the opportunity to study in France for a semester. We aim to develop a long-term partnership that integrates French language courses with our cultural offerings/events at this location.



2- Certifications

2.1 The DELF and DALF Certifications

Alliance Française de Delhi remains the sole official DELF-DALF certification centre in New Delhi. These diplomas, globally recognized, hold lifelong validity. AFD provides the opportunity to attain all levels (A1- A2 - B1- B2 - C1- C2). Depending on the level, the DELF can strengthen

a CV and facilitate employment in companies where French is the spoken language. DELF B1 enables eligibility for French nationality. DELF B2, and increasingly DALF C1, open the doors to French, European, or French-speaking universities, as well as many prestigious schools.

DELF Prim and DELF Junior versions cater respectively to very young learners (7 to 11 years) and youth (12-17 years).

Registrations for the DELF exams have seen a slight decrease (-7.6%), particularly for the "Tout



Registration comparison

Level	2021-22	2022-2023	2023-2024
A1	226	327	233
A2	279	441	376
B1	335	400	383
B2	171	189	178
C1	30	40	39
C2	8	8	5
JA1	32	84	124
JA2	19	60	82
JB1		13	19
Prim A1.1		3	2
Prim A1		2	4
Prim A2			3
	1100	1567	1448

public" version and the A1 level. However, registrations for the "Junior" are on the rise (43%), indicating that young students hold potential for the advancement of French teaching in our institution.

This decline in interest for DELF certifications is a common trend across the network of Alliances Françaises throughout India. In response, the network, in collaboration with its partner Institut Français in India responsible for central management of the DELF DALF exams, has devised an action plan to address this issue. Primarily, the focus has been on enhancing communication and emphasizing the significance of certifications.

The action plan has facilitated the introduction of orientation sessions and mock tests to better assist students in exam preparation. Moreover, efforts have been made to effectively communicate the benefits of certifications, especially in terms of professional opportunities or pursuing higher education in France, and to underscore the value of higher-level certifications.

As students are increasingly adopting a consumer approach: they invest in their French language learning; certifications must provide them with a concrete return on investment.



2.2 Organizing DELF Mock Exam Sessions

As an official centre for DELF-DALF exams, the Alliance Française provides students with the opportunity to assess their preparedness for the actual DELF-DALF exam through mock exams. These sessions are scheduled a few days before the commencement of the registration of the official DELF-DALF exams.

2.3 The TCF – French Knowledge Test

The TCF is designed for individuals aged 16 or older who seek to assess their French proficiency for academic (students, future students, interns, etc.), professional (employees or future

employees, etc.) or personal reasons.

This exam holds official recognition from numerous French and international authorities, including the Ministry of Immigration, Francization, and Integration of Quebec (MIFI), university administrations, and training centers.

The Alliance Française de Delhi typically conducts one session per month for the TCF Canada exam to accommodate the demand. However, there has been a decline in participation, with 61 candidates appearing for the exam compared to 81 in 2023. This decline may be attributed to ongoing political tensions between Canada and India, potentially impacting Canadian immigration.

Additionally, only one candidate appeared for the TCF IRN, which enables candidates to validate their French proficiency for purposes such as applying for French nationality or long-term residence permits in France.



3. Training

3.1 Initial Training of FLE Teachers

AFD continues its partnership with the University of Le Mans, offering training in teaching FLE accredited by DU-FLE (University Diploma of French as a Foreign Language). The class for 2023-2024 comprises 15 participants.

This one-year hybrid training program, both distance and face-to-face, provides a pool of well-trained teachers in the didactics of FLE. AFD identifies high-potential candidates and strengthens their training through mentoring provided by our senior teachers. This system

ensures the continual renewal of AFD's teaching staff, aligning with proactive job and skills management.

3.2 In-Service Training of AFD Teachers

In-Service training for teachers is paramount to staying abreast of educational and technological advancements. In the 2023-24 academic year, teachers underwent training in various areas during internal sessions, including:

- Educational engineering training
- Integration of Artificial Intelligence and digital tools into teaching practices
- Training in France at CAVILAM for 2 teachers: A tailor-made program focused on training engineering for teachers within the Indian network.

AFD teachers also regularly participate in short online training sessions, including webinars and online courses organized by our French partners such as Alliance Française de Paris, France Education Internationale, and CAVILAM.

3.3 Training for IFI

With its team of teachers and trainers, AFD serves as a training operator for the regional network of Alliances and for the IFI. In November 2023, two AFD trainers conducted a training session at the Alliance Française in Colombo (Sri Lanka) for 30 French teachers from schools. The training focused on piloting a pedagogical sequence and evaluation in FLE. Additionally, AFD also welcomes in its regular French courses, a dozen French teachers from Delhi schools. These teachers receive funding from the IFI to enhance their language skills and prepare for the DELF exams.



4. Francophonie

Visit by Ms. Chrysoula Zacharopoulou, Secretary of State for the Francophonie: AFD had the privilege of hosting Ms. Chrysoula Zacharopoulou, Secretary of State, who engaged in a dialogue with the students of the Alliance française de Delhi. These interactions provided our students with the opportunity to inquire about the Minister's professional journey and her experience learning the French language. The Minister conveyed her deep affection for the French language and highlighted its significance in her career. She encouraged our students to persevere in their language studies, underscoring its value in both the Indian and international job markets.

Francophonie Mela: The annual celebration of the Francophonie Mela witnessed remarkable success this year, attracting over 1,000 visitors to the Mela held on March 16, 2024. A rickshaw Treasure Hunt across the capital streets enhanced the event's visibility, and the organization of a French MUN engaged our students in stimulating simulation conferences and debates. The various competitions were as vibrant and successful as always. A special mention goes to AFD Got Talents, which unveils exceptional talents in music, singing, and dance each year.

One group captivated the audience with their performance, earning the opportunity to showcase their talents at the inauguration of our Annex at TDV - Noida.



FRENCH LIBRARY

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the continued support and enthusiasm of our patrons, staff, and stakeholders. In these pages, we invite you to journey with us through the highlights, challenges, and achievements that have marked our commitment to promoting French language and culture within our community.

This report offers a comprehensive overview of our accomplishments over the past year, shedding light on our initiatives, collaborations, and impact. From expanding our digital offerings to enhancing our physical spaces, one of the key highlights earlier this year has been the acquisitions of eight new public computers an initiative aimed at enhancing our technological offerings to our members and ensuring that our members have access to modern digital resources.

Memberships

We are delighted to report a significant increase in membership at the library in this financial year 2023 -24. With a current membership count of 4613 individuals, we have seen a notable rise as compared to the previous year. This surge not only demonstrates a growing interest in our library's offerings but also reflects the expanding reach of our mission to promote French language and culture within our community. What's even more encouraging is that out of these members, 2036 have been actively engaged with the library, having definitively issued books at least once this year. This statistic underscores the tangible impact of our programs and resources, indicating that more individuals are actively participating in and benefiting from the wealth of physical material and digital resources available at our library.



Statistics	2023-2024
Number of registered members	4613
Number of registered members(students at AFD)	3036
Number of documents	17945
Number books borrowed	12211

BD adulte	1426
BD jeunesse	615
Mangas	79
Romans adulte	3046
Romans jeunesse	1216
Doc. adulte	5594
Doc. jeunesse	392
Jeux	55
Albums	676
Francophonie	395
Inde	675
LGBTQ	34
Livres FLE	1648
Livres pédagogie	710
Poésie	284
Revue	721
Romans policiers	142
Théâtre	237
Total	17945

Culturethèque

Culturethèque, our dynamic online digital library continues to thrive as a premier resource hub, offering an extensive array of novels, newspapers, magazines, podcasts, children's books and audio books to name a few. Earlier this year the platform went under significant modifications, making it more user-friendly and accessible than before. These improvements have not only enriched the user experience but also have expanded the library's reach and impact. Culturethèque has proven to be an invaluable tool for students engaged in online classes,

providing them with essential resources without the need to visit the centre physically.

Items lent out

Albums	1296
BD adulte	651
BD jeunesse	1010
CD jeunesse	8
Doc. adulte	758
Doc. jeunesse	287
DVD documentaire	14
DVD fiction	71
DVD jeunesse	19
Francophonie	83
Inde	187
Jeux	32
Livres FLE	3712
Livres pédagogie	339
Mangas	99
Poésie	60
Revue	736
Romans adulte	1394
Romans jeunesse	1331
Romans policiers	54
LGBTQ	25
Théâtre	45
Total	12211

12211 items have been lent out during the course of the year in the following manner:

Educational outreach and collaborations

Our collaborations with local schools and universities have flourished over the past year, fostering mutually enriching partnerships that enhance educational opportunities for students and faculty alike. There is a sharp increase in institutional membership, with more schools and colleges recognizing the value of our resources and programs for their academic communities. One particularly successful initiative has been our guided library visits tailored specifically for educational institutions. On average, we host two to three school or college visits per month, offering students and school teachers a curated experience that combines exploration of our

extensive collection with engaging activities such as movie screenings, quizzes and engaging activities. These visits are thoughtfully designed to align with curricular objectives and promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of French language and culture. Through these collaborative efforts, we aim to inspire a lifelong love of learning and literacy while fostering meaningful connections between academia and the wider community.



Workshops and events

Pride/LGBTQ Corner launch

We would like to highlight the resounding success of the launch of our LGBTQ section in the library with a small collection of 34 books, an initiative aimed at cultivating inclusivity and celebrating diverse voices within our community. This event was one of its kind as this was the first time we launched any section in our library. The event launch shows how important it



is for Alliance Française de Delhi to promote diversity and make this a safe and welcoming space for the LGBTQ community. The evening was dedicated to LGBTQ literature with an attendance of over 50 individuals, reflecting the enthusiastic response and support from our patrons. Through engaging discussions, captivating readings by our panel, attendees were immersed in a celebration of queer culture and narratives. The event not only provided a platform for representation but also served as a testament to our commitment to creating an inviting space where all are valued and respected. The overwhelming turnout reaffirms the importance of such initiatives in promoting understanding, acceptance, and unity within our community.



Read Out Aloud Competition, every year library organises this event in collaboration with the French Institute attracting students from all India Alliances and levels. The event was a grand success, with over 80 participants (for local round) presenting in front of our esteemed jury. Following are the winners of local round who will represent Alliance Française de Delhi in National round:

Apaar Singh – Level A

Sanya Shah- Level B

Aakanksha Goel – Level C

Speaking workshops are conducted on every Thursday and Saturday by Ms. Sharbani Roy. The workshops have different themes every week, the objective is to help the students improve their day to day conversation in French. The workshops welcomes students from A1 to C1 level.

Board games workshops and dictation workshops organised by Ms. Aayushi Saklani to help beginners and intermediate level students. The workshop area of the media library turns into a playground. Each month the participants discover new games and takes dictations based on different themes which helps them improve their French in fun filled and play full manner.

Special Workshops by our Volunteers:

Atelier lecture à voix haute or, a Read aloud workshop, is conducted every 4th Friday of the month by Laurence Renard, Richa Khandelwal. The objective is to help participants improve their French pronunciation, intonation as well as vocabulary and general culture. A theme is decided in advance and texts from modern and classic French literature, including songs at times, are proposed to the participants.

Atelier écriture, or writing workshop, is conducted every 2nd Friday of the month by Laurence Renard, Richa Khandelwal. The objective is to help participants improve their vocabulary and written expression all while being creative. A theme is decided on the day of the workshop, certain words or expressions or even extracts from French literature relevant to the theme are proposed to the participants, to help with their texts.



TRANSLATION CELL

- Established in 1989, the Translation & Interpretation Cell has made remarkable progress since its inception. The Cell has undertaken numerous prestigious and extensive projects across various domains, including translation, interpretation, and dubbing. It is supported by a team of 13 certified translators and interpreters, each bringing their expertise to these diverse areas.
- In the financial year 2023-24, the Translation & Interpretation Cell saw a significant increase in revenues as compared to the previous year. This growth is attributed to the successful completion of numerous high-profile translation, interpretation, and dubbing projects. The Cell also expanded its network by establishing collaborations with several distinguished organizations, including Suez, Climate Impact X, Schneider, Safran, UNDP, Arin Media, and Angus Montgomery Arts. These associations have not only enhanced the Cell's portfolio but also broadened its expertise across various industries.
- With the rise in the number of Indian students pursuing higher education in France, the volume of administrative translation for students has also increased this year. The number of Indian students going to France has seen a substantial increase of approximately 20% as compared to the previous year. This trend is expected to continue as the French government actively promotes higher education in France for international students, offering various scholarships and streamlined processes to attract more applicants. Consequently, the



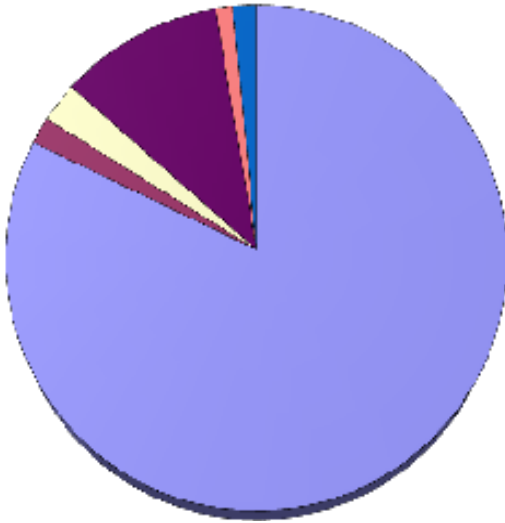
demand for accurate and timely translation services is likely to grow, ensuring students can navigate the administrative requirements smoothly.

- Adding another accomplishment to our list, the translation cell successfully completed two complex legal and technical translation assignments for Suez Projects Pvt. Ltd. These projects required a high level of expertise and attention to detail, underscoring the team's capability in handling specialized content. Additionally, the team concluded an urgent legal translation for the Singapore-based company Climate Impact X Pte. with exceptional accuracy and efficiency.
- Some mammoth assignments for Schneider Electric Infrastructure, Safran Electronic & Defense Service India, and the High Commission of Canada were also smoothly accomplished with precision. These large-scale projects required meticulous attention to detail and thorough expertise, showcasing the team's ability to handle significant and demanding translation tasks efficiently and accurately.
- Another notable achievement was a dubbing assignment for Arin Media Production, where two native speakers were engaged. The voice-over was performed for an educational book specifically designed for teaching French to children, ensuring the pronunciation and intonation were accurate and engaging for young learners.
- The Cell also undertook several interpretation projects for the United Nations Development Programme, the Embassy of the Gabonese Republic, and Kriti Inter Trade. These assignments involved facilitating communication in high-stakes, multilingual environments, demonstrating the team's proficiency and adaptability. An especially interesting interpretation assignment was completed during the India Art Fair for a French artist, under the flagship of Angus Montgomery Arts India Pvt. Ltd. This project highlighted the interpreter's ability to convey complex artistic concepts and nuances, enhancing cross-cultural understanding and appreciation at a major international event.
- A significant simultaneous interpretation assignment for the Homeland Security of the French Embassy was carried out by our interpreters, involving 30 French delegates meeting with high-ranking officials from the Delhi Police. This complex assignment required real-time interpretation of sensitive and technical discussions, ensuring clear and accurate communication between both the parties. Our interpreters were highly praised by the French Embassy for their excellent services, demonstrating their proficiency and professionalism in handling high-profile international engagements.

FINANCES

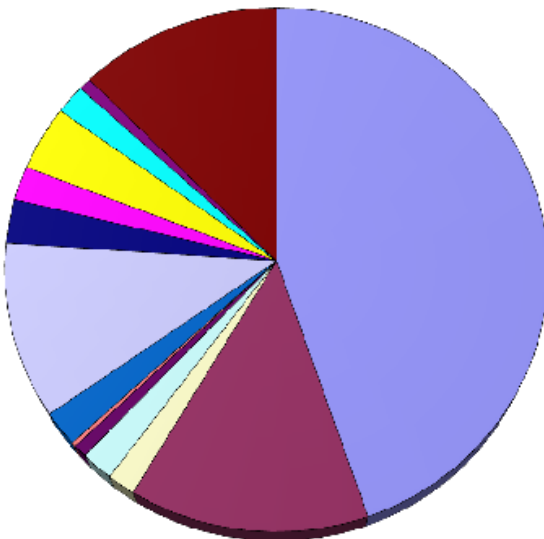
The financial performance of AFD continues to be satisfactory. This has been made possible: inter alia, by judicious control on expenditure.

AFD: INCOME



- French Language Classes - 82.1 %
- Cultural & Educational Activity - 1.74 %
- Translation - 2.6 %
- Subscription - 0 %
- Interest - 10.85 %
- Other Income - 1.14 %
- Booking - 1.58 %

AFD: EXPENSES



- Salaries & Social Benefits - 44.68 %
- Repair & Maintenance - 13.86 %
- Depreciation - 1.63 %
- Translation Expenses - 1.89 %
- Statutory Expenses - 0.79 %
- Printing & Stationery - 0.26 %
- Watch & Ward Expenses - 2.15 %
- Cultural & Educational Activities - 10.83 %
- Electricity/Telephone Expenses - 2.7 %
- Staff Welfare - 2.1 %
- Bonus - 4.04 %
- Other Operating Expenses - 1.85 %
- Legal & Professional Fees - 0.77 %
- Professional Educationist Expenses (Teachers) - 12.45 %

INCOME:

S.No.	Particulars	Amount
1	French Language Classes - 82.1 %	15,94,76,506.00
2	Cultural & Educational Activity - 1.74 %	33,87,493.08
3	Translation - 2.6 %	50,44,406.00
4	Subscription - 0 %	3,939.00
5	Interest - 10.85 %	2,10,83,177.00
6	Other Income - 1.14 %	22,19,811.74
7	Booking - 1.58 %	30,62,855.00

EXPENSES:

S.No.	Particulars	Amount
1	Salaries & Social Benefits - 44.68 %	7,23,02,017
2	Repair & Maintenance - 13.86 %	2,24,18,587
3	Depreciation - 1.63 %	26,35,953
4	Translation Expenses - 1.89 %	30,56,299
5	Statutory Expenses - 0.79 %	12,79,666
6	Printing & Stationery - 0.26 %	4,14,848
7	Watch & Ward Expenses - 2.15 %	34,69,865
8	Cultural & Educational Activities - 10.83 %	1,75,17,712
9	Electricity/Telephone Expenses - 2.7 %	43,69,236
10	Staff Welfare - 2.1 %	33,89,722
11	Bonus - 4.04 %	65,38,111
12	Other Operating Expenses - 1.85 %	29,68,005
13	Legal & Professional Fees - 0.77 %	12,39,759
14	Professional Educationist Expenses (Teachers) - 12.45 %	2,01,34,850

GOVERNING BODY



J.L. Sarin
President



I.M. Chishti
Vice-President



Amita Mishra
Vice-President



Harpreet Singh
Secretary



Vaishali Gupta
Joint Secretary



Surya Bhatia
Treasurer



Aditya Arya
Member



Sandeep Sapra
Member



Aruna Vasudev
Member



Manisha Sondhi
Member



Aude Priya Wacziarg
Member



Dr. Mohan Kumar
Member



Stéphane Amalir
Ex-Officio Member



Frédéric Wolska
Ex-Officio Member



Ragini Mehta
Permanent Teacher /
Teachers' Representative

ADMINISTRATION TEAM



Stéphane Amalir
Director



Frédéric Wolska
Academic Director



Rita Suri
Executive Assistant
to Director



Arshad S. Rahmani
Manager
Administration



Mitushi K. Kapoor
Head Culture &
Communication



Ravneet Kaur
Academic
Coordinator



M.R. Duggal
Manager
Accounts



Karuna Chopra
Assistant to
Academic Director



Avinna C. Das
Assistant Manager
Accounts



Kahini Sapra
Cultural Coordinator



Devika A S
Communication
Coordinator



Madhurima Sanyal
Cultural Coordinator



Praseon P. Sachdeva
Senior Translation &
Interpretation Coordinator



Neha Kanouj
Senior Cashier



Kanchan Kapoor
Senior Cashier

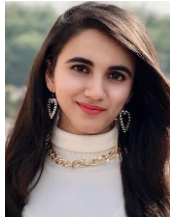


Noopur Goel
Course Counsellor

ADMINISTRATION TEAM



Tavishi Kakwani
Course Counsellor



Komal Malhotra
Course Counsellor



Sharbani Roy
Senior Librarian



Mridula Khanduri
Librarian



Aayushi Saklani
Librarian



Russell Nagarajan
Senior IT Administrator



Munish Vasudeva
Senior IT Administrator



Shailesh Arora
Audio Visual InCharge



Jayant Kumar
Office Assistant



Kishen Singh
Technician / Support Staff



Gopal Singh
Support Staff



Ravi Shankar
Office Assistant



Suman Saurabh
Technician

ACADEMIC TEAM



Chetan Lalchandani
Permanent Teacher



Amita Chaudhari
Permanent Teacher



Ashmi Kumar
Permanent Teacher



Ishani Dutta
Permanent Teacher



Mukta M. Kaul
Permanent Teacher



Padma Natarajan
Permanent Teacher



Ragini Mehta
Permanent Teacher



Ritu Gupta
Permanent Teacher



Sharda Mishra
Permanent Teacher



Snigdha B.
Permanent Teacher



S. Somasundaram
Permanent Teacher



Perna B. Duggal
Permanent Teacher



Pallavi Brara
Permanent Teacher



Sakshi Tandon
Permanent Teacher



Anubhuti Arora
Permanent Teacher



Soniyaa Tuli
Associate Teacher



Benjamin Bruneau
Associate Teacher



Manisha Sharma
Associate Teacher



Gunjan Gupta
Associate Teacher



Neeta Khemka
Associate Teacher



Harini Venkatesh
Associate Teacher



Jayashri Sridharan
Associate Teacher



Nargis Ali
Associate Teacher



Aditi Das
Associate Teacher



Nathalie Mitra
Associate Teacher



Monica Singh
Associate Teacher



Prabhjot Singh
Associate Teacher



Subhashini B.
Associate Teacher



Tulika Anand
Associate Teacher



Veronika Kapoor
Associate Teacher



Vibha Chopra
Associate Teacher



Jeanne Subtil
Associate Teacher



Neilu K. Makhija
Associate Teacher



Ruchira Karkhanis
Associate Teacher



Rahul Verma
Adhoc Teacher



Mukta Gadag
Adhoc Teacher



Shireen Khanna
Adhoc Teacher



Yakshita Arora
Adhoc Teacher



Shraddha Aggarwal
Adhoc Teacher



Krithika S
Adhoc Teacher



Andita Rao
Adhoc Teacher



Shubhra Gupta
Adhoc Teacher



Rohini Rangachari
Adhoc Teacher



Rachna Sachdev
Adhoc Teacher



Prachi Chawla
Adhoc Teacher



Anupam Garg
Adhoc Teacher



Tejas Kulkarni
Adhoc Teacher



Anuj Sharma
Adhoc Teacher



Prabhat Dixit
Adhoc Teacher



Divya Sachdev
Trainee Teacher



Saumya Devrani
Trainee Teacher



Neha Purohit
Trainee Teacher



Ritu UPRETI
Trainee Teacher



A V Sushma
Trainee Teacher



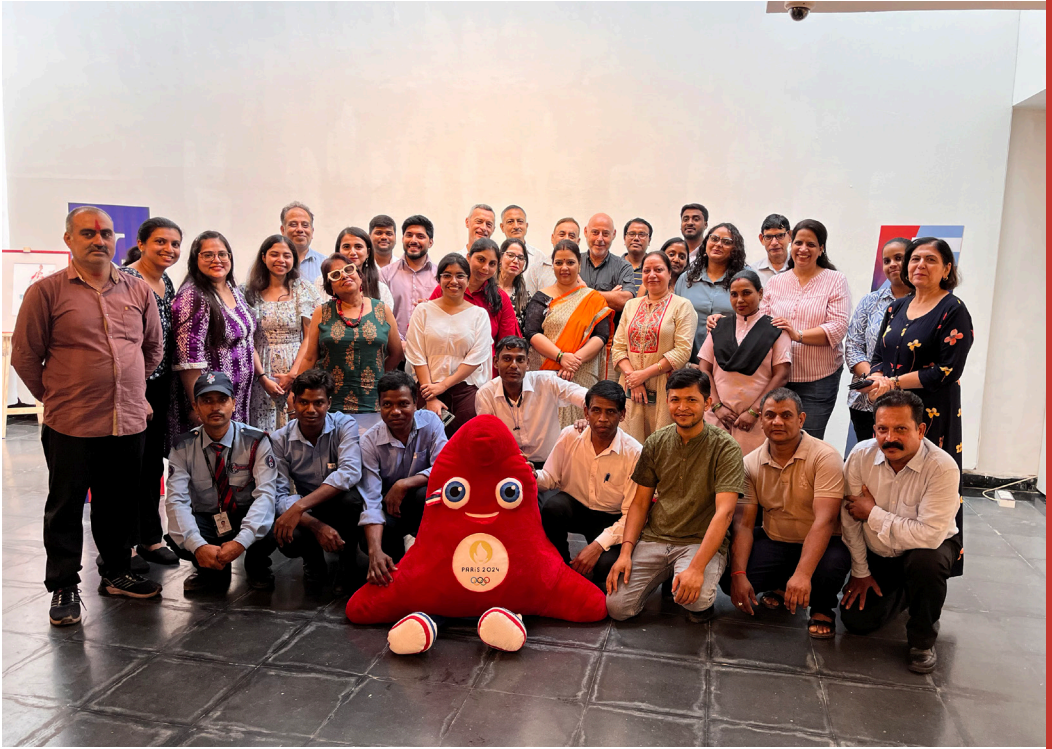
Deepakshi Garg
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Vanita Raguvanshi
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Jeevashree Banerjee
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