

India-Kenya Bilateral Relations

India and Kenya are maritime neighbours. The contemporary ties between India and Kenya have now evolved into a robust and multi-faceted partnership, marked by regular high-level visits, increasing trade and investment as well as extensive people to people contacts.

The presence of Indians in East Africa is documented in the 'Periplus of the Erythraean Sea' or Guidebook of the Red Sea by an ancient Greek author written in 60 AD. A well-established trade network existed between India and the Swahili Coast predating European exploration. India and Kenya share a common legacy of struggle against colonialism. Many Indians participated and supported the freedom struggle of Kenya.

India established the office of Commissioner for British East Africa resident in Nairobi in 1948. Apasaheb Pant was the first Commissioner. Following Kenyan independence in December 1963, a High Commission was established. India has had an Assistant High Commission in Mombasa. Vice President Dr. S Radhakrishnan visited Kenya in July 1956. Smt. Indira Gandhi attended the Kenyan Independence celebrations in 1963. PM Indira Gandhi visited Kenya in 1970 and 1981. PM Morarji Desai visited Kenya in 1978. President Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy visited Kenya in 1981. President Moi visited India for a bilateral visit in 1981 and for the NAM Summit in 1983.

The State visit of PM Narendra Modi to Kenya on 10-11 July 2016 gave a new impetus to bilateral partnership. PM Narendra Modi and President Uhuru Kenyatta discussed a wide range of bilateral issues. Both leaders witnessed signing of seven (MoUs)/Agreements in the fields of defence, trade and developmental assistance. PM handed over 30 field ambulances for the use of the Kenya Defence Forces. PM and President Kenyatta addressed an India-Kenya Business Forum. Five business to business MoUs were signed on the side-lines of the business event. Both leaders visited the 'India Innovation Pavilion' and released a booklet on 'Doing Business in Kenya'. PM addressed a gathering of over 20,000 Indian community members in Nairobi. Significantly, President Kenyatta joined him during the diaspora interaction. PM delivered a special lecture to a large gathering of students at the University of Nairobi and visited United Nations Office at Nairobi. India announced gifting of a state-of-the-art made in India cancer therapy machine – Bhabhatron II – to Kenyatta National Hospital, grant of US\$ 1million for the refurbishment of the Mahatma Gandhi graduate library of the University of Nairobi and holding of the first ever Festival of India in Kenya.

President Uhuru Kenyatta paid a State Visit to India from 10-12 January 2017 on an invitation extended by PM Narendra Modi. The two leaders held official talks on 11 January in New Delhi. President Kenyatta attended the Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2017 on 10 January. President Kenyatta was accompanied by several Ministers, senior officials and a high-level business delegation. President Kenyatta held meetings with the President and Vice President and attended a business forum in Delhi on 12 January. Discussions were held on key elements of bilateral relationship including increasing cooperation in defence and maritime security, enhancing trade and investment relationship and counter-terrorism. Key sectors discussed were maritime security and surveillance, counter-terrorism, disrupting terrorist networks, counter-narcotics and human trafficking, agriculture, health, supporting Kenya's development through Lines of Credit, digital and cash-less economy, e-Governance, procurement of pulses, sports, renewable energy especially International Solar Alliance, blue economy, comprehensive convention on terrorism and reforms of international institutions including the United Nations. MoU on Cooperation in the agriculture sector and allied sector and LoC for US\$100 million

for agricultural mechanization was signed during the visit. Earlier, President Uhuru Kenyatta attended the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit and held bilateral meeting with PM Modi in October 2015.

Recent Ministerial Visits from India:

| Name of Minister | Date | Remarks |
|---|------------------|--|
| Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change | 4-7 Dec 2017 | to attend the 3 rd Session of United Nations Environment Assembly |
| Shri M. J. Akbar, MoS for External Affairs | 27-28 Nov 2017 | to attend the swearing-in ceremony of President Kenyatta |
| Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Minister for Urban Development, Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation | 7-11 May 2017 | to participate in the 26 th Session of the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT |
| Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, MoS for Finance & Corporate Affairs | 6-7 March 2017 | to represent India at the 4 th Annual Devolution Conference in Naivasha |
| Shri Manoj Sinha, MoS for Communications (I/C) | 1-3 Sept 2016 | the 2 nd Indo-Africa ICT Expo in organized by TEPC and NASSCOM |
| Shri Prakash Javadekar, MoS (I/C), Environment, Forest & Climate Change | 24 - 27 May 2016 | to attend the 2 nd Session of United Nations Environment Assembly |
| Smt. Nirmala Sitaraman, MoS (I/C) for Commerce and Industry | 15-19 Dec 2015 | to attend the 10 th WTO Ministerial meeting |
| Gen. V. K. Singh, MoS for External Affairs | July 2015 | to handover the invite to President Uhuru Kenyatta for the 3 rd India-Africa Forum Summit |
| Shri Prakash Javadekar, MoS (I/C), Environment, Forest & Climate Change | June 2014 | To attend the inaugural session of UN Environment Assembly |

Recent Ministerial Visits from Kenya:

| Name of Minister | Date | Remarks |
|---|------------------|---|
| Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) for Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Mr. Ababu Namwamba | 19-23 March 2018 | to attend informal Ministerial Meeting on WTO in New Delhi |
| Cabinet Secretary (Minister) for Foreign Affairs & International Trade Amb. Dr. Amina Mohamed, Minister of | February 2015 | To co-chair the 7 th Joint Trade Committee Meeting |

Bilateral Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) at ministerial level was set up in 1999. The first and only JCM took place in 2003 in Nairobi. An MoU on Foreign Office Consultations (FOCs) was signed in 2003. The first bilateral FOCs were held in Nairobi in June 2016.

Bilateral Trade: An India-Kenya Trade Agreement was signed in 1981, under which both countries accorded Most Favoured Nation status to each other. The India-Kenya Joint Trade Committee (JTC) was set up at Ministerial level in 1983 as a follow-up to the Agreement. The JTC has met seven times since, the last in February 2015 in New Delhi. India was Kenya's largest trading partner in 2014-15 with bilateral trade of US\$ 4.235 billion. However, for year 2016-17, bilateral trade was US\$ 2.30 billion and for 2017-18, bilateral trade was US\$ 2.05 billion. Main Indian exports to Kenya include petroleum products, pharmaceuticals, steel products, machinery, yarn, vehicles and power transmission equipment. Main Kenyan exports to India include soda ash, vegetables, tea, leather and metal scrap.

The High Commission supported several Buyer-Seller Meetings/Exhibitions/ Fairs in 2016 for visiting delegations of APEDA (January), EDCIL (February), CHEMEXCIL (February), EEPC (March), KenyaPlast (June), AGRITEC (June), FIEO (June), ACMA (July), 2nd India-Africa ICT Expo (September); INDEE (November), APEDA (December) and EPCES (December). In 2017, Mission supported Source India Kenya (January), SRTEPC (March), Complast (June), Agritec Africa (June), 'Make in Gujarat Business Expo' (July) and Mission organized a full-day business event in February 2017 titled "Leapfrogging India-Kenya bilateral Trade & Investment – Vision 2018. Mission organized its annual Trade and Investment Promotion Event on "Kenya's Big Four Agenda and India's Partnership in Realizing this Vision" on 16 March 2018 in Nairobi where Adan Mohamed, Cabinet Secretary for Industry, Trade & Cooperatives was the Chief Guest.

According to the Kenya Investment Authority (KenInvest), India is the second largest investor in Kenya. Over 60 major Indian companies have invested in various sectors including manufacturing, real estate, pharmaceuticals, telecom, IT & ITES, banking and agro-based industries. Indian investments have resulted in creation of thousands of direct jobs to Kenyans. Indian pharmaceutical companies have a substantial presence in Kenya. A bilateral Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) was signed in 1989. Revised DTAA was signed in July 2016 and came into force on 30 August 2017.

A Joint Business Council (JBC) was set up in 1985 by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) and the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KNCCI). FICCI and KNCCI signed a fresh MoU in January 2017 on the sidelines of the Business Forum during the State visit of President Uhuru Kenyatta. Revived JBC met in New Delhi in January 2017. In February 2016, Mission revived a forum of CEOs of over 40 Indian companies based in Kenya and five meetings of the India Business Forum have been held since then.

Development Cooperation: India offers development assistance to Kenya in the form of loans and credit. This includes a loan of Rs. 50 million to Government of Kenya in 1982 and Lines of Credit by EXIM Bank to Industrial Development Bank Capital Ltd. An Agreement on extension of a Line of Credit of US\$ 61.6 million by EXIM Bank of India to Kenya for utilization in the power transmission sector was signed during the visit of PM Raila Odinga to India in November 2010. A loan agreement to extend lines of credit of US\$ 15 million (as first tranche out of US\$ 30 million) to IDB Capital Limited for development of SMEs was signed in July 2016. A Line of Credit agreement of US\$ 29.95 million for upgradation of Rift Valley Textiles Factory (RIVATEX East Africa Limited) was signed in July 2016. An LOC agreement of US\$ 100 million for Agricultural Mechanization Project was signed in January 2017.

People to people contacts: Kenya Airways flies to Mumbai twice daily. In November 2016, Kenya Airways has expanded its existing cooperation by including codeshares on Jet Airways' domestic flights between Mumbai, New Delhi, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad. Foreign airlines also provide air connectivity via Doha, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Muscat, Addis Ababa and Kigali. Air India's operations to Nairobi via Aden, which began in January 1951, the carrier's second overseas route after London, ended in January 2010 and Air India closed its Nairobi office in March 2011. In August 2016, a team from Air India visited Kenya to explore possibilities of resumption of Air India flights to Nairobi.

India is the third largest source of for inbound tourists to Kenya. Over 60,000 Indian tourists visited Kenya in 2017. Kenya Tourism Board (KTB) has launched a marketing campaign in major Indian cities to increase tourist arrivals from India. Many Kenyans visit India for medical treatment. Around 1,500 people including students and yoga enthusiasts participated in the grand event organized by the Mission to celebrate the third International Day of Yoga in Nairobi in 2017. President Kenyatta commissioned an Advanced Telecobalt Cancer Therapy Machine – Bhabhatron II & Digital Radiotherapy Simulator – Imagin at the Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi in August 2017.

Indian Community and Diaspora in Kenya: Indians were trading with the Swahili coast since early historical times as evidenced by ancient works. With the region coming under Omani rule particularly Mogadishu, Mombasa and Zanzibar, Indian presence remained part of Swahili kaleidoscope. With the advent of Portuguese and finally British, Indian involvement became deeper. Prominent figures of the Kenyan Indian community in Kenya's pre-independence period included the labour leader Makhan Singh. M. A. Desai and Pio Gama Pinto participated actively in Kenya's independence struggle. Indian MP Diwan Chaman Lall joined Jomo Kenyatta's defence team which included two other persons of Indian origin, F R S DeSouza (later Kenya's Deputy Speaker) and A R Kapila, at his 1953 trial.

A vibrant community of persons of Indian origin presently numbered around 80,000 including an estimated 20,000 Indian citizens. Several Kenyans of Indian origin have distinguished themselves as lawyers, judges, doctors and academics. Three persons of Indian origin from Kenya have been awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman: Mr. Manilal Premchand Chandaria, Mr. Pheroze Nowrojee and Dr. FRS De Souza. The Kenya-India Friendship Association (KIFA) was set up in 1981. 'Bharatwallah Alumni Association' (an alumni association of Kenyan students who had studied in India for the last over 50 years) was formally launched in May 2016. The PM interacted with Bharatwallah Alumni Association in July 2016. There are many associations representing different communities among the Indian Diaspora as well as several places of worship, schools, etc. Indian origin MPs Dr. Swarup Ranjan Mishra and Mr. Abdul Rahim Dawood visited New Delhi to attend the First PIO-Parliamentarians Conference on 9-10 January 2018. Ms. Champa Varsani and Mr. Darshan Chandaria visited South Africa to participate in the Gandhi-Mandela Youth Summit as part of Commemoration of 125th Anniversary of the Pietermaritzburg Railway Station incident on 6-7 June 2018.

A bilateral Cultural Cooperation Agreement was signed in 1981. Mission in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of India and the Ministry of Sports, Culture and the Arts of Kenya organized the first-ever Festival of India in Kenya named "Urafiki Utsav" from 10 October to 28 November 2016. Six cultural troupes from different parts of India performed in five cities of Kenya. Since 2016, under the sponsorship of ICCR, Indian artists are participating as adjudicators for the Kenya Music Festival.

There are about 3,500 Kenyan students currently studying in 50 Institutions throughout India. In 2017-18, over 400 Kenyan nationals availed training and scholarships programme in various fields under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme; India-Africa Forum Summit and Aid to Africa Programme. An MoU on establishment of an ICCR Chair on Indian studies between ICCR and University of Nairobi was signed in March 2015. Dr. Seepana Prakasam served as the first ICCR Chair of Indian Studies at the University of Nairobi from Sept 2016-July 2017. The High Commissioner and Vice Chancellor of the University of Nairobi signed an MoU for renovation of the Mahatma Gandhi Graduate Library at the University of Nairobi on 3 Oct 2016. The High Commissioner handed over a cheque of US\$ 1 million to the University during the celebration of the 10th International Day of Non-Violence in Nairobi. Late Kenyan Nobel Peace laureate and environmentalist Prof. Wangari Maathai had been conferred the 2005 Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding as well as the 2006 Indira Gandhi Award for Peace, Disarmament and Development. Prof. Rachel Gesami of Kenya joined as Nelson Mandela Chair at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi in February 2018.

Useful Resources

Website of High Commission of India, Nairobi: <https://www.hcinairobi.co.ke>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/IndiainNairobi/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/indiainkenya>

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