



# Rajasthan Foundation's Success Story: A Holistic Analysis of Crisis Management, Cultural Enrichment, Investment and Humanitarian Support

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## **Abstract**

*This research article delves into the pivotal role played by the Rajasthan Foundation (RF) as a pioneer in strengthening bonds with the Rajasthani Diaspora. The RF's initiatives have successfully ignited a profound wave of engagement within the Rajasthani Diapsora, cultivating connections with over 25 Global Rajasthani Associations, Non-Residents Rajasthani (NRR) communities, NRR Mitras and potential NRR investors across the globe. These dynamic NRRs and associations exhibit an unwavering commitment to giving back to their beloved homeland, Rajasthan, both culturally and economically. In the time of crisis, the RF has been instrumental in implementing effective crisis management strategies to aid the Rajasthani diapsora, exemplifying their commitment to safeguard the well-being of the diaspora community. The article underscores the RF's commendable efforts in cultural preservation and economic development. In short, RF's multifaceted approach makes it a pioneering force in nurturing robust bonds with the Rajasthani diapsora, encompassing cultural, economic and crisis management facets.*

**Keywords-** Diaspora, Rajasthan, Rajasthan Foundation, NRRs, cultural, development, philanthropy

## **Introduction**

Diaspora, a term that resonates with the intricate tapestry of human history, encapsulated the profound story of communities dispersed far from their ancestral homelands to far-flung corners of the world. Rooted in the ancient Greek word 'diaspeirein', meaning 'to scatter', the concept of diapsora has evolved over time to encompass diverse groups sharing a common origin and heritage while residing in different corners of the world. The phenomenon of diapsora has been driven by a myriad of factors, including economic aspirations, political upheavals and the pursuit of better opportunities. These scattered communities are bound not only by their cultural ties but also by the complex interplay of nostalgia, adaption and resilience in the face of

displacement. At its core, diaspora is a testament to the resilience of human spirit, as individuals and communities adapt, thrive and contribute to their adopted lands while retaining a deep connection to their roots.

## Objective of study

This research article explores the extensive efforts made by the Rajasthan Foundation (RF) in supporting and empowering the Rajasthani diaspora across the globe spanning the period from December 2018 to October 2023. The research systematically categorizes these efforts into distinct activities, highlighting the foundation's responses to various challenges and its role in fostering connections, development and cultural preservation within the diapsora. The study showcases the RF as a case study, encompassing its work during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukraine-Russia war, evacuation missions, economic initiatives, cultural engagement, healthcare, education and philanthropy. This article demonstrates how the RF has effectively addressed a wide array of challenges and opportunities faced by the Rajasthani diaspora, serving as a catalyst for their growth, connectivity and well-being. The foundation multifaceted reflects on its dedication to fostering a stronger, more prosperous diaspora community and contributing to the development of Rajasthan as a whole.

## Rajasthani Diaspora

In the heart of Rajasthan, where the sands of the Thar Desert whisper tales of resilience and tradition, a unique narrative of Rajasthani diaspora unfolds. Human migration, an intrinsic part of the state's history, not only been an enduring phenomenon that has shaped the lives and destinies of countless Rajasthani individuals and families but also stands as a vibrant and distinct thread, woven into the fabric of nations far from the arid landscapes of their home state, Rajasthan.

As we delve into the story of the Rajasthani diaspora, we applaud the adventures of these individuals hailing from Rajasthan. Fueled by their ambitions and dreams, they have dispersed worldwide, imprinting their indelible legacy on the world while staying deeply rooted in their heritage. Despite residing in diverse corners of the world, Rajasthanis have carried with them the colors, flavors and traditions of their homeland, enriching the global diaspora experience.

The history of Rajasthani diaspora is a captivating saga of migration, adaption and the indomitable pursuit of dreams that stretches across centuries and continents. Rooted in the cultural and historical tapestry of Rajasthan, this diaspora began its journey with the ancient trade routes that crisscrossed the region, attracting traders and merchants to venture gar and wide. Rajasthan's martial Rajput clans and Maratha warriors expanded their influence and territories, leading to the settlement of Rajput communities in different parts of India. During colonial era, Rajasthanis played vital roles as merchants, laborers and soldiers, dispersing to

various corners of the British Empire, including Africa, the Caribbean and Southeast Asia. Post-independence, economic opportunities and educational pursuits spurred a new wave of migration, with Rajasthanis establishing themselves in countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. This modern diaspora continues to grow, preserving its cultural heritage, fostering successful communities and making substantial contributions to the societies in which they reside. The history of Rajasthani diaspora is a testament to the resilience, adaptability and enduring ties that connect Rajasthanis to their ancestral homeland while embracing the opportunities and challenges of the wider world.

## **Rajasthan: Bridging Borders, Embracing Diaspora**

In a world where globalization has blurred geographical boundaries, the significance of maintaining strong ties with one's roots and heritage holds paramount importance, especially in the context of Rajasthan. Rajasthan known for its rich tapestry and historical legacy, has a substantial diaspora scattered across the globe. Maintaining strong ties with this diaspora is essential not only for the preservation and promotion of Rajasthan's vibrant culture but also for harnessing economic opportunities and fostering philanthropic endeavors.

The Govt. of Rajasthan shares a profound and dynamic relationship with its diaspora, the Non-Resident Rajasthanis (NRRs), spread throughout the world. Recognizing the immense value and significance of this global community, the state government has proactively engaged in fostering connections and collaboration with NRRs which envisions a dynamic and mutually beneficial relationship with its diaspora. The diaspora has never played such a significant role in Rajasthan's economic and social growth as it does now. With Rajasthan galloping ahead thanks to robust economic reforms, development and improved business accessibility, Rajasthan needs to interact more with its diaspora. By engaging with Rajasthan's global community, the state not only safeguards its heritage's enduring presence on the global stage but also taps into the diaspora's contributions and support. To harness skills within a diaspora, it is crucial to gain a better understanding of its characteristics. The Rajasthan govt. has made substantial endeavors to actively involve and provide support to its diaspora community via the Rajasthan Foundation.

## **Rajasthan Foundation: Existence and Significance**

The Govt. of Rajasthan, under the visionary leadership of Sh. Ashok Gehlot, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan, took a pioneering step by establishing the Rajasthan Foundation (RF) in March 2001. RF was not just another government initiative; it was a bold and forward-thinking move that laid the foundation for a deeper and more meaningful connection between the state and its NRRs. RF was created with a clear and ambitious mission: to re-establish and enhance ties between NRRs and their home state. Rajasthan government's initiative when establishing the Rajasthan Foundation was to enhance its ability to engage with diaspora and identify skill sets that could help address the state's structural needs, noting the importance of

regularly profiling the diaspóra and developing the necessary tools and in-house capacities to achieve this objective. The vision seeks to strengthen cultural bonds, encourage economic collaboration, facilitate philanthropy and empower the diaspora as cultural ambassadors and economic partners, ultimately driving the development and prosperity of both Rajasthan and its global diaspora community.

## Charting the Course: Vision and Objectives of Rajasthan Foundation

The Rajasthan Foundation envisions a dynamic and inclusive relationship between the state of Rajasthan and its diaspora both within India and across international borders. This vision is rooted in three core principles:

1. **Strengthening Bonds and Preserving Culture and Heritage:** The primary vision of the Rajasthan Foundation (RF) is to strengthen cultural, economic and social bonds with its diaspora across the globe. This includes fostering a sense of belonging and connection to state, regardless of geographic distance. The foundation is dedicated to safeguarding the rich tapestry of Rajasthan's culture and heritage. Through cultural events, heritage conservation and promotion of traditional arts, it aims to ensure that the legacy of Rajasthan remains vibrant and cherished among its diaspora.

2. **Empowering Participation and Contribution:** A central tenet of the vision is to create an enabling environment for Non-Residents Rajasthani (NRRs) to actively participate in and contribute to the social, economic and cultural progress of Rajasthan. This involves providing opportunities for investments, skill development and a sense of belonging.

3. **Fostering Development:** The government envisions collaborative development, where the diaspora actively participates in the growth and progress of Rajasthan by investing in the state's economy and contributing their expertise. The overarching goal is to catalyze the development of Rajasthan by harnessing the energy, expertise and resource of its diaspora. By fostering collaboration and mutual growth, the foundation aims to propel the state forward in various sectors.

In conclusion, the Rajasthan government's dedicated efforts, channeled through the Rajasthan Foundation (RF), underscore its commitment to not only nurturing a strong and symbiotic but substantial relationship with the diaspora community. By focusing on cultural preservation, economic engagement, education, diaspora integration, crisis support and cultural exchange, the government along with RF is not only bridging geographical gaps but also building a cohesive and thriving global Rajasthan community. Rajasthan aims to position its diaspora as global ambassadors for the state, promoting its rich cultural heritage and economic potential on international platforms. Through RF government seeks to tap into the vast potential of Non-Resident- Rajasthanis (NRRs) find support, a sense of identity and belonging in Rajasthan. This vision exemplifies the state's unwavering dedication to its Diasporas' well-being, heritage and active participation in Rajasthan's journey of growth and development. As these initiatives continue to unfold, they hold the promise of a brighter and more connected future for both the diaspora and the state of Rajasthan.

## Rajasthan Foundation: Empowering Connections

RF facilitates a continuous dialogue, encouraging the active participation of the diaspora in the state's growth and development. It works closely with state government with the initiative stemmed from the understanding that the global Rajasthani diaspora is an invaluable resource that can contribute significantly to the development and growth of their place of origin. With setting itself apart as a forum for fostering renewed bonds and ensuring the welfare of NRRs living in various countries and regions across the globe RF has come a long way.

The Rajasthan Foundation has emerged as a stalwart advocate and supporter of the Rajasthani Diaspora, leaving an indelible mark through its multifaceted initiatives across the globe. Its commitment to the well-being and prosperity of Rajasthanis living far from their homeland is evident in a diverse range of activities. Categorizing these efforts into distinct areas of focus, we delve into the impactful work undertaken by the Rajasthan Foundation:

### Rajasthan Foundation: Pravasi Rajasthanis' COVID-19 Relief Drive

In the of the challenging COVID-19 pandemic, the RF assumed a leading role in the service of the people. During the lockdown, it functioned as a central hub, providing crucial assistance and support to Rajasthanis stranded in various states. Amid the challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis, the RF took a proactive stance, actively engaging with prominent members of global Rajasthani community. Their heartfelt appeal encouraged collaboration in assisting those in need within their respective local communities, while simultaneously seeking their generous contributions to bolster the collective initiatives of their home state. This united effort played a vital role in mitigating the hardships faced by the state's residents during the global lockdown. This article highlights the Foundation's central role in acquiring and disbursing vital relief supplies and financial resources, demonstrating the strength of collaborative endeavors during times of crisis.

**Allocation of oxygen concentrators and tankers:** The RF, in collaboration with Pravasi Rajasthanis, has assumed a central role in the acquisition and distribution of critical COVID-19 relief resources. A significant number of oxygen concentrators were dispatched to Rajasthan, with substantial portion allocated to district hospitals and healthcare centers (2941 in all). Additionally, valuable contributions came from various entities, including the American-India Foundation, Dubai-based NRRs and Shivanand Foundation. Notably, two oxygen tankers were generously donated by Dubai-based NRR, making a substantial impact on the oxygen supply in Jodhpur. RF expressed its gratitude through a Zoom event, acknowledging all contributors.

**Deployment of oxygen plants and ventilators:** The American-India Foundation played a vital role by installing oxygen plants at key healthcare facilities boosting local oxygen production at CHC Bayana, Bharatpur and SMS College, Jaipur. Additionally, Canada-based NRR Shri Navratan Kothari committed to

providing 3 oxygen plants and electric generators for healthcare centers in the Churu district. In the realm of ventilators, NRR Dr. Vivek Ojha donated eight emergency lung ventilators from the Czech Republic and American-India Foundation contributed 6000 single-use ventilators and 3000 monitors to SMS Medical College, Jaipur.

**Other essential contributions and cash donations:** RF received substantial support in various forms, including 200 oxygen cylinders from the Rajasthan Business & Professional Group, Dubai and a 400KW DG Set for Bhilwara Govt. Hospital donated by Dr. Akshat Jain from USA. Further, 100 Pulse Oxymeters were provided by the American-India Foundation to ESI hospital, Udaipur.

In a unique initiative, global NRRs have pledged to donate Peepal trees to create natural oxygen-emitted areas, supporting the Govt. of Rajasthan's plantation drive. Alongside material contributions, the RF also received significant cash donations (Rs. 15 Lacs) from global NRRs, with a total commitment of around Rs. 38 lacs for COVID-19 support. This is an exemplary illustration of unwavering commitment of Pravasi Rajasthanis to support the state govt. in its fight against the pandemic.

The RF has established global connections with NRRs and actively works to rekindle their ties with the State of Rajasthan. As part of this ongoing effort, the Foundation played a pivotal role in organizing a unique interaction between the Hon'ble Chief Minister and NRRs around the world during the challenging times of COVID pandemic. The commendable efforts of the RF, led and guided by Commissioner Shri Dhiraj Srivastava, during the Covid crisis, earned him the prestigious 'World Book of Records, London' recognition.

## **Rescue and Relief: RF's Role in Evacuating Rajasthani Citizens**

The Ukraine-Russia war, which commenced in early 2022, cast a shadow of uncertainty over the lives of Rajasthani students and citizens who were caught in the crossfire. The Sudan and Manipur crisis of 2023 brought severe challenges for the Rajasthani diaspora, particularly students. Amidst the turmoil, the RF emerged as a lifeline, meticulously planning and executing the safe evacuation of these individuals, ensuring their well-being during these trying times. This research article delves into the pivotal role of the RF in coordinating and facilitating the secure repatriation of these individuals during a time of crisis in Ukraine, Sudan and Manipur.

**Role as Nodal Officer:** The Commissioner RF was appointed as the Nodal officer, a pivotal role that entailed close collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs and Indian Embassies. This significant responsibility entailed working closely with these entities to facilitate the safe return of Rajasthani students from the conflict-ridden Ukraine, which had descended into a chaotic war zone. Similarly, the Commissioner RF played a vital role in the Sudan and Manipur crisis. Collaborating with the Ministry of External Affairs

and Indian Embassies, the Commissioner worked diligently to ensure the secure repatriation of Rajasthan's diaspora members facing turmoil in Sudan and Manipur.

**Setting up assistance centers:** The situation intensified when, on 24 February 2022, air routes were closed due to the escalating Ukraine-Russia conflict. In response to this critical development, the RF swiftly organized a help desk and control room, at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, Mumbai International Airport and Jaipur Airport. In March 2023, during the Sudan crisis, and in May 2023, amidst Manipur crisis, earthquake in Syria, RF played a crucial role in ensuring that Rajasthani individuals, who found themselves trapped in the midst of these conflicts, received vital assistance and guidance to enable their safe evacuation and repatriation to their home state.

**Multi-pronged approach:** RF's multi-faceted approach involved the creation of a three-tier system to manage the crisis effectively. Requests were received through various channels, including telephone and emails, in addition to names provided by public representatives and the Chief Minister's office. Furthermore, RF collected comprehensive information about students stranded in Ukraine and leveraged this data to create a WhatsApp group, facilitating continuous communication and moral support. Same course of action was followed up for Sudan and Manipur crisis.

**Collaboration with government departments:** Collaboration with various departments of the Rajasthan government allowed RF to conduct video conferences, instructing district collectors to remain in constant communication with the families of stranded students and citizens. This information flow was further bolstered by the establishment of a control room and helpline numbers.

**Empowering the Diaspora:** Notably, RF arranged video conferences with the assistance of expatriate Rajasthani individuals who had successfully reached Poland from Ukraine, providing them with a platform to share their experiences and concerns with the Hon'ble Chief Minister. This initiative fostered a sense of unity and support among the Rajasthani community during these trying times.

**Achieving safe repatriation:** Through collective efforts, RF and different govt. departments and the resilience of the stranded students and citizens, a significant milestone was achieved. By March 11, 2022, a total of 1009 Rajasthani students and individuals had safely returned home from Ukraine. Rajasthani citizens were transported from Sudan to the port of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and subsequently, they were flown and sailed to different cities in India, including Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmadabad, Bangalore and but of course different cities of Rajasthan. Out of approx. 100 returning individuals, 83 were successfully reunited with their families and homes, thanks to the assistance provided by the RF and the Rajasthan state govt. A total of 99 students from Manipur were brought back safely to Rajasthan at govt. expenses. The state govt. ensured their well-being, including accommodations, meals and transportation throughout the process. This

remarkable outcome showcases the RF's unwavering commitment to serving its people in times of crisis and exemplifies the power of coordinated humanitarian efforts.

## **RF's Visionary NRR Policy: A Historic Launch**

The NRR Conclave marked a historic juncture with the Hon'ble Chief Minister's unveiling of the groundbreaking NRR Policy 7 Oct 2022. This momentous occasion saw the simultaneous launch of a new logo and a state-of-the-art website for the RF, symbolizing a heartfelt gift to the diaspora and emphasizing the state's profound dedication to its NRR community. The NRR policy, which has been formulated on the Five-C concept of connect, culture, community, care and contribution, aims to bring over one lakh NRRs under the Rajasthan Foundation, which was set up by the state government in 2001, in the next five years. This visionary document laid out a proactive role for the govt., aimed at fostering closer ties with the diasporea. It presented a comprehensive policy framework that delineated the state's commitment to NRRs, with a particular focus on their support, encouraging their investments in Rajasthan and ensuring their overall well-being.

The RF's proactive initiative commenced with a pivotal move, introducing a policy document that not only guided but also ushered in a transformative approach to fostering more extensive and meaningful connections with NRRs. In short, this policy framework underscored the critical importance of recognizing the vast potential and substantial contributions of NRRs. It articulated the state's commitment to making NRRs an integral part of Rajasthan's progress, ensuring they feel not just welcomed but deeply connected to the state's development and growth. A slew of initiatives are planned under the NRR policy, including 'Mhari Dani', a flagship scheme of the government through which the NRRS will be able to voluntarily contribute to development works in towns and villages, 'Pravasi Mitra' in which NRRs would be appointed in various countries, who would provide strategic mentoring and guidance to people of their land who want to move abroad for study, work or travel. The policy envisages setting up a Pravasi Rajasthani Kendra in Jaipur. 12 NRRs cells have been formed in the different districts of Rajasthan.

## **Rajasthan's Investment Renaissance 2022:**

The Govt. of Rajasthan had initially slated 'Invest Rajasthan' for Jan 2022, a global investor summit aimed at attracting investments to the state. However, the unfortunate outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic forced a postponement of the event to Oct 2022. In this endeavor, the RF played an important in facilitating a significant number of NRR investments during the summit. Remarkably, the Marwari community, considered to be among the world's oldest business people, was prominently featured in the summit's proceedings. Their influence can be observed across the globe, with Marwari entrepreneurs establishing a presence in every corner of the world.



What sets 'Invest Rajasthan 2022' apart is the RF's proactive approach in mobilizing the NRR community. They organized road shows and virtual meetings on a global scale to engage potential investors and bring them into the fold of Rajasthan's promising investment landscape. This visionary approach to investment promotion stands as a testament to Rajasthan's commitment to fostering economic growth and international partnerships.

## **Cultural and Economic Bridging: RF's Role in Indo Africa Expo 2023**

RF played a significant role in the Indo Africa Expo. Held in July 2023, aimed to bolster economic ties and stimulate trade relationships between India and East African nations. This trade exposition brought together 175 entrepreneurs, underlining the potential for robust economic collaboration. Beyond its economic goals, the event also served as a unique platform for the Rajasthani diaspora residing in Kenya and other East African countries, offering them an opportunity to engage with their cultural heritage and explore business prospects within East African region.

RF's significance in this endeavor lay in its ability to foster emotional connections, promote cultural exchange and facilitate economic partnerships between Rajasthan and East African region. This multi-faceted approach not only enriched the cultural experience of the Rajasthani diaspora but also laid the groundwork for fruitful, mutually beneficial relationships between Rajasthan and other African countries participated in expo. RF's involvement in this venture showcased its effectiveness in enhancing cultural diplomacy and its ability to engage with the diapsora in a meaningful manner, reinforcing the significance of such organizations in bridging the cultural and economic gaps on the international stage.

## **NRR Conclave: A Triumph of Diaspora Connection**

The NRR Conclave served as a moving tribute to the enduring connections between Rajasthan and its worldwide diapsora, highlighting the heartwarming connections that transcend borders. This landmark event was a testament to the enduring bonds that have been nurtured over the years, uniting Rajasthan with its diapsora in a meaningful and historic way.

***Celebrating years of dedication:*** As the RF tirelessly dedicated itself to nurturing and renewing the bonds between the state and its diaspora, the time had come to commemorate years of collective efforts. The NRR Conclave emerged as a unique gathering, a heartfelt celebration of the state's diaspora hailing from various states and countries. The focus was here not on expectations or demands but purely on witnessing the joy and contentment on the faces of the diaspora, as they reunited with their roots.

***A record-breaking success:*** The NRR conclave marked a historic milestone for the RF, thanks to the unwavering support received from the diaspora. This unprecedented event in the foundation's history symbolized a bond that goes beyond borders, cultures and expectations. The event's exceptional success is a testament to the deep connections it nurtured.

***Quite contributors: The Rajasthan Foundation-*** The RF played pivotal role as the backbone of the NRR conclave. Their support extended to various dimensions, including-

***Engaging venture capitalists-*** Conducting virtual meetings with the NRR network and venture capitalists, enlightening them about Rajasthan's investment potential and encouraging them to participate with investments proposals.

***Road shows for NRR mobilization:*** the foundation actively participated in road shows aimed at mobilizing NRR investors, spreading the message of investment opportunities in Rajasthan.

***Paving way for global participation:*** RF played key role in promoting Invest Rajasthan (IR) summit on various platforms. They extended invitations to NRRs from all corners of the world, actively encouraging their participation in the event.

***Philanthropic commitments:*** The NRR Conclave produced a remarkable outcome- the receipt of numerous intentions our NRR, trusts and associations to support philanthropic projects across Rajasthan. This campaign, initiated by the RF, aimed to inspire NRRs in India and abroad to actively participate in their homeland's socio-economic development. As a result, Letters of Intent (LoIs) were submitted by NRRs, pledging a substantial sum of Rs. 271 crore for philanthropic initiatives. This serves as a significant motivational force for the global NRR community. Many of these projects are already underway, and dedicated efforts continue to ensure the completion of the remaining ones. Among these, a prominent example is the development of a multi-specialty hospital in Churu district, estimated at a cost of Rs. 150 crore, with substantial progress made in terms of land allotment.

Moreover, Rajasthanis across the globe actively participate in philanthropic endeavors that extend their support to their homeland, a role that RF wholeheartedly recognizes and promotes. The Rajasthan govt., through its tireless work via RF, has taken considerable steps to foster connections, spur economic advancement and safeguard cultural heritage. These initiatives reflect the state's unwavering commitment to global collaboration and inclusivity, serving as a paradigm for uniting diverse communities and transcending borders.

## **RF's Impactful NRR Engagement:**

In the context of this research paper, we delve into the past impact of RF's initiatives on both the Rajasthani Associations and the global Rajasthani Diaspora. These initiatives successfully mobilized more than 25 Global Rajasthani Associations, NRRs and prospective NRR investors worldwide. Their collective drive to contribute to their cherished ancestral homeland, Rajasthan, served as a driving force behind these endeavors. RF, committed to fostering connections among Rajasthani communities worldwide has done marvelous job by unifying them under a single digital platform and elevating the visibility of these associations and their activities.

## **Empowering Dreams Abroad: NRR Mitra Support by RF**

The aspirations of many young individuals in Rajasthan were anchored in achieving international degrees to advance their personal and professional lives. A significant number also embarked on overseas job opportunities, while others pursued travel or business ventures abroad. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by these migrants, RF took a proactive step by appointing NRR Mitras in various countries across the world. These dedicated Mitras, representing their respective countries of residence, eagerly offered strategic mentoring and guidance to fellow Rajasthanis aspiring to study, work or travel abroad. Such international linkages proved invaluable, aiding young individuals in adapting to foreign environments and forging new pathways toward a promising future on foreign shores.

***Cultural enrichment and engagement:*** A multitude of virtual events, cultural programs and festivals have been organized, attracting enthusiastic participation from a substantial number of NRRs. These events, including celebrations for festivals like Haryali Teej, Makar Sakranti, global Deepotsav and Independence Day, showcase the diverse occasion that capture the interest and engagement of NRR community.

***Fostering cultural bonds:*** RF, through its cultural exchange programs and govt.-sponsored festivals, nurtures cultural connections and celebrates Rajasthan's rich heritage. These efforts foster a sense of belonging among NRRs. One of such much appreciated effort was organizing 'Chal Meri Dholaki Dhamak Dham', a puppet storytelling session narrated by Seema Mudra who joined from USA, successfully engaged young Pravasi kids in the past. It effectively made them aware of and connected them with their state's rich tradition and history. Through storytelling and puppetry, the workshop inspired a deep appreciation for their cultural heritage, fostering a sense of belonging and pride among the participants.

RF plays an important role in preserving and celebrating Rajasthan's rich cultural and heritage legacy. With a commitment to reconnecting the Rajasthani diaspora with their deep-root cultural and heritage, RF organized an engaging online talk show 'Science of ancient temples of Rajasthan' with Deepti Singh,

Professor in Cairo, Egypt and Dr. Vikram Bhati, renowned historian and Assistant director at Research Institute, Chopasani, Jodhpur on 1<sup>ST</sup> May 2021. This event showcased the remarkable foresight of our ancestors and unveiled the advanced techniques and scientific knowledge applied in ancient temple construction in Rajasthan. Through such programs, RF acts as a cultural bridge, strengthening the diaspora's ties to their roots and fostering a profound connection with their spiritual, cultural and traditional heritage. This initiative not only celebrates Rajasthan's cultural treasures but also serves as a bridge between the past and the present, enlightening the diaspora about the scientific marvels of Rajasthan's ancient temples.

**Welfare support and community building:** In the 'Invest Rajasthan' summit held in Jaipur 2022, a significant proposal for 'Rajasthani Pravasi Bhawans' in various cities across the country and abroad was introduced. Reflecting a deep sense of pride and proactive engagement, RF stepped forward to support this initiative. Shayar Maloo, in a remarkable and generous gesture, donated her residence to establish the first Pravasi Bhawan in the state, located in Sujangarh, Churu. This initiative, supported by RF, vividly exemplified the organization's unwavering commitment to the well-being of the Rajasthani diaspora. In a recent addition (2023) to this initiative, a land in Coimbatore was allotted by Tamil govt. for Rajasthani Pravasi Bhawan on the request of CM, Govt. of Rajasthan and NRRs living in Tamilnadu further extending support for Rajasthani expatriates. These initiatives clearly showcase the significant contribution of the RF in forging connections, promoting well-being and nurturing strong bonds within the diaspora.

**Celebrating pravasi excellence:** Numerous programs are in place to captivate and inspire NRRs by highlighting the outstanding achievements of exemplary individuals from pravasi community. 'Hum Rajasthani' is a standout initiative, introducing and celebrating Pravasis who have garnered national and international recognition for their significant contributions, rich experiences and profound knowledge.

**Facilitating govt.-diaspora interaction:** RF has taken the lead in spearheading an innovative program, 'Miliye Sarkar Se', designed to facilitate direct interactions between the diaspora and govt. officials. This initiative enables NRRs to engage in meaningful conversations with Hon'ble Ministers and public representatives, gaining insights into sector-specific schemes and investment opportunities.

**Sector-specific engagements:** Within its comprehensive engagement strategy, RF has played an important role in connecting the global Rajasthani diaspora with government officials from the Govt. of Rajasthan. These interactions span a multitude of sectors, encompassing healthcare, tourism, art and culture, solar energy, skill development and education, among others. They take place both in physical and virtual settings, effectively transcending geographically boundaries for the exchange of ideas and opportunities.

A prime example of RF's commitment to education reflects in the year 2021 when the Rajasthan govt. introduced the Rajiv Gandhi Scholarship Yojna. This program aimed to offer financial support to students pursuing higher education overseas. RF, with its proactive approach, spearheaded productive dialogues between government officials and students who had chosen academic pursuits in countries such as Canada, USA, UK, Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong. The outcomes were expenditure of approx. 46 crore, notable with 245 students from Rajasthan benefitting from this initiative. RF continues its dedication to support the Rajasthani community abroad through its NRR Mitras, serving as a valuable resource in their quest for knowledge and growth.

## **RF and DoRI: Transforming Healthcare in Rajasthan**

DoRI Foundation was set up during COVID-19 Pandemic by then CM Rajasthan Govt. under aegis of RF to promote medical service to the people with the help from NRR doctors working in other countries including USA & UK. This exceptional initiative seeks to revolutionize healthcare in Rajasthan, promoting sustainable, equitable, effective and efficient services to the states, most vulnerable individuals and communities. RF played an instrumental role in nurturing and facilitating the birth of DoRI. The foundation provided support, resources and a collaborative platform for Pravasi Rajasthani doctors to unite and channel their expertise towards a shared purpose especially at the time of pandemic. DoRI and Jaipur's SMS Medical College jointly worked on medical benefits which include best healthcare and treatment to patients in various super-specialties' in the state. Through RF's guidance, DoRI has rapidly evolved into a dynamic force for healthcare transformation in the state. Under the aegis of RF, DoRI is actively engaged in impactful healthcare initiatives, striving to bridge the healthcare gap and uplift underserved communities. RF's efforts have yielded tangible results. NRRs, who had previously felt distant from their homeland, now have a direct channel to contribute to Rajasthan's progress. The organization has successfully facilitated several collaborations, leading to investments in various sectors, including technology, healthcare and education.

## **Conclusion**

RF stands as a remarkable case study in how visionary leadership and innovative thinking can create pathways for a stronger connection between a state and its diaspora. It demonstrates the importance of recognizing and nurturing the ties that bind people to their roots. In nutshell, the Rajasthan Foundation is a testament to the enduring connection between Rajasthan and its diaspora. It strives to build a bridge that brings the two closer together, not just in spirit but in action, enabling a brighter future for all. It's a story of preserving heritage, nurturing bonds, and creating opportunities that resonate across borders and generations.

In short, RF serves as a connecting link, promoting teamwork and partnership between Rajasthan and its worldwide community. RF extends a helping hand to NRRs ensuring they have access to essential services and support. Open communication channels, including websites, social media platforms and dedicated

events, enable NRRs to share their thoughts, concerns and feedback- all these revolves around RF, facilitating a responsive and collaborative relationship. Furthermore, RF operates as a vital venue for ongoing dialogue and engagement between NRRs, the State of Rajasthan and its different agencies. It harness the potential of the Diaspora to enhance Rajasthan's economic, cultural and social progress, ensuring a steadfast connection between Rajasthan and its global residents, where both NRRs and the State of Rajasthan can prosper and flourish.

By facilitating contributions, ensuring welfare and promoting cultural exchange, RF has set a benchmark for other regions to follow in building stronger ties with their diapsora. As the world continues to globalize, initiatives like Rajasthan Foundation serve as a beacon of unity and progress, showcasing the power of reconnecting with one's roots.

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