

## **India – Comoros Relations**

India established its diplomatic relations with the Union of Comoros in June 1976. Our Mission in Antananarivo is concurrently accredited to Comoros. India and Comoros have always enjoyed close and friendly relations. Both the countries have similarities of view on regional and global issues.

### **Visits from Comoros**

A number of VVIP/High-Level visits to Comoros to India took place during 2004 to 2015, which are as follows:

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Visitor</b>	<b>Date of visit</b>
1.	Mr.Souef Mohamed El-Amine, Minister of External Relations & Cooperation	August 2004
2.	Mr. Ahmed Ben Said Djaffer Minister of External Relations & Cooperation	July 2006
3.	Mr. Ahmed Abdullah Mohamed Sambu, President of Comoros	4-8 November, 2007
4.	Mr.Fahmi Said Ibrahim Minister of External Relations & Cooperation	18-19 February 2011
5.	Mr. Mohamed Issimail Minister for National Education	01-02 March 2012
6.	Mr. Mohamed Bakri Ben Abdoulafatah Charif, Minister of External Relations & Cooperation	02 November 2012
7.	Mr. Mohamed Ali Soilihi Vice President in-charge of Finance Ministry	21-23 February 2013
8.	Mr. Mohamed Ali Soilihi Vice President in-charge of Finance Ministry	21 October 2015
9.	Dr.Ikililou Dhoininé, President	26-29 October 2015

### **Visits from India**

In August, 2015, Shri Y. S. Chowdary, Hon'ble Minister of State for Science and Technology in his capacity as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister visited Comoros, to extend invitations to HE the President and Foreign Minister of Comoros for the forthcoming India-Africa Forum Summit to be held in New Delhi in October, 2015.

In October 2011, Shri Gurjit Singh, formerly AS (E & SA), Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, paid a visit to the Island to further strengthen the existing bilateral relations.

### **Bilateral Developmental Cooperation:**

EXIM Bank of India had offered a concessional credit of US\$ 41.6 million for setting up a power plant in Moroni. An Agreement to implement the LOC was signed on 22 February 2013 at New Delhi, following which an open bid tender for construction of the

power plant was floated. M/s Overseas Infrastructure Alliance (OIA) and Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. Consortium was successful in the bid and would be undertaking construction of the project. Inaugural Ceremony of the 18 MW power plant at the capital city of Comoros was held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The inaugural ceremony of the project was presided over by HE Mr. Mohamed Ali Soilihi, Vice President and Minister for Finance of Union of Comoros in the presence of Indian Ambassador and a number of Comorian dignitaries. The power plant, once operational, will provide great respite to energy deficient Comoros. A proposal to set up a vocational training centre (VTC) in Moroni to impart skills in plumbing, welding, electricity, civil works, IT, etc. is under consideration of the Government of India.

The Pan African e-Network Project started its operations in Comoros in September 2010 but utilization is low, partly due to language barrier. The Mission has been impressing upon the local government to give wider publicity to the facilities provided by the project so that maximum number of Comorian population could benefit from it.

### **Aid/Assistance:**

The Government of India had granted exemption from ban on export of 25,000 tonnes of non-basmati rice to the Union of Comoros to help relieve the food crisis in Comoros in 2008. In December 2012, Government of India provided US\$ 100,000/- as assistance to Comoros for losses suffered on account of torrential rains in April 2012.

### **Capacity Building Programmes:**

As part of South-South Cooperation, India's focus has been on capacity building including training in highly skilled/technical fields through courses which are offered under ITEC and India Africa Forum Summit Scholarships. A number of scholarships/training courses are being offered by the Government of India to Comoros under ITEC, IAFS, programmes etc. However, the utilization on the part of Comoros has not been satisfactory due to lack of awareness and also due to lack of knowledge of English. The following is the utilization data in this regard: Comoros could utilise only 12 out of 30 slots under ITEC and 1 out of 2 slots under IAFS and 5 out of 5 slots under ICCR scholarships during 2014-15. During 2015-16, the Comoros has so far been able to utilise only 8 slot under ITEC and 1 slot under IAFS.

**Economic and Commercial Relations with India:** The trade between the Comoros and India has been steady, not increasing as expected. The bilateral trade figures between the two countries for the last three years are as follows:

*In millions US\$*

	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014 – 15</b>	<b>2015-16 (Apr-Sep)</b>
India's exports	10.98	20.74	13.70	17.76	8.20
India's imports	2.96	8.02	6.59	11.30	1.98

*Source: DGFT*

Main item of export to Comoros are Meat and Meat items, Textiles and Clothing, cereals and products, Engineering Goods, etc. Main imports from Comoros are Spices and Iron and Steel waste.

**Indian Community:** The Indian Diaspora comprises of around 250 persons and majority of them are engaged in trade and business. The role played by the Indian community in the overall development of Comoros is highly appreciated at all levels. Some of the Indians are very influential and their contribution to the total GDP of Comoros has also been significant. The Indian Diaspora has been playing significant role in promoting Indian culture and traditional values in Comoros. In recent years, a number of young professionals have started working for some foreign companies in Comoros.

**Cultural Relations:** Due to small size of the Island and a tiny Indian Diaspora, there has not been any significant exchange of cultural visits between the two countries.

**Useful Resources:**

Embassy of India, Antananarivo website

[www.embassyofindia.mg](http://www.embassyofindia.mg)

Embassy of India, Antananarivo Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/IndiaInMadagascar>

Embassy of India, Antananarivo Twitter link:

<https://twitter.com/indemtana>

Embassy of India, Antananarivo Youtube Channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRiM\\_YUXv9KnKxyVTR3XiGw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRiM_YUXv9KnKxyVTR3XiGw)

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