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San Antonio Mayor to Lead Trade Delegation to India

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San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro giving the keynote address on stage during day one of the Democratic National Convention Sept. 4 in Charlotte, North Carolina. (Getty Images)

United States

[San Antonio, Texas Mayor Julian Castro](#) – a rising star in the Democratic Party – will lead a trade delegation of business, science and education leaders to India beginning Jan. 21, 2013.



A group of approximately 20 people are expected to accompany Castro on his two-week visit to Hyderabad, Chennai and New Delhi. The delegation hopes to expand Indian foreign investment in San Antonio, which established a ["sister-city" relationship with Chennai](#) in 2008, formalized by former Mayor Phil Hardberger.

The trip is being jointly organized by the [Alamo Asian American Chamber](#)

[of Commerce](#) – which annually organizes a trade delegation to an Asian country – and Anuja, San Antonio, a non-profit organization created last year to promote the sister-city relationship between Chennai and San Antonio.

[Kausi Subramaniam, president of Anuja, S.A.](#) told India-West she expected the trip to create several new opportunities for San Antonio and India. Focus sectors include biomedical science, information technology and education. Representatives from the clean energy sector are also expected to join the trade mission, but the latter has not been confirmed, said Subramaniam.

[The Bexar County Medical Society](#) along with the company [BioMed S.A.](#) are confirmed participants on the trip, and are looking to establish relationships with medical organizations in India to trade research information, said the Indian American, envisioning an ongoing exchange of researchers between the two countries.

[RackSpace Hosting](#) will also join the mission to introduce Indian companies to the concept of cloud computing, with the hopes of gaining new customers there. The "open cloud" company provides its services to more than 190,000 customers worldwide, including the Associated Press, CBS Interactive, PBS and Zynga. Cloud computing is the concept of storing files and application on the Internet, rather than on a single computer: Google's Gmail is an example of a cloud computing application.

Local universities and community colleges have also expressed interest in joining the trip, said Subramaniam, adding that they will focus primarily on recruitment.

Mayor Castro has not yet scheduled speaking engagements in India, but Merin Rajadurai, who mans the India Desk at the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C., is arranging meetings between delegation members and Indian federal and local officials and Indian companies, reported the San Antonio Express News.

Subramaniam noted the success of the Chennai/San Antonio relationship, noting that a medical society from Chennai came to San Antonio to research diabetes, which equally afflicts Indians and Texans. Another group of researchers came to study San Antonio's approach to treating river pollution, she said.

Chicago, Ill., [Mayor Rahm Emanuel](#) is expected to travel with a trade delegation to India later this year. The City of San Francisco established a sister-city relationship with Bangalore in 2010, and San Jose, Calif., has a sibling relationship with Pune.

A string of U.S. governors have made inaugural trade missions to India over the past 18 months. Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell and Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley each made their first visits to India last November, and Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear made his third trip to India in September. Washington Governor Chris Gregoire made her inaugural visit to India in October, promoting her state's apples and potatoes as potential imports for India.

[N. Parthasarathi](#), India's consul general in San Francisco, told India-West in an earlier story that India – with its more than 400 million middle-class consumers — presents an attractive consumer market for U.S. businesses. Even people living on \$2 can avail of U.S. products, he said.